

February 27, 1975
Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, SECRET,
No. 059.057

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Summary:

The Embassy of Romania in Pyongyang reports on the military responses of North and South Korea to the growing number of clashes near the Northern Limit Line (NLL).

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TELEGRAM

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To: Comrade Stancu (handwritten)

Less than two weeks [since the last incident], a second serious incident took place in the South Korean territorial waters, which resulted in the sinking of another North Korean vessel. Pyongyang says it was a fishing vessel while Seoul claims it was an armed vessel, which, together with a group of military vessels went into the South Korean territorial waters.

Navy and Air Force units from both sides were deployed during this incident. In order to expedite the succession of events, an American Phantom Fighter jets escadrille intervened. Each side blamed the other for the occurrence of this incident, accusing each other of being the instigators. News agencies in both the North and the South published statements. Both sides asked for the urgent summoning of the Panmunjeom Military Armistice Commission. After this incident, which began on February 26th in the afternoon, a state of tension, almost incandescent, emerged: decision-makers in South Korea ordered the general mobilization [of the armed forces] and they are keeping air, navy and army units in the impact areas with North Korea in a state of alert.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is using this incident to intensify its campaign against the Seoul authorities and the US presence in South Korea, to intensify the disorder which dominates Seoul and within the South Korean military leadership.

We will inform you separately on the official position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Signed: Dumitru Popa