

December 6, 1973
Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, SECRET,
No. 61.537

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Summary:

The document describes how the North Koreans enthusiastically celebrated the consensus of Committee No. 1 over the Korean issue in the UN; however, Lazar believes that the Korean leadership has not actually grasped the full implications of the decision. In addition, the telegram describes how Pyongyang's attempt to reassert control over South Korean islands close to the North Korean shores in the Yellow Sea has created friction between the two countries. The author also mentions that North Korean support for the student movements in South Korea legitimized Seoul's harsher crackdown on the dissident movements.

Credits:

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Translation - Korean

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To Direction I Relations - Comrade Ion Ciubotaru

We further inform you about the various reactions within the DPRK concerning the U.N. consensus over the Korean issue, a topic intensely debated within the diplomatic corps in Pyongyang.

As we formerly pointed out, the consensus of Committee no.1 over the Korean issue, which was received with enthusiasm in Pyongyang, as a great victory, in fact represents a practical compromise solution (as opposed to the unjustified requests during the period of preparations for the General Assembly), which the DPRK is accepting as an alternative to the South Korean project of enrolling two Koreas at the U.N. From the comments of socialist diplomats as well as of other countries, partially confirmed by the insistence with which the Korean press is justifying the position of the DPRK government, it has become apparent that some members of the Korean leