

# OFFENSIVE IN LAOS PRESSED BY ENEMY

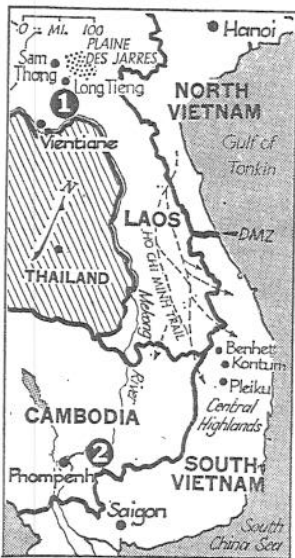
MAR 15 1972

## Heavy Fighting Is Reported on Ridge at Long Tieng

**NYTimes**  
VIENTIANE, Laos, March 14 (UPI)—Heavy fighting was reported under way tonight along the outer defenses of the American-backed base at Long Tieng just south of the Plaine des Jarres.

Skyline Ridge, one of the key defenses of the base, was said to be under attack by a battalion of North Vietnamese troops. The assault followed the enemy success yesterday in overrunning the defenses of Sam Thong, a support base six miles to the northwest.

Gen. Thongphan Knocksy, the Laotian Defense Ministry



The New York Times/March 15, 1972  
**Attack at Long Tieng (1)  
In eastern Cambodia (2),  
followed heavy shelling.  
U.S. bombers reportedly  
destroyed an enemy base.**

spokesman, said the prime objective of the Communists was to capture Long Tieng, thus opening the way to a drive southward toward Vientiane, about 80 miles away.

[United States sources in Vientiane, as quoted by Reuters, said that the Sam Thong garrison was holding on to positions west and southwest of that base, but doubt was expressed that they could hold out much longer.]

General Knocksy said the ground assault at Long Tieng had been preceded by shelling attacks in which one artillery shell was fired every 10 minutes at Skyline Ridge and the base itself.

Long Tieng is used by the Central Intelligence Agency to train Meo tribesmen in guerrilla fighting against the North Vietnamese and has long been a major target of Communist forces.

## Raids on Enemy Base Reported

SAIGON, South Vietnam, March 14 (AP)—United States military sources reported today that B-52 aircraft destroyed a major North Vietnamese jungle headquarters in eastern Cambodia last night as they flew raids to open the way for a South Vietnamese armored drive.

American advisers in the field said the bombing uncovered a complex of more than 100 underground bunkers filled with supplies. Thirty-four enemy soldiers were reported killed, and 200 others were said to have fled into the jungle 10 miles inside Cambodia and about 85 miles northwest of Saigon.

Farther north, in the Central Highlands region bordering Cambodia and Laos, South Vietnamese pilots were said to have knocked out three North Vietnamese tanks and eight trucks after a 30-vehicle convoy was spotted six miles southwest of Benhet. There was no confirmation by ground forces. Also in the highlands, the Saigon command reported 64 enemy soldiers killed in clashes with company-sized units near an installation known as Fire Base 5. It was the heaviest fighting in the highlands since United States officials began predicting an offensive there in January.