

# The Last Phantom From Thailand

## Thailand

The last American F-4 Phantom jets to fly a bombing mission over Cambodia took off today at 9:13 a.m. (7:13 p.m. PDT) yesterday. Few of the 5000 GIs stationed here gave the planes a second glance.

The mission was treated as routine, with the exception that one of the planes was flown by the American commander at Korat, Colonel Robert Crouch, 51, of Honolulu.

Four Phantom jets and two A-7 Corsair IIs were in the last group of planes to take off. They had one hour and 45 minutes to bomb their targets in Cambodia and then leave Cambodian air space under the bombing deadline.

Flying another Phantom, a tan-and-green camouflage—painted aircraft with tiger teeth painted on its pointed nose and "mad Dog" stenciled on its under-

carriage, was Lieutenant Jerome L. Fleming, 24, of Kosciusko, Miss.

The sandy-haired pilot was asked how he felt knowing he might be the last American pilot to drop bombs on Indochina?

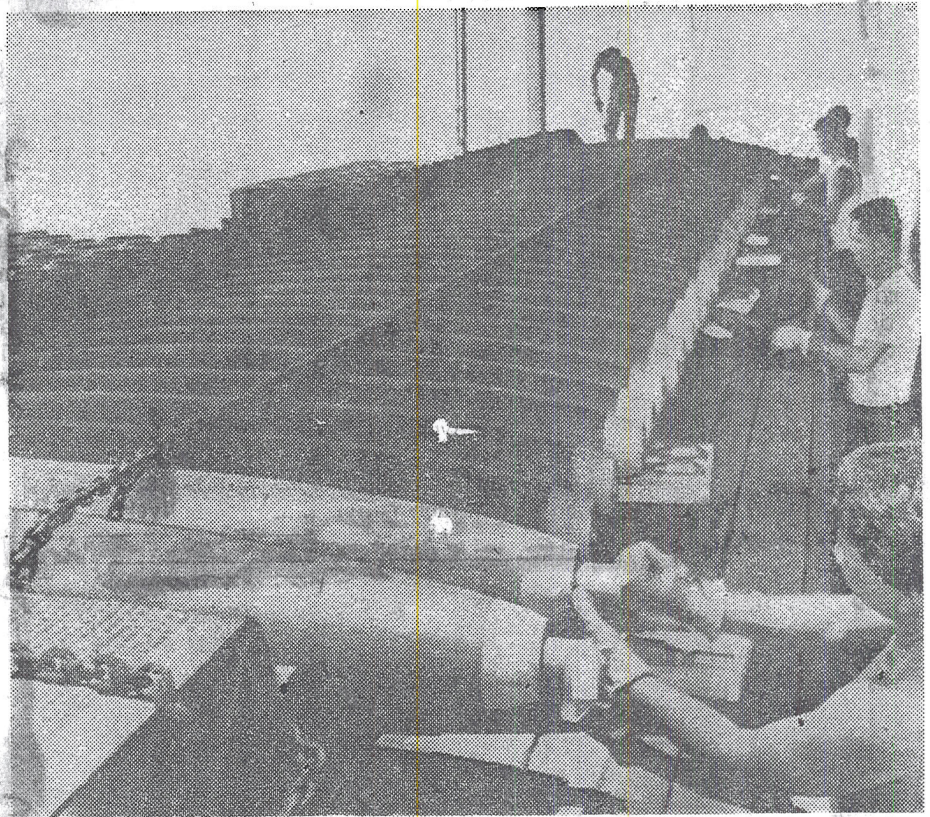
"It feels good to me," Fleming said. "I'm glad the bombing's going to stop. I think it's about time we stopped. We've been here long enough."

"I just hope we get back from this trip," he added with a grin.

Crouch, a veteran of the Indochina war, said before he climbed into the cockpit of his Phantom that today is a very significant day for all the people of the world. I hope that our investment in attempts to achieve peace in Southeast Asia come to fruition today.

"I tend to look at the mission today as just another working day. We'll see what the future holds."

United Press



AP Wirephoto

U.S. ground crews fused bombs yesterday for the last runs over Cambodia