

## **February 5, 1968**

### **Information on the Situation in Korea**

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#### **Summary:**

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia analyzes the underlying context behind and causes of the Pueblo Incident and other dangerous military engagements on the Korean Peninsula.

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PRESIDIUM OF THE CPCZ CENTRAL COMMITTEE □□

CLASSIFIED!

3750/ 25 Subject No.: 15

On the subject: Information on the Situation in Korea

Information is presented about the situation in Korea. The material was consulted with C. V. Koucky and c. B. Lomsky.

Attachment I

Proposal of a resolution

Attachment III

- a) Information on the situation in Korea
- b) Study on tension in the Korean area (military part)

Presenting: c. V. David

5th February 1968

No. of pages: 29

Subj.: 15

[...]

On the subject □Information on the situation in Korea  
□(c. V. David)

Accepted resolution:

The CPCZ CC Presidium

□

I.□Acknowledges the information on the situation in Korea.

II.□Agrees with the proposed plan of action with except with the provision that the point 3 (Attachment III/a), page 15) will be modified to the effect that the Minister of Foreign Affairs accepts the DPRK diplomatic representative now, and the CPCZ CC Secretary would accept him only depending on further development of the situation.

Will do: □c. V. Koucky

□□c. V. David

□□c. B. Lomsky

□□c. J. Kudrna

[...]

File No. P 3750

R e s o l u t i o n

Of the 58th meeting of the CPCZ CC Presidium from February 6, 1968

On the subject No. 15: □Information on the situation in Korea

□(c. V. David)

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The CPCZ CC Presidium

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□□c. B. Lomsky

□□c. J. Kudrna

[...]

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

File No. 020.873/68-3

Attachment: III a/

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Information on the Situation in Korea

□Serious escalation of the situation in the Far East happened lately in connection with detention of an American spy ship Pueblo at the DPRK coast by patrol boats of the Korean People's Army, and in connection with armed actions of Korean patriots in South Korea. These events increased tension on the Korean Peninsula and created danger that this region could become another spot of military conflict.

□Main features of the development on the Korean Peninsula are given in the presented

information.

I.

□The main source and cause of persistent tension on the Korean Peninsula is the fact that Korea remains a divided country, and that strong South Korean and American armies, with modern arms, stand in the South. These circumstances deeply influence all life in the DPRK, and it is reflected in the political direction of the KWP. With growing concern, the KWP leadership is following the development in South Korea where a younger and more flexible leadership managed to lead the country away from a near collapse after the fall of Rhee Syngman, and it has been successful recently in somewhat stabilizing the country with the help of foreign capital, namely from the USA, Japan and West Germany. This relative stabilization of the South Korean regime, accompanied by strong anti-communist propaganda and police terror, seems to have paralyzed revolutionary sentiments in the country, and is very efficient especially in discrediting the authority and decreasing the influence of the DPRK among South Korean population. Contributing to this lately to a certain degree is also more tactful conduct of American troops towards the South Korean public. On the other hand, the initial political and especially economical dominance of the DPRK, still noticeable in the beginning of the 60-ies, was gradually diminishing due to economic stagnation, characteristic for close cooperation of the DPRK with the PRC. The DPRK is equally concerned about the broad international political and military activity of the South Korean regime, pursued for attaining international authority and for strengthening the positions of world imperialism in Asia, and aimed especially against socialist countries.

□The latest development in South Korea is also accompanied by number of visits in Seoul of capitalist world's leaders, which culminated by the trip of President Johnson in October 1966. Most of these visits contributed to stimulation of South Korean economy, build-up and modernization of South Korean army, and strengthening of "Asian - Oceanic ties" under the USA sponsorship.

□All this contributes to growing restlessness on the Korean peninsula, and lowers chances for a peaceful unification of the country in the foreseeable future. The DPRK leadership is also concerned about, and even expects, aggression from the South, and is preparing Korean people for unification of the country through a military conquest, relying on the strength of the Korean people.

□This process in the KWP CC politics took shape during the last year. In his address at the national conference of the KWP in October 1966, Kim Il Sung introduced a doctrine that unification of the country will be a long term matter that will require especially creating a Marxist party in South Korea, and a close cooperation with mainstream organizations. In conflict with that, the current KWP position calls for liberation of the southern part by force as soon as the time is right. This new approach is already reflected in a slogan put forth by Kim Il Sung in January 1967, which says that it is necessary to unify Korea still within the lifetime of the current generation. The expression "peaceful and democratic unification of the country" disappeared from Korean propaganda. Korean press also does not hide that it is a preparation for the defeat of American imperialists. The inevitability of war is being theoretically justified, its consequences are being downplayed, and fear of war is being exposed as a sign of bourgeois pacifism and revisionism.

