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FROM WALT ROSTON
TO THE PRESIDENT
CITE CAP20234

1968 JAN 11 22 41

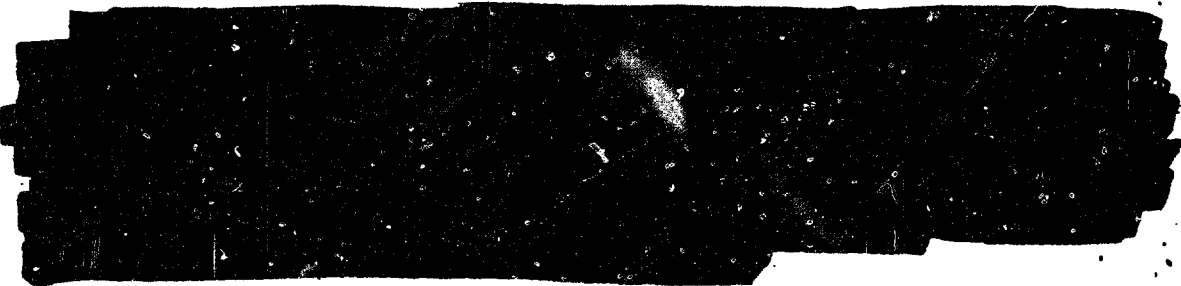
JANUARY 11, 1968

HEREWITH A CIA SUMMARY OF A LONGER TEXT ON THE ENEMY
THREAT TO KHE SANH.

IN THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER
OF INDICATIONS THAT THE ENEMY IS BUILDING UP ITS FORCES
IN THE LAOTIAN PANHANDLE WEST OF THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE.

THE TARGET PRIMARILY THREATENED BY THESE FORCES APPEARS
TO BE THE ALLIED BASE AT KHE SANH IN WESTERN QUANG TRI
PROVINCE OF SOUTH VIETNAM. ENEMY RECONNAISSANCE AND PROBING
ACTIVITY NEAR KHE SANH HAS INCREASED MARKEDLY IN THE LAST FEW
WEEKS.

THE COMMUNISTS COULD BE USING THE TIME BETWEEN NOW AND THE TET
HOLIDAYS TO COMPLETE THEIR CONCENTRATION AROUND KHE SANH IN
PREPARATION FOR AN OFFENSIVE AFTER TET.



THE COMMUNISTS COULD MUSTER A TOTAL FORCE OF OVER 20,000
SHOULD THEY DECIDE AT SOME POINT TO COMMIT ALL PERSONNEL
FROM THE ELEMENTS OF THE FOUR DIVISIONS NOW IN THE GENERAL
AREA. THIS IS CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN THEY WOULD NEED MERELY
TO TAKE KHE SANH. THEIR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE IN ATTACKING KHE
SANH WOULD BE TO DRAW US REINFORCEMENTS INTO THE AREA, TIE
THEM TO STATIC DEFENSIVE POSITIONS, AND INFLICT MAXIMUM
CASUALTIES ON US FORCES OVER A PERIOD OF TIME.

THE BUILDUP OF FORCES IN LAOS AND WESTERN QUANG TRI
PROVINCE ALSO STRENGTHENS NORTH VIETNAMESE DEFENSE
OF THE LAOS CORRIDOR.



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Approved for Release
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