

19 03

20

24

fg

FM GEN WHEELER
TO GEN JOHNSON
GEN MCCONNELL
MOORER CNO
/GEN CHAPMAN
MR ROSTON WHITE HOUSE WASH DC
MR RUSK STATE DEPT WASH DC
MR HELMS CIA

WASH DC
ARMY
AIR FORCE

DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 10-10-78 letter

By ip, NARS, Date 3-29-79

FM GEN WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV
TO ADM SHARP CINCPAC
INFO GEN WHEELER
AMB BUNKER, AMEMB, SAIGON

1. THE FOLLOWING IS MY ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION AS IT HAS DEVELOPED.
2. THE ENEMY'S TET OFFENSIVE PEAKED ON 30-31 JANUARY AND HAS BEEN EBBING OVER THE PAST TWO DAYS. CURRENT ACTIONS RESULT PRIMARILY FROM THE HOPPING UP OF POCKETS OF ENEMY FORCES IN AND AROUND THE URBAN AREAS OF THE COUNTRY. THE ENEMY HAS CAUSED HEAVY DAMAGE TO SECTIONS OF SAIGON, MY THO, AND OTHER CITIES AND TOWNS IN HIS RAMPAGE OF DESTRUCTION, BUT

HE HAS FAILED TO GAIN THE OBJECTIVES HE SOUGHT. THE COST TO HIM IN LOSSES OF MANPOWER HAVE BEEN ENORMOUS. IT IS TOO EARLY TO ACCEPT ANY FIGURE OF ENEMY KILLED AKXRD TIDENT HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE ENEMY LOST MORE MEN IN THE 72 HOURS BEGINNING 1800 29 JAN THAO HE HAS IN ANY SINGLE MONTH OF THE WAR.

3. THE OBJECTIVES, STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THIS ENEMY OFFENSIVE ARE BECOMING CLEARER. BEGINNING ON 31 JANUARY THE VC PROPAGANDA ORGANS ANNOUNCED THE EXISTENCE OF A NEW "REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES" RESPONSIVE TO A NEW POLITICAL ENTITY CALLED "THE ALLIANCE OF NATIONAL AND PEACE FORCES". THIS ORGANIZATION WAS TOUTED AS A COLLECTION OF INTELLECTUALS, MERCHANTS, INDUSTRIAL, POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS NOTABLES. THE "REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES" ARE ALLEGED TO MAINTAIN MANY ELEMENTS INCLUDING DEFECTED GVN TROOPS. IT IS APPARENT THAT THE ENEMY ATTEMPTED TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION OF SPONTANEOUS POLITICAL AND MILITARY UPRISING AGAINST THE GVN AND TO SUPPRESS THE ROLE OF THE NLF AND THE VC/NVA MILITARY FORCES.

4. THE RUSE IS TRANSPARENT. BUT THE GOALS AND STRATEGY OF THIS TET OFFENSIVE ARE INDICATED IN IT. THE ENEMY

2

APPARENTLY HOPED TO SEIZE A NUMBER OF POPULATION CENTERS OR PARTS OF THEM AND SET UP AN OSTENSIBLY NON-VC POLITICAL APPARATUS IN THE ENSUING CHAOS. THE INITIAL ASSAULTS, WHERE POSSIBLE, WERE CONDUCTED BY VC MAIN AND LOCAL FORCES AND GUERRILLAS INFILTRATED INTO POPULOUS AREAS UNDER COVER OF THE TET CELEBRATIONS. THESE WERE APPARENTLY TO PARALYZE GVN CONTROL AND GENERATE A POPULAR UPRISING WITHIN 48 HOURS. THEN THE REMAINING VC MAIN FORCES AND THE NVA WOULD REINFORCE TO EXPLOIT THE SITUATION. THIS GENERAL PATTERN OF THE ENEMY PLAN HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIATED BY NUMEROUS POW INTERROGATIONS AND BY THE ACTUAL MOVEMENT AND COMMITMENT OF FORCES. THERE WERE, OF COURSE, MODIFICATIONS IN VARIOUS AREAS FOR LOCAL REASONS.

5. THE NVA DIVISIONS IN NORTHERN I CTZ WERE NOT COMMITTED DURING THE TET OFFENSIVE. THERE WERE SOME CONTACTS NEAR CAM LO, BUT THESE WERE DUE TO U.S. MARINE INITIATIVES. ELEMENTS OF THE 812TH REGIMENT AND ONE BATTALION EACH OF THE 803RD (BOTH FROM THE 324B DIVISION) AND 270TH INDEPENDENT REGIMENTS WERE COMMITTED TO THE ATTACK ON QUANG TRI CITY.

6. IN THE TRI-THIEN MR THE ENEMY COMMITTED 80 PER CENT OF

HIS LOCALLY AVAILABLE FORCES IN ATTACKS ON QUANG TRI CITY, HUE AND PHU BAI. ONLY THE 9TH NVA REGIMENT AND POSSIBLY SOME ELEMENTS OF THE 4TH AND 5TH NVA REGIMENTS WERE HELD BACK. IN SOUTHERN I CTZ PRACTICALLY ALL OF THE VC UNITS WERE COMMITTED, BUT THE 2ND NVA DIVISION AND THE NEWLY INFILTRATED 31ST NVA REGIMENT HAVE NOT BEEN TO DATE.

7. IN THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS, EVERY VC UNIT WAS COMMITTED ALONG WITH ELEMENTS OF THE 24TH AND 93B NVA REGIMENTS. THE 1ST NVA DIVISION RETAINED AN OFFENSIVE POSTURE, BUT DID NOT ATTACK. ALONG THE COASTS OF II CTZ, THE PAUCITY OF VC TROOPS AND GUERRILLAS WAS REFLECTED IN THE RELATIVE INACTIVITY OF THE ENEMY. THE EXCEPTIONS WERE THE ATTACKS AT NHA TRANG BY THE 18B NVA REGIMENT AND AT PHAN THIET BY VC UNITS. THE REMAINDER OF THE 5TH NVA DIVISION AND ALL OF THE 3RD NVA DIVISION REMAINED INACTIVE.

8. IN III CTZ, IT NOW APPEARS THAT ALMOST EVERY VC UNIT WAS COMMITTED WITH THE 7TH NVA DIVISION PLUS THE 88TH NVA REGIMENT WITHHELD. A POSSIBLE IMPORTANT EXCEPTION IS THE 9TH VC DIVISION. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT AT LEAST TWO REGIMENTS OF THE 9TH ARE IN THE SAIGON-BIEN HOA AREA, BUT WE ARE

3

NOT SURE WHETHER THEY HAVE BEEN COMMITTED.

9. IN IV CTZ VIRTUALLY EVERY VC BATTALION WHICH WE KNOW TO EXIST WAS COMMITTED TO ATTACKS THROUGHOUT THE CTZ.

10. THUS, IT APPEARS THAT THE ENEMY HAS GENERALLY FOLLOWED HIS PLAN TO COMMIT VC FORCES AND RETAIN NVA FORCES FOR FOLLOW UP ATTACKS. HE HAS ACHIEVED LITTLE SUCCESS TO EXPLOIT WITH FOLLOW UP ATTACKS, BUT HIS CAPABILITY TO RECYCLE HIS OFFENSIVE REMAINS, AND ANOTHER ROUND OF ATTACKS COULD OCCUR IN I, II AND III CTZ'S AT ANY TIME. IN IV CTZ IT APPEARS THAT THERE ARE NO LARGE RESERVES FOR RENEWED ATTACKS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

11. I EXPECT ENEMY INITIATION OF LARGE SCALE OFFENSIVE ACTION IN THE KHE SANH-DMZ AREA IN THE NEAR FUTURE DESPITE THE FAILURE OF THE TET OFFENSIVE TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES. HE HAS BEEN HURT TO SOME EXTENT BY FRIENDLY FIREPOWER AND HIS LOSSES AROUND CAM LO, BUT IT IS UNLIKELY HE WOULD ABANDON HIS HEAVY INVESTMENT IN OFFENSIVE PREPARATION IN THAT AREA. IT IS LIKELY THAT THE UNCOMMITTED NVA FORCES ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY WILL CONDUCT COMPLEMENTING OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS. IF THE ENEMY CONDUCTS THESE ATTACKS HE WILL NO LONGER ENJOY THE

COVER OF THE TET HOLIDAYS, AND HE WILL LACK THE ASSISTANCE OF DESTROYED VC UNITS. THIS PRESENTS US WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO INFLICT THE SAME DISASTROUS DEFEATS ON HIS NVA TROOPS AS WE HAVE ON HIS VC FORCES.

SSO NOTE: DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS
900

NNNN

~~SECRET~~ FILE ONLY

MEMORANDUM

20
25
INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

27
Saturday, February 3, 1968, 3:05 P.M.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: AP Report of Fighting in Saigon Suburb

By phone from MACV Saigon, the NMCC has learned that fighting involving U.S. troops and planes in Thu Duc, a suburb of Saigon, has ended. Enemy losses are given as 108 killed in action. Friendly losses are unknown as yet.

The fighting began yesterday when a U.S. Army platoon was heavily engaged. A south Vietnam infantry battalion and U.S. armored elements were sent to reinforce the battalion. Air support was provided. The AP report of air strikes in the area is essentially correct.

Meanwhile, a CIA report just received indicates there were sporadic firing incidents in the center of Saigon just before midnight their time. Snipers are around the American Embassy and near Ambassador Bunker's residence. The report is attached.

Brom
Bromley Smith

DECLASSIFIED

Authority DSO 10-25-78, NSC 8-14-80
By JK (ing) NARS, Date 8-29-80

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

RECEIVED
WHCA

EYES ONLY

ZCZCQAA 755

1968 FEB 3 20 04

00 YEKADS
E YSNKQA 39 0341824
O 031815Z ZYH ZFF-5
FM GEN WHEELER CJCS WASH DC
TO GEN JOHNSON C/S ARMY
GEN MCCONNEL C/S AIR FORCE
ADM MOORER CNO
ZEN/GEN CHAPMAN CMC
MR ROSTOW WHITE HOUSE WASH DC
MA RUSK STATE DEPT WASH DC
MR HELMS CIA
O 031253Z ZYH ZFF-1
FM GEN WESTMORELAND COMUSMACV SAIGON
TO GEN WHEELER CJCS WASH
ADM SHARP CIMCPAC HAWAII
ZEM

~~SECRET~~ MAC 01588 EYES ONLY
SECTION ONE OF TWO

DURING THE PAST 24 HOURS IT APPEARS THAT THE ENEMY EFFORT IS DIMINISHING AND THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT HE IS ATTEMPTING TO BREAK CONTACT AND WITHDRAW FROM SOME OF THE MAJOR BATTLE AREAS. OF THE NUMEROUS ATTACKS, THE ENEMY MOUNTED AGAINST MAJOR CITIES AND TOWNS, HE IS CONTINUING TO FIGHT WITH ORGANIZED FORCES AT THIS TIME ONLY IN HUE,

KONTUM, PLEKU, DALAT, AND PHAN THIET. HIS STATUS IN XUAN LOC IS UNCLEAR.

THE US/FWF/ARVN FORECES CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR OFFENSIVE POSTURE AND ARE CONDUCTING SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS TO CLEAR CITIES

AND TOWNS OF SNIPERS AND SMALL ISOLATED POCKETS OF RESISTANCE.

IN QUANG TRI PROV, THE CAM LO COMBINED ACTION PLATOON HEADQUARTERS RECEIVED AN ENEMY MORTAR AND GROUND ATTACK AT 020215H. A THIRD MARINE DIVISION REACTION FORCE RESPONDED AND HEAVY CONTACT CONTINUED THROUGHOUT THE DAY, BECOMING SPORADIC AT 1600H. CUM RESULTS: FRIENDLY - SEVEN KIA, 20 WIA; ENEMY - 111 KIA, 43 DETAINED, 47 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS AND 20 CREW-SERVED WEAPONS CAPTURED. THIS ATTACK, WHICH WAS STOPPED COLD, MAY HAVE BEEN THE FIRST MOVE IN THE DMZ OFFENSIVE.

IN QUANG TRI PROV, NORTHEAST OF DONG HA, ELEMENTS OF THE THIRD MARINE DIVISION ENGAGED AN UNKNOWN SIZE FORCE EARLY ON 31 JANUARY AND THE ACTION TERMINATED LATE ON 2 FEBUARY. CUM RESULTS: FRIENDLY - 30 KIA, 133 WIA; ENEMY - 156 KIA, 5 DETAINED, 32 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS AND 19 CREW-SERVED WEAPONS CAPTURED.

