

Tuesday, January 30, 1968, 10:00 P. M.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Pres file

SUBJECT: Westmoreland Reports U.S. Embassy Saigon Cleared of Viet Cong

At 9:00 P. M. (IST) General Westmoreland telephoned from the U.S. Embassy compound to report that the Embassy Chancery as well as the entire compound are completely cleared of Viet Cong attackers.

In the rest of Saigon, he reports that things are now quiet. There is still some fighting at the nearby U.S. base at Tan Son Nhut. This fighting at the base may be Viet Cong attempting to get out of the area. He reports he has all the strength needed to take care of this fighting.

Ambassador Bunker is safe but has not yet returned to his Embassy office. All Embassy civilians are safe, one marine was killed and two were wounded in the action. Four Military Police were killed and three were wounded. Nineteen Viet Cong were killed in the fighting.

Damage to the Embassy building is minimal. There was no structural damage but part of the lobby was destroyed and the outside of the building damaged.

General Westmoreland reconstructs the operation as follows:

At about 3:00 A. M. Saigon times a Viet Cong platoon of about twenty men dressed in civilian clothes and armed with automatic weapons, rockets, satchel charges and explosives, attacked the Embassy compound. They made a hole in the outer wall through which they crawled. Their purpose was apparently to destroy the building.

The MPs moved in, encountering sniper fire coming from buildings nearby. At about 5:00 A. M. U.S. troops moved into the compound, engaging the Viet Cong. At 8:00 A. M. a platoon of the 101 Airborne Division landed on the roof. The fighting ended about 9:00 A. M., all Viet Cong in the area believed killed.

151

Bromley Smith

BKS:amc

245
LATE REPORT:

A report just received from the Bien Hoa Airbase states that an attack by an enemy battalion has ended. Preliminary casualties are three U.S. killed and 44 wounded. Two aircraft destroyed and ten others damaged. Several buildings in the compound were damaged. Number of enemy attackers killed is unknown. All were dressed in South Vietnamese police uniforms.