

Subject: I Corps Operations

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1. I have reviewed Gen. Cushman's plans for the next six-eight weeks in Northern I Corps. Priority will be given to destroying enemy forces in coastal areas of Thua Thien and Quang Tri; blocking enemy use of Route 547 and interdicting his lines of communication in the A Shau valley; and mounting offensive operations against enemy forces in Khe Sanh area; to include opening of Route 9. The latter is planned to commence about 1 April.

2. As a result of above priorities, with extreme demands on logistic and helicopter support, Gen. Cushman does not plan to execute the assault and occupation of A Shau valley and raids into the associated base areas 607 and 611, as had been planned and approved for approximately 1 April. In lieu of assault operations into the A Shau valley, extensive reconnaissance operations by U. S. and Vietnamese special forces, and organic assets will continue along Route 547 to the valley. The reconnaissance will be backed up by at least one brigade of the 101st Airborne, operating out of Cumberland fire base. Targets in the valley will be developed for air and artillery attack. Raids of short duration by air mobile forces may be conducted to harass and destroy enemy logistical installations.

3. In conjunction with operations beginning in early April along Highway 9 and on the Khe Sanh plateau, we will submit contingency plans employing up to brigade size forces (US/ARVN) in operations against enemy bases in Laos. These plans will be focused on known enemy installations and/or forces which we cannot reduce by B-52 strikes, tactical air and other measures short of incursions by ground forces. Plans will be in consonance with Southeast Asia Coordination Conference discussions and coordinated with American Embassy, Laos. I will keep you apprised of our plans and requirements as they evolve.

~~TOP SECRET EYES ONLY~~

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Authority OSD Ltr 6/26/79
By SPW/ISP/RG, NARA, Date 2/13/96