THE NOTHEAST AND SOUTWEST PORTIONS OF THE CITADEL OF HUE CONTINUE TO REMAIN PARTIALLY OCCUPIED WITH HEAVY CONTACT GOING VIETNAMESE

ACTICAL AIR STRIKES HAVE SUPPORTED FIFTH ARVN THROUGHTOUT THE ACTION. AN ESTIMATED TWO ENEMY COMPANIES WERE FLEEING OVER THE SOUTWEST WALL OF THE CITADEL AT APPROXIMATELY 1200H. REPORTED RESULTS: FRIENDLY-

71 KIA (16 US, 55 ARVN), 259 WOUNDED (88 US, 157 ARVN, 14 US CIVILIANS); ENEMY - 514 KIA, 25 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS, ONE CREW-SERVED WEAPON CAPTURED.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 10-10-78 letter
By ij, NARS, Date 3-29-79

25a

DUY XUYEN, SOUTHWEST OF HOI AN, REMAINS OCCUPIED BY UNKNOWN ENEMY FORCES. AIR AND ARTILLERY HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED THROUGHOUT THE AREA. ROK MARINE FORCES ARE CONDUCTING OPERATIONS IN THIS AREA TODAY. NO REPORT OF CASUALTIES AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.

IN QUANG NAM PROV AT 030315H THE DANANG AIRFIELD RECEIVED AN ESTIMATED 40 ROUNDS OF ROCKET FIRE. THE WEST RUNWAY WAS TEMPORARILY CLOSED WITH COMPLETE OPERATIONS RESUMING AT 030730H. RESULTS: 366TH TACTICAL FIGHTER WING (USAF) AIRCRAFT RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING DAMAGE: ONE F-4C DEST, THREE F-4C MODERATE DAMAGE, NINE F-4C MINOR DAMAGE, TWO KIA (ARVN), FOUR WIA (THREE USAF, ONE USMC).

DURING THE NIGHT OF 2-3 FEB CON THIEN RECEIVED 138 ROUNDS OF ARTY/RKT FIRE. NO CASUALTIES REPORTED.

(III CTZ)

KONTUM IS RELATIVELY QUIET. FREQUENCY AND INTENSITY OF ENEMY GROUND AND MORTAR ATTACKS HAVE DECREASED. ALL FRIENDLY COMPOUNDS AND INSTALLATIONS ARE SECURE. RESUPPLY OF ALL FRIENDLY FORCES WAS COMPLETED AS OF 2205HOURS LAST NIGHT. THE AIRFIELD CONTINUES TO RECEIVE SMALL ARMS FIRE AND SPORADIC AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE, BUT IS OPEN FOR EMERGENCY USE. ENEMY FORCES IN

AND AROUND THE CITY HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS THE 4TH AND 6TH BATTALIONS, 24TH NVA REGIMENT.

A NUMBER OF INSTALLATIONS IN THE CITY OF DALAT HAVE BEEN ATTACKED. THE ENEMY IS CONTINUING TO PRESS THE ATTACK ON TWO US BILLET, THE RAILROAD STATION, AN ARVN OUTPOST AND THE PERIMETER DEFENSE OF THE PROVINCE HQ. THESE ATTACKS HAVE BEEN REPULSED, HOWEVER, AND ESTIMATED ENEMY BATTALION IS STILL IN THE CITY. CG II CORPS (ARVN) HAS DESIGNATED A REACTION FORCE OF TWO CIDG COMPANIES AND THE 23D RANGER BN (ARVN) TO MOVE TO DALAT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

AT BAN ME THUOT, A DELAYED REPORT FROM ARVN INDICATES THAT YESTERDAY MORNING, ENEMY FORCES USED A SMALL QUANTITY OF TEAR GAS DURING AN ABORTIVE ATTACK ON THE PERIMETER OF THE 2D BATTALION, 31ST ARTILLERY (ARVN). THE ATTACK WAS REPULSED WITH NO FRIENDLY CASUALTIES. THE 1ST BATTALION, 593D ABN INF (US) COMMENCED OPERATIONS BY INSERTING TWO COMPANIES FOUR KILOMETERS TO THE SOUTHEAST OF BAN ME THUOT AFLD TO REINFORCE ELEMENTS OF THE 23D ARVN INF DIVISION. THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT CONTACT IN OR AROUND BAN ME THUOT SINCE YESTERDAY.

IN PHAN THIET, THE 3D BN, 44TH INF (ARVN) HAS ASSUMED THE MISSION OF DEFENDING THE CITY. THIS HAS RELEASED ADDITIONAL

ELEMENTS OF THE 3D BN, 506TH ASN INF FOR COMMITMENT TO THE NORTH OF THE CITY WHILE HEAVY CONTACT CONTINUES. U.S. FORCES HAVE SEIZED THE INITIATIVE IN THIS CONTACT AND ARE MAINTAINING CONSTANT PRESSURE ON THE ENEMY. THERE IS SOME STREET FIGHTING WITHIN THE CITY AND THE ENEMY HAS PLACED HARASSING MORTAR FIRE ON THE AIRFIELD.

AT 030210H PLEIKU CITY WAS ATTACKED BY ENEMY MORTAR FIRE THE POL AND AMMUNITION DUMPS WERE HIT BUT DAMAGE WAS NEGLIGIBLE. GUNSHIPS ENGAGED THE ENEMY FIRING POSITIONS ACHIEIVING A LARGE SECONDARY EXPLOSION. AT THE PRESENT TIME THE CITY QUIET HOWEVER, SMALL ENEMY GROUPS ARE REPORTED IN THE CITY.

SSO NOTE: DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS
900

NNNN

~~SECRET~~

EYES ONLY

~~SECRET~~

EYES ONLY

RECEIVED
WHCA

1968 FEB 3 19 42

ZCZCQAA756

OO YEKADS.

DE YSNKQA 40 0341824

O 031815Z ZYH ZFF-5

FM GEN WHEELER CJCS WASH DC

TO GEN JOHNSON C/S ARMY

GEN MCCONNEL C/S AIR FORCE

ADM MOORER CNO

ZEN/GEN CHAPMAN CMC

MR ROSTOW WHITE HOUSE WASH DC

MR RUSK STATE DEPT WASH DC

MR HELMS CIA

O 031253Z ZYH ZFF-1

FM GEN WESTMORELAND COMUSMACV SAIGON

TO GEN WHEELER CJCS WASH

ADM SHARP CIMCPAC HAWAII

ZEM

~~SECRET~~ MAC 01588 EYES ONLY

SECTION TWO OF TWO

(III CTZ)

IN DINH DUONG PROVINCE, SIX KILOMETERS NE PHU CUONG AT 021203H ELEMENTS ON 1/28 INF ENGAGED AN UNKNOWN SIZE ENEMY FORCE. ARTILLERY, LFT SUPPORTED. CONTACT BROCKEN AT UNKNOWN TIME. RESULTS: FRIENDLY - FIVE WIA; ENEMY - 53 KIA, 10 DETANIEES, 7 82MM MORTARS CAPTURED.

IN BIEN HOA PROVINCE, FOUR KILOMETERS NE BIEN HOA CITY, AT 021530 ELEMNTS OF THE 199TH LT INF BDE LOCATED AN ENEMY BASE CAMP WITH 20 BODIES AND 4 OTHER ENEMY WERE KILLED IN A

SHORT ENGAGEMENT.

IN LONG KHANH PROVINCE, IN XUAN LOC AT 022255H THE TOWN WAS ATTACKED FROM EAST AND WEST BY AN UNKNOWN SIZE FORCE EMPLOYING MORTARS AND B-40 ROCKETS. AT 0245H C/3/3 CAV IN CONTACT WITH UNKNOWN SIZE ENEMY FORCE. US/ ARVN UNITS IN THE COMPOUNDS WERE IN HEAVY CONTACT.

(IV CORPS)

MINHINONG PROVINCE, CHO LACH, BA CANG, TANH BINH AND BINH MINH DISTRICT TOWNS RECEIVED SHORT SHORT ATTACKS WITH NO SIGNIFICANT RESULTS. VINH LONG CITY WAS QUIET UNTIL 030100H WHEN MORTAR FIRE WAS RECEIVED FROM POSITIONS TO THE EAST. NO GROUND ATTACK FOLLOWED. MACV COMPOUNDS HAVE BEEN REOCCUPIED BY US PERSONNEL. CLEARING OPERATION CONTINUES WITH ONLY SNIPER FIRE REPORTED.

IN KIEN HOA PROVINCE, THE TOWN OF MO CAY WAS REOCCUPIED BY 7TH ARVN DIV UNITS AND THE SITUATION IS NOW QUIET. CASUALTIES ARE UNKNOWN BY REPORTED AS LIGHT. IN THE CITY OF BEN TRE, ENEMY BROKE OFF THEIR ATTACK AT APPROXIMATELY 030300 AND ONLY SNIPER FIRE IS PRESENTLY REPORTED.

IN BA XUYEN PROVINCE, SITUATION REPORTED QUIET, HOWEVER, TWO

ENEMY COMPANIES HAVE BEEN REPORTED SOUTHWEST OF SOC TRANG AIR-FIELD AND A REACTION FORCE HAS BEEN DISPATCHED TO ENGAGE.

IN DINH TUONG PROVINCE AT 030250H, AN ESTIMATED ENEMY BATTALION ATTACKED THE NORTH SIDE OF MY THO. FRIENDLY ARTILLERY, AC-47 AND HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS FIRED IN SUPPORT. ENEMY BROKE CONTACT AND WITHDREW AT 030330H. CASUALTIES UNKNOWN.

IN KIEN GIANG PROVINCE, AT 030100H, RACH GIA, THE PROVINCE CAPITAL, WAS ATTACKED BY AN UNKNOWN SIZE ENEMY FORCE EMPLOYING MORTAR AND RECOILLESS RIFLE. FRIENDLY ARTILLERY AND AC-47 SUPPORTED. ENEMY BROKE CONTACT AND WITHDREW AT 030200H. RESULTS OF THIS CONTACT ARE UNKNOWN.

IN KIEN PHONG PROVINCE AT 022320H, CAO LANH, THE PROVINC CAPITAL, WAS ATTACKED BY AN UNKNOWN SIZE ENEMY FORCE EMPLOYING MORTAR AND RECOILLESS RIFLE FIRE. FRIENDLY ARTILLERY AND AC-47 SUPPORTED. ENEMY BROKE CONTACT AND WITHDREW AT 030100H. RESULTS: FRIENDLY - 24 WIA (ARVN); ENEMY: UNKNOWN. (SAIGON)

THE CITY OF SAIGON IS STILL EXPERIENCING ISOLATED INSTANCES OF SNIPER FIRE. NO CASUALTIES HAVE BEEN REPORTED TODAY HOWEVER.

NO US MILITARY INSTALLATIONS OR BILLETTS HAVE REPORTED ANY CONTACT.

THE RVN EIGHTH AIRBORNE BATTALION FLUSHED OUT APPROXIMATELY

10 VC DURING A SWEEP OF THE JGS COMPOUND AND ADJACENT AREAS.

HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS PLACED ROCKET AND MACHINE GUN FIRE ON THE VC AND TEN VC WERE KILLED, WITH FOUR INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS BEING CAPTURED BEFORE THE VC EVADED. THE 1/18TH US INF HAS BEEN ENGAGED WITH A

LARGE SIZE ENEMY FORCE IN THE THU DUC AREA, EIGHT KM NE OF SAIGON.

THEY WERE REINFORCED BY THE 6TH VNMC BN AND FOUR TANKS AND 15

APC'S FROM THE 11TH ARMORED CAV, BIEN HOA. THE 7TH AF PLACED

32 IMMEDIATE STRIKES WITHIN 4KM OF SAIGON TODAY, IN SUPPORT OF

FRIENDLY TROOPS IN CONTACT AND ENEMY TROOPS OBSERVED IN THE OPEN.

MOST OF THESE STRIKES WERE TO THE NORTH AND NORTHWEST OF THE CITY.

BASED ON SIGHTINGS AND FRIENDLY ATTACKS ON ENEMY TROOPS, INDICATIONS ARE THAT THERE APPEARS TO BE A GENERAL WITHDRAWAL OF ENEMY FROM THE SAIGON AREA, IN A NORTHERLY DIRECTION.

ALL 24 AIRFIELDS WHICH HAVE BEEN HIT BY ENEMY ATTACKS BUILDING THE PAST FOUR DAYS ARE OPERATIONAL AT THIS TIME.

CURRENT CASUALTY REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE ENEMY HAS LOST

OVER 13,700 KIA SINCE 291800H WITH FRIENDLY KIA JUST OVER 1,050 OF WHICH APPROXIMATELY 340 ARE US.

