

January 24, 1968
**Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, TOP
SECRET, No. 76.013, Flash**

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Summary:

The Embassy of Romania in the DPRK reports on the response of the North Korean press to the Blue House Raid and announces that an American ship, the USS Pueblo, has been captured by the North Koreans near Wonsan.

Credits:

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1. On January 24, propaganda organizations in the DPRK issued elaborate news bulletins with regard to the actions undertaken by the armed groups who are dealing blows to the American and South Korean units in the ROK.

According to the South Koreans, South Korean units and American troops are pursuing the North Korean group which initiated the attack on January 21 in Seoul and which is currently retreating towards the DPRK. Out of the 31 members of the group, 15 people were shot in isolated clashes with the South Koreans and one was taken prisoner.

Judging from the way the North Korean press is presenting the situation in the ROK, we realize that they are exaggerating a great deal and they purposely distort the truth so as to create the impression of a truly revolutionary state of mind. Although news reports are also concerned with the twentieth anniversary of the creation of the DPRK Army, the North Korean press is in the midst of an intense campaign against the Americans and the South Koreans. Scenes from the fighting during the war and the liberation of Seoul in 1950 cover the pages of North Korean newspapers almost entirely.

2. At the same time, it was announced that on January 22 an American military ship was captured [by the North Koreans] in the waters of Wonsan Harbor (it was not specified whether in the territorial waters of Wonsan-our note).

3. The South Korean radio station announced that the ship in question, weighing 906 tons and having a crew of 83 people, was captured from international waters and forced to enter Wonsan Harbor. This action was meant to make the emerging situation [on the peninsula] even more tense; the state of the South Korean army and fleet was changed to 'fighting' mode, and the American aircraft carrier Enterprise departed from the Japanese port Sasebo and will be stationed in the waters in front of Wonsan harbor in the DPRK.

4. Judging from the things we've remarked upon recently, over the last three days the North Koreans have established many military checkpoints; they carry out daytime and nighttime raids; throughout the city there are more and more armed groups of civilians (even 4 to 5 people); the nightshift guards for embassies have doubled; and an increasing number of policemen are posted in front of embassies. This explains the recently enforced prohibition on foreigners traveling outside of Pyongyang.

5. We believe that the provocations which have emerged recently are attributable to the North Koreans entirely and in this way they put into practice the motto: 'let us be ready and take initiative to welcome the forthcoming great revolutionary event of the reunification of the motherland.'

Although the North Koreans are currently testing the nerves and feeling out the attitudes of all elements in South Korea, including the US, towards a potential large-scale military confrontation, we believe it is not impossible that the aggravated situation in South Korea will lead to the resumption of hostilities (stopped in 1953).

Signed: N. Popa