

MEMORANDUM FOR CORRESPONDENTS

NO. 20-11
28 JANUARY 1971

SUBJECT: Summary of U.S. Support of ARVN Route 4 Operations,
13 - 25 January 1971

HQ MACV - U.S. sea and air operations in support of the ARVN operation along Route 4 in Cambodia terminated 25 January. At that time the USS CLEVELAND (LPD) and the USS IWO JIMA (LPH) rejoined the other ships of the Amphibious Ready Group and resumed normal operations.

The limited support provided to the RVNAF supplemented their own support which provided the bulk of the needs for the operation.

A small Army group of approximately 40 personnel embarked in the CLEVELAND for the purpose of providing logistics and communications support. The first mission was flown from the deck of the CLEVELAND stationed in off-shore waters on 13 January.

About 60 other U.S. Army personnel were involved in the Army air operations along Route 4. This included gunships, observation aircraft and command and control aircraft. This force operated from a forward base established on Phu Quoc Island and from the flight pad of the CLEVELAND.

U.S. Army aircraft assigned to the operations included five UH-1s (including command and control ships); six AH-1Gs; three CH-47s; and three O-1s. Those aircraft flew less than 25 sorties a day. In addition, U.S. Air Force aircraft including two B-52 missions flew less than 15 sorties a day.

From the U.S. Marine Corps helicopter squadron on board the USS IWO JIMA a few logistical missions were flown between the IWO JIMA and the CLEVELAND, or between the ships and Phu Quoc Island. U.S. Army airborne coordinators along with ARVN observers coordinated air activities of helicopter gunships under the control of FACs to ensure that friendly forces were not endangered by air operations.

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Neither U.S. ground combat troops nor ground advisors entered Cambodia or accompanied ARVN forces. There were no U.S. combat casualties, and there were no U.S. aircraft combat losses related to the operation. There was one aircraft operational lost in an accident at take-off of an Army AH-1G helicopter from the CLEVELAND. The crew was uninjured.

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