SSO NOTE: DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS
800

~~SECRET~~

EYES ONLY

26

47218

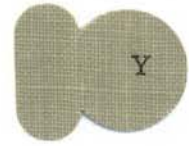
[Handwritten signature]

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Mr. President;

Herewith two sober, well- balanced
assessments by Westy and Abrams plus Bunker's
response on handling the press.

1. Westy on the over-all situation.
2. Abrams on how the Delta took the
attacks and responded -- on the whole, heartening.
3. Bunker's specific suggestions,
which require your judgement.



[Handwritten signature]

RECEIVED
HQA

26a

123 FEB 4 16 01

70ZCQAA775

.....

YKADS
DE YSNKQA 8 0351531
O 041522Z ZYH ZFF-5
FM GEN WHEELER CJCS WASH DC
TO MR ROSTOW WHITE HOUSE WASH DC
MR RUSK STATE DEPT WASH DC
MR HELMS CIA
Z 040959Z ZYH ZFF3
FM GENERAL WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV, SAIGON
TO GENERAL WHEELER, CJCS, WASHDC
INFO ADMIRAL SHARP, CINCPAC HAWAII
AMB BUNKER SAIGON
ZEM
~~SECRET~~ MAC 0161 EYES ONLY
REF CJCS MSG 031606Z



DECLASSIFIED

Authority JCS 10-10-78 letter
By ip, NARS, Date 3-29-79

AFTER NEARLY FIVE DAYS OF WIDESPREAD FIGHTING, THE TRUE DIMENSIONS OF THE SITUATION ARE BEGINNING TO EMERGE.

FROM A REALISTIC POINT OF VIEW WE MUST ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE ENEMY HAS DEALT THE GVN A SEVERE BLOW. HE HAS BROUGHT THE WAR TO THE TOWNS AND THE CITIES AND HAS INFLICTED DAMAGE AND CASUALTIES ON THE POPULATION. HOMES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED; DISTRIBUTION OF THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE HAS BEEN INTERRUPTED. DAMAGE HAS BEEN INFLICTED TO THE LOC'S AND THE ECONOMY HAS BEEN DISRUPTED. MARTIAL LAW HAS BEEN INVOKED, WITH

STRINGENT CURFEWS IN THE CITIES. THE PEOPLE HAVE FELT DIRECTLY THE IMPACT OF THE WAR.

A TREMENDOUS CHALLENGE HAS BEEN POSED TO THE GVN TO RESTORE STABILITY AND TO AID THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUFFERED.

THE ENEMY HAS PAID A HIGH PRICE FOR HIS EFFORTS. HIS LOSSES FROM 291800H TO 041200H STAND AT 15,595 KIA, 3,122 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS AND 682 CREW SERVED WEAPONS. HE HAS COMMITTED A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF HIS LOCAL FORCES, SAPPER UNITS, AND VC MAIN FORCE UNITS INTO THE BATTLE. OUR ESTIMATE INDICATES ABOUT 52,000. WE DO NOT KNOW, AT THIS TIME, HOW MUCH OF HIS GUERRILLA FORCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE HAVE BEEN COMMITTED BUT, IN THE TOWNS AND CITIES, IT MUST BE A SIGNIFICANT PORTION. AGAIN OUR ESTIMATE WOULD BE AS HIGH AS 10,000 ALL OF THESE FORCES HAVE BEEN BADLY HURT, SOME HAVE BEEN WIPE OUT. THE ENEMY HAS REALLY FAILED TO ACHIEVE HIS OBJECTIVES. POLITICALLY, THERE HAVE BEEN NO UPRISINGS, NONE OF THE TOWNS WHICH HE PENETRATED ARE NOW HELD BY HIM, ALTHOUGH HE STILL IS HOLDING OUT IN PARTS OF A FEW SIGNIFICANT PLACES SUCH AS HUE, KONTUM CITY, DALAT, SAIGON AND IS CONTINUING TO LAUNCH NEW ATTACKS AGAINST NUMEROUS TOWNS IN IV CTZ. SPECIFICALLY, IN THE DELTA THE BATTLE TURGES IN AND OUT OF THE TOWNS, SOME BEING HIT REPETITIVELY, OTHERS TEMPORARILY OCCUPIED AND THEN FREED BY FRIENDLY REACTION FORCES. AS OF

THIS WRITING, HE HAS NO SIGNIFICANT HOLD ON ANY TOWN IN IV CTZ.

MILITARILY, THE ENEMY HAS FAILED IN HIS OBJECTIVES AND HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO SUSTAIN HIS ATTACKS. THUS, HE HAS DEMONSTRATED THE LACK OF A BASIC CAPABILITY TO DO SO. ALL OF OUR AIRFIELDS ARE OPERATIONAL DESPITE HIS ATTACKS. WE HAVE LOST A NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT BUT THESE HAVE NOT SERIOUSLY INFLUENCED OUR ABILITY TO CONTINUE ALL FACETS OF AIR SUPPORT. HE HAS FAILED TO BREAK COMMUNICATIONS. IN FACT, THROUGHOUT THIS BATTLE, COMMUNICATIONS HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY DEPENDABLE. HE HAS FAILED TO DESTROY ANY FRIENDLY UNITS, ALTHOUGH FRIENDLY CASUALTIES DURING THE FIVE DAY SPAN ARE THE HEAVIEST OF THE WAR. AS OF 041200H, THEY STAND AT 415 U.S. KIA, 904 ARVN KIA, 13 FW KIA AND 2,385 U.S. WIA, 2,705 ARVN WIA AND 102 FW WIA.

ALL FW AND ARVN FORCES HAVE THE STRENGTH, DISPOSITION, AND ARE IN THE PROPER FRAME OF MIND TO KEEP AT THE ENEMY AND INFLECT EVEN GREATER LOSSES IF HE PERSISTS IN THE ATTACK. AND, SINCE MANY OF HIS NVA/VC MAIN FORCES HAVE NOT BEEN COMMITTED, WE MUST ACCORD HIM THE CAPABILITY OF A SECOND CYCLE OF ATTACKS EITHER AGAINST THE POPULATED AREAS OR MOST LIKELY, IN THE DMZ AND OTHER AREAS OF NVA CONCENTRATION. THESE MAY COME IN CONCERT.

I HAVE NO DOUBT OF THE ABILITY OF THE FW FORCES TO MEET THIS RENEWAL.

ALSO, I BELIEVE THE ARVN HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT IT CAN AND WILL FIGHT VALIANTLY TO STEM THIS ENEMY SURGE. AS FOR ARVN PERFORMANCE, THERE IS NO QUESTION BUT THAT THEY WERE CAUGHT IN A "PRE-TET" POSTURE. WE DO NOT HAVE FULL DETAILS, BUT THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT UNITS WERE REDUCED BY TET LEAVE AND WERE NOT FULLY ALERT DESPITE PRESIDENTS THIEU'S ASSURANCE TO ME THAT 50 PERCENT OF EACH UNIT WOULD BE ON THE ALERT. FROM THE OPENING OF THE FIGHTING, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE MOVED THEIR FORCES RAPIDLY AND TOWARDS THE BATTLES, AND THE TROOPS HAVE FOUGHT WELL. THEY ARE CARRYING THE BRUNT OF THE CITY FIGHTING, WITH THE U.S. FORCES WORKING ON THE OUTSKIRTS, OR IN COOPERATIVE OPERATIONS IN THE MORE CRITICAL TOWNS. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE ARVN APPRECIATES THE ENORMITY OF THE TASKS AHEAD AND, ALTHOUGH THE HIGH COMMAND IS UNDERSTANDABLY ENGROSSED IN CLEARING THE CAPITAL, THE REST OF THE MACHINERY IS FUNCTIONING. THE FULL IMPACT OF ARVN LOGISTICAL LOSSES HAS NOT BEEN DETERMINED.

THE IMMEDIATE TASK FACING US IS TO COMPLETE THE CLEAN UP OF ENEMY FORCES IN THE CITIES.

IN HUE, THE BATTLE IS STILL GOING ON. FIVE ARVN BATTALIONS AND ONE U.S. MARINE BATTALION ARE OPERATING IN THE CITY. 2 BATTALIONS OF THE 1ST CAV ARE EMPLOYED OUTSIDE THE CITY. I AM HOPEFUL THAT THE NEXT

FEW DAYS WILL SEE THE SITUATION CLEANED UP.

IN KONTUM, ORGANIZED RESISTANCE HAS STOPPED AND FRIENDLY FORCES ARE MOPPING UP. WE HAVE A U.S. INFANTRY BATTALION WITH APC'S AND TANKS, AND AN ARVN INFANTRY BATTALION IN AND AROUND THE CITY. THE ENEMY HAS SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES IN THE AREA.

SSO NOTE: DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS

RECEIVED
WHCA

1968 FEB 4 16 10

ZCZCQAA776

OO YEKADS

DE YSNKQA 9 0351531

O 041523Z ZYH ZFF-5

FM GEN WHEELER CJCS

TO MR ROSTOW WHITE HOUSE WASH DC

MR RUSK STATE DEPT WASH DC

MR HELMS CIA

O 041244Z ZYH ZFF3

FM GEN WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV, SAIGON

TO GEN WHEELER, CJCS, WASHDC

INFO ADM SHARP CINCPAC HAWAII

AMB BUNKER (PASS TO MR. CHILLEMI)

ZEM

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ MAC 01628 EYES ONLY

1. FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OBTAINED TODAY BY GENERAL ABRAMS IN VISIT TO IV CTZ MAY BE USEFUL AS BACKGROUND FOR TELECAST.

2. LTC DU, PROVINCE CHIEF, KIEN HOA PROVINCE, WAS AT HIS PLACE OF DUTY IN PROVINCE HEADQUARTERS IN BIEN TRE CITY. HIS FAMILY WAS AT FAMILY HOME IN SAIGON. AT 0230 HOURS, VC ENTERED HOME AND MURDERED HIS FAMILY. ALTHOUGH LTC DU WAS ADVISED OF THIS TRAGEDY, HE CARRIED ON DURING THE HEAVY ATTACKS ON HIS HEADQUARTERS. HE DISPLAYED REAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY IN THE FACE OF THE RUTHLESS VC TERRORISM IN BIEN TRE IN WHICH THOUSANDS OF HOME WERE DESTROYED. HE CONTINUED TO WORK AROUND THE CLOCK TO HELP HIS PEOPLE.

3. GENERAL TRI, COMMANDER 9TH ARVN DIVISION WAS AT HIS OPERATIONS CENTER AT SA DEC ON 310200, AT WHICH TIME THE VC ENTERED HIS HOME IN THE CITY NOT FAR FROM HIS OPS CENTER. HIS FAMILY WAS NOT IN HIS HOUSE. UPON LEARNING OF THE VC RAID, GENERAL TRI SENT A PLATOON TO DESTROY THE VC. IT SUCCEEDED IN DRIVING OFF THE VC AND CAPTURED ONE PRISONER. UPON INTERROGATION IT WAS LEARNED THAT THE VC MISSION WAS TO CAPTURE THE GENERAL AND HIS FAMILY AND FORCE HIM TO CALL FOR HIS CHIEF OF STAFF AND DEPUTY. WITH THESE HOSTAGES, THE VC WERE TO GIVE GENERAL TRI THE CHOICE OF TURNING OVER HIS DIVISION OR ALL WOULD BE EXECUTED.

4. GENERAL THAN, COMMANDER 7TH ARVN DIVISION, WAS AT HIS HEADQUARTERS WHEN THE VC ATTACK WAS INITIATED. DURING THE BATTLE A VC PLAN WAS CAPTURED WHICH DETAILED THE MISSION OF CAPTURING GENERAL THANH AND HIS HEADQUARTERS FOR THE SAME PURPOSE AS DESCRIBED ABOVE IN THE CASE OF GENERAL TRI.

5. THE SIGNIFICANT FEATURE IN ALL OF THE ABOVE INCIDENTS IS THAT THE PRINCIPALS WERE AT THEIR POSTS OF DUTY WHEN THE ATTACKS WERE INITIATED. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THIS WAS DURING THE TET PERIOD. THEIR ATTENTION TO DUTY UNDOUBTEDLY SAVED THEIR LIVES AND PRIMARILY CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESSFUL DEFENSIVE ACTIONS OF GOVERNMENT FORCES IN THE DELTA.