□Even though a directive of parallel building and defending the country was declared at the October KWP conference in 1966, it is obvious that defense became a priority. Even the last year's budget of the DPRK reflects that by allocating more than 30% of expenses (not including the free Soviet military aid) for defense. Many articles reveal the real nature of military measures of the DPRK, for instance in the issue of "Korean People's Army" from November 1967 where it is written: "The military course of our country, as devised by Marshal Kim Il Sung, allows us to protect our socialist homeland reliably thanks to making strengthening of the defensive military force a priority, and to realize, through our own initiative, a great revolutionary event - unification of the country".

□Korean propaganda makes every effort to convince the DPRK citizens and the world that the situation is quite analogous to that just before the beginning of the Korean war. Military training of civilians, including women and children, justified by a doctrine: to build the DPRK like an "invincible fortress of steel", reached

unprecedented levels in the DPRK.

□We should not underestimate either that creating military hype has other purposes, like distracting people from existing economic difficulties, justifying the stagnant standard of living, demanding the utmost discipline and obedience, and preventing any criticism.

□The personality cult of Kim Il Sung reached unprecedented levels especially recently. Attributes accompanying his name are often several lines long. All successes and victories past and present are associated with the name of Kim Il Sung, regardless of historic facts. Even his parents and grandparents are becoming subjects of celebrations. Korean propaganda equals Kim Il-sung with Korea while the DPRK is presented as an example for other countries. New stage of manifestation of Kim Il Sung's personality cult is inherently connected with other two issues - the importance of the DPRK example for struggling nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and with exaggeration of Kim Il Sung's role in the international communist and workers movement.

□In support of the international importance of his theoretical works, excerpts are used namely from Cuban press that publishes Kim Il Sung's speeches consistently.

□Collected works of Kim Il Sung are basic and actually today the only source for study of Marx-Leninism. Korean citizens get only very limited information about life in other socialist countries or about the situation in the world while all news in the press and radio are adapted to the KWP position. This policy results in deepening isolation of the DPRK from the outside world.

□Manifestations of personality cult in the DPRK intensify due to strong nationalism. All problems associated with the DPRK are exaggerated and made more important than other international problems.

□Personnel policies of the KWP reflect the personality cult as well. Number of high and middle ranking party officials were removed in the summer of 1967. According to some information, Politburo members Pak Geum-cheol [Pak Kum Chol] and Ri Hyo-sun [Ri Hyo Sun] have been arrested during the last June meeting of the KWP CC. Pak Geum-cheol allegedly asked Kim Il Sung for a more realistic domestic policy, including an increase in standard of living and a more realistic approach to the problems of South Korea where the key factor should be a surge of internal revolutionary forces. According to his friends, Pak Geum-cheol was considered one of the most competent officials of the KWP and the DPRK, and Ri Hyo-sun dealt with South Korean issues in the Politburo for many years. In the same period, other deputies and officials of the KWP CC and civil organizations were removed (for instance, chairman of the Workers' Union CC, director of the KWP CC Youth Organization, chairman of the Youth Organization CC, director of the DPRK Press Agency, and many others). The removed officials are in some cases replaced by graduates of a military institute.

□The leaderships of the KWP and the DPRK differ in their opinions from positions of most of other fraternal parties, especially in current most pressing matters - issues of war and peace.

□Differences of opinion among Korean comrades are the most pronounced in the approach to fight against imperialism. In this regard, the KWP calls strongly for a frontal push for immediate and final destruction of imperialism. According to the Korean interpretation, it is possible to fight with imperialism only by strong verbal attacks or war.

□Issues of country unification influence very strongly the KWP positions on war and peace, peaceful coexistence, and the approach to fight with imperialism. Naturally, they influence also the KWP attitude towards the international communist movement. It is true that the KWP leadership calls for unity of the ICWM in its fight against imperialism, and for coordination of fraternal countries' aid to Vietnam but it sees such unity based only on its own interpretation of fight against imperialism, and only from the point of view of its own interests and objectives. Fraternal parties are indirectly criticized for attacking imperialism only verbally while being afraid of it and making concessions. Korean comrades present their own positions as the only correct application of Marx-Leninism.

□Extraordinary importance is given to Third World Countries that the DPRK considers

an important factor for an increase of its international authority and prestige. At the same time, the DPRK strives to stress in these countries its own example, and to influence them especially by doctrines on "build-up by own resources", "independence from big countries", and by radicalism of Korean positions. The KWP has not taken a position yet on the consultation meeting of fraternal parties in Budapest in February this year. According to the opinion of a KWP CC Politburo member, Secretary of the Council of Ministers and a DPRK Minister of Foreign Affairs Pak Seong-cheol [Pak Song Chol], which was relayed to the GDR Ambassador, conditions for meetings of fraternal parties are worse than a year ago. Under conditions of deepening disagreements between the CPSU and the Chinese CP, and when diplomatic contacts have not even been established yet between the USSR and the PRA, meetings of fraternal parties can contribute to widening of the rift. So far the only reference about meetings in preparation, published in Korean press, is the information taken from the Central Authority of the Cuban CP on the last deliberations of the Cuban CP CC about its decision not to participate in the Budapest meeting.

