

January 31, 1968 20

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Rostow

Herewith Gen. Westmoreland's telephonic answers to the President's questions.

1. Casualties to date

From the beginning of the planned truce at 6 P. M., 29 January, the following casualties have been suffered by us or inflicted on the enemy:

-- Friendly: 421 killed in action, including 189 U. S.

-- Enemy: 4,320 killed in action
1,811 detainees, many of whom are prisoners of war

2. Enemy capacity to sustain present campaign

We see this as a 3-phase campaign.

The first phase involved build-up, sporadic attack, and a well-orchestrated psychological warfare program against the population.

We are now in the second phase, which is an all-out military effort throughout South Viet Nam, except for the two northern provinces. The enemy has achieved some local successes, but the initiative is turning against them. However, we feel that he has the capability of continuing this phase for perhaps several more days at great risk to himself.

The third phase will involve a massive attack in Quang Tri and Quang Nam provinces. The enemy is now poised for this phase which he considers his decisive campaign. Our air strikes have blunted his attack, but we still give him the capability to strike at any time with large forces supported by an abundance of artillery and rockets.

3. Relationship between North Vietnamese and North Korean actions

It would seem to us there is a relationship.

4. Is there a military impasse in South Viet Nam?

We do not think the situation in South Viet Nam is at an impasse, since the initiative is turning in favor of the government and the allies, and the enemy is suffering unprecedented casualties, indeed.

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DA Memo, Jan. 5, 1983

By LG, NARA Date 1-29-72

5. Is the enemy holding any towns in South Viet Nam now?

The enemy does not control any single town in South Viet Nam.

However, he has some degree of control in several towns. Specifically, he now has forces in Quang Tri, Hue, Duy Xuan, Kontum City, Chau Phu and Ben Tre, and scattered elements in Saigon.

I repeat, he does not control any single town. In these areas where the enemy has troops, they are confronted by Vietnamese troops and fighting continues.

6. What political and psychological problems do Ambassador Bunker and General Westmoreland foresee?

It seems to Ambassador Bunker and me that initially there will be some adverse psychological impact on the people and the government. However, if the government handles the matter carefully, they can use the opportunity to improve their position with the people.

President Thieu has the opportunity to exercise rare leadership.

The National Assembly has the opportunity to be more constructive.

President Thieu has declared martial law, but this will have to be approved by the Assembly after 12 days in accordance with the Constitution. The situation should not slow down major programs for a prolonged period. It will harden the government's position on negotiations with the Front. It may set back civilianization of the government.

Military success should give the Army of South Viet Nam and its leadership self-confidence and should encourage the acceleration of their improvement.

ROBERT M. GINSBURGH

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