6. GENERAL ABRAMS DISCUSSED THE DELTA SITUATION WITH MR. COTTRELL, DEPUTY FOR CORDS AND COLONEL HILL, MILITARY DEPUTY IN THE IV CTZ. THESE OFFICERS HAD JUST COMPLETED A TOUR OF ALL 16 PROVINCES IN IV CTZ AND TALKED WITH EVERY PROVINCE CHIEF AND THEIR US ADVISORS. THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE VC ATTACKS IS GREAT. THEY ESTIMATE OVER 10,000 HOMES DESTROYED AND APPROXIMATELY 125,000 PEOPLE HOMELESS. GENERAL ABRAMS

CONSIDERED IT SIGNIFICANT THAT ALL PROVINCES WITHOUT EXCEPTION, HAD ALREADY INITIATED REORGANIZATION OF THEIR AREAS, APPOINTED RELIEF COMMITTEES, AND WERE PROVIDING THE HOMELESS WITH FOOD, CLOTHING AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. FOOD KITCHENS WERE FEEDING PEOPLE WITHOUT FACILITIES. THERE APPEARED TO BE AN INTENSE DESIRE BY PROVINCE CHIEFS TO SHOW THEIR PEOPLE THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS MORE TO OFFER THAN DO THE VC. IT WAS ALSO INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT PEOPLE WERE HELPING EACH OTHER, GIVING UTENSILS AND FOOD TO THE DESTITUTE, INDICATING THAT IN A REAL CRISIS, VIETNAMESE PEOPLE DO BAND TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON WELFARE. WITHOUT EXCEPTION, PROVINCE CHIEFS STATE THAT THEY WOULD COPE WITH FOOD AND CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS WITHOUT OUTSIDE HELP. THEY WILL NEED MONEY AND BUILDING MATERIALS. THE DETERMINATION AND WILL OF THE DELTA LEADERSHIP TO CARE FOR THEIR PEOPLE IS AN ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT.

SSO NOTE DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS

820

NNNN

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

RECEIVED
VNCA

3

27

1968 FEB 4 12 33

DLA697
OO YEKADS
DE YEKADL 759 035 1219
O 041153Z ZYH
FM SAIGON
TO WHITE HOUSE
ZEM

IMMEDIATE PRECEDENCE USED FOR XMSN PURPOSE ONLY, ACTUAL PRECEDENCE IS PRIORITY.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 3-6-79 letter
By if, NARS, Date 3-21-79

Copy should be
sent to Christian
BICS

Rostow

~~SECRET~~ 051049Z FEB 68 VIA CAS CHANNELS
PRIORITY ~~MODIS~~ BUTTERCUP
FM AMB BUNKER SAIGON 445

TO THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVE FOR MR ROSTOW

REF: CAP 80386

1. WESTY AND I WILL, OF COURSE, BE RESPONSIVE TO THE PRESIDENT'S WISHES. WESTY GAVE EXCELLENT COMPREHENSIVE PRESS BRIEFING LAST FRIDAY AND WILL GIVE ONE TOMORROW ALSO. EARLIER FRIDAY, HE WAS PRECEDED BY GENERAL WEYAND WHO DID FIRST RATE JOB. HE HAD TO BE IN FIELD YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND GENERAL CHAISSON FILLED IN FOR HIM, ALSO TURNING IN EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE. I HAVE GIVEN TWO STATEMENTS TO PRESS, RADIO, AND TV AND HAD BACKGROUND CONFERENCE WITH PRESS YESTERDAY.
2. WESTY, BARRY ZORTHIAN, AND I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A SUGGESTION. WE BELEIVE THAT WESTY CAN BE MORE EFFECTIVE AND HAVE MORE IMPACT WITH THE PRESS IF HE DOES NOT MAKE HIS BRIEFING A DAILY EVENT. IF IT BECOMES ROUTINE, ITS SIGNIFICANCE TENDS TO DIMINISH. ANOTHER READING MIGHT BE THAT IF THE TOP COMMANDER HAS TO APPEAR DAILY THE SITUATION HERE MUST BE EXTREMELY SERIOUS, CERTAINLY MORE SERIOUS THAN WE BELIEVE IT TO BE. IF, AS IS CASE NOW, ENEMY ACTIVITY TAPERS OFF AND CLEANUP PROGRESSES THERE WILL BE LESS NEWS AND WE FELL THAT IF WESTY WERE TO GIVE A BRIEFING AT TIMES HE AND I THINK APPROPRIATE, SAY EVERY TWO OR THREE DAYS, IT WOULD HAVE MAXIMUM IMPACT WITH THE PRESS.
3. I WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE COMMENTS ON THE NON-MILITARY COURSE OF EVENTS AT APPROPRIATE TIMES AS YOU SUGGEST.
4. WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR REACTION TO THE ABOVE SUGGESTIONS.
5. ON ANOTHER SUBJECT, ORGANIZATION OF THE JOINT GVN-US TASK FORCE GOT UNDERWAY YESTERDAY. AT MEETING WITH KY PRESIDING, IT WAS AGREED THAT PUBLICLY IT WOULD BE A GVN TEAM WITH U.S. IN SUPPORTING ROLE. ACTUALLY IT WILL FUNCTION AS WE HAD SUGGESTED (SAIGON 17607) WITH U.S. HAVING FULL PARTICIPATION WITH VIETNAMESE. BOB KOMER WAS PLEASED WITH RESULTS OF FIRST MEETING YESTERDAY AND I BELIEVE WE SHALL BE ON THE WAY PROMPTLY. I HAVE REPORTED MORE FULLY IN MY WEEKLY MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT, GETTING OFF TODAY.
6. I AM ALSO GLAD TO REPORT THAT IN OTHER ACTIONS MINISTRY OF HEALTH HAS RESPONDED MAGNIFICENTLY. IT HAS PRE-EMPTED SERVICES OF SOME 40 ARVN DOCTORS IN SAIGON. AND MINISTER LU Y HAS WORKED

AROUND THE CLOCK FOR THE LAST THREE DAYS. THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS HAS ALSO PERFORMED EXTRAORDINARILY WELL. REPAIRS WERE QUICKLY MADE TO THE AQUEDUCT IN THE CITY AND ALL OF SAIGON HAS WATER. FOOD SUPPLIES ARE AMPLE, AID HAS BEEN ABLE TO RESTORE POWER OUTAGE OF TWO NIGHTS AGO, AND THERE IS FUEL ON HAND FOR AT LEAST TWENTY DAYS' SUPPLIES. YESTERDAY WE PICKED UP GVN LEAFLETS SHOWING PICTURE OF VC TERROR KILLING RECOUNTING THE NUMBER OF VC KILLED AND CAPTURED, PRAISING ARVN FOR ITS PROMPT RESPONSE TO THE VC ACTION, AND CALLING FOR THE PEOPLE TO STAND FAST IN THE FACE OF THE VC.

GP-1

425

NNNN

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

28

1:30 p.m.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 4, 1968

JP
Mr. President:

The attached memorandum summarizes possible reasons why the attack on Khe Sanh has not yet begun.

General Ginsburgh prepared it for Mr. Rostow, who is not in the office at the moment.

Brom
Bromley Smith

AA

~~SECRET~~

2A.
Sunday, February 4, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROSTOW

28a
I would speculate that there are two possible reasons why the attack on Khe Sanh has not yet materialized:

- Our B-52 and tactical air attacks may have upset their timing -- especially if the air bombardment actually put their headquarters out of operation for a day or so.
- They may have planned the attack on Khe Sanh to coincide with a second round of attacks on the cities. Initial attacks on the cities would be designed to force General Westmoreland to commit his reserves. The second round would keep them committed while they launched a major assault on Khe Sanh.

Since the first attacks did not achieve their objectives, it is conceivable that the attack might not take place.

More likely, the enemy would try to carry out its original plan. If so, we might expect the battle for Khe Sanh to start within the next three days. Various intelligence reports indicate; for example:

- Attack as early as possible before 5 February.
- General Loan, police director, believes another attack on Saigon is scheduled for 4 or 5 February.
- Enemy troop movements in Pleiku area indicate possibility of attack the night of 4 February (today our time).
- A second attack is scheduled for Nha Trang ten days after the first attack (6 or 7 February).
- Special communications plans for enemy units the night of 4-5 February.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6
NLJ 96-205
By ics, NARA Date 7-20-98

1
General Ginsburgh

~~SECRET~~

JS

29

2A

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Sunday, February 4, 1968
6:30 p. m.

Rec'd 6:50p

Mr. President:

The mortar attack on Khe Sanh continues; however, there has been no report of ground attacks at this time.

The enemy is reported to have reached the wire defending Hill 861, but the Marine Force manning the defensive positions are reported to be pushing the enemy from the Hill.

The information passed to you earlier reporting Hill 881 S as being under ground attack has been proved erroneous. The Hill is reported to be quiet.

The weather in the Khe Sanh area is 500 feet ceiling and visibility is one-half mile to over a mile with ground fog.

R

Robert N. Ginsburgh

BB

30

Ps

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

CC

February 4, 1968

Mr. President:

Herewith the B-52 strikes for the day now scheduled -- 33, all in the Khe Sanh area.

This battle will probably take some time.

We shall monitor round-the-clock in the Situation Room.

I suggested to Bus Wheeler he file a daily report with you.

Walt R.
Gen. Gurney will be on duty tonight
W

~~TOP SECRET/LIMDIS~~



THE JOINT STAFF

THE NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CENTER
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

4 February 1968
4:30 PM EST

DECLASSIFIED
OSD letter NOV 22 1978

Authority

By if, NARS, Date 6-11-79

MEMORANDUM FOR: Senior Watch Officer, White House Situation Room
Mr. Benjamin H. Read, Executive Secretary,
Department of State, c/o Operations Center

Subject: Operational Highlights

SOUTHEAST ASIA

The following US Air Force B-52 missions are now scheduled to be flown during the next 24 hours:

<u>MISSION & NR OF ACFT</u>	<u>TIME (EST) ON TARGET</u>	<u>TARGET LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION</u>
UNIFORM 38 (6 B-52s)	7:15 PM 4 February	In South Vietnam, 6 miles south-southeast of Khe Sanh; contains storage areas and munition supplies.
UNIFORM 66 (12 B-52s)	1:20 AM 5 February	In South Vietnam, 6 miles north-northwest of Khe Sanh; contains a battalion size bivouac area.
UNIFORM 95 (12 B-52s)	9:50 AM 5 February	In South Vietnam, 8 miles west-northwest of Khe Sanh; contains storage and munition supplies.
UNIFORM 91 (9 B-52s)	12:40 PM 5 February	In South Vietnam, 17 miles northeast of Khe Sanh; contains elements of the NVA 320th Division.

The following ROLLING THUNDER 57 ALFA strikes are now scheduled during the next 24 hours:

<u>TARGET AND LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME (EST) ON TARGET</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>STRIKE FORCE</u>
Chuc Son Army barracks (N), 10 miles south-west of Hanoi	7:36 PM 4 February	7 AF	4 F-105
	3:36 AM 5 February		4 F-105
Ha Dong Army barracks (SW), 8.5 miles south-west of Hanoi	7:38 PM 4 February	7 AF	8 F-105
	3:38 AM 5 February		8 F-105

~~TOP SECRET/LIMDIS~~

<u>TARGET AND LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME (EST) ON TARGET</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>STRIKE FORCE</u>
Kinh No railroad yard, 9 miles north of Hanoi	7:56 PM 4 February 3:56 AM 5 February	7 AF	12 F-105 12 F-105
Lang Son railroad/ highway bridge (JCS 18), 79 miles northeast of Hanoi	3:35 AM 5 February	7 AF	4 F-4

DDO WEL

ADDO GU

CCOC EL

NMCC - 4 FEB 68, 4:30 PM EST

TOP SECRET/LIMDIS

31

2A

DD

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Sunday, February 4, 1968
7:20PM

Mr. President:

At last report the attack on Hill 861 was
diminishing.

The mortar attack on the Khe Sanh combat base
has ceased. The base was reported to be
quiet and the airstrip was still open. The
extent of damage to the base is unknown at
this time.

2

ROBERT N. GINSBURGH

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

EE

Sunday, February 4, 1968
8:25 P.M.

Mr. President:

As we wait for some word about what may be happening at Khe Sanh, it helps to remember that these are always trying periods for Commanders (or Commanders-in-chief).

~~General Eisenhower, after refusing to allow Prime Minister Churchill to accompany the D-Day invasion forces expressed his thoughts: "Nevertheless, my sympathies were with the Prime Minister. Again I had to endure the interminable wait that always intervenes between the final decision of the high command and the earliest possible determination of success or failure in such ventures."~~

I spent the time visiting troops that were to participate in the assault. ...I found the men in fine fettle, many of them joshingly admonishing me that I had no cause for worry since the 101st (one brigade of the 101st is now at Hue in the I Corps) was on the job and everything would be taken care of in fine shape."