□ In relations of the DPRK with fraternal parties and countries, it is also customary that Korean comrades insist that their opinions be fully accepted and supported by these parties and countries. The DPRK as well issues imperative instructions to socialist countries as what they may or may not do in their policy and relations towards imperialist countries. An article "Let us turn the thrust of our fight against the American imperialism", published in Rodong Sinmun on October 16, 1967 in commemoration of Moscow meetings, calls for harder position towards the USA and for more decisive and active fight against the American imperialism and for active support of struggle of Asian, African and Latin American nations, asserting that socialist countries must be also aware of the danger of Japanese imperialism, and fight against it. The requirement "every socialist country must respect the policy of Cuban CP, and is only obligated to support the struggle of Cuban people", also implies a wish of the KWP to gain an unconditional support of socialist countries for the Korean position.

□ Korean comrades use similar tactics in their approach to international organizations where they often push for unrealistic requests, and on top of that, they strongly demand from their socialist partners consistent support regardless of interests common to the whole socialist community.

II.

□ By carrying out its current line, the KWP also contributes to growing disturbances and dangerous escalation of tension, namely in the Demilitarized Zone, which was especially noticeable in the previous year. The number of incidents in this zone and to the south of it reached so far an unprecedented level. Incidents claim many lives. The DPRK authorities accuse the Americans and the South Korean regime of importing new kind of weapons into South Korea, of shooting against the North from the Demilitarized Zone, and of other incidents, and they assert that incidents in the South Korean territory are the result of a growing national liberation fight of South Korean patriots. Conversely, Americans and South Koreans accuse the DPRK of increasing infiltration into the South, and of importing new kinds of weapons. In October last year, the DPRK government issued and delivered to members of the UN Political Committee a Memorandum to the situation in Korea, with a concern about the danger of a new flare-up of the Korean war as a consequence of American provocations, and about the necessity of an immediate withdrawal of USA troops from South Korea. The text of a letter from the South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs, containing numerous attacks against the DPRK and its policy (especially in connection with "infiltration from the North"), was also distributed in this committee.

□ According to the opinion of the Czechoslovak delegation to the Supervisory Commission of Non-Aligned States and of our Pyongyang Embassy, many circumstances suggest that incidents in the Demilitarized Zone and to the south from there are intentionally and purposefully created especially from the side of the DPRK, even though it is difficult to judge in such cases, which side is responsible for the incidents. However, increasing tension on the 38th parallel and growing number of incidents in the Demilitarized Zone correspond to the Korean concept of fight against imperialism and of support of South Korean people's revolutionary struggle. The DPRK authorities try to attract world attention to the Korean problem, and they strive to

gain support of socialist countries for their policy.

□ Rapid deterioration of the situation in the Demilitarized Zone and the danger of a new conflict were reflected in negotiations of the Military Armistice Commission in Panmunjeom. At meetings, both sides accuse each other of violating the agreement, and negotiations lead to nowhere. For Koreans, the Military Armistice Commission is a place where they can challenge Americans face to face, and they take full advantage of this possibility. Speeches of the Korean delegate contain mainly propaganda, and are utilized especially in the domestic propaganda of the DPRK. The problem with the conduct of the Korean comrades at negotiations in the Commission is their persistent refusal to participate in joint investigations of the discussed incidents, which is required by the Armistice Agreement.

□ DPRK authorities pressure Cs. and Polish delegations to the Supervisory Commission of Non-Aligned States to make the SCNAS a place of anti-imperialistic fight in the North Korean style, regardless of the mission of the Commission, as it follows from the Armistice Agreement. Also, Korean comrades inform the Cs. and Polish delegations about issues of the demilitarized zone only sporadically and inaccurately. The Czechoslovak delegation to the SCNAS follows the current directive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

□ Recently, the situation in Korea underwent a very dangerous development. On January 23 this year, patrol boats of the Korean People's Army detained the American spy ship Pueblo with 83 men aboard, and escorted it to the North Korean port of Wonsan. According to the information of the DPRK, the American ship was detained 10 miles away from Wonsan and 7.6 miles from the island of Yeodo. The ship was collecting data on water depth, location of troops, and defenses of the DPRK coastline.

□ On January 19 this year, this incident was preceded by an attempt of a 30 men strong group to penetrate to the Seoul residence of the South Korean regime's President and other government officials. There was several hours shoot-out between this group and South Korean police, with dead and injured on both sides. The South Korean regime mobilized military forces that, together with the American Army, killed most of the group's members.

