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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 8, 1968

Pres file

Mr. President:

Herewith Westy reports minor
operations at Khe Sanh.

Weather operational for both resupply
and tactical air support.

W.W. Rostow

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Thursday, February 8, 1968

Following is the text of a cable sent by General Westmoreland at 5:22 AM this morning.

This is the fourth report on the Khe Sanh area and covers the period from midnight EST February 7 to midnight EST February 8.

During this period the Khe Sanh combat base continued to receive sporadic shelling from mortar and rockets throughout the afternoon and night.

By 3:00am February 7 thirty two persons had been helilifted from the Lang Vei special forces camp, including 14 Americans. Three helicopters received enemy fire in the extraction resulting in one pilot being wounded. Three enemy tanks are reported to have been destroyed in the Lang Vei area.

At 4:25 pm the Marine outpost southwest of Khe Sanh started receiving rocket and mortar fire, followed by a ground attack. The attack continued until 5:45 pm. The enemy penetrated the wire of the platoon outpost but was repulsed. The enemy broke contact by 6:30 pm.

At 8:00 pm a Marine reinforcing element moved into position at the outpost. The position continued to receive sporadic incoming fire throughout the morning (last evening Washington time). The enemy fire was returned but with unknown results. During the period one Marine was reported killed, and two Marines were wounded and evacuated.

At 10:45 pm EST an air observer reported four enemy tanks southwest of Khe Sanh. Air strikes were run and it is believed that two of the tanks were disabled. An air observer also reported sighting 20 vehicles moving in a westerly direction five kilometers west of Lang Vei. Air strikes were conducted with unknown results.

During the period Marine tactical air flew 44 sorties in support of the area, the Air Force flew 98 sorties, the Navy 37, for a total of 179 sorties. Four Arc Light strikes (35 sorties) were flown against targets in the Niagara area. Reported bomb damage assessment as the result of the Arc Light strikes included three secondary fires and numerous secondary explosions.

The logistics status remains satisfactory in the Khe Sanh area. Airlift resupply provided 127 short tons of supplies, 94 tons of which was

ammunition. Individual combat rations were increased from 15% to 26 days.

No COFRAM type ammunition was expended during this period.

For the period encompassing the 24-hours of February 8 EST, seven Arc Light strikes (45 sorties) will be flown in the Niagara area. Tactical sorties include 44 Marine, 48 Air Force, and 52 Navy, for a total of 144 sorties. The Marines will have 16 aircraft on call for the Khe Sanh area while the Air Force will have 120 sorties on alert. Additional sorties that could theoretically be diverted into the Khe Sanh area total 406 Air Force, 250 Navy, for a grand total of 656.

Enemy unit identifications in the Khe Sanh area remain the same as previously reported.

The weather on the afternoon of February 7 was marginal for flying with a ceiling of 1,500 feet. The period from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm was poor with low ceilings and visibility as low as one third to one half miles in fog. Weather conditions improved to marginal at 7:00 pm, with ceilings of 2,000 feet and good visibility.

The forecast is for marginal to good conditions in the afternoon and evening of today, with ceilings varying from 2,000 to 3,000 feet. Early tomorrow the weather will become poor, with low clouds and visibilities restricted to one quarter to one mile in fog. By morning the weather should improve again to marginal, with ceilings of 1,500 feet.