4

ROBERT N. GINSBURGH

~~LITERALLY EYES ONLY GENERAL WHEELER~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

February 5, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL WHEELER

Bus --

You will wish to know that the
President dispatched this message to
Gen. Westmoreland back channel today.

W. W. Rostow

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED

Authority DSD 10-25-78, NSC 8-14-80
By JK (ing), NARS, Date 8-29-80

WWRostow:rlh

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Sent 12:12

1968 FEB 5 17 12

file
FEB 5 PM 12 22
MONDAY

VZCZCDSI888
OO YEKADLC
DE YEKADS 518 036164Z
O 051644Z ZYH
FM WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
TO ANEMB SAIGON
ZEM

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ VIA CAS CHANNELS CAP83398
LITERALLY EYES ONLY FROM THE PRESIDENT FOR GENERAL
WESTMORELAND

THERE IS SOME IRRESPONSIBLE TALK IN THE NEWSPAPERS
ABROAD AND HERE TODAY THAT WE HAVE LOST CONFIDENCE
IN YOU.

I WISH TO TELL YOU IN THE BLUNTEST AND MOST DIRECT
WAY I CAN THAT I HAVE NEVER DEALT WITH A MAN IN WHOM
I HAD MORE CONFIDENCE. YOU AND YOUR VIETNAMESE COLLEAGUES
HAVE, IN MY JUDGMENT, DEALT WITH THE ATTACK ON THE
CITIES WELL.

IT IS MY JUDGMENT THAT YOUR LEADERSHIP AND ELLSWORTH'S
WILL BRING US MUCH FURTHER AHEAD A MONTH FROM NOW THAN
WE OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE BEEN.

LET US MAKE THAT HAPPEN.

I BELIEVE THAT EVERYTHING YOU HAVE ASKED FOR HAS BEEN
SUPPLIED.

AS YOU GO INTO THIS BATTLE, YOU HAVE MY FULLEST POSSIBLE
CONFIDENCE AND SUPPORT

170

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6

NLJ 96-193

By CB, NARA Date 11-3-97

NNNN

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 5, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROSTOW

Bob Ginsburgh just called to inform me that General Wheeler was informed in a telephone conversation with General Westmoreland that "gravel has been laid north of Khe Sanh."

Bob said we had no other information available at the present time, but would probably find out more this afternoon.


Art McCafferty

36

INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

J2

Monday, February 5, 1968
8:25 a.m.

Mr. President:

This summary of three prisoner of war
interrogation reports is consistent with the
longer one I sent up earlier.

If our boys follow through in clearing up
the cities and we hold Khe Sanh, the morale
problem will shortly be on the other side.

Walt Rostow

TDCS 314/02051-68 (advance)

DECLASSIFIED
Authority CIA letter SEP 1979
By isp, NARS, Date 10-2-79

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

HH

DIRNSA COMMAND CENTER
STATE (RCI)
CIA-OCI
ZEN

SANITIZED

Authority CIA 12-21-78 letter
By SP, NARS, Date 4-6-79

SANITIZED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ NOFORN CITE TDCS314/02051-6S (ADVANCE)

COUNTRY: SOUTH VIETNAM

DOI: 27 JANUARY 1968 - 4 FEBRUARY 1968

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF ONE VIET CONG AND TWO NORTH VIETNAMESE
ARMY PRISONERS CONCERNING THE PLANS AND OBJECTIVES
OF THE TET OFFENSIVE AND POPULAR SUPPORT FROM THE
SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE DURING THE OFFENSIVE.

ACQ: |
SOURCE: |

(5 FEBRUARY 1968)

1. A BRIEF INTERROGATION OF THREE PRISONERS IN THE BIEN HOA AREA REVEALS THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: (A) THEY WERE GIVEN ORDERS FOR THE TET CAMPAIGN SHORTLY BEFORE THE TIME OF ATTACK AND WERE TOLD THAT THE EFFORT WOULD BE A FINAL THRUST TO LIBERATE SOUTH VIETNAM (SVN). THE PRISONERS SAID THEY WERE TO ATTACK CITIES AND TO CONCENTRATE THEIR EFFORTS AGAINST HEADQUARTERS INSTALLATIONS, PARTICULARLY U.S. FACILITIES, (B) LOW LEVEL CADRES APPARENTLY WERE NOT PROVIDED WITH WITHDRAWAL PLANS SINCE THERE WAS NO QUESTION ABOUT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF VICTORY. THEY WERE TOLD THAT THE TET HOLIDAY WOULD BE CELEBRATED IN "LIBERATED" AREAS FOLLOWING THE TRIUMPH. THE PRISONERS SAID THEIR ORDERS WERE TO CONTINUE FIGHTING UNTIL VICTORY, (C) THERE WAS AN INITIAL BELIEF THAT THE POPULATION WOULD ASSIST IN AN UPRISING AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) AND U.S. FORCES, (D) IN THE OPINION OF THE PRISONERS THE ANTICIPATED SUPPORT FROM THE SVN POPULATION WAS NOT FORTHCOMING, (E) NO MENTION WAS MADE TO THE PRISONERS OF A MAJOR OFFENSIVE IN THE NORTHERN AREAS OF SVN TO FOLLOW-UP OR COINCIDE WITH THE TET CAMPAIGN, (F) THE PRISONERS HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY EFFORTS TO REORGANIZE THE "ALLIANCE FOR PEACE AND DEMOCRACY" AS A COALITION MOVEMENT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM (NFLSV), (G) THE PRISONERS WERE NOT AWARE OF ANY FOLLOW-UP PLANS FOR THE CURRENT OFFENSIVE, (H) THE PRISONERS WERE UNABLE TO COMPREHEND A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MILITARY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL VICTORY BECAUSE THEY WERE ORIENTATED SOLELY TOWARD A MILITARY TRIUMPH. THE PRISONERS WOULD NOT COMMENT ON THE REACTIONS OF HANOI OR THE NFLSV TO THE FAILURE TO ACHIEVE THE MILITARY OBJECTIVES OF THE TET OFFENSIVE.

2. DISSEM: STATE, MACV, 7TH AF, CINCPAC, PACFLT, ARPAC, PACAF, POLAD/CINDPAC.

GP-1
625

37

INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Monday, February 5, 1968 -- 8:50 a.m.

Mr. President:

While on night duty I asked Bob Ginsburgh to do a terse statistical comparison of the situation at Dien Bien Phu and that at Khe Sanh.

The numbers suggest why our military are confident.

W. W. Rostow

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

24
FS
Monday, February 5, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROSTOW

SUBJECT: Khe Sanh and Dien Bien Phu

The campaign for Dien Bien Phu lasted 209 days and the actual seige 56 days.

~~The French began with a strength of about 5,000 (including Montagnards, North Africans, Vietnamese and Foreign Legionnaires).~~ Although a total of 15,000 participated, maximum strength on the French side at any one time was about 13,000. Total casualties were: 1,100 killed, 1,600 missing and 4,400 wounded.

~~The Viet Minh totaled 49,500 combat troops~~ plus 55,000 support troops.

By comparison we have ~~5,000 Americans at Khe Sanh~~ versus an enemy strength of about 20,000. Thus the enemy's advantage is ~~less than 4 to 1 rather than 8 to 1 as it was at Dien Bien Phu~~ (including support troops). If we consider total strengths in I Corps north of Hue, the enemy has only 38,600 versus our 41,000 (including South Vietnamese).

~~Usable supplies~~ parachuted to Dien Bien Phu averaged about ~~100 tons per day~~ during the seige. General Westmoreland has a capability of ~~600 tons per day.~~

Total aircraft available to the French were ~~75 combat aircraft and 100 supply and reconnaissance aircraft.~~ By comparison, the U.S. has more than ~~2,000 aircraft and 3,300 helicopters.~~

94
ROBERT N. GINSBURGH

INFORMATION

38

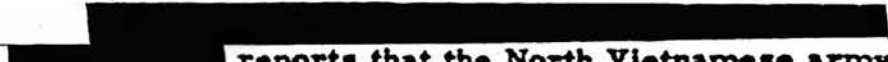
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Monday, February 5, 1968 -- 4:05 pm

Pres file

Mr. President:

This is the report I didn't send along the other day because: it was only one such straw in the wind; and CIA could not evaluate the source. Nevertheless, it is interesting.

 reports that the North Vietnamese army has informed the Viet Cong that support will be withdrawn in March 1968 and therefore the Viet Cong must make every effort to win before March."

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

W. W. Rostow

SANITIZED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6
NLJ 96-199
By is, NARA Date 8-19-98

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

WWRostow:rlm

INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

39

Monday, February 5, 1968 -- 6:30 p.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith the casualty figures and weapons captured by Corps areas from 29 January to midnight February 4 in Vietnam.

Roughly speaking, if these figures are correct, they took 10 weeks' casualties in a week.

The weapons captured are also round about 10 weeks' take.

W. W. Rostow

KK

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 5, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROSTOW

SUBJECT: Statistics on the Past Week's Activity in Vietnam

The following are cumulative statistics for the period from the 29th of January to midnight, February 4, by Corps areas:

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Captured</u>	<u>Weapons Captured</u>
<u>I Corps</u>				
Enemy	6030		2009	1276
U. S.	225	1218		
South Vietnamese	335	1159		
<u>II Corps</u>				
Enemy	3562		1477	1103
U. S.	77	309		
South Vietnamese	270	933		
<u>III Corps</u>				
Enemy	7118		456	1412
U. S.	148	1109		
South Vietnamese	238	905		
<u>IV Corps</u>				
Enemy	3625		559	1043
U. S.	65	239		
South Vietnamese	226	956		
<u>TOTAL</u>				
Enemy	20,335		4,501	4,834
U. S.	515	2,875		
South Vietnamese	1,069	3,953		

It is interesting to look at this in comparison with other periods.

	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>Last week</u>
Ratio enemy/friendly killed	2.8/1	3.7/1	4.1/1	12.8/1
Enemy weapons captured (weekly average)	224	357	598	4,834

It is difficult to make a relationship with prisoners, due to a change in reporting procedures. However, it is interesting to note that the prisoner of war population as of January 1 was 9,743. Assuming all those captured last week are valid POWs, this will mean we have increased this population by almost 50 percent in just one week.


Art Mc Cafferty

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

40

Monday, February 5, 1968 -- 9:00 a.m.

Mr. President:

Responding to a question from Elspeth last night, I explained events in Vietnam as follows.

The war had been proceeding in 1967 on an attritional basis with our side gradually improving its position, the Communists gradually running down: like this



Allies

Communists

Behind these curves were pools of military forces and fire power which represented the working capital available to the two sides.

As the documents forecast, the Communists decided to take a large part of their capital and put it into:

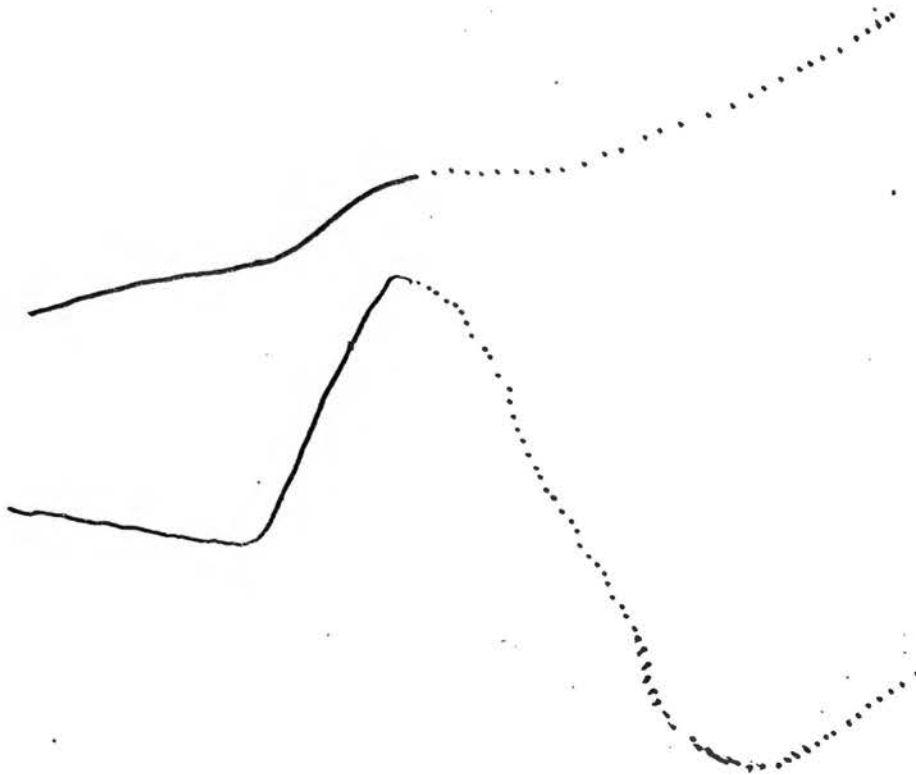
- an attack on the cities;
- a frontier attack at Khe Sanh and elsewhere.

