



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISSING VIETNAM WAR AIRMAN IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Air Force Col. Gilbert S. Palmer Jr., 37, of Upper Darby, Pa., will be buried Nov. 1, in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. On Feb. 27, 1968, Palmer and one other crew member were carrying out photo-reconnaissance of enemy targets in Quang Binh, North Vietnam, in their RF-4C aircraft. After losing radio communication, Palmer's plane crashed in an unknown location and could not be located during search efforts at the time.

In 1999, a U.S./Lao People's Democratic Republic (L.P.D.R.) recovery team, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), was taken by a local villager to a crash site in Savannakhet Province, near the Vietnamese border. Aircraft wreckage from an RF-4 reconnaissance aircraft was found. Additional investigations of the crash site, between 2001 and 2010, recovered human remains and military equipment specific to Palmer's aircraft.

In addition to forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from the JPAC, and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory used mitochondrial DNA – which matched that of Palmer's brother – in the identification of the remains.

More than 1,600 Americans remain missing from the Vietnam War. More than 900 servicemen have been accounted for from that conflict, and returned to their families for burial with military honors since 1973. The U.S. government continues to work closely with the governments of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia to recover all Americans lost in the conflict.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, call (703) 699-1169 or visit the DPMO Web site at www.dtic.mil/dpmo.

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