

~~SANITIZED~~ 41

CITE: JCS 01272

3 FEBRUARY 1968

DTG : 030332Z

FROM: GENERAL WHEELER, CJCS

TO : GENERAL WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV

INFO: ADMIRAL SHARP, CINCPAC

History

SUBJ: KHE SANH

REF: JCS 01147 JAN 68

1. I SENT YOU EARLIER A MESSAGE REGARDING PRESIDENTIAL CONCERN RELATIVE TO REINFORCEMENT AND RESUPPLY OF KHE SANH DURING BAD WEATHER WITH THE HIGHWAY CLOSED AND THE AIRFIELD INTERDICITED. I REPORTED TO YOU THAT MY RESPONSE WAS THAT HELICOPTERS CAN FLY WHEN FIXED WING AIRCRAFT CANNOT AND THAT HELICOPTERS DO NOT NEED AN AIRSTRIP. ALSO, WEATHER SO BAD THAT HELICOPTERS CANNOT FLY SOME PART OF THE DAY IS MOST UNUSUAL. MOREOVER, IN EXTREMES, ROAD CAN BE OPENED BUT AT A COST.

~~SANITIZED~~
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
N.J. 90-62
By John. NARA. Date 8-27-91

2. I HAVE JUST HAD A PHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESIDENT IN WHICH HE REITERATED HIS CONCERN THAT THE SITUATION COULD BECOME SO SERIOUS IN THE KHE SANH AREA HE COULD BE CONFRONTED WITH A DECISION

WHICH HE DOES NOT WANT TO BE FORCED TO MAKE. I REPEATED MY FOREGOING ASSESSMENT TO HIM AND TOLD HIM OF MY CONVERSATION WITH YOU THIS MORNING IN WHICH YOU STATED YOUR BELIEF THAT AN ATTACK WOULD SOON BE MADE AT KHE SANH (PERHAPS TONIGHT), THAT IT WOULD BE A

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BLOODY FIGHT BUT THAT YOU ARE CONFIDENT THAT THE POSITION CAN BE HELD. AS TO REINFORCEMENTS, I POINTED OUT THAT YOU HAVE THE BULK OF THE 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION AVAILABLE AND THAT YOU HAVE AUTHORITY TO USE COFRAM AND THE ASSENT TO DO SO.

3. IN RESPONSE, THE PRESIDENT ASKED ME IF THERE IS ANY REINFORCEMENT OR HELP THAT WE CAN GIVE YOU.

4. I RECALL THAT I TOLD YOU IN MY EARLIER MESSAGE THAT NO EARLY REPLY WAS NEEDED. HOWEVER, SINCE I WILL BE SEEING THE PRESIDENT TOMORROW AT NOON, I NEED A RESPONSE FROM YOU BY ABOUT 0900 WASHINGTON TIME, IN ORDER TO DISCUSS INTELLIGENTLY WITH HIM THE SITUATION, YOUR VIEWS, AND ANY REQUEST WHICH YOU SEE FIT TO PUT FORWARD.

5. I RECOGNIZE THAT THIS IS SHORT NOTICE; ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PRESIDENT IS CONCERNED ALL THE MORE BECAUSE OF THE HAPPENINGS OF THE LAST FOUR DAYS IN VIETNAM AND THE TEMPO OF VC/NVA ACTION AGAINST VIETNAM AND US FORCES AND INSTALLATION. REQUEST, THEREFORE, THAT YOU FURNISH ME YOUR JUDGMENTS AS TO THE PROBLEMS SET FORTH ABOVE BY THE TIME SPECIFIED. WARM REGARDS.