□ On January 24, Americans accused the DPRK at the Military Armistice Commission of an attempt to assassinate the President and leading officials of the South Korean regime and of seizing an American ship in international waters. The USA spokesman stated that capture of the ship can have the gravest consequences, and endanger peace in the DPRK. He demanded immediate return of the ship and the crew, and an apology. He also requested that a serious warning be relayed to Kim Il Sung. The Korean side rejected the accusation.

□ President Johnson and Minister Rusk characterized the situation as very serious. The USA representative to the UN Goldberg relayed to U Thant American government's concerns about consequences of the incident, and requested to call the Security Council on the issue of capture of the American vessel. The USA is presenting the issue of the incident with the ship as part of a continuous violation of the demilitarized zone, and a provocation against South Korea. The USA asked the USSR to intervene with the Korean side for release of the captured ship. The USSR refused to mediate, and warned the USA against any irresponsible actions.

□ The USA, the South Korean regime and the DPRK took number of military measures towards increasing combat readiness of armed forces. These measures alone, together with psychological conditioning of population in both parts of Korea, create a situation when a serious incident perpetrated by any side could escalate into a military conflict of greater magnitude.

□ According to the international law, the DPRK conduct was legitimate if the American vessel engaged in hostile activities within coastal waters of the DPRK, and resisted after being ordered to leave. If it was an incident at high seas, the DPRK intervention was not legitimate. It is now difficult to assess the issue. We accept the DPRK position that the ship Pueblo was in the coastal waters of the DPRK. From this point of view, detention of the ship appears as an act in defense of the DPRK sovereignty.

□ In the area where the ship Pueblo was detained, Soviet ships are passing through with aid for PRV, and with military aid and substantial part of goods and materials

shipments for the DPRK. From this area, the ship could have monitored movement of part of the DPRK Navy, including Korean submarines, one of the main air force bases, a zone of DPRK support fortifications, and movement in the corridor that the USA thinks is being used for transfer of North Korean groups into South Korea. Considering the importance of this corridor, and in connection with growing tension on the 38th parallel, it seems that the ship's mission was to assess combat readiness of the Korean Army, and possibly the extent of danger that slogans about forceful unification of the country could actually be carried out.

□We should see the current conflict also in broader implications, considering that the DPRK has alliance treaties both with the Soviet Union and the PRC, in which both countries pledge to aid the DPRK if it is attacked and is in a state of war.

□The address of the USA delegate to the Security Council mostly contained previously published accusations from the American side. The Soviet delegate responded with a strong criticism of a multiyear USA policy of intervention in Korea, and in the case of the ship Pueblo, he especially used the deposition of the ship's captain to counter the American arguments. The Security Council discussion did not result in support of the USA account that was decisively dispelled by the USSR. So far, the American delegation did not submit to the Security Council any resolution. The main feature of Security Council's deliberations about the issues is the Soviet delegate's proposal to invite the DPRK delegation to the Security Council immediately. The USA rejected the proposal with a provision that it would be willing to admit the DPRK to the Security Council if the ship and the crew are released. There are also visible efforts especially of developing countries to mediate between the USA and the DPRK. It turned out to be a good thing at the moment that the issue got to be discussed at the Security Council because it lowered the war hysteria in the USA and bought time for finding a diplomatic solution to the conflict. The offensive of the South Vietnam NLF in the last days forced the USA to tone down its actions against the DPRK in connection with the Pueblo incident.

□The DPRK preferred direct negotiations with the USA. Negotiations between representatives of the USA and the DPRK are going on at the Military Armistice Commission in Panmunjeom since February 2. According to the report from our Embassy, the negotiations continue in a calm manner. According to the AP agency report from Seoul, the DPRK representatives at negotiations in Panmunjeom expressed willingness to return to the USA the injured and killed crew members of Pueblo. According to another report of the Reuter agency in Tokyo, referring to reports of the South Korean press center, the USA and the DPRK reached in Panmunjeom on February 5 a fundamental agreement on release of the Pueblo crew. According to the same source, the USA basically accepted the North Korean condition and would admit that Pueblo encroached on North Korean territorial waters. The USA also allegedly promised a public apology. According to the report of the Reuter agency in Washington, the USA State Department allegedly stated on February 2nd that it had no confirmation of a fundamental agreement with the DPRK on the Pueblo crew release. These reports are not officially confirmed yet. Even if they turn out to be true, it is not possible to expect radical decrease in tension as long as the both sides do not cancel military measures taken in connection with the Pueblo incident.

III.

Increasingly dangerous development on the Korean Peninsula and complexity of the situation in this region was subject of discussions of the CSCP CC 1st Secretary A. Dubcek with representatives of the CPSU CC during his recent visit in Moscow. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs consulted this issue with the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs in December last year. In both cases, Soviet comrades were acquainted with our assessment of the development in Korea and informed about our concern with some dangerous aspects of the problem. Soviet comrades fully agreed with our opinions but they stressed that DPRK representatives assured the Soviet side that the DPRK would not take any measures that would lead to military confrontation. During the last developments with the ship Pueblo, the Soviet side also passed two pieces of information to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Czechoslovak government, concerning the concrete steps the USSR is taking.

