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June 7, 1973

Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, SECRET, Regular, No. 061.224

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Summary:

Popa notes the rift between the two Koreas since the North-South joint declaration in 1972 as Seoul considers North Korea's attempts to join organizations where South Korea is already a member as a means to undermine its authority.

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TELEGRAM
Sender: Pyongyang
CLASSIFICATION: SECRET
Regular
Date: 07.06.1973/08:00
No.: 061.224
To: Comrade Deputy Minister Nicolae Ghenea

We would like to inform you on the main aspects of inter-Korean relations.

North-South relations on the Korean Peninsula, as known to the wider public, are going through a process of increasing tension.

The propaganda apparatus in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea resumed the labeling of South Korea, showing some restraint, as it should have according to the commitments it assumed through the 4 July Joint Communiqué, only towards the South Korean president.

Although there was no consensus on the basic positions of the two parties with respect to unification from the very beginning of the dialogue, currently there is a noticeable drifting apart between the point of view of the North and that of the South on crucial matters to the Korean nation.

Although rational in themselves, the proposals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea put forward within the Coordinating Committee as well as in the meetings of the Red Cross delegations, are, because of their radical character, unacceptable to the authorities in Seoul, especially given that they were put forward in a block, without giving the possibility to negotiate on them.

At their turn, the South Korean authorities, mended after the difficulties they underwent in the international arena and after the measures they adopted in the fall of last year [1972] and aware of the political implications of the North's proposals, are manifesting reduced receptivity towards the path imposed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Our attention was grabbed by the fact that lately, the South Korean mass media are carrying out an intense publicity campaign around some alleged cases of infiltrations in the South of Northern agents and around the mass condemnation of those who participated in a spy network working for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The North Korean press systematically refutes, sometimes in an insufficiently persuasive manner, these reports.

Externally, there is a sustained concern from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to establish diplomatic relations and to join organizations where South Korea is already present.

To our mind, this approach is not meant to draw the two countries closer, but on the contrary, it is supposed to undermine and gradually weaken the positions of the authorities in Seoul.

Starting from this rationale, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is currently carefully studying the attitude it shall take towards the forthcoming session of the United Nations, especially since, recently, Seoul decided to register this matter on the agenda, going against its old position in favor of postponing a discussion of the Korean matter.

Depending on the position it will take, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will or will not use the right it has owing to its membership in the World Health Organization to appoint an observer to the UN.

Against this background, there will be another reunion of co-presidents of the South-North Coordinating Committee on 9 June.

Signed: Dumitru Popa

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□□: Dumitru Popa