

February 16, 1968
Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, TOP
SECRET, No. 76.044, Regular

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Summary:

The Embassy of Romania in the DPRK reports on Vietnam's frustration with North Korea following the seizure of the USS Pueblo.

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Following the events in Seoul on January 21 and the USS Pueblo incident [on January 23], one can notice a conspicuous cold attitude on behalf of the Vietnamese diplomats (from the delegation of the National Liberation Front, NLF, and from the Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam) toward the North Korean comrades.

In a recent discussion between the Romanian Ambassador and Vu Ngoc Ho, the representative of the NLF in Pyongyang, the latter stated with unrestrained anxiety that the North Koreans, in an attempt to underline the alleged similarity between the situation in South Korea and that in South Vietnam, affirmed that just like the revolution in South Vietnam cannot endure for too long without the help of North Vietnam, so the revolution in South Korea needs the help of North Korea.

This uninspired comparison referring to the revolutionary situation in the southern parts of the two countries was sensitive for the Vietnamese diplomats, because, according to the Czech Ambassador, they were the ones to approach this issue openly in many conversations with members of other socialist diplomatic missions in Pyongyang.

We believe that there are other factors contributing to this deterioration [of relations between the Vietnamese and the North Koreans], namely the USS Pueblo incident and the incident in Seoul, through which the North Koreans muted any similarity of the events in Vietnam, which took place at the same time, attracting the attention of the international public opinion on contingent actions without any prospects and without an adequate revolutionary basis (in South Korea-our note).

On the occasion of the Army Day Anniversary in North Korea, the two Vietnamese delegations sent only staff at the level of 'First Secretary' to the many activities organized by the North Koreans (the Ambassador invoked health problems and the NLF representative left Pyongyang before February 8).

Signed: N. Popa