□According to the second piece of information the Soviet Ambassador relayed to c. V. David on February 2nd this year, Korean comrades agree with the position the Soviet



representative is maintaining during discussions in the UN Security Council about the USA complaint. According to their opinion, it is necessary to drag out discussions about the Pueblo issue in the Security Council.

□All kinds of unofficial ideas are discussed at the UN Security Council on mediation towards settlement of the incident. The Soviet side informed Korean comrades about this. Referring to the possibility of having direct contacts with Americans in Panmunjeom, Korean comrades feel that mediation of third world countries is not necessary. As for concrete mediation offers, Korean friends consider it possible to determine tactics as the situation develops.

□In conversations with the Soviet Ambassador from 28th to 31st January, concerning further possible actions of the DPRK in connection with the incident, Korean comrades did not go further than saying that they do not expect to succumb to provocations and that they would welcome a decreasing tension.

□Rusk sent a letter to c. A.A. Gromyko on January 29. In that letter, Americans repeat their version that the ship "Pueblo" was in international waters at the moment of detention. Rusk asserts that Johnson is exercising restraint in the matter and believes that a settlement reached as fast as possible would be in the interest of the both parties.

□During unofficial consultations among members of the Security Council, the USA representative Goldberg addressed the USSR representative with a declaration that the USA is trying to find a way of settling the conflict diplomatically in such a manner that the ship and crew are returned without detracting from the position of either party.

□As Korean comrades requested, it was stressed in the answer to Rusk and in a discussion of the Soviet representative with his American counterpart at the Security Council that the way of resolving the incident appears to be not escalating tension in this area, not insulting national dignity of the DPRK by blaming them for the incident and not espousing a policy of threats; the USA must stop pressuring the DPRK and threatening it.

□On January 31, USSR representatives told Korean comrades that by taking decisive measures in defense of its sovereignty, the DPRK scored a political victory. Now it would be desirable to solidify the achieved results and to demonstrate the unwavering and, at the same time, peaceful nature of the DPRK conduct in connection with this incident. That could be accomplished by expulsion of the "Pueblo" crew from the DPRK territory. Korean comrades were told that such a step from their side could not be interpreted as weakness but to the contrary; it would be appreciated everywhere as a demonstration of a responsible approach, and it would strengthen even more the international standing of the DPRK.

□Given a choice, the Soviet government will even in the future maintain the position that events triggered by the incident should not exceed certain level, and that it will make every effort to ensure that these events do not escalate into an armed conflict.

□Soviet comrades also expressed they were convinced that Czechoslovak friends share their position because it reflects our joint line in international matters. They would be grateful to the Czechoslovak government if it would deem it possible to share information it has at its disposal, and add comments to this issue.

□We view the USSR conduct as correct and thoughtful because it helps to prevent a flare-up of a wider conflict, and to transfer its solution to diplomatic area. On January 31 this year, the Cs. Government was informed of a DPRK government's declaration from January 27 this year on penetration of the American spy ship Pueblo into the DPRK territorial waters. The Cs. Government condemned violation of the DPRK sovereignty, and expressed to the DPRK government its support in defense of territorial integrity and legal rights. Cs. press, radio and television condemn the American provocation against the DPRK, and inform the Cs. Public about the unfolding events. However, the Korean side protested that our press accepts western information without comments, and it demanded that we publish only information issued by the DPRK. Our press, radio and television were notified about certain incorrectness associated with news from western agencies.

□According to the assessment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of National Defense, even if the Pueblo issue is settled peacefully, situation in the

Korean area will remain dangerous especially due to military measures taken by the involved parties.

Given the current situation, it would be appropriate for us to proceed the following way: [redacted] be in constant contact with Soviet comrades, to share our knowledge with them, to keep regular consultations about the developing situation, and to coordinate joint actions.

. To give political support to the DPRK in defense of its territorial sovereignty and legal rights, and to condemn provocations of the USA and the South Korean regime against the DPRK.

. To be in contact with the DPRK MFA and the DPRK Embassy in Prague, to inform them about our findings, and to request from them information on DPRK positions. To lead the DPRK appropriately towards peaceful resolution of the conflict. It may be good for this purpose if the CSCP CC Secretary accepts a diplomatic representative of the DPRK and appropriately explains our position.

. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Interior will ensure that the CSCP CC Presidium and the Czechoslovak government are continuously informed.

[redacted]  
[...]

On February 4, 1968

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

File No. 020.873/68-3

Attachment: III b/

A Study on Tension in the Korean Area (Military section)

02/04/1968 [redacted] General situation

[redacted]

Since the beginning of 1967, number of incidents in the Demilitarized Zone was growing, which significantly escalated tension in the Korean area. This tension increased by the end of 1967, and in January 19 this year, an armed group of 30 men attempted an assassination of the South Korean President and other government officials.

