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~~TOP SECRET~~

Pres file

FROM WALT ROSTOW
TO THE PRESIDENT
CITE CAP 80481

~~TOP SECRET~~

HEREWITH GENERAL JOHNSON'S REPORT ON HIS MORNING CONVERSATION
WITH WESTY.

1. GENERAL WESTMORELAND HAD JUST COMPLETED A CALL TO
GENERAL ABRAMS AT MACV FORWARD LOCATED AT HUE/PHU BAI.
GENERAL ABRAMS STATED TO GENERAL WESTMORELAND THAT FOR THE
FIRST TIME HE, GENERAL ABRAMS, WAS PERMITTING HIMSELF TO BE
SOMWHAT ENCOURAGED. HE HAD VISITED THE AMERICAL DIVISION
AND THE 2D ARVN DIVISION ON 22 FEBRUARY AS WELL AS THE ELEMENTS
OF THE 3D BRIGADE, 82D AIRBORNE DIVISION, THAT HAVE ARRIVED
AT CHU LAI. THE BRIGADE HAS NOT YET COMPLETED ITS MOVE.
BOTH THE AMERICAL AND THE 2D ARVN DIVISION ARE PERFORMING
EFFECTIVELY AND ARE STEPPING UP OPERATIONS AWAY FROM THE
POPULATED AREAS ONCE AGAIN. GENERAL ABRAMS ALSO REPORTED
THAT THE EXPERIENCE LEVEL IN THE 3D BRIGADE, 82D AIRBORNE
DIVISION WAS VERY HIGH; THAT THEIR ATTITUDE WAS EXCELLENT;
AND THEY WERE ENCOURAGED BY THE RECEPTION GIVEN THEM BY GENERAL
KOSTER OF THE AMERICAL DIVISION. IT IS GENERAL WESTMORELAND'S
INTENTION TO EASE THE BRIGADE INTO COMBAT OPERATIONS SLOWLY
SO THAT TEAMWORK TRAINING WITHIN THE BRIGADE CAN BE
REFRESHED FULLY.

2. THE THREE VIETNAMESE MARINE BATTALIONS IN HUE HAVE
MADE SLOW PROGRESS BECAUSE OF A LACK OF DIRECT-FIRE HIGH VELOCITY
WEAPONS. TEN 106 MM RECOILLESS RIFLES ARRIVED IN HUE/PHU
BAI ON 22 FEBRUARY AND WILL BE DELIVERED TO THE VIETNAMESE
MARINES ON 23 FEBRUARY TO CORRECT THIS DEFICIENCY. IN ADDITION,
SRIGADIER GENERAL OSCAR DAVIS, ASSISTANT DIVISION COMMANDER
OF THE FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION, IS LOCATED AT THE FIRST DIVISION
COMMAND POST WITH GENERAL TRUONG, THE FIRST ARVN DIVISION
COMMANDER. GENERAL DAVIS IS ACTING AS FIRE COORDINATOR FOR
GENERAL TRUONG, AND GENERAL WESTMORELAND INDICATED THAT THIS
ARRANGEMENT IS WORKING WELL.

DECLASSIFIED

Authority GC/12 104-78, NSC/12 814-50

By u/p/ly, NARA, Date 3-4-92

3. THE FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION HAS ENCOUNTERED FOUR ENEMY BATTALIONS NORTH AND EAST OF HUE AND IS IN HEAVY CONTACT WITH THESE UNITS. THE DIVISION COMMANDER REPORTED SOME SUCCESS BUT HAS NOT REPORTED ANY DETAILS. FURTHER, TWO 8 INCH HOWITZERS HAVE ARRIVED NEAR QUANG TRI TO REINFORCE THE FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION AND AN ADDITIONAL TWO ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN POSITION TOMORROW (23 FEBRUARY) AT THE SAME LOCATION. THE FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION CAPTURED 12 PRISONERS. INITIAL REPORTS INDICATE THAT THREE DIFFERENT ENEMY REGIMENTS ARE REPRESENTED BY THE 12 PRISONERS. GENERAL WESTMORELAND DOES NOT KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS, BUT HE EXPECTS TO OBTAIN SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION FROM INTERROGATION THAT WILL BE EXPLOITABLE IN TERMS OF IDENTIFYING SOME INDICATION OF ENEMY INTENTION.

4. GENERAL WESTMORELAND EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT HUE MAY HAVE BEEN THE ENEMY'S PRIMARY OBJECTIVE FROM THE OUTSET OF THE TET OFFENSIVE. REPORTS INDICATE AN ENEMY EFFORT TO REINFORCE HUE THROUGH THE A SHAU VALLEY AND HE IS WATCHING THE A SHAU VALLEY VERY CAREFULLY.

5. THERE WAS LITTLE ACTIVITY IN THE II CORPS AREA.

6. THERE WAS CONTACT EARLY 22 FEBRUARY ABOUT 3 KILOMETERS WEST OF SAIGON WITH THE ENEMY REPULSED AND DISPERSED. NORTH OF SAIGON IN SOUTHERN BINH DUONG PROVINCE THE RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY OF THE 5TH ARVN DIVISION ENGAGED AN ENEMY FORCE KILLING 29 ENEMY WHILE LOSING ONLY ONE KILLED. SOUTHEAST OF SAIGON IN THE RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE AN ENEMY FORCE OVERRAN A LOCAL POLICE STATION KILLING 7 AND SEIZING A SMALL NUMBER OF WEAPONS, THE EXACT NUMBER NOT SPECIFIED.

7. ON THE AFTERNOON OF 22 FEBRUARY AT CAT LAI, ANTI-TANK ROCKETS WERE USED BY THE ENEMY TO STRIKE SEVERAL AMMUNITION BARGES. TWO BARGES EXPLODED AND TWO BARGES WERE BEACHED. DEMOLITION EXPERTS ARE IN CONTROL IN THE AREA AND ARE ASSESSING DAMAGE. SMALL ENEMY DETACHMENTS ARE INTERDICTING ROADS AROUND SAIGON USING THE RPG-2 OR 9-40 ROCKET AND RPG-7 OR 9-41 ROCKET WITH SOME EFFECTIVENESS AGAINST VEHICLES. AS WE WERE TALKING GENERAL WESTMORELAND REPORTED ARVN CONTACT WITH TWO ENEMY BATTALIONS EAST OF TAN SON NHUT WITH THE SPOOKY GUN SHIP WITH MINI-GUNS FIRING ON THIS FORCE. INITIAL REPORTS INDICATE 1 VC MAIN FORCE BATTALION AND 1 VC LOCAL FORCE BATTALION. THE SIZE OF THE ENEMY FORCE IS TENTATIVE AND SPECIFIC UNIT IDENTIFICATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE.

8. GENERAL WESTMORELAND REPORTS THAT SINCE THE TET OFFENSIVE BEGAN ON 29 JANUARY, 39,417 ENEMY HAVE BEEN REPORTED KILLED IN ACTION AND 6,590 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN DETAINED.

~~TOP SECRET~~

DTG 22/1644Z FEB 68