

Aid Rushed to U.S.-Backed Base In Laos After Foe's Penetration

Special to The New York Times FEB 16 1971

VIENTIANE, Laos, Feb. 15— Reinforcements and supplies were flown today to the American-backed base at Long Tieng, which was penetrated yesterday by North Vietnamese commandos.

"We are determined to hold Long Tieng," Prince Sisouk na Champassak, the deputy defense minister, said at a news conference called to report developments at the base.

He said that several hundred North Vietnamese, attacking before dawn yesterday behind barrages of rocket and mortar fire, reached a base area within one or two miles of the airfield. The field itself was not damaged, he reported, but in two hours of fighting the commandos smashed food depots, the base's medical center, numerous buildings and other properties.

Among the buildings struck by the shelling was the home of Gen. Vang Pao, commander of the military region that includes Long Tieng. The general was not at home at the time.

It was during the commando raid that an American F-4 jet loosed some bombs by mistake within friendly lines. One American stationed at Long Tieng was wounded.

Prince Sisouk and American spokesmen said an investigation was under way to determine whether casualties and damage were caused by the American bombs or by enemy fire.

The commandos, coming un-

der attack by both American and Laotian planes, withdrew from the base a little after 6 A.M., Prince Sisouk reported.

The prince set enemy casualties at 21 killed and reported that a North Vietnamese who was wounded and taken prisoner said the North Vietnamese had suffered heavy losses.

The prisoner was the second taken by Laotian forces during the week. Both are being interrogated. Prince Sisouk said 10 Laotians were killed.

The prince described the situation around Long Tieng and its neighboring positions of Sam Thong and Ban Na as serious, but indicated there appeared to be no immediate threat of their being overrun.

The area is defended mainly by Meo and other tribesmen advised, trained and equipped by specialists from the American Central Intelligence Agency. American advisory, logistics and other liaison personnel work regularly at Long Tieng. Other Americans are also engaged there in relief activity for the United States aid program in Laos.

American transport planes of Air America and Continental Airlines, financed by United States funds, supply the Sam Thong-Long Tieng and other sectors in Laos and haul troops and other materials. Transport planes today were busy replenishing the supplies at Long Tieng.