

~~TOP SECRET~~

*Pre-file*

*151*  
June 26, 1967

Mr. President:

The attached cable from General Westmoreland reports on his trip to the Kontum area on Saturday, following the heavy fighting in that area last week.

The General has been concerned with the recent enemy build-up in this area and last week directed the deployment of additional forces to the area. Operation GREELEY, in which Company Alpha was badly mauled -- on which he reports in this message -- was the spoiling action by which the General hoped to relieve the enemy pressure in this area.

From his report, it would appear this operation met with some initial success.

W. W. Rostow

~~TOP SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(b)

White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983

By *LG*, NARA, Date *6-27-91*

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

~~TOP SECRET~~

107c  
Monday, June 26, 1967

TEXT OF CABLE FROM GENERAL WESTMORELAND (MACV, 5995)

SUBJECT: Operations in Kontum Province

I have just returned from Pleiku and Kontum provinces where I talked to key U.S. and Vietnamese officials. It is now quite evident that the 173 Brigade was deployed to Kontum in the nick of time. During the past two weeks the enemy has been very aggressive in the area. He pursued a campaign to harass the people and attack outposts along Highway 14. These actions served as a cover for the positioning of North Vietnamese battalions around Dak To, which I am confident he intended to attack within a matter of days. The population became nervous, manifest by eight hamlets being abandoned with the people seeking refuge in the towns.

As Lt. Col. Luat, Vietnamese 24th Special Zone Commander, explained to me, the first phase of the enemy's plan has now failed and the people have regained their confidence because of the presence of Allied troops. He reports that seven of the eight abandoned hamlets have now been reoccupied.

Larsen has put Peers, Commanding General 4th Division, in command of the operations in Kontum as well as Pleiku. Peers has designated Brigadier General Walker as Task Force Commander and counter-part to Luat of the Vietnamese 24th Special Zone, with headquarters in Kontum City. Walker has operational control over the 173 Brigade and the 2d Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division. If additional troops of the 1st Cavalry Division are required, the Commanding General of the 1st Cavalry Division will assume command.

The North Vietnamese Army 24th Regiment has apparently been reinforced by additional North Vietnamese troops. Luat believes that this reinforcement could be as much as two regiments, but I believe this to be an over estimate. Perhaps as much as one additional regiment is in the area.

I was briefed in detail by Brigadier General Deane of the 173 Brigade, the Battalion Commander of the 2d Battalion 503d Airborne

~~TOP SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12356, Sec 3.3

DA Memo, Jan. 5, 1968

By 117, NARA Date 6-27-94

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

Infantry, Lt. Col. Partain, and Captain Milton of "A" Company which unit carried the brunt of the battle against what was probably a North Vietnamese battalion. I addressed the 43 men that remained in the company and subsequently visited the 18th evac hospital in Pleiku, where I talked to a number of the wounded.

Company "A" took extremely heavy casualties. Of 141 men, 76 were killed and 22 were wounded. All four platoon leaders were killed. As I analyze the situation, Company "A" made an excellent account of itself although only 106 enemy bodies were actually seen by people who survived. From the reports of the men on the ground and the forward air controllers, and in consideration of the artillery and air strikes delivered against the enemy, actual casualties inflicted were probably several fold greater. The Brigade, Battalion, and Company Commanders estimate that there were over 450 enemy killed. Needless to say, this estimate cannot be chalked up as a matter of record.

Men who were in the battle tell me that they were attacked repeatedly by sizeable forces which they met with maximum fire. After several hours the enemy gave up and withdrew from the battlefield, suggesting that he had had enough. Morale of the men remaining in the hard-hit company is high. They will receive replacements tomorrow and rebuild the company. Their spirits and outlook are remarkable.

The Special Forces and CIDG have done an excellent job in the area but at the cost of four Special Forces NCO's and a number of CIDG soldiers killed. A patrol from the Dak To Special Forces camp on June 13 gave warning of the enemy build-up.