



A Canberra B.20 of 2 Sqn, RAAF, passes Penang Island on its return to RAAF Butterworth, Malaya, after a bombing exercise over the Song Song range. The squadron, with its eight aircraft, is moving to South Vietnam to increase Australia's commitment in that conflict, as recounted on the preceding page

there, the RAAF Caribous ferry down supplies from Saigon which have been landed there by RAAF C-130s from Australia. C-130s operating in direct support of the Australian task force, will resume flights into Vung Tau immediately this is possible. The present closure of the main runway, however, makes it likely that the base for 2 Sqn, with Canberras, will be elsewhere.

#### New Italian Strike Fighter

THE FIAT G.91Y, a twin-engined development of the light tactical fighter flown by the Italian, German and Greek air forces, made its first flight from Turin on December 27 (illustrated on this page and on page 2; the aircraft was described in our June 2, 1966, issue, page 936). The G.91Y, piloted by Cmdt Vittorio Sanseverino, Fiat's chief test pilot, performed satisfactorily during the 45min maiden flight.

Two GE J85-GE-13 engines, delivering a total static thrust of 8,160lb with afterburner, greatly enliven the performance of the new variant, the prototype of which has been rebuilt from an earlier machine. Limiting Mach number is 0.96 at altitude. Maximum take-off weight of the G.91Y, which is fitted with more modern navigation and weapons control equipment than are currently operational models, is 19,200lb and empty weight is 9,500lb.

No sales of the G.91Y have yet been announced, though its development has been encouraged by the Italian Government and the Aeronautica Militare can be expected to buy some, possibly to replace F-84Fs and RF-84Fs. The aircraft was at one time of close interest as a potential Thunderjet replacement for the Royal Netherlands and Belgian Air Forces, but their choice is now the Northrop F-5.

#### New Job for Hummingbird

UNDER TWO RECENTLY ANNOUNCED contracts from the USAF, the Lockheed Hummingbird VTOL research aircraft is to be modified for flight and stability development work in support of the United States/West German Republic VTOL fighter programme.

Two XV-4A Hummingbirds were built under US Army contract to evaluate the augmented-jet ejector-lift system, and the



Two engines where there was only one before: the Fiat G.91Y twin-engined tactical strike/reconnaissance fighter lands at Turin after its first flight on December 27. (See item on this page)

first flew on July 7, 1962, but crashed on June 10, 1964, with the loss of its pilot.

The first contract covers the modification by Lockheed-Georgia of the remaining aircraft to take six General Electric engines of unspecified type, in place of the two existing Pratt & Whitney JT12A-3s, each of 3,300lb thrust. Two of the six will be deflected-thrust propulsion engines, while the remainder will be of the pure lift type, thus simulating the powerplant configuration of the US/German VTOL fighter project.

Work is to start immediately, and the XV-4B, as it will be known, will fly late in 1967. Preliminary flight trials by the company will last for about five months, after which the aircraft will be transferred to North American, who, under the second contract (to last for 39 months), will develop and install a stability/flight control system in conjunction with the USAF Dynamics Laboratory. The aircraft will then be used in an intensive flight programme to evaluate

handling qualities and establish control system criteria.

#### More Migs for Vietnam

NORTH VIETNAM has doubled the size of its Mig force in recent weeks with the delivery by sea of 100 new aircraft from Russia, according to a report from Saigon. North Vietnam now has an estimated 200 Migs, composed of the -17, -19 and -21 models, and most of these are believed to be operational in the Red River delta industrial area around Hanoi and the port of Haiphong.

#### More Alouettes for RNethAF

AN ORDER worth about £2 million has been placed by the Royal Netherlands Air Force for 27 Sud Alouette III helicopters. This will be later extended to 45, thus making the Netherlands—which already has Alouette IIIs in service—the largest user of the type.

The aircraft will be used for artillery observation, casualty evacuation and light transport work.

A second DH Rapide has recently been presented to the Parachute Regiment's Red Devils team of free fall parachutists by Rothmans of Pall Mall. The new aircraft, "Pegasus," is seen here with the original Rapide "Invicta." In the last 12 months the company has sponsored three overseas demonstrations by members of the Red Devils appearing as the Rothmans Sky Divers in their free time

