

Red Missile Shot Down U.S. Copters

SAIGON — (AP) — A Communist missile knocked down one of two American-piloted helicopters that was lost while carrying 11 members of the International Commission of Control and Supervision, a commission source confirmed today.

The two choppers were reported missing yesterday while flying reconnaissance in northwestern Quang Tri Province.

The commission source said the last communication the American civilian pilot of one of the helicopter had with his base was the exclamation: "I've been hit by a missile and we're going down."

The two choppers were missing in the Communist-dominated northwestern corner of South Vietnam near the Laotian border and just four miles below the demilitarized zone.

The Viet Cong claimed they were conducting a search for the missing helicopters, and they did not immediately permit the international commission to launch its search operation.

A spokesman for the Viet Cong said: "We are very much concerned with this incident, and we will try our very best to have a full report soon."

The commission unanimously expressed its "grave concern" Sunday over the fate of the 19 persons on the two helicopters.

David Lewis, leader of Canada's New Democratic party, said the incident proves the Canadian government should end participation in the commission. But Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau said Canada is not about to pull out because of the incident.