

January 16, 1973

Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, No.061.009

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Summary:

Lazar describes setbacks in inter-Korean cooperation following South Korea's hostile attitude towards North Korea. The author observes that DPRK is irked by President Park's growing cult of personality home and abroad.

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02/0422/16.01.1973

To Department II Relations

We would like to draw your attention to several aspects which have occurred over the past 10 days in inter-Korean relations, which result in an aggravation of the relatively calm atmosphere created at the end of 1972.

The political stabilization process experienced by South Korea, generated by the success of certain actions following the state of emergency, instituted in December 1972, continued to consolidate itself.

The last international contacts of South Korean authorities (the dialogue of Kim Jong-pil with Nixon and Tanaka) created a sense of security for the regime in Seoul.

On the backdrop of this situation, the South Korean authorities have proceeded towards consolidating their defense system, towards completing large-scale military operations, exercise of local defense, while taking up again the old style of labeling and disseminating "danger" from the Northern side.

During his first press conference this year, held on 12 January, President Park Chung Hee, using rough language towards the DPRK, pointed out the fact that distrust towards the North is still prevalent and therefore, military forces need to be consolidated. At the same time, he underlined the reduced efficiency of inter-Korean relations. In reply, the DPRK reopened the campaign of criticism against the South, in particular condemning military actions and U.S. engagement in modernizing the South Korean army.

Old affirmations about "the incessant strengthening of fascist policies in the country and of warmongering policies carried by South Korean authorities" re-emerged in the discourse held by Deputy Prime Minister Pak Seong-cheol [Pak Song Chol] at a public meeting (10.01 current year [10 January 1973]).

DPRK is visibly irritated by the personality cult created in South Korea and abroad around Park Chung Hee, as well as by the fact that the latter is speaking for 50 million Koreans; that is to say, that the South Korean president is claiming all initiative in contact with the North.

In analyzing the causes for this impasse in the dialogue between the two parts of Korea, we believe they lie in the outlook on the purpose, stages and rhythm of North-South contacts.

While the South is supporting a gradual approach to present problems, starting from the simple towards the more complex ones, the North is pushing for direct and expedient solutions to fundamental issues, which in their turn would lead to the solving of minor issues.

Secondly, cooperation actions envisioned by the DPRK for the near future are not going to be accepted by the South since they are tailored on the political-economic superiority of the North and hold true to the politically revolutionary purposes of the South Korean population.

Keeping in mind the present situation, and most of all the high-level official declarations of the two sides, we expect that no efficient steps will be made towards putting into practice the understandings and accords made in theory by the act of setting up the South-North Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

Signed: Aurelian Lazar

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