

Memorandum

28

TO : Colonel D. P. McAuliffe,
Executive to CJCS

DATE: 20 March 1968

FROM : Colonel H. W. Card, Jr., USMC
Pacific Division, J-3

SUBJECT: Informal Answer to Another "Screwy Idea"

1. On the surface, this idea appears to be ridiculous but we are not set in concrete and we may be forced to water down our estimate after we analyze a few statistics.

2. To provide sufficient concrete for a single trench 600 yards long, 2 feet wide and 3 feet deep would require:

400 Cu yds of concrete, which weighs

800 tons, and which would require about

116 sorties of aircraft (C-130/C-123/CH-53/CH-46).

This is approximately

3 times the daily supply effort for Khe Sanh which receives, on the average day,

300 tons of critical (Class I, III, V) supplies to sustain itself.

3. To place this idea in the proper perspective, it is pertinent to note that on 19 March, Khe Sanh received 286 tons of supplies which required 43 sorties of aircraft distributed as follows:

16 - C-130
3 - C-123
7 - CH-53
17 - CH-46

4. On the basis of the foregoing, it is estimated that if sufficient aircraft were available it would take the commitment of about 120 sorties (C-130, C-123, CH-53, CH-46) to fill this (600 yd/2'3') trench with liquid concrete. Estimating that the enemy constructed at least 20 such trenches for a perimeter of about 14,000 yds around Khe Sanh it would take about 2,400 sorties of aircraft to do the job (assuming no slop-over or bailing by the wily enemy).

5. For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that approximately 60 sorties per day could be flown on this project. It would, therefore, take at least 40 good flying days to complete the job. (This assumes, of course, that no aircraft are shot down by the enemy while they hover over the area to discharge their concrete into the enemy trench system.)

6. It is our summary conclusion that, while the suggestion appears solid and weighty, it is by no means feasible enough on which to base a concrete answer.



H. W. CARD, JR.
Colonel, USMC
Current Operations Br.
Pacific Division, J-3