

Kien

29

Wednesday, February 28, 1968  
11:50 a. m.

~~TOP SECRET~~

MR. PRESIDENT:

Herewith the two regular morning reports from Saigon:

## 1. Khe Sanh - DMZ:

- less shelling; relatively good weather permits effective U. S. air and artillery action;
- high level of re-supply (237 tons);
- weather for next day not too bad.

## 2. MACV telephone conversation

- a good operation south of Danang at Tam Ky; serious and, we hope, sustained work to open Highway 1;
- still uncertainty about the actual strength of the enemy units outside of Saigon.

W. W. Rostow

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Authority OSD Ltr 10-18-78By ip/ly, NARA, Date 3-3-92

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Wednesday, February 28, 1968, 9:50 AM

TEXT OF CABLE FROM GENERAL WESTMORELAND

This is report number twenty-four on the situation in the Khe Sanh/DMZ area and covers the 24-hour period of February 27, 1968.

~~Enemy incoming~~ lessened somewhat yesterday at Khe Sanh compared with previous days as enemy shelling totaled 115 rounds of mortar, 15 rounds of artillery and 10 rounds of rocket. Casualties attributed to the shelling were one killed, 20 wounded (11 evacuated). There were no significant ground contacts reported, however, several significant sightings of enemy activities were made.

At 10:00 AM a resupply helicopter received small arms fire from enemy positioned 1000 meters east of Khe Sanh. ~~At 10:25 AM an air strike was executed southwest of Khe Sanh in Laos, and destroyed one vehicle believed to be an enemy tank.~~ At 11:10 AM Marines sighted eight enemy troops moving towards the Khe Sanh area with a 50 caliber weapon 2 1/2 kilometers east of Hill 881; air strikes were called with undetermined results. At 11:15 AM, an administrative officer directing air strikes 20 kilometers southwest of ~~Khe Sanh reported three large fires around the Co Roc area.~~ A vehicle convoy was spotted at the same location and air strikes were called in with undetermined results.

Throughout the afternoon incoming continued but of a sporadic nature. An artillery mission was fired on a known mortar site three kilometers southwest of Hill 881 resulting in ~~several secondary explosions.~~ An air strike run four kilometers southwest of Hill 881 resulted in ~~nine secondary explosions.~~ At 8:25 PM Marine Listening Post heard movement to the left of its position and received one grenade injuring two Marines. Fire was returned with unknown results. ~~Three additional large secondary explosions were observed four kilometers north of Khe Sanh as a result of a tactical air run.~~ Damages attributed to the day's incoming at Khe Sanh consisted of a helicopter destroyed by an enemy artillery round. Aircraft personnel were not injured.

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By cp/ly, NARA, Date 3-3-92

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Elsewhere at friendly installations bordering the DMZ, ~~enemy incoming~~ artillery, rocket and mortar rounds were significant. Camp Carroll received five rounds of mortar. At Dong Ha Combat Base, 11 rounds of artillery fell. No damages or casualties were recorded in either instance. Con Thien and Gio Linh received five mortar rounds and 38 artillery rounds respectively, with negative damage and casualties reported. Friendly casualties of two killed, seven wounded (six evacuated) were caused by 115 rounds of artillery and 25 mortar rounds falling at positions held by Marines in the Cua Viet area. The 1st AMTRAC received nine rounds of mixed artillery and mortar causing minor injuries to one individual.

In ground contacts yesterday in Operation Saline, search and destroy operations conducted by elements from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, in Mai Xa Thi Village, ~~accounted for six North Vietnamese Army killed.~~ In the contact one Marine was killed and three injured. On the Cua Viet, three landing craft convoys were fired upon with automatic weapons fire and mortars. In each instance negative casualties were reported.

There were five COFRAM missions fired expending 27 rounds of 155 MM and one round of 8" ordnance, resulting in ~~26 North Vietnamese Army killed.~~

The high total of ~~415 tactical air sorties~~ were flown in support of Khe Sanh during the period. Marine aircraft flew 157 sorties, with Bomb Damage including 10 secondary explosions, six secondary fires, one mortar position destroyed. Three bunkers destroyed, 20 structures destroyed, 20 structures destroyed, and 22 enemy killed. The Air Force flew 153 sorties and the Navy flew 105 sorties. Bomb Damage Assessment included ~~11 large fires (numerous small fires), 39 secondary explosions, 39 road cuts, eight confirmed enemy killed (15 probable).~~ One automatic weapons position destroyed, and two 37 MM guns destroyed. Six ARC LIGHT strikes (33 sorties) were flown in the Niagara area.

Air resupply for the period amounted to ~~237 short tons~~. Fifteen short tons of vehicles, six short tons of mail and three short tons of medical supplies completed the largest resupply tonnage delivery in many weeks. In addition, 68 passengers were landed at Khe Sanh. Resupply sorties totaled 46 on February 27. Fourteen C-130 aircraft completed ten air drops, and three air landed at the airfield. Twenty-eight Marine helicopters delivered passengers and cargo.

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For the next 24 hours, a total of 282 tactical air sorties are scheduled in support of Khe Sanh. Eight ARC LIGHT strikes (48 sorties) will be flown in the Niagara area.

Except for a brief period of fog at 9:00 AM on February 27 the weather was good the remainder of the morning and afternoon with partly cloudy skies and good visibilities. The weather remained generally good through the night until 4:00 AM on February 28 when fog formed, reducing visibilities to two miles by 8:00 AM. The forecast for the period next 24-hour period is for cloudy skies with continued visibility restrictions because of fog.

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

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CM-3055-68  
28 Feb 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with General Kerwin, CS, MACV

1. General Westmoreland was out of the office and I talked to General Kerwin, General Westmoreland's Chief of Staff. There is little to report concerning activities in SVN except for some updating of information reported in the Presidential operational/intelligence brief and in General Westmoreland's report #24 on the situation in the Khe Sanh/DMZ area.

2. In the action reported west of Tam Ky, a sweep of the areas increased enemy casualties to 239 KIA from the 148 reported earlier while U.S. losses increased from two to three KIA. No change in U.S. wounded. There is no further information on the reported movement of major communist elements to the coastal area between Da Nang and Tam Ky.

3. Action is underway to secure Highway 1 from Ai Van Pass to Phu Loc, and it is estimated that the road should be secure to permit engineer work within the next 72 hours. Concurrently, security operations are underway on Highway 1 between Phu Loc and Hue/Phu Bai; it is estimated that several more days will be required to secure the latter segment fully.

4. In II Corps at Dak To there is no change to reports already received here. A friendly long range patrol ambushed enemy forces 5 kilometers west of Kon Tum City resulting in 20 enemy killed and no friendly casualties.

5. Activities in III Corps consisted of indirect fire attacks already reported. Some of the casualties at Bien Hoa resulted from a direct rocket hit on a friendly bunker. I raised a question concerning any changes in location of the 5th and 9th VC Divisions and the 7th NVA Division and their subordinates in the Saigon area. General Kerwin reports no evidence of significant change in location of these units.

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Authority JOE 10-378  
By sp/sg, NARA, Date 3-3-92

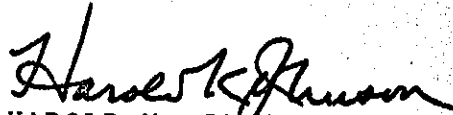
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6. In IV Corps Area no information was provided beyond that contained in the Presidential operational/intelligence brief.



HAROLD K. JOHNSON  
ACTING CHAIRMAN  
JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

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