

March 15, 1967

**Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, No.76.093,
TOP SECRET, March 15, 1967**

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Summary:

Ionescu Teofil and Huang Mîoi discuss a forthcoming 'great revolutionary event' in North
Korea.

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In a discussion with Ionescu Teofil about the internal situation in North Korea and the significance of the repeated statements about the forthcoming 'great revolutionary event', the Vietnamese Minister-Counselor, Huang Mîoi, stated the following:

'Gathering from conversations with the North Koreans and from the remarks that the North Koreans made on various occasions, it can be concluded that the North Korean leadership is set on taking actions which will result in either the definitive solution of the Korean problem and the expulsion of American forces, or the acknowledgment of the existence of two Korean states through an international treaty, which would replace the current armistice. Given that the efforts undertaken until now to achieve these goals using political means had no results, this time a military path will be adopted, which in the current international context, would trigger a chain of political reactions to achieve the above-mentioned goals. If victory is achieved in Vietnam by democratic force, or if the conflict in Vietnam is ended by means of political [negotiations], with the condition of the withdrawal of American troops, then the plan is to launch a limited military conflict on the 38th parallel. Time-wise, this war will be unleashed at the time of the decision to withdraw American troops from Vietnam will have been taken, but shortly before the actual withdrawal will have begun.[']

The North Koreans are taking the following aspects into account:

- The United States will be politically and militarily paralyzed, which would prevent it from getting involved in another war without having definitively resolved the current one. On the other hand, involvement in yet another conflict would taint the US in the eyes of the international public opinion, as the latter would conclude that this additional war was unleashed to satisfy the bellicose ambitions of the American administration, etc. Such an action would not enjoy too much support and sympathy externally, as the outcomes and denouement of the Korean War still endure in the memory of the US public opinion.

In other words, the unleashing of a military conflict in Korea while the Vietnam War would be drawing to a close, would be met with widespread public condemnation from the international community, which would be set in motion to ask the immediate conclusion of this new war.

It is also acknowledged that a settlement on the Vietnam issue would create the framework, basis and premises, including a precedent, for the immediate resolution of the conflict in Korea, without taking the proportions [of the Vietnam War].

The North Koreans are also aware that reigniting the conflict in Korea would mean the resumption of hostilities between UN forces and Korean-Chinese forces, which would affect all UN member-states, and this organization overall, which is currently characterized by a different atmosphere and mindset, compared to the 1950s. This situation would create a premise for discussing from the outset the Korean issue within the Security Council and within other UN bodies, which would attract the attention of the international public opinion and would create the framework for solving the Korean matter with the consent of both socialist and Third World countries. The approach adopted at the last two UN sessions on the Korean issue points in this direction.

On the other hand, China would find itself compelled to intervene on the North Korean side so as to respect its old commitments as well as to defend its own political interests. Korea would not create the type of obstacles that China has encountered in Vietnam, given that China [in the Korean case] will have to intervene, and the USSR has already given North Korea the necessary military aid, which it could continue to supply since there is a common border between the DPRK and the USSR.

In addition, the Vietnamese diplomat showed that in case the envisioned conditions won't create the desired premises, the North Koreans could terminate the conflict, given its limited scale, through bilateral contacts within the armistice accord framework and with the consent of the great powers, especially the USSR.

With respect to the issues discussed at the beginning of the conversation, the Vietnamese diplomat expressed his belief that presently the North Koreans were only preparing the domestic and international public opinion. The domestic public is used to the thought that this conflict will eventually take place and that its responsibility is to be morally and militarily prepared. The international public opinion is enticed by emphasizing the tensions on the 38th parallel, the fact that the US is delivering modern weaponry to South Korea etc. The North Koreans are aiming at portraying the US as planning the resumption of the war in Korea, given the preparations it is making. While military preparations in the North intensify and Soviet military aid reaches its destination, the South will undertake measures to step up the import of weaponry and to increase the level of military preparedness. This situation would make the job of North Korean propaganda significantly easier.

The Vietnamese diplomat expressed his belief that Kim Il Sung and Kim Il had discussed these issues in Moscow and it seems that they had received guarantees that the USSR would grant them all its moral and material support.

Moreover, the Vietnamese diplomat implied that in one form or another Kim Il Sung referred to these issues during his visit to Bucharest. He wanted to find out why Kim Il Sung had gone straight to Bucharest from Moscow and what kind of issues were discussed [in Bucharest].

Ionescu Teofil replied that he was aware of Kim Il Sung's visit to Bucharest, but that he did not know the details of the conversation.

Note

The Vietnamese Minister-Counselor is known to be a serious diplomat, who doesn't make puerile speculations.

He has frequent contacts with North Korean decision-makers and other officials, he travels considerably to take part in actions honoring North Korea's solidarity with the struggle of the Vietnamese people and the aid granted by the DPRK to Vietnam.

Signed: N. Popa

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