In the one case their objective was the believed vulnerability of the GVN and the believed latent popular support for the Viet Cong.

In the other case, the believed vulnerability of the U.S. public opinion to discouragement about the war.

LL

So the curves actually moved like this:



The dotted portions indicate the potentiality if:

- the cities are cleared up and held against possible follow-on attacks;
- the GVN demonstrate effective political and relief capacity;
- we hold Khe Sanh;
- we keep U.S. opinion steady on course.

In short, if all on our side do their job well, the net effect could be a shortening of the war.

W. W. Rostow

Tuesday, February 6, 1968

41

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

We have gone through the accumulated materials resulting from interrogation of prisoners and documents captured last week, and sought the answers to three questions:

1. Did the VC/NVA troops expect the Vietnamese populace to rise up and support them in their attacks?
2. Did the VC/NVA have any known plans for retreat or withdrawal?
3. What is the VC/NVA evaluation as to success or failure of the campaign?

In general, the answers are as follows:

1. Yes, they did expect assistance and uprising as evidenced by the following responses to interrogation.

A prisoner captured on January 31 in Chau Doc City stated that the attack was to create conditions which would bring the U. S. Government to negotiate in order to proceed with peace. The time was ripe for an uprising. He said that the VC realized that they were committing everything and every person they had in this assault. It was obvious to all that the assault was a "go for broke" matter. He believes that few of the participants expected success, although most of them hoped that they would succeed.

Prisoners captured in Nha Trang (II Corps) state that they were told they could take Nha Trang because of the VC organization in the city. The NVA officers did not believe this but went on with the attack in order to support the nation-wide effort and make success possible elsewhere.

MM

According to one of these who was captured on the morning of February 4, "The current general insurrection campaign will extend for the duration of the Winter-Spring Campaign. Many attacks will continue because the order has been given and cannot be countermanded." He stated that "when the VC/NVA attacked Nha Trang, they expected to be defeated; however, they believed in the general insurrection campaign of South Vietnam."

The Executive Officer of the VC Zone Committee II, Gia Lai (Pleiku), who was captured on January 30, stated that the aim of the present action is to achieve the goals set forth in Resolution 13 of the Lao Dong Party, that is, guide people to strike and demonstrate and to liberate all areas. He also advised that the present offensive was scheduled to last seven days and would end on February 5, 1968.

Three prisoners captured in the Bien Hoa area stated that they had believed that the population would assist in an uprising against the GVN and U.S. forces and in their opinion the anticipated support from the population has not been forthcoming.

2. All evidence points to the conclusion that orders were received to "hold at all costs." Prisoners captured on January 30 in the attack on Pleiku revealed that they had orders to "take Pleiku City or not return." Three prisoners captured in the Bien Hoa area apparently were not provided with withdrawal plans since there was no question about achievement of victory. The prisoners said their orders were to continue fighting until victory. (Lack of a withdrawal plan and unfamiliarity with the local terrain may account in part for the large enemy losses.)

Four prisoners captured in the attack on Saigon provided the following: Casualties were to be left behind. After Saigon had been occupied, there would be a special detachment to take care of wounded. The Battalion was not to retreat. The objective was to be held indefinitely. Supplies would be brought in later. Troops were ordered to fight until Saigon was taken. A prisoner who died of wounds on February 1 revealed before his death that the major objectives in the attack on Saigon were the Presidential Palace, the radio station, and the Tan Son Nhut Airbase, with orders to hold at all costs, with no thought of retreat.

Another prisoner (believed to be a VC General and currently undergoing more intensive interrogation) revealed that the VC planned to take over Chau Doc Province at any cost. If this failed, then taking over the Province was to be completed before the end of the "Spring Phase," that is, before the end of March 1968. This all came about because of an order from COSVN to use the Tet period as a "unique opportunity to make sacrifices of their lives for the survival of the fatherland." There was no plan of retreat or withdrawal as the VC were convinced of success. This was part of a general uprising throughout South Vietnam, which would reduce the number of U. S. or GVN troops which could be sent in as reinforcements. Thus, if their first attack on Chau Doc City failed, they planned to keep attacking until they achieved success.

Approximately 100 VC prisoners captured in the attack on the city of Rach Gia, Kien Giang Province, with an average age being between 15 and 18 years, revealed during interrogation that the soldiers were given no contingency plan and were directed simply to take the town and hold it until a coalition government could be formed.

3. There is little hard evidence in the form of response to interrogation or captured documents which give feel for their assessment of success or failure. However, the following does show that plans did not progress as anticipated.

A prisoner captured in Chau Doc City indicated that his troops had been told that the conditions were now right for an uprising of the population and that an aggressive and rapid assault would bring the people to the side of the VC and make untenable the positions of the GVN and American defenders. The uprising in fact did not take place during the attack and the prisoner said that it is likely that this lack of all-out popular commitment to the campaign is having a bad effect on the morale of the VC attackers.

A prisoner captured during the attack on Nha Trang stated that there would be a second attack on the city and that the Special Forces Headquarters, the 62nd Aerial Squadron, and the airfield

would be shelled. Shelling had been intended during the first attack but the element in charge of transporting ammunition did not arrive on time.

W. W. Rostow

AmcC:jjs

4)
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

ACTION

42

Tuesday, Feb. 6, 1968
9:50 a.m.

*Rec'd
10:00*

Mr. President:

Herewith constructive thoughts from Amb. Lodge.

May I make them available to Sects. Rusk and
McNamara and Dick Helms?

Yes _____

No _____

Call me _____

W. Rostow

*1. Don't know
M. Rusk
T. Helms
R. Helms*

~~TOP SECRET~~ attachment

*Cys sent above
2/8/68*

NN



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

520

26

42a

February 5, 1968

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

Dear Walt:

Herewith a memorandum for the President.

With warm regards,

As ever yours,

Henry Cabot Lodge

The Honorable Walt W. Rostow
Special Assistant to the President
The White House

Enclosure

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 1-24-79 letter
By if, NARS, Date 3-29-79



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 5, 1968

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

DECLASSIFIED

To: The President
From: H. C. Lodge

Authority State 1-24-79 letter
By if, NARS, Date 3-29-79

1. While some of the recent raids in Viet-Nam eventually took on a conventional military aspect (as, for example, in Hue), most of them were clandestine; were conducted in civilian clothes; and were closely intertwined with the civilian population for information, for path finding, and for attempted political effects.
2. These raids, therefore, were appropriate activities for the use of police-type techniques and it seems fair to conclude that if the police-type work -- whether by military or police personnel -- had been superior, many of the raids would have been prevented and those which would not have been prevented would have been more rapidly put down.
3. The existence of effective police-type forces being, I believe, utterly vital both in the long and short run, I suggest that the present is a good time to have a fresh audit made of the adequacy of existing Vietnamese forces -- as to size, organization and training -- to perform those police-type functions.
4. This audit should be made by a civilian, since these clandestine terrorist raids involve weighty political and psychological considerations which make them altogether different from the military. The

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

- 2 -

audit should be done as quietly, tactfully, unobtrusively, informally -- and rapidly -- as possible.

5. The above is said without derogating from the courageous performance of individual Vietnamese during the past week and from what has already been accomplished by the Americans in charge of pacification.
6. This moment may, however, be the heaven-sent opportunity to give the GVN some much needed stimulus which normally they would not be able to take.
7. Some of the questions to which answers should be obtained, on the American side, are:
 - a) With how much intensity and sharp focus is the job of revamping the ARVN going?
 - b) How clearly is the new mission of the ARVN, notably in its sociological and civil implications, understood up and down the line?
 - c) Are the ARVN trainers persuading and enthusing?
 - d) Do the trainers understand it all themselves?
8. Some questions on the Vietnamese side are:
 - a) What progress has been made on rooting out the Viet Cong infrastructure in the places which were raided last week?
 - b) If, as has been reported, advance knowledge existed of the intended raids, what was done before the raids took place by way of a "comb out", that is: verification of identity cards, checkpoints, curfew, etc.

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

- 3 -

- c) To what extent were the infiltrators picked up when they arrived in town?
- d) Are the police generally easily available in the slum section of Saigon where information on location of Viet Cong normally exists? If not, are steps being taken to make them so?
- e) What is the feasibility of organizing the urban masses themselves to help the police?

H.C. Lodge

~~TOP SECRET - NODIS~~

24

~~SECRET~~

INFORMATION

43

Tuesday

February 6, 1968 -- 2:55 p.m.

SITUATION ROOM MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Enemy Attacks in the Khe Sanh Area

We have just received information that the ARVN unit at Lang Vei, to the west of Khe Sanh, was under heavy ground attack at 2:20 p.m. this afternoon. Initial reports indicate that the enemy employed seven tanks; at least one of the tanks had been knocked out.

During the contact, the Marines at Khe Sanh fired COFRAM from 105mm guns.

W. W. Rostow

W. W. Rostow

00

DECLASSIFIED

Authority DSO 10-25-78, NSC 8-14-80
By JK (ing), NARS, Date 8-29-80

~~SECRET~~

32

2A

44

~~SECRET~~

INFORMATION

Tuesday
February 6, 1968 -- 5:50 p.m.
bid 6:05

SITUATION ROOM MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Fighting Around Khe Sanh

At 5:09 tonight the enemy is using flamethrowers at the Lang Vei Special Forces camp. Latest reporting indicates the enemy used 9 tanks and 4 to 5 are disabled.

Twenty-eight rounds of 105mm COFRAM was fired in support.

Khe Sanh combat base is receiving 6 rounds of mortar fire per minute and the runway is cratered.

PP

Walt Rostow

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
ISC Memo, 1/30/95, State Dept. Guidelines
By cb, NARA, Date 4-28-99

MEMORANDUM

~~SECRET~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

45
2A
INFORMATION

Tuesday, February 6, 1968
8:30 p.m.

MR. PRESIDENT:

Based on a telephone call to MACV, the Pentagon says the attached AP bulletin is not true. The camp has not been overrun and occupied.

South Vietnamese forces and our forces at Lang Vei are in their bunkers.

Brown
Bromley Smith

183

BULLETIN

CAMP

SAIGON (AP)-SOUTH VIETNAMESE HEADQUARTERS SAID A SPECIAL FORCES-GREEN BERET-CAMP IN THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SOUTH VIETNAM WAS OVERRUN AND OCCUPIED EARLY WEDNESDAY BY COMMUNIST TROOPS USING TANKS AND ARMORED CARS.
GG816P 6

DECLASSIFIED

Authority OSD 10-25-78, NSC 8-14-80
By JK (ing), NARS, Date 8-29-80

45a

FBIS 13 FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

PARIS AFP IN SPANISH 0428 GMT 7 FEB 68 E

(TEXT) SAIGON-- THE LANG VEI CAMP HAS BEEN DESTROYED AND OCCUPIED BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE, IT WAS OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED HERE THIS MORNING.

7 FEB 0457 AN/RS

(SUBS PREVIOUS)

VIETNAM

BY EDWIN G. WHITE

(SAIGON)--NORTH VIETNAMESE INFANTRYMEN SUPPORTED BY NINE MEDIUM TANKS AND FLAME-THROWERS MADE REPEATED ASSAULTS ON THE LANG VEI (LAHNG VAY) SPECIAL FORCES IN THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SOUTH VIETNAM EARLY WEDNESDAY AND PENETRATED THE BARBED WIRE PERIMETER.

THE U-S COMMAND SAYS RADIO CONTACT WITH THE AMERICAN GREEN BERET TROOPERS INSIDE THE CAMP WAS LOST FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR BUT WAS RE-ESTABLISHED AND IT APPEARED THE MONTAGNARD MILITIAMEN IN THE CAMP AND THEIR AMERICAN ADVISERS ARE STILL HOLDING OUT.

