

April 14, 1967

**Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, No.73.130,
TOP SECRET, April 14, 1967**

Citation:

"Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, No.73.130, TOP SECRET, April 14, 1967", April 14, 1967, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Archive of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Obtained and translated for NKIDP by Eliza Gheorghe.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/116698>

Summary:

A report on the tensions provoked resulting from incidents near the 38th parallel.

Original Language:

Romanian

Contents:

Translation - English

On April 12, in a discussion with M. Golub, the Czechoslovak Ambassador to Pyongyang, he referred to the following issues regarding the internal situation in the DPRK and the incidents on the 38th parallel: he possesses information from the Czechoslovak delegates in the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission that the North Koreans are responsible for the majority of the provocations on the 38th parallel, and very few by the Americans.

The North Koreans are provoking these incidents so as to keep the masses in a perpetual state of tensions, to justify the need for the full militarization of the entire country and to get the population accustomed to shortages, in case DPRK attacks South Korea and subsequently is confronted with considerable hardship, which the population could therefore bear with more easily.

The North Korean leadership is aware that revolutionary forces in South Korea are almost inexistent and that is why it tries to use all means available to send activist groups to the South to organize the progressive forces there. It is possible, the Czechoslovak diplomat added, that the situation worsens in the upcoming months, because of the upcoming presidential elections in South Korea scheduled for May 3rd, until when the North Koreans will try to send groups to the South to sabotage them. It is not unthinkable for the North Koreans to unpleasantly surprise all those labor union delegations gathered in Pyongyang for May 1st celebrations, by attempting to carry out a larger operation, and then put the blame on the Americans. The goal of this operation would be to impress foreign delegations and demonstrate the justified need for liberating the South, as well as secure their assistance.

Lately, the Czechoslovak diplomat added, the US had changed its attitude within the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, growing increasingly aggressive and brutal, and shouting in the North Koreans' faces that they are the inciters and the criminals, that in the current circumstances, the North Koreans can no longer invoke the provisions of many articles in the armistice agreement. It seems, said the Czechoslovak Ambassador, that the recent defection of the Deputy Director of the North Korean News Agency helped the US and the South Koreans understand the intentions of the North, the reasons for their military preparations and the details of the state of DPRK armed forces and their military equipment, etc.

We want to add that on April 10, two more North Korean groups attempted to cross the 38th parallel and infiltrate the South (emphasis in original). The two groups of North Koreans made a 1-km long incursion past the frontier. Four members of these groups got killed. Newspapers and radio channels in North Korea have not mentioned anything about these incidents and the four deaths.

Lately, there are more and more workers' guards receiving military training in Pyongyang. Over the past week, these guards received new equipment: new rifles, automatic weapons, shotguns, and light anti-tank equipment. The press is publishing more and more articles mentioning how troops are waiting a mere sign from Kim Il Sung to cross the 38th parallel and liberate the south of the country through arms.

It is hard to predict what these tensions will lead to and how these incidents will evolve, in terms of frequency and magnitude. Many diplomats believe that if these tensions increase in frequency and intensity, it is possible that they degenerate in an armed conflict.

We will continue following these events and keep you informed.

Signed: N. Popa