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North Viets Say 2 Russ Ships Hit

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Examiner News Services

s North Vietnam claimed today that two Soviet ships had been damaged by U.S. planes yesterday in North Vietnamese territorial waters and had four crewmen were injured.

Hours later, North Vietnam claimed that a U.S. air raid had damaged the offices of the Chinese economic mission in Hanoi.

In Washington, sources at the Pentagon said one of the Soviet ships, the Pezeck, had probably been hit in a cross-fire between U.S. mine-laying planes and North Vietnamese shore batteries.

The sources said it was likely that more Soviet ships had been hit.

c "There was an awful lot of shooting going on from both sides, one well-placed source said.

Both the military sources and Pentagon officials speaking on the record denied there had been any deliberate attacks on any ships in North Vietnamese ports. "There have not been any ships on the target lists," a spokesman said.

The North Vietnamese broadcast reported that two Soviet ships, the Babouchkine and the Pezeck, had been attacked by U.S. warplanes yesterday in North Vietnamese territorial waters and that four crewmen had been injured. The

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Claim 2 Russ Ships Hit

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broadcast gave no further details.

The White House Presidential press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said he had "no verification" of such an attack but he did not flatly rule it out.

s He said that the United States report that U.S. aircraft fired upon vessels of the People's Republic of China.

p He said U.S. aircraft are "not authorized to target freighters of the People's

Republic of China" and he said the U.S. has no verification of such an attack.

The later Hanoi report, claiming damage to the offices of the Chinese economic mission, also said the editorial office of Tan Viet Hoa, organ of the General Association of Chinese residents in Vietnam and various dwelling houses were destroyed.

i A 500-pound bomb was dropped on the Vietnam - Soviet Friendship Hospital and a doctor was wounded, the broadcast said.