THE COMMAND SAID FIVE OF THE ENEMY'S RUSSIAN-MODEL T-34 TANKS WERE DESTROYED. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THE ENEMY HAS BEEN REPORTED USING TANKS IN THE VIETNAM WAR.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY HEADQUARTERS HAD REPORTED EARLIER THAT THE CAMP FOUR MILES WEST OF THE LAOTIAN BORDER AND ABOUT 20 MILES SOUTH OF THE DE-MILITARIZED ZONE HAD BEEN OVER-RUN.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAYS A RECONNAISSANCE PLANE FLYING OVER THE CAMP AT DAWN SAW NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS MOVING INSIDE IT. HE ADDED THAT THE PILOT REPORTED MAKING RADIO CONTACT WITH MEMBERS OF THE CAMP'S GARRISON WHO SAID THEY HAD WITHDRAWN FROM THE CAMP.

CS1230AES FEB. 7

4516

2A

INFORMATION

46

Wednesday

February 7, 1968 -- 10:30 a.m.

SITUATION ROOM MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Possible Evacuation of Lang Vei

The NMCC informs us that they have just received a garbled secure telephone call from MACV which indicates that all personnel have been evacuated from Lang Vei.

They will follow up shortly with a teletype message.

W. Rostow

RR

✓ ✓ ✓
✓ ✓ ✓
✓ ✓
✓ ✓ ✓

47

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 7-10-78, NSC 11-27-78

By if, NARS, Date 4-6-79

6

INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

15

Wednesday, February 7, 1968
11:55 a.m.

Rec'd
12:29

Mr. President:

Herewith a balanced assessment
from Bunker, much like our own.

W. W. Rostow
W. W. Rostow

Saigon 18399

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

SS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 3-6-79 letter Wednesday, February 7, 1968
By ip, NARS, Date 3-21-79

20
✓

FOR THE PRESIDENT

TEXT OF CABLE FROM BUNKER (Saigon 18399)

SUBJECT: Hanoi's Expectations From and Reaction To Its Recent Offensive

As information from documents and prisoners captured in the recent fighting begins to accumulate, the evidence is growing that Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army planning relied heavily on prospects of a "general uprising" and large-scale defections of Army of the Republic of Vietnam units to make possible a Communist take-over of the administration of many provincial capitals and territorial units. Their tactics were designed to encourage such a development.

One technique was to try to render Army of the Republic of Vietnam units leaderless. In several cases, enemy forces were given the specific mission of killing or kidnapping various high-ranking Army of the Republic of Vietnam Commanders and paralyzing Army of the Republic of Vietnam command posts (the Joint General Staff compound itself was one specific object of the attack) in the belief that the Army of the Republic of Vietnam units concerned would then defect to the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army side. The Communists invented a special organization -- the Revolutionary Armed Forces -- to enable defecting Army of the Republic of Vietnam units to team up with the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army without having to join the People's Liberation Armed Forces as such. The other prime target of the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army operation was the administrative and police structure throughout the country, and Communist propaganda from the earliest hours of the offensive referred to the importance of establishing revolutionary administrations to supplant those of the "puppet government" destroyed by the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army attack. There are reports of individuals having already been nominated for key jobs in the new Viet Cong administrative apparatus and of plans even having been made for a flag-raising ceremony for the new Viet Cong administration in Kontum on the first day of the lunar new year.

The virtually total absence of the usually elaborate Viet Cong withdrawal plans as well as the "no retreat" instruction given to the units concerned strongly suggest that it was believed that all they would have to do was to seize their objective and hold it for a brief period of time while the masses of the people and the defecting Army of the Republic of Vietnam could be mobilized for their support.

There is growing evidence, in captured documents and interrogation reports as well as Communist propaganda, that a mass shift in popular support to the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army was anticipated as the allied military situation deteriorated and Government of Vietnam administrative authority crumpled. Here again a special organization -- the Alliance of National and Peaceful Forces --

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

was invented to make it possible to defect from the government side without actually becoming part of the National Liberation Front itself. Some enemy units even had instructions not -- repeat not -- to damage installations and equipment (at Tan Son Nhut Airfield, for example), as these should be kept intact for Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army use.

The tenacity with which the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army have held on to some of the areas they have captured (in Hue and parts of Saigon, for instance) also suggests that the leadership envisaged a seize-and-hold, not a hit-and-run operation. The only way this would be possible with the forces available to the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army would be if they received massive popular and Army of the Republic of Vietnam support.

It is clear by now that the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army expectations were not fulfilled -- we know of no Army of the Republic of Vietnam unit which defected to the enemy, and the popular uprising simply did not take place. In part, this may have been due to the failure of specific operations -- the attempts to kill or kidnap commanders almost all failed, as did many efforts to seize key installations. The principal point, however, is that the Communists misjudged the temper of the people and the Army -- they simply were not ready to throw in their lot with the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army. The result is that the new groups which the Viet Cong set up for defectors among the Army and people remain unmanned; the areas which the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army wrestled from the Government of Vietnam are being taken back; the Government of Vietnam is pulling itself together; and it is the Government of Vietnam, not the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army or the new front groups, which is in control of the cities and is starting the long -- and potentially politically profitable -- rehabilitation effort.

In sum, we can say that, while the recent offensive without question brought definite successes for the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army, it would appear that the enemy's expectations were fairly sharply disappointed and Hanoi is now confronted with quite a different situation than it had anticipated.

Hanoi's response to the current situation is not yet clear, and it may indeed still be taking shape. We have noted one interesting straw in the wind on a key subject -- negotiations with the allies. It is a Cabanes piece from Hanoi (reporter from Paris AFP transmitted in English, February 5) which analyzes a February 5 Nhan Dan article on President Johnson's February 2 press conference. According to Cabanes, the Nhan Dan article indicates that Hanoi now feels that it has given sufficient signs of goodwill on the negotiation issue and that it is up to President Johnson to make the next move. Cabanes says Hanoi "no longer expects a positive reply in the near future from Washington to its offer to negotiate", though it will not close the door to talks if President Johnson should eventually come around. This sounds to us as if Hanoi leadership, disappointed in any hopes that their recent offensive would put them in a position of strength which they might have felt would have permitted them to bring some flexibility into their negotiating posture, have decided that negotiations should not be pursued at present unless President Johnson knuckles under.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

-3-

This one sign, then, points to a digging in of heels on Hanoi's part, a posture that would be consistent with Hanoi's earlier responses to adversity. However, what their final position will be remains to be seen, and indeed may not be determined pending further developments -- Khe Sanh, for instance.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Wednesday, February 7, 1968 -- 3:30 p.m.

Mr. President:

With respect to the ECONOMIST article:

1. I agree with the basic conclusion: This Is It.

2. Exactly as the document said, they have, for whatever reasons, decided to win or lose the war in the weeks and months ahead.

3. We do not know how much they have left after the first attack on the cities, but it is my feeling at the present time that they will continue to use whatever assets they have to continue to attack the cities with two objectives:

-- To try to exhaust the Vietnamese military and civil apparatus which has taken the first shock well but has little depth;

-- To force Westy to commit to the battle in the cities the reserves needed to hold Khe Sanh.

In short, the ECONOMIST may assume that the battle of the cities, as a serious diversionary operation, is more nearly over than, in fact, it will prove to be.

4. In this connection, I must tell you that I found Bus Wheeler's statements at the NSC meeting like a firebell in the night; that is, a most serious warning. Westy has been forced to commit some of his units from the Air Cav Division and the 101st Airborne to support the battle for the cities. Meanwhile, the North Vietnamese units opposite Dak To and elsewhere along the western frontier have not been committed.

The captured documents indicate that Hanoi's generals are very conscious of the limit to Westy's own reserve forces.

5. Since this is a battle which may determine the shape of Asia for a very long time -- as well as the U. S. position on the world scene -- it is a battle that must be won. Therefore, I am inclined to think, as of this afternoon, that we are close to the time when we should:-- Fly the 81st Airborne out to Vietnam;-- Extend enlistments in Vietnam and elsewhere;-- Call up reserves; etc.~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED

Authority DSD 10-25-78, NSC 8-14-80
By J.K. (ig), NARS, Date 8-29-80

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

-2-

6. We may be able to wait a day or so because it is possible that we have so damaged the Viet Cong main force units that attacked the cities that they will not have the capacity to extend for long the fight in Hue, Cholon, Danang, and Dalat. But for what it is worth, my gut feeling is this is one where we had better be safe than sorry.

Having said that, I would underline that my military qualifications consist in once having risen as high as the rank of Major in the planning of bombing operations — *a long time ago!*

W. W. Rostow

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

JORDEN 2A

~~SECRET~~

RECEIVED
WHCA

49

UU

~~SECRET~~

HCE 783
1968 FEB 7 17 47

PAGE 01 SAIGON 18443 071734Z

53
ACTION EA 15

INFO CIAE 00,NSAE 00,NSCE 00,SSO 00,USIE 00,GPM 03,H 02,INR 07,L 03,
NSC 10,P 04,RSC 01,SC 01,SP 02,SS 00,SR 01,ORM 03,SAL 01,SAH 03,
IO 13,CCO 00,RSR 01,MM 01,7091 W

Z C 071714Z FEB 68 ZFF-6
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE FLASH 3491
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 60333
SECDEF
CINCPAC

Reston

~~SECRET~~ SAIGON 18443

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJECT LAO REFUGEES

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 3-6-79 letter
By ip, NARS, Date 3-21-79

1. MACV HAS BEEN INFORMED BY KHE SANH BASE COMMANDER THAT AN
ESTIMATED 3000 LAO REFUGEES FROM LANG VEI AREA HAVE MOVED TOWARD
THE BASE AND ARE NOW ABOUT ONE QUARTER MILE AWAY FROM IT. THIS
PRESENTS A SERIOUS TACTICAL PROBLEM FOR KHE SANH BASE DEFENSES AT
PRESENT CRITICAL JUNCTURE. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN REFUGEES
BECOME SHIELD FOR ENEMY ATTACK AGAINST BASE. BASE COMMANDER HAS
THEREFORE BEEN ADVISED TO ATTEMPT TO DETER THE REFUGEES FROM MOVING
ANY CLOSER TO BASE INSTALLATIONS.

2. LACTION CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN SAIGON OFFERED SEVERAL DAYS AGO

PAGE 2 ~~SECRET~~ 18443 071734Z
TO VISIT LAO GROUP WHEN IT WAS AT LANG VEI. THIS WAS NOT FEASIBLE

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 02 SAIGON 18443 071734Z

AT THE TIME. UNLESS WE HEAR FROM YOU TO THE CONTRARY, WE PLAN TO ASK HIM TOMORROW IF HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO BE AIRLIFTED TO KHE SANH IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE REFUGEES TO MOVE AWAY FROM DANGER ZONE IN AS ORDERLY AND EXPEDITIOUS FASHION AS POSSIBLE AND TO COOPERATE WITH GVN AUTHORITIES.

3. MACV FULLY AWARE POLITICAL SENSITIVITY OF SITUATION AND WILL OF COURSE, DO ALL THAT IT CAN TO AVOID SERIOUS INCIDENT, BUT ADVISES THAT TACTICAL SITUATION AT KHE SANH NOT NOW CONDUCTIVE TO EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER REFUGEES.

4. IF YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL URGENT THOUGHTS OR SUGGESTIONS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE THEM. WE WILL KEEP YOU POSTED.

BUNKER

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ ~~EYES ONLY~~

RECEIVED
WHCA

50

VV

VZCZCKAA423ZIF220NKB4860DA738
OO YEKADS
DE YSHKOD 7 0303325
O 070324Z ZYM ZFF 1
FM GEN WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV, SAIGON
TO THE PRESIDENT
ZEN

0003 FEB 7 04 21

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ MAC 01719 ~~EYES ONLY~~

AM GREATFUL TO YOU FOR YOUR MESSAGE OF YESTERDAY, WHEREIN YOU
EXPRESSED YOUR CONFIDENCE IN THIS COMMAND. BE ASSURED WE ARE DOING
ALL POSSIBLE TO DEAL THE COMMUNIST AGGRESSOR A SEVERE BLOW. THERE
ARE DIFFICULT DAYS AHEAD, BUT WE ARE FULLY CONFIDENT IN OUR ABILITY TO
PREVAIL OVER THE ENEMY.

FAITHFULLY YOURS.

SSO NOTE: PRECEDENCE FOR TRANSMISSION ONLY
DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS

100

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~EYES ONLY~~

NNNN

DECLASSIFIED
OSD letter NOV 22 1978

Authority

By

if, NARS, Date 6-11-79

NODIS

NODIS

WW

→ Rostow

SAI

EA. Bar

Ida

WH Rost.

