



January 26, 1968
**Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, TOP
SECRET, No. 76.020, Flash**

Citation:

"Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, TOP SECRET, No. 76.020, Flash", January 26, 1968, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Political Affairs Fond, Telegrams from Pyongyang, TOP SECRET, 1968, Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Eliza Gheorghe.

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Summary:

Following a meeting with staff from the East German Embassy, the Embassy of Romania in the DPRK summarizes the views of Pak Seong-cheol, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Korean Workers' Party and Vice President of the Cabinet and Foreign Minister of the DPRK, on the seizure of the USS Pueblo.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

The Chargé d'affaires of the [Embassy of the] German Democratic Republic in Pyongyang told A. Lazar on January 26 that on that day he had had a meeting with Pak Seongcheol, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Korean Workers' Party, Vice President of the Cabinet and Foreign Minister of the DPRK, to whom he delivered a letter from the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany together with the speech of Walter Ulbricht regarding the need to adopt the new constitution of the GDR.

On this occasion, the German diplomat asked Pak Seongcheol for his opinion on the current situation in Korea.

Pak Seongcheol did not make any comments regarding the incident in Seoul on January 21, describing it as an act carried out by patriotic South Korean groups. With respect to the capture of the American ship USS Pueblo, the North Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs pointed out the following: 'The American ship violated the territorial waters and undertook provocative acts against the DPRK. The decision to capture it was based on the principle of self-defense. The North Korean government will take the same form of action in the future, capturing or even sinking any enemy ship which violates North Korea's territorial sovereignty. If the US undertakes any acts of intimidation or uses force, the DPRK will reply through the same means, including force. The resolution of conflict depends entirely upon the Americans.'

'The government of the DPRK is the only authority to decide whether to free the crew or not.'

'We are content with the fact that the Soviet Union refused to mediate the matter of the captured vessel. We will regard those who will accept the United States proposal to mediate this matter as friends of the Americans.'

Signed: N. Popa