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INFORMATION

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Saturday, March 16, 1968 - 9:00 am

Mr. President:

Weather luck holds at Khe Sanh:

- 234 incoming rounds;
- 351 friendly sorties plus 36 B-52's;
- recce and small attacks on A Shau Valley, of which we shall have more;
- 227 tons delivered.

For file

W. W. Rostow

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Authority OSIA/10-18-78
By SP/4, NARA, Date 4/2/92

Saturday, March 16, 1968, 8:30 AM

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Herewith, General Westmoreland's report number forty-one on the situation in the Khe Sanh/DMZ area for the 24-hour period ending 8:00 PM, 15 March.

Khe Sanh had clear weather after early morning haze lifted after 11:00 am. Prior to that time, Air Force resupply operations had been hampered.

During the period, Khe Sanh received 30 rounds of artillery, 14 rounds of rocket and 190 rounds of mortar fire, for a total of 234 rounds. The incoming fire resulted in one Marine killed and 13 wounded (three evacuated). Enemy indirect fire attacks marked the only activity at the base, as no ground contacts were reported. There was no change in either the disposition of Marines in defense at Khe Sanh, or in the enemy situation.

Elsewhere along the DMZ, contact was light with one exception. Dong Ha received twenty-five 140mm rocket rounds which wounded 13 personnel. Two required medical evacuation. Total casualty figures for the 3rd Marine Division area for the period were, two Marines killed, 39 wounded (16 evacuated), 14 enemy killed.

In tactical air operations, 351 sorties were flown. Marines flew 130, US Air Force 133, and the Navy 88. Bomb damage assessment included 53 secondary fires, 19 road cuts, 45 bunkers destroyed, three trucks destroyed, 18 secondary explosions, 25 enemy killed by air and one mortar position destroyed.

In the A Shau Valley, US Air Force flew four reconnaissance sorties and seven tactical strike sorties. Bomb damage assessment included three secondary explosions and 10 bunkers destroyed.

Six Arc Light strikes (36 sorties) were scheduled into the Niagara Area. One strike, within 1,200 meters of friendly troops, with fifteen secondary explosions reported.

Aerial resupply for the period totaled 227 short tons. One hundred and forty-two passenger replacements were landed at the field. Throughout the day, 49 sorties were flown. Fixed wing aircraft conducted 16 airdrops. Marine helicopters flew the remaining 33 sorties, delivering passengers and cargo.

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Authority 80-11652 Sec 5.(A)*LNBy esj, NARA Date 4/2/92

Three hundred and sixteen tactical air sorties were scheduled for the next 24-hour period, with the Marines planning 88, Air Force 128 and the Navy 100. Marines will maintain their 16 aircraft on call and the Air Force will have 120 alert sorties available on call. Six Arc Light strikes (36 sorties) are also scheduled.

The forecast for 16 March is for scattered clouds and good visibility by 11:00 am. Ceilings and visibility will again lower by mid-night and fog will reduce conditions to marginal by early morning on the seventeenth.