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'Friendly' Missile Hit Navy Ship

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One of two United States Navy ships believed knocked out of action by North Vietnamese gunfire in the Tonkin Gulf was actually hit by missiles launched from "friendly" aircraft, a U.S. Navy spokesman said today.

The spokesman at the big U.S. naval base at Subic Bay, the Philippines, said "two anti-radiation missiles were either inadvertently launched by friendly aircraft or malfunctioned upon launch and homed on radar emissions from the Worden, exploding close to the ship."

One man was killed and nine others were injured aboard the Worden early Monday.

The guided missile destroyer Buchanan was hit by Communist coastal batteries Sunday, killing one man and wounding seven. Earlier it had been believed the Worden may have come under attack by a North Vietnamese torpedo boat because it was too far from shore to be hit by Communist shore batteries.

United Press