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SERIAL: (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424

PASS: (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424

COUNTRY: (U) BURMA (BM).

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] / BURMA ARMY AND PORTERS (U)

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
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DOI: (U) 900420.

REQS: (b)(3):10 USC 424

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SUMMARY: ~~(S/NE)~~ THE BURMESE ARMY CONTINUES TO ABDUCT PEOPLE FOR PORTER DUTY IN SUPPORT OF MAJOR OPERATIONS IN SOUTHEAST BURMA. PEOPLE ARE IMPRESSED TO WORK ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS AS WELL AS TO SUPPORT TACTICAL OPERATIONS.

TEXT: 1. ~~(S/NE)~~ THE BURMESE ARMY (BA) IS ABDUCTING PEOPLE ON A MAJOR SCALE THROUGHOUT SEVERAL CITIES IN TENASSERIM DIVISION. BA PRESS GANGS NOW OPERATE IN THE CITIES OF KAW THAUNG (VICTORIA POINT), MERGUI (BEI), YE, AND TAVOY. CIVILIANS ROUNDED UP IN THE FIRST THREE NAMED CITIES ARE TRANSPORTED BY COASTAL STEAMERS TO AN ISLAND IN THE RIVER OFF THE SHORE OF TAVOY WHERE A MAKESHIFT "PORTERS CAMP" HAS BEEN SET UP BY THE BA. FROM THERE, PORTERS ARE DISPATCHED IN GROUPS AS NEEDED.

2. ~~(S/NE)~~ A CENTRAL PORTERS CAMP WAS SET UP IN TAVOY RATHER THAN MAKING SMALLER CAMPS IN THE OTHER CITIES BECAUSE RESIDENTS OF THOSE TOWNS KNEW THE AREA SO WELL THEY COULD RUN OFF EASILY. TAKING THEM TO TAVOY, WHERE

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THEY DON'T KNOW THE AREA, REDUCES THE RUNAWAY PROBLEM. IT IS STILL POSSIBLE TO BUY OUT OF PORTER DUTY AT ANY TIME IN THE PROCESS. THE STANDARD "FEE" IS 3,000 TO 5,000 KYAT OR A GOLD "THAI BAHT" CHAIN COMMONLY WORN AROUND THE NECK BY MALES IN SOUTHERN BURMA. PAYMENT OF THE FEE ALSO GETS A "CERTIFICATE" FROM THE BA ATTESTING THAT THE INDIVIDUAL HAS DONE PORTER DUTY AND SHOULD NOT BE "RE-KIDNAPPED".

3. ~~(C/NF)~~ A PARTICULARLY OBNOXIOUS TACTIC IN ROUNDING UP PORTERS IS THE "MARKET SWEEP." BA SOLDIERS ENTER A MARKET AND ARREST EVERYONE IN SIGHT INCLUDING WOMEN AND CHILDREN. WHEN MALE RELATIVES APPEAR AT THE ARMY COMPOUND SEEKING THEIR CHILDREN OR FEMALE RELATIVES THE BA MAKE A TRADE: THEY RELEASE THE WOMEN/CHILD RELATIVES AND KEEP THE MALE AS A NEW PORTER.

(b)(1), Sec. 1.4(c)

DEFENSIVE THAT THE INITIAL STEP WILL BE TO FORM THE RAILBED INTO A PASSABLE MOTOR ROAD. HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF WHETHER THE THAI GOVERNMENT PLANS TO EXTEND THE RAILROAD TO THE BORDER ON ITS SIDE.

5. ~~(C/NF)~~ TO CONDUCT THE MAJOR PART OF THE ROUGH LABOR ON THIS PROJECT, ALL HAMLETS AND VILLAGES ALONG THE RAILROAD ARE SUBJECTED TO CORVEE LABOR WHEREBY A VILLAGE IS TASKED TO CONTRIBUTE ITS ENTIRE MANPOWER FOR A FULL DAY OF CONSTRUCTION WORK. THIS CORVEE PROCESS HAS ALREADY STARTED IN THE YE AREA AND VICINITY. PORTERS KIDNAPPED BY THE BA ARE ALSO USED TO WORK ON THIS PROJECT ON A FULL-TIME BASIS.

(b)(1), Sec. 1.4(c)

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AFTER HE RETURNED TO KAW THAUNG HE WAS TOLD BY HIS FRIEND THAT THE BA WAS HAPPY TO TAKE RANGOON RESIDENTS LIKE HIMSELF WHO WERE IN TOWN TO "DO BUSINESS" BECAUSE THEY WERE WEALTHIER AND WOULD PAY MORE TO GET OUT OF THE PORTER DUTY. [REDACTED] RETURNED CAUTIOUSLY TO RANGOON BY SHIP AND PLANE VIA TAVOY, WHERE HE RECEIVED SUCH THE SAME INFORMATION.

(b)(1),Sec. 1.4(c)

[REDACTED]

2. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1),Sec. 1.4(c)  
PROJECT OF THE MAGNITUDE OF A REBUILT ROAD OR RAILROAD CONNECTING YE WITH THREE PAGODAS PASS. WHILE IT MAKES GOOD STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION SENSE TO HAVE THIS LINK, THERE ARE ALREADY PLANS AFOOT TO FORGE A LAND LINK BETWEEN THAILAND AND BURMA BY BRIDGE AT MAE SOT-MYAWAD-DY.

(b)(1),Sec. 1.4(c)

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