The tension escalated after the DPRK Navy detained the American radiological reconnaissance ship Pueblo on 01/23/1968.

According to a DPRK declaration, the ship was captured 10 miles from the port of Wonsan, which means in the DPRK territorial waters. The American side denies this assertion, and requests return of the ship together with its crew. So far, neither side was able to prove its assertion about the distance of the ship from the Korean coast at the time of capture.

This incident forced the USA to take number of diplomatic actions associated with military measures. Military measures were implemented along with that in both parts of Korea. Military measures carried out after 01/23/1968 by the involved parties increased significantly numbers of armed forces in this area and changed the balance of power.

Military measures of the USA involve both forces located in the Far East, and armed forces and reserves on the USA territory. [redacted] In the Far East [redacted]

[redacted] American Armed forces were placed on elevated combat readiness;

. Part of Air Force was moved from the Vietnam area to the Korean area, and more aircraft flew over from the USA to the Korean area.

[redacted]

Findings about the USA military measures: [redacted]

. From Okinawa and from Philippines to South Korea, 5 squadrons totaling 108 tactical planes (50 of F-105, 18 of F-4, 40 of F-102) and the command of the 18th tactical wing were moved.

. From the USA were moved

□□

□□ South Korea: 2 squadrons of tactical aircraft consisting of 48 planes (24 F-4, 24 of unspecified type) and 16 transport planes (C 141, C 130, C 124), with aircraft technical personnel and military material,

. to the island of Guam: 2 squadrons of tactical aircraft (33 planes F-105).

□□ From Navy in the Vietnam theatre, an attack aircraft carrier RANGER was moved to the Korean area, and by regrouping the Pacific fleet, an attack group was created in the Korean area, which consists of 30 ships centered around two attack aircraft carriers, 1 anti-submarine aircraft carrier and three missile cruisers.

. USA mobilization measures

□□

For possible further strengthening of armed forces in the Far East, about 14,700 reservists were called to duty in the first round in the United States, and 28 air force units were mobilized, out of which:

□□ 8 tactical fighter squadrons of the Air Force National Guard, with total of 200 planes F-100,

. 3 tactical reconnaissance squadrons of the Air Force National Guard, with total of 54 planes RF-101,

. 5 squadrons of air transport from the Air Force Reserves, with total of 48 planes C-119 and 32 planes C-124,

. 1 rescue squadron from the Air Force Reserves, with 4 planes HU-16B ALBATROS,

. 3 attack squadrons of the Navy Reserves, with 35 planes,

. 3 tactical fighter squadrons of the Navy Reserves, with 35 planes, and

. 5 unspecified squadrons.

□□

USA ground forces in the Far East has not been strengthened yet, however, measures were taken for mobilization of two divisions and six brigades from reserves on the USA territory.

As for South Korean troops, no further mobilization measures were detected, except for elevated combat readiness. According to some reports though, the South Korean government considers possible withdrawal of two South Korean divisions from South Vietnam.

In consequence of USA and South Korean military measures, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as well brought its troops to combat readiness, and is mobilizing 16 reserve divisions. At the same time, it strengthened its troops formations along the Demilitarized Zone. Military measures of the DPRK are allegedly carried out with material support of the PRC.

Current development of the situation and reports at our disposal are not sufficient so far to unambiguously determine what motivation the particular involved parties have to create the current situation, and what objectives they pursue by prolonging it.

Even though we closely monitor development in the Korean area, lack of credible reports about measures and intentions namely of the DPRK and the PRC makes it impossible to objectively assess the possible impact of the military-political measures taken. Due to mobilization measures, freedom of movement of diplomatic personnel in the DPRK was limited, including our military attaché, and the Korean side does not inform him about its measures and intentions. Neither our representatives at the SCNAS in Panmunjon have any opportunity to gather objective information. However, the extent of the carried out military measures and the intensity of war propaganda in the DPRK indicate strong tendencies towards a military solution.

We can say though, that the United States used the increased tension to push through Congress further measures for strengthening of American troops in this area,

which they can use to increase pressure in Vietnam, once the tension in Korea is diffused.

Measures taken by the DPRK make it more difficult for the United States to further strengthen its troops in Vietnam because these measures tie up considerable forces of the USA in the Korean area, limit freedom of maneuver of the USA armed forces in the Far East, and they lead to transfer of two South Korean divisions from South Vietnam to South Korea. Tying up of considerable USA forces in the Korean area alleviates the situation of the NLF and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and thus creates conditions for successful liberation fight in Vietnam.

Generally, tense situation in the Korean area and the Far East also suits the current policy of the PRC, who is better able to exert its superpower influence in this area.

