

March 21, 1973
Telegram from Bucharest to Pyongyang, SECRET,
No. 02/01810

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Summary:

Romanian officials describe disagreements between the South and North Korean delegations during the second session of the South-North Coordination Committee (SNCC).

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Comrade Chief of Mission,

We are hereby presenting a synthesis of the opinions formulated by the bureau in Pyongyang concerning the second session of the SNCC [South-North Coordinating Committee], which took place in Pyongyang between 14-16 March 1973:

The session took place on the background of pronounced antagonisms between the two sides and concluded without clear solutions to issues discussed, due to fundamental differences of opinions.

Throughout discussions, Northern representatives, abandoning the issues opened towards consideration during the last session, proposed new ideas which surprised the Southern delegation and were not retained by the latter for further reflection.

The Northern co-president launched thereupon the idea of matching the number of 5 SNCC members from each side with the chiefs of staff from both militaries, or of creating a subcommittee made up of representatives of the two armies.

Showing that this new proposal goes beyond its mandate and putting it into practice is premature given the existing conditions, the Southern side suggested the creation during the present session of two subcommittees-economic and social-cultural.

Northern representatives refused to take in consideration the creation of only two committees, insisting on the simultaneous creation of all 5 committees planned during the co-presidents' meeting in November 1972 (political, military, diplomatic, economic and cultural).

Due to the cautious attitude of the South and the "all or nothing" strategy of the north, the session ended without any notable success.

Visible change in the position of the DPRK (the rejection of Southern proposals which, though did not exhaust all available possibilities, offered nevertheless the framework for economic, cultural, sports, etc. types of exchanges and contacts) has a lot to do with the country's first victories resulting from synchronizing the inter-Korean dialogue with international developments (the opening of Sino-American dialogue regarding withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea).

It is obvious that the DPRK is attempting, with the help of the People's Republic of China or by itself, to gain the time necessary for obtaining the disengagement of the U.S. from the peninsula, which in turn would ensure a position of superiority for Pyongyang in inter-Korean negotiations. Conversely, the DPRK is expecting practical results from its comprehensive international campaign of building contacts.

The new DPRK tactics aims at achieving immediate objectives of unification without South Korea, or even against it.

The continuation of inter-Korean dialogue will therefore retain a formal character, depending mostly on indirect actions and various contingencies.