Sec def

51

~~TOP SECRET~~ 270911Z FEB 68 VIA CAS CHANNELS

FM AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN (FROM VIENTIANE 1398)

TO SECSTATE EYES ONLY KATZENBACH AND BUNDY

1. I HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING INDICATIONS THAT PREPARATIONS BEING MADE TO MOVE MIG ACTIVITY INTO SOUTHERN PORTION OF NORTH VIETNAM, AND CONSEQUENT U.S. SPECULATION THAT THIS ACTION BEING TAKEN IN ORDER INTERCEPT B-52 FLIGHTS. I WOULD LIKE TO OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE SPECULATION WHICH I SUGGEST YOU CRANK INTO YOUR CONTINGENCY PLANS.

2. IT MAY BE THAT HANOI, IN ANTICIPATION OF CESSATION U.S. BOMBING ACTIVITY IN NORTH VIETNAM, IS PREPARING FOR EVENTUALITY THAT WE WILL, HOWEVER, CONTINUE BOMBING HO CHI MINH TRAIL IN LAOS. THEY WOULD THEREFORE BE PRUDENT TO ESTABLISH MIG SANCUTARY IN SOUTHERN PART OF NORTH VIETNAM TO HARASS U.S. AIR ACTIVITY IN LAOS CORRIDOR.

3. SIMILARLY, IF CESSATION OF BOMBING TAKES PLACE BEFORE RPT BEFORE MAJOR ASSAULT AGAINST KHE SANH,

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 1-24-79 letter
By ip, NARS, Date 3-29-79

PAGE TWO VIENTIANE 4393 ~~TOP SECRET~~

HANOI MIGHT FIND IT USEFUL TO HAVE MIG SANCUTARY IN ORDER RENDER AIR ENVIRONMENT AROUND KHE SANH AS HAZARDOUS AS POSSIBLE. WHILE ALL THIS MIGHT BE CONSIDERED STRETCH OF "NO ADVANTAGE" CLAUSE, IT WOULD PROBABLY, AT LEAST IN CASE LAOS, HAVE TO BE MEASURED AGAINST OUR AUGMENTED AIR ACTIVITY ON THE TRAIL.

4. FACT THAT THESE PREPARATIONS FOR MIG MOVEMENT TAKING PLACE CURRENTLY SUGGESTS POSSIBILITY, IF FOREGOING SPECULATION TAKEN SERIOUSLY, THAT WE SHOULD CONSIDER CONTINGENCY OF HANOI MOVEMENT TO NEGOTIATIONS AFTER RPT AFTER CURRENT WAVE OF URBAN VIOLENCE, BUT BEFORE RPT BEFORE MAJOR ASSAULT ON KHE SANH. IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT, IN 1954, HANOI WENT TO NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE RPT BEFORE DIEN BIEN PHU FELL IN ORDER GET MAXIMUM PSYCHOLOGICAL VALUE FROM THAT VICTORY WHILE AT THE CONFERENCE TABLE. IT SHOULD ALSO BE BROWNE IN MINE THAT ASSAULT ON DIEN BIEN PHU BEGAN MARCH 13.

~~TOP SECRET~~

52

INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET~~

Thursday, February 8, 1968

Mr. President:

Herewith Westy predicts:

1. Renewed attacks on Saigon, Danang, Dak To, and a determined attempt to hold Hue, based on hitherto uncommitted North Vietnamese forces.
2. The time for the second wave is now estimated for February 10 - 11.
3. The full scale attack at Khe Sanh and the DMZ area generally could come at any time.

W. Westy Rostow

DECLASSIFIED

Authority OSD 10-25-78; NSC 8-14-80By JK (isp), NARS, Date 8-29-80~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET/SAVIN~~

52a

Thursday, February 8, 1968

THE FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF CABLE FROM GENERAL WESTMORELAND

The following is my assessment of recent enemy activity and strategy:

The enemy's objectives in the recent phase of his Winter-Spring Campaign are now clear. They were primarily psychological and political. The enemy sought first, to destroy the Government of Vietnamese governmental apparatus, second, to intimidate the people, and third, to bring about large scale defections from ARVN. All of these would add up to a "general uprising" in which the citizens would join the Viet Cong ranks and thus permit the enemy to take over the control of major cities and areas. The military objectives of this phase appear to be secondary. Here the attacks were directed primarily against Headquarters, air installations and aircraft with the view of injuring our control and our air power so as to hamper reinforcement and air support. Of course there was a secondary military objective to disperse and divert our forces throughout South Vietnam.

Since he hoped to obtain Vietnamese support from his "general uprising," the enemy used Viet Cong troops to the largest extent possible. Obviously these were more appropriate for use in this psychological thrust than North Vietnamese Army troops. Some North Vietnamese Army troops in First and Second Corps were used where Viet Cong strength was inadequate. He withheld large formations, both North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong, apparently to reinforce local success or to recycle his offensive at some later date.

As to the timing, attacks in southern First and Second Corps (Military Region 5) commenced in the early hours of 30 January. Attacks in the Second Corps, Fourth Corps, and Tri-Thien commenced 24 hours later. This is as close to simultaneity as the enemy has ever come in launching widespread attacks, and probably is a result of a high-level (Hanoi) decision to use the Tet Holidays for cover. In the Khe Sanh/DMZ and Duc Co area of the Western Highlands, the enemy appeared ready to attack concurrent with his Tet offensive, but he probably was delayed because of friendly operations.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 13292, Sec. 3.5

NLJ

By _____, NARA, Date _____

~~SECRET/SAVIN~~

In my opinion, the enemy tactical scheme for the urban areas was simple, well planned, and, up to a point, effective. Viet Cong local force and sapper troops infiltrated the urban areas under cover of Tet celebrations and mingled with the people. Units then assembled, armed themselves, and attacked their targets. At the same time, supporting units outside the city launched attacks on airfields and other installations. Numerous POW Interrogations indicate that the initial attacking forces were to seize key installations, paralyze Government of Vietnam installations, and start a general uprising--all within two to three days. Then heavier units were to reinforce to eliminate remaining resistance and exploit the situation.

There was no general uprising, and the enemy holds totally no cities, though his units remain in city environs and continue harassment he achieved his greatest success in Hue. Also, enemy forces lost heavily (22,000 - 23,000 killed and 5,000 detainees since the commencement of his Tet offensive). On the other hand, the enemy has scored a psychological blow, possibly greater, in Washington than in South Vietnam, since there are tentative signs that the populace is turning against the Viet Cong as a result of these attacks. In addition, the enemy has succeeded in temporarily disrupting the South Vietnam economy.

The enemy poses serious threats in the following areas:

A. Saigon: Remnants of the local force units are still in Saigon but the major threat consists of the 9th Viet Cong Division now located a few kilometers North of Saigon. Although the evidence is thus far inconclusive, I anticipate that this attack will be supported by rockets into the Saigon area--possibly the 240MM Rocket which a POW has stated is in the area.

B. Khe Sanh/DMZ: The enemy deployment in the DMZ is well known and his recent attacks in the Khe Sanh area indicate he has surrounded that camp with two divisions. A major offensive is imminent.

C. Danang: The 2d North Vietnamese Army Division, deployed west of Danang, is preparing for an attack.

D. Dak To: The 1st North Vietnamese Army Division has again deployed its three regiments in the immediate Dak To area and an attack supported by mortars and rockets appears imminent.

E. Hue: The enemy occupies the southern portion of Hue and pockets of strong resistance exist in the Citadel Proper. The disposition of the 6th Regiment and Headquarters Tri-Thien Military Region coupled with resupply activity indicates a possible attack recycle against the city. Certainly, the enemy will remain until forced to withdraw.

We have a number of indications as to the time frame for the next phase of the enemys offensive. Two POWs in Third Corps indicate a new phase will begin on 10 and 11 February. In First and Second Corps COMINT indicates the new phase will begin on 8 and 9 February. Additionally, two North Vietnamese Army officers captured in Laos state that the date for the renewed offensive is 10 February.

I believe the enemy will continue to strain the will of the people by maintaining pressure on the populated areas with his forces already committed. He probably will attempt to coordinate major offensives indicated above and current intelligence points to a recycle of attacks in the Saigon area, probably to commence on 10 or 11 February.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

53

~~SECRET~~

8 February 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROSTOW

In reflecting on the events of the past ten days, I have come to the following very personal conclusions:

- Most probably we have reached a major turning point in the war.
- General Westmoreland probably has the strength he needs to do the job.
- This is no time to take chances. General Westmoreland and the Chiefs might be reluctant to ask for the strength to provide the necessary insurance because they don't want to add to the President's heavy burdens.
- Neither the President nor the U. S. can afford to lose or draw the current campaign.

Accordingly, I think the President should consider:

- Sending the 82d Airborne (and perhaps some additional units) to Vietnam at the earliest possible moment (changing whatever rules may be necessary) -- unless the JCS assure him that this added insurance is unnecessary.
- Simultaneously, asking the JCS whether the U. S. can send the 82nd to Vietnam without mobilizing some Reserve units.
- Stepping up the air campaign against NVN.

It seems to me that such action would have a salutary effect on the situation in Vietnam in the U. S. and Korea.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NSC 1-5-81 Letter

By inf, NARS, Date 4-20-81

9

ROBERT N. GINSBURGH

~~SECRET~~

YY

53a

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 7-10-78, NSC 11-27-78

By if, NARS, Date 4-6-79

5
INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(PS) Thursday, February 8, 1968
5:25 p.m. *Rec'd 5:25p*

Mr. President:

Herewith Ho's order of the day
for the Tet offensive.

I believe he meant every word.

W. A. R. Rostow

Saigon 18562

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ZZ

DECLASSIFIED

Authority State 3-6-79 letter

By is, NARS, Date 3-21-79

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Thursday, February 8, 1968

TEXT OF CABLE FROM AMBASSADOR BUNKER (Saigon, 18562)

SUBJECT: COSVN Order for Tet Offensive

The following is the combined documents exploitation center translation of a document captured on February 3 in Tay Ninh Province. The document is a carbon copy of what appears to be the general order from COSVN to its military forces for the Tet offensive.

Begin text:

Headquarters, South Vietnam
Liberation Army

Enclosure
B

Order of the Day
of the Headquarters,
All South Vietnam Liberation Armed Forces

To all cadre and combatants,

"Move Forward to Achieve Final Victory"

The Tet greeting of Chairman Ho is actually a combat order for our entire army and population.

And in compliance with the attack order of the Presidium, Central Committee South Vietnam Liberation Front, all cadre and combatants of all South Vietnam Liberation Armed Forces should move forward to:

Carry out direct attacks on all the Headquarters of the enemy, to disrupt the US Imperialists' will for aggression and to smash the Puppet Government and Puppet Army, the lackeys of the US. Restore power to the people, completely liberate 14,000,000 people of South Vietnam fulfill our revolutionary task of establishing democracy throughout the country.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 2 -

This will be the greatest battle ever fought throughout the history of our country. It will bring forth world-wide change but will also require many sacrifices. It will decide the fate and the survival of our fatherland and will shake the world and cause the most bitter failure to the imperialist ringleaders.

Our country has a history of four thousand years of fighting and defeating foreign aggression, particularly glorious battles such as Bach Dang, Chi Lang, Dong-Da and Dien Bien Phu. We defeated the special war and are defeating the limited war of the Americans. We resolutely move forward to completely defeat the American aggressors in order to restore independence and liberty in our country.

Dear Comrades,

Our liberation armed units have had many achievements in the past. This will be a good opportunity for you to score more brilliant and heroic victories. Through this opportunity, you will be able to make maximum use of your abilities, demonstrate your devotion to the revolution and your unsubdued will to get even for what has been done to our country and brighten our beloved country.

In the name of our fatherland's independence and liberty, Headquarters of all South Vietnam Liberation Armed Forces orders every cadre and combatant to:

1. Move forward aggressively to carry out decisive and repeated attacks in order to annihilate as many American, Satellite and Puppet troops as possible in conjunction with political struggles and military proselyting activities. Each cadre and combatant must be doggedly determined to accomplish their combat mission. Each local area must also accomplish its assigned mission.

2. Display to the utmost your revolutionary heroism by surmounting all hardships and difficulties and making sacrifices so as to be able to fight continually and aggressively. Be prepared to smash all enemy counter attacks and maintain your revolutionary standpoint under all circumstances. Be resolute in achieving continuous victories and secure the final victory at all costs.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 3 -

3. Correctly comply with all combat discipline and the Front policies. Strive to assist and protect the people and motivate them to comply with the Front policies.

It is evident that the American aggressors are losing.

The call for assault to achieve independence and liberty has sounded.

The Truong Son and the Mekong river are moving.

You, comrades should act as heroes of Vietnam and with the spirit and pride of combatants of the Liberation Army.

The final victory will be with us.

- Day - Month 1968

Instruction: This enclosure B will be read to every cadre and combatant prior to departure for attack.

Comment: JUSPAO is processing this document for release February 8 or 9.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~