## II. Situation in Armed Forces and Mutual Power Ratio

Military measures of the USA and the DPRK are being implemented in order to equalize the mutual power ratio in the Korean area, which follows from this data [\[1\]](#):

Strength of main categories of armed forces and quantities of armaments by 01/23/1968

Category	
South Korea	
USA	
Total	
DPRK	
Ratio	
Ground forces	
(in thousands)	
660	
45	
705	
340	
2 : 1	
Infantry divisions	
20	
2	
22	
20	
1.1 : 1	
Tanks	
1750	
280	
2030	
600	
3.3 : 1	
Fighter planes	
214	
---	
214	
700	

1 : 3.5   

Strength by 02/04/1968, after implementation of mobilization measures and strengthening   

Category

South Korea

USA

Total

DPRK

Ratio   

Ground forces

(in thousands)

660

45

705

540

1.3 : 1   

Infantry divisions

20

2

22

36

1 : 1.6   

Tanks

1750

280

2030

unknown

?   

Fighter planes

214

VNS? 180

156

550

700

1 : 1.3   

Till the implementation of military measures in the Korean area, there was a favorable power ratio for the DPRK in Air Force (3.5 : 1), for South Korea and the USA in ground forces personnel (2 : 1), in tanks even 3.3 : 1.

After implementation of the measures on both sides by 02/04/1968, superiority of the Korean Air Force decreased to 1.3 : 1, and the ratio in ground forces manpower and light armaments was about equal. Persistent superiority of South Korean and American ground forces in heavy armaments, namely tanks, is probably not a decisive factor, considering the terrain of the Korean theatre.

Marked superiority of South Korea and the USA remains in the Navy. The United States are also able to even out, on short notice (within 48 hours) if necessary, the

current unfavorable ratio in combat air force, and even achieve a considerable superiority there. We are talking about the possibility to strengthen the American air force by about 300 - 500 fighter planes from the 12th Air Force Army and from mobilized air force; which, however, is hindered by lack of suitable operational bases, and would require an approval of the Japanese government for use of airfields on the Japanese territory.

□ Substantial strengthening of ground forces cannot be done in short time, and transfer of combat ready or mobilized units from the USA would take a month or more.

□ The current power ratio is not sufficiently favorable to either side for launching an extensive offensive.

### III. Implications of Possible Scenarios of Conflict Resolution

Scenario 1 - dissipation of tension through a peaceful settlement in short time (2 - 3 weeks)

□ This scenario presumes mutual concessions in a diplomatic solution.

□ Should a peaceful settlement of the Pueblo incident happen within 2 - 3 weeks, and the tone of diplomatic negotiations would offer hope for a peaceful solution, the USA armed forces in the Far East would remain positioned in two areas: Vietnam and Korea.

□ In this case, we can expect only an increase of American air force in the Far East.

□ On the USA territory, there can be at that time in combat ready status

□□□ to 500 planes from the 12th Air Force Army, located in the western part of the USA, and up to 350 fighter planes mobilized from reserves,

. up to 8 divisions of ground forces and 2 divisions of marines,

. part of forces of the 1st Navy Fleet from the Pacific Fleet.

□□

□ The DPRK can at that time finish mobilization measures, especially in material/equipment readiness (also with the help of allies).

□ In the case of a peaceful settlement of the incident, and if there are no de-mobilization measures in the DPRK and thus no significant decrease in tension, a considerable part of the USA forces will remain tied up in the Korean area, which would diminish USA combat capabilities in Vietnam. In the opposite case, that is if the DPRK would de-mobilize, we should expect that part of the freed up forces of the USA, both from the USA and from Korea, would be used in South Vietnam, which would change the power ratio to the disadvantage of the NLF. □□□ □□ □□□ Scenario II - diffusing the tension through peaceful settlement after longer negotiations (more than 2 - 3 weeks) □□

In this case, the Korean area would tie up considerable forces of the USA, and it is probable that these forces would be further strengthened, especially air force and navy.

Compared to the previous scenario, there would be 3 more divisions from reserves on the USA territory ready to strengthen ground forces in the Far East within 30 days, and beside that, we cannot exclude a mobilization supplement of the 1st, 3rd and 5th Navy Fleets.

5 - 6 divisions from ground forces of the USA could be transferred to the Korean area within 30 days.

The DPRK would continue strengthening its armed forces, especially with heavy armaments delivered by allies.

During resolution of the conflict, more armed forces would be tied up in the Korean area than now but after a settlement, more forces would probably be transferred to Vietnam, thus changing the power ratio to a significant disadvantage of the NLF.

□□□ Scenario III - military solution □□

□ This solution would create two fronts in the Far East. New forces would enter the war on both sides. The USA armed forces in the Far East would grow significantly but they

would be divided between two theatres. As a consequence, American forces in Vietnam would not be sufficiently strengthened. That would lower chances of the USA to win the conflict soon, and would make the situation of USA troops in Vietnam objectively worse (possible withdrawal of two South Korean divisions and transfer of part of air force from Vietnam to Korea). Armed forces of all categories would clash at the Korean front, and the conflict would be much larger than that in Vietnam.

