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FROM WALT ROSTOW
TO THE PRESIDENT
CITE CAP80537

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FEBRUARY 24, 1968

TODAY'S KHE SANH REPORT:

- 1500 ROUNDS OF MORTAR AND ARTILLERY FIRE;
- SMALL PROBING GROUND CONTACTS;
- 185 TONS DELIVERED;
- BAD WEATHER CONTINUES;
- NEVERTHELESS, CONSIDERABLE AIR SUPPORT AND SOME SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority OSIA Date 1/3/79

By ip/18, NARA, Date 3-3-92

ADDITIONAL LATE ITEM: INTELLIGENCE INDICATES THE ENEMY'S MAJOR ARTILLERY REGIMENT HAS MOVED UP CLOSE TO THE BASE NEAR KHE SANH TOWN.

TEXT OF CABLE FROM GENERAL WESTMORELAND

THIS IS REPORT NUMBER TWENTY ON THE SITUATION IN THE KHE SANH/DMZ AREA AND COVERS THE 24-HOUR PERIOD FEBRUARY 23, 1968.

FRIENDLY ELEMENTS BORDERING IN THE DMZ EXPERIENCED AN ACCELERATED ENEMY THRUST YESTERDAY AS ENEMY FIRING WAS IN EXCESS OF 1500 ROUNDS OF MIXED MORTAR AND ARTILLERY, EARMARKED FOR FRIENDLY HELD INSTALLATIONS. KHE SANH COMBAT BASE, THE PREFERRED ENEMY TARGET, BORE OVER 85 PERCENT OF THESE ENEMY EXPLOSIVES AS 1000 ROUNDS OF ARTILLERY, AND 300 ROUNDS OF MORTAR IMPACTED IN THE VICINITY. CASUALTIES WERE: 10 KILLED IN ACTION, 51 WOUNDED IN ACTION (21 EVACUATED). INCIDENT TO THE BOMBARDMENT WAS A FIRE IN AN AMMUNITION SUPPLY DUMP, AS 1000 HIGH EXPLOSIVE ROUNDS, 120 CANISTER ROUNDS BOTH 90MM AND 500 BEEHIVE ROUNDS 106MM WERE DESTROYED. RESUPPLY IS SCHEDULED FOR TOMORROW. COUNTER BATTERY WAS FIRED ON SUSPECTED ENEMY FIRING POSITIONS RESULTING IN ONE LARGE SECONDARY EXPLOSION.

FEW AREAS WENT UNTouched IN NORTHERN QUANG TRI PROVINCE DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD. CAMP CARROLL RECEIVED 23 ROUNDS OF MORTAR; 26 ARTILLERY ROUNDS IMPACTED AT DONG HA. FOUR MARINES REQUIRED EVACUATION AT CAMP CARROLL; TWO MARINES

WERE SLIGHTLY WOUNDED AT DONG HA. AT CON THIEN, FOUR AFTERNOON ENEMY BARRAGES BROUGHT 65 ROUNDS OF HEAVY ARTILLERY ATOP POSITIONS HELD BY THE MARINES. AN ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENT FELL IN THE SALINE AREA AS ELEMENTS FROM THE 1ST MARINES COUNTED 61 ROUNDS, WHICH INFILTED MINOR WOUNDS ON ONE MARINE. FINALLY, ENEMY ATTENTION CONTINUED TO FOCUS AT CUA VIET AS THE 1ST AMTRAC RECEIVED 18 ROUNDS OF ARTILLERY.

IN GROUND ACTION YESTERDAY, AN ARVN RANGER BATTALION MADE CONTACT WITH AN ESTIMATED ENEMY BATTALION AT KHE SANH, 200-400 METERS FROM THE PERIMETER. FRIENDLY ARTILLERY WAS FIRED IN SUPPORT. CASUALTIES ARE UNREPORTED. ALSO, IN A SMALL CONTACT AGAINST A SMALL ENEMY FORCE, A MARINE COMPANY SUCCEEDED IN KILLING 7 NVA, WHILE SUSTAINING ONE FRIENDLY FATALITY.

THIRTY ROUNDS OF 105MM COFRAM ORDNANCE WERE EMPLOYED IN ONE MISSION IN SUPPORT OF THE ARVN RANGER BATTALION IN THE VICINITY OF THE KHE SANH COMBAT BASE ON A SUSPECTED NVA BATTALION, WITH UNDETERMINED RESULTS.

A TOTAL 351 TACTICAL SORTIES WERE FLOWN DURING THE PERIOD IN SUPPORT OF KHE SANH. MARINE AIRCRAFT FLEW 68 SORTIES. BOMB DAMAGE ASSESSMENT INCLUDED THREE SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS, TWO SECONDARY FIRES, AND SIX BUNKERS DESTROYED. THE AIR FORCE FLEW 199 SORTIES AND THE NAVY FLEW 84 SORTIES. WEATHER AGAIN NECESSITATED THE MAJORITY OF MISSIONS BEING COMBAT SKY SPOT. BOMB DAMAGE ASSESSMENT FROM VISUAL STRIKES INCLUDED SIX SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS, SEVEN SECONDARY FIRES, NINE ROAD CUTS, TWO ROCKET POSITIONS DESTROYED, AND FIVE TRUCKS AND FOUR BUNKERS DESTROYED. THERE WERE 14 B-52 STRIKES (45 SORTIES) FLOWN IN THE NIAGARA AREA.

AERIAL RESUPPLY TO KHE SANH FOR THE PERIOD AMOUNTED TO 165 SHORT TONS. MEDICAL SUPPLIES AMOUNTED TO ONE SHORT TON. IN ADDITION 17 REPLACEMENT PASSENGERS WERE LANDED AT THE THE AIR FIELD. RESUPPLY SORTIES TOTALED 15 ON 23 FEB. TEN C123 AIRCRAFT COMPLETED 10 AIRDROPS. THREE C123 AIRCRAFT LANDED AT THE AIRFIELD AS DID 2 MARINE HELICOPTERS.

FOR THE NEXT PERIOD 238 TACTICAL AIR SORTIES WILL BE FLOWN IN SUPPORT OF KHE SANH. THERE WILL BE SEVEN ARC LIGHT STRIKES (42 SORTIES) FLOWN IN THE NIAGARA AREA.

THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD, THE WEATHER AT KHE SANH WAS POOR, WITH LOW STRATUS CLOUDS REDUCING THE CEILING TO 100 TO 1000 FOOT BROKEN AND DENSE GROUND FOG LOWERING SURFACE VISIBILITY TO 1/16 TO 5 MILES.

THE FORECAST FOR TODAY IS FOR CLOUD CEILINGS AND SURFACE VISIBILITIES NEAR ZERO EXCEPT FROM 1000 AM TO 6:00 PM WHEN THE CEILING WILL RAISE TO 500 FOOT BROKEN AND THE VISIBILITY TO 1 MILE IN GROUND FOG AND DRIZZLE.

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