

Government Claims 2 Downed

N. Viet Planes Bomb Laos Village

VIENTIANE, Laos (UPI) — Laotian forces shot down two North Vietnamese planes near the Laotian village of Muong Yut, 200 miles northeast of here, the government announced Monday.

The government also announced, in a communique read to reporters by Finance Minister Sisouk Na Champassak, right-hand man of Premier Souvanna Phouma, that there had been a

serious attack on Nam Bac, a government strong point 60 miles north of the Royal Capital at Luang Prabang.

The communique also stated that two aircraft at Luang Prabang airport had been damaged by machinegun fire during a Pathet Lao raid there last night.

The communique did not say anything about the fate of government troops at Nam Bac.

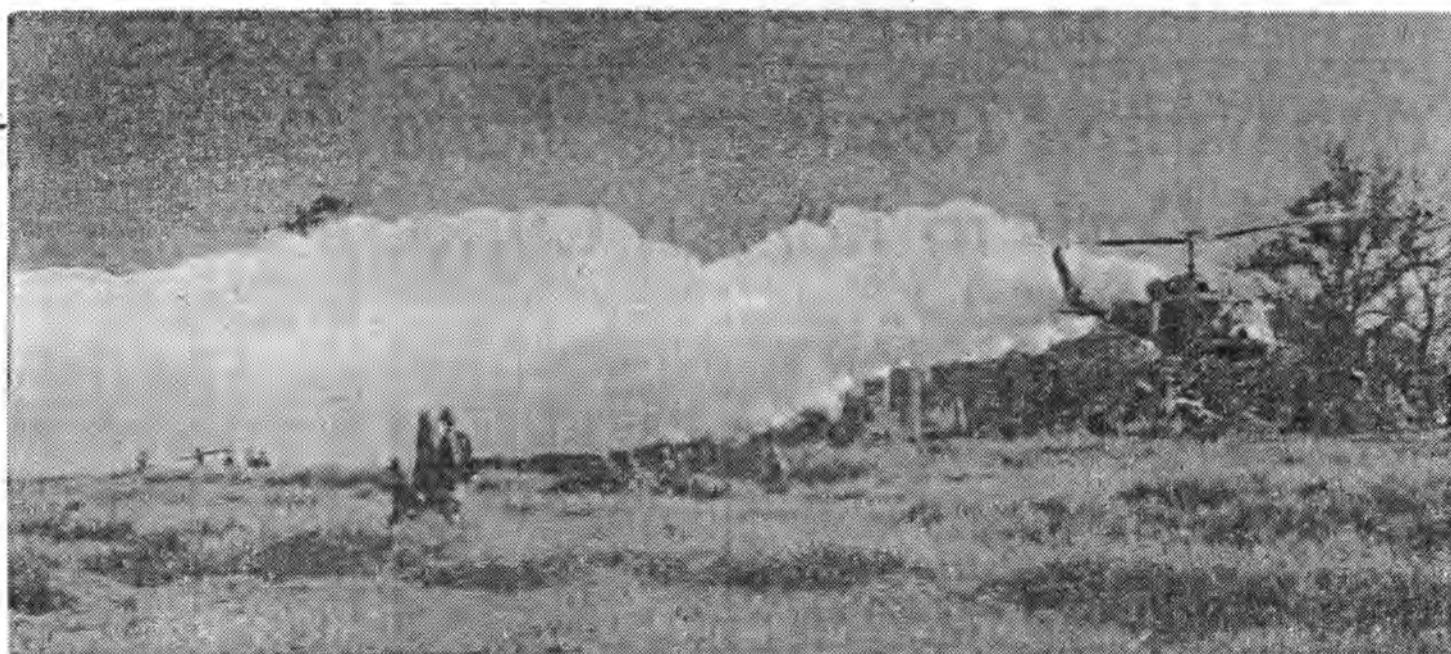
It did state that the attack was

made by five battalions of Pathet Lao and two regiments of North Vietnamese troops, as well as elements of a North Vietnamese division on its way through Laos to South Vietnam.

The communique said the attack on Luang Prabang airfield was connected with that on Nam Bac, and was an effort by the communists to put out of action an airfield from which T28 fighter bombers fly in support of the Nam Bac position.

The communique said on Jan. 12 four North Vietnamese airplanes attacked Muong Yut, 15 miles west of Sam Neua. These four planes flew from the east at a very low altitude and strafed and bombed Muong Yut, causing four civilian dead and wounding many.

Among the four planes, two were shot down by machineguns and two were able to escape. The downed planes were Antonov-2s, or so-called Colts.



Lone Copter Provides Shield for Troops

Soldiers of the 2nd Bn., 27th Inf. "Wolfhounds" move from a landing zone toward a wooded area under the cover of a smoke

screen provided by a helicopter. They were taking part in the 25th Inf. Div's Operation Saratoga. (USA Photo by Spec. 4 Joe Carey)

MIG Downs F105

S&S Vietnam Bureau

SAIGON—An Air Force F105 was shot down in a dog fight with a Communist MIG21 over the Communist country Sunday. The pilot is listed as missing.

Meanwhile, poor weather continued to hamper U.S. air strikes, limiting Sunday's air action to 83 missions.

The plane was the 786th U.S. warplane lost over North Vietnam in the war and was the 38th downed by a MIG. U.S. pilots have shot 103 MIGs out of the sky in air battles over North Vietnam in the war.

Most of the raids Sunday were against Communist supply lines and gun positions.

In the day's most significant raid, Air Force F105s flew radar-directed strikes against the Yen Bai airfield and storage area 78 miles northwest of Hanoi.

Other F105's radar bombed a railroad yard 94 miles northwest of the Communist capital on the northwest rail link with China.

Air Force B52 bombers flew three missions against Communist targets Monday. Two strikes hit suspected enemy positions 20 and 22 miles northwest of Khe Sanh near the DMZ. The other mission hit the enemy 88 miles north of Saigon.

Channel Silt Plagues Shipping at Haiphong

Casualties in Vietnam