□ The current (and expected) power ratio does not give either side a clear chance to resolve the conflict quickly, and it appears that it must be changed.

□ Increase of the USA forces could be facilitated by forces from the 82nd paratroopers division (within 3 days), from 2nd and 4th divisions of Marines (within 3 weeks), from 5th mechanized division, and from mobilized 3 divisions and six brigades (within 1 month), that is total of 9 divisions. Aircraft from the 12th Air Force Army could add about 300 fighter planes to the USA forces in the Far East. These measures would lead to tipping the power ratio to the advantage of the USA. Beside these forces, we could expect strengthening by three more divisions within 50 days, and strengthening by part of mobilized forces from 1st, 3rd and 5th fleets.

□ Increase of the DPRK armed forces requires technological aid and assistance through external armed forces. Without this aid, and especially if South Korea strengthens, chances of just successful defense would be greatly diminished. The extent of aid to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must correspond to intentions; for the offensive scenario, such aid would have to be quite extensive (40 - 50 divisions). Such an aid would also create danger of the USA using nuclear weapons (if the DPRK is successful).

□ The direct consequence for the United States of this scenario happening would be a substantial increase in demand for means of waging war in the Far East (armed forces, cargo, means of transportation). It would also limit possibilities of growth in other armed forces, and it would decrease flexibility to use armed forces in other theatres.

□ It appears that strengthening of USA armed forces in the Far East does not offer a chance of quick resolution of the both conflicts either. The United States face here the prospect of a long war that would limit their maneuvering capabilities.

□ Another substantial change in the power ratio could happen with a limited use of nuclear weapons. However, this would create danger of a mutual use (the PRC). It could also lead to escalation of the conflict and to a possible direct conflict between the United States and the PRC (strikes against nuclear sites of the PRC), and consequently, increased international activity aimed at stopping the war. Use of nuclear weapons, though, does not give the United States a clear chance of victory, considering the escalation of the conflict. □ □ □ IV. Conclusion. Increased tension in the Korean area forces the United States to commit larger forces around Korea, which limits their use at the Vietnam front.

. The crisis in the Korean area makes it possible for the United States government to strengthen armed forces in the Far East. Peaceful solution of the incident may enable the USA to strengthen armed forces in the Vietnam theatre and thus increase its chances of a successful military solution.

□ □

Once armed conflict breaks out, the USA faces two alternatives: □ □ □ conventional war - protracted war on two fronts (with all the political, economic and military consequences),

. Limited nuclear war - danger of escalation of the war and of a direct conflict with the People's Republic of China (while the USA cannot be absolutely sure about the outcome), and a situation when the world public opinion would be galvanized against the USA (efforts to stop the war).

□ □

For the United States, the most advantageous scenario appears to be a peaceful solution of the conflict, which would make it possible to carry out, during further negotiations, the planned measures for strengthening of armed forces in the Far East. Peace negotiations give the United States the possibility to regroup their forces in favor of the Vietnam theatre and to successfully conduct operations. The extent of

the regrouping will depend on whether the DPRK implements mobilization measures or not. [1] Increased tension in the Korean area draws part of USA military efforts from

[2]

Vietnam, and it is objectively helping the National Liberation Front and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Quick solution in the Korean area can lead to forces transferred to the Korean area being used again in the Vietnam theatre, and to decreased possibilities of moving mobilized forces from the USA to the Far East. It follows that if they were moved to the Far East, they would probably be used in the Vietnam theatre.

Peaceful settlement after longer negotiations would result in part of the USA armed forces being tied up in the Korean area, which would reduce pressure on the NLF and DRV forces. At the same time, the USA armed forces are more likely to be transferred to the Far East for the benefit of the Korean area. Peaceful settlement would then make it possible to transfer larger United States forces to the Vietnam area than with the previous scenario, and thus also to influence the course of the conflict to the advantage of the USA.

[3] In the case of a military solution of the conflict in Korea, it is unlikely that the USA would decide to commit to a protracted war with conventional weapons like in Vietnam. Potentially dangerous development of a possible military conflict is manifested not only by requests of some American congressmen but also by proposals of high military officials, for instance the Chief of Staff of the 8th Army in Korea, for a solution of a possible conflict with the use of tactical nuclear weapons.

[4]

A military solution would require socialist countries to increase military aid and to take some measures in armed forces for potential escalation, and to increase military spending in general. It is also necessary to anticipate possible flare-up of a limited nuclear war, and to think about measures to counter such a situation.

[1] Presented data was gathered from public sources, and it does not include worker-peasant militia who in the DPRK are trained especially for defense purposes.

[2] Part of the DPRK Air Force gained considerable combat experience while fighting on the side of the DRV.