

Pres. file
9

Tuesday, June 25, 1968
3:15 p. m.

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MR. PRESIDENT:

Clark did not get to the attached item today:
proposed MACV item on changed tactics in
Khe Sanh area (western Quang Tri province).

There is some urgency, because of Baltimore
Sun leak.

Clark says Westy approved this shift before
he left, according to a message from Abrams.

Westy gets into Honolulu tomorrow, I believe.

If we go ahead today we should make sure:

- Westy is informed of this statement;
- he backs it.

W. W. Rostow

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Approved _____

No _____

Call me _____

Assure Westy is promptly informed
at Honolulu and Gen. Wheeler talks
to him there upon arrival _____

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White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1988
By ag, NARA, Date 7-1-92

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E.O. 12066, Sec. 3.3
DA Memo. Jan. 5, 1988
By ag, NARA, Date 7-1-92

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DRAFT OF PROPOSED ANNOUNCEMENT TO BE MADE BY MACV

1. The enemy was engaged at Khe Sanh earlier this year in order to combat him in the hinterlands rather than in the populated areas, to take maximum advantage of our air power and artillery, to prevent him from making a logistical base on the Quang Tri plateau and to sit astride the various potential infiltration routes.
2. General Westmoreland achieved all of these goals. He kept two enemy divisions tied down, destroyed more than half of the 20 to 25,000 troops which the enemy had committed, prevented the establishment of the logistical base and helped block the potential infiltration routes.
3. We now intend to reinforce the successes won by General Westmoreland at Khe Sanh.
4. There have been two significant changes in the situation since early this year. One is an increase in friendly strength, mobility and fire power, so that we are now more capable than we were of conducting both a mobile offense and defense in western Quang Tri. The second is the shift in Communist strength and tactics, necessitated because their earlier tactics resulted in disaster at Khe Sanh.
5. They are now confronting us throughout Vietnam with stand-off mortar and artillery attacks and with small ground attacks, attempting to evade our efforts to fix and destroy their large formations. Additionally, they have increased significantly their strength immediately south of the DMZ -- from the equivalent of six divisions in I Corps in January to the equivalent of at least eight divisions today.
6. Because of the increase in our strength, mobility and firepower, and of the change in Communist strength and tactics, we are now in a position to alter our own tactics.
7. During the battle of Khe Sanh, we took maximum advantage of our superior fire power. We now plan to take maximum advantage of our firepower plus our second great asset -- our mobility. The concept of our new disposition will be not linear, but mobile. The initiative in western Quang Tri province has been ours since Operation Pegasus. We are now taking steps to assure that it will continue to be ours.
8. We will use mobile forces, tied to no specific terrain, to attack, intercept, reinforce or take whatever action is most appropriate.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.3

DA Memo, Jan. 5, 1988

NARA, Date

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9. To take maximum advantage of the change in the enemy posture, we will close down the base at Khe Sanh. Having suffered one debacle with his earlier tactics at Khe Sanh, it is not logical to assume that the North Vietnamese would repeat that debacle. And it is not logical for us to be inflexible under the changed conditions.

10. I obviously am not going to go into details of precisely how we are deploying our forces or how we will utilize the additional maneuverability that we will gain by inactivating the base.

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