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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

CM-3001-68
11 February 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Situation in Vietnam

You have received General Westmoreland's seventh report on the situation in the Khe Sanh area for the period through 11:00 PM EST, 10 February 1968. I talked to General Westmoreland at 8:15 AM EST this morning and obtained the information on the situation in Vietnam which is contained in the succeeding paragraphs.

As General Westmoreland's report indicated, Khe Sanh airfield was shelled yesterday. A C-130 aircraft was hit by fragments of a mortar shell upon landing, damaging its hydraulic system; they may be able to repair this aircraft tomorrow. General Westmoreland plans to use C-123 and Caribou aircraft in resupplying Khe Sanh and, to meet this need, has had General Momoyer convert for airlift use some C-123s used in the defoliation effort.

Sniper fire continued in Hue. The first of the three Vietnamese Marine Battalions to reinforce in Hue arrived there yesterday; in addition, elements of a US Marine Battalion were moved in. There was heavy fighting south of Danang, resulting in 195 enemy killed. There was light contact on the outskirts of Dalat.

The attack on Tan Son Nhut did materialize as General Westmoreland expected, resulting in 196 enemy killed and 170 or so weapons captured.

In the IV Corps area there was light contact in several towns.

A rallier (defector) taken at Khe Sanh gave information on the following order of enemy attack: (1) Lang Vei; (2) Con Thien; (3) Khe Sanh. He stated also that he had seen near Thanh Hoa several weeks

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ago about 20 missiles mounted on PT-76 Amphibious Tank chassis (the PT-76 was used at Lang Vei). General Westmoreland indicated these could be FROG missiles (see attachment) and that this could be the "big surprise" which the Soviet correspondent in Hanoi wrote about recently. Other possibilities for the "big surprise", in General Westmoreland's view, could be the use of SA-2 missiles near the DMZ, air strikes in the DMZ area by IL-28s, and MIG attacks against B-52s. General Westmoreland and his commanders are alert to all of these possibilities and taking appropriate measures.

In addition, General Westmoreland provided me the following assessment of South Korean and Australian troops in Vietnam:

"South Korean and Australian forces have aggressively and professionally fought the enemy wherever and whenever encountered. In addition to providing very capable defense of their own tactical areas of responsibility (TAOR) the presence of these allies has provided us the flexibility for redeployment of our own more mobile forces to contend with other threat areas. It is also significant that Highway 1 has remained open through the length of the Korean TAOR during the current situation. The fact that the more dramatic events of well coordinated enemy attacks have bypassed Korean and Australian areas is attributable to an extent to the emphasis of enemy strategy."

Earle G. Wheeler
EARLE G. WHEELER
Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachments

FROG Missile
PT-76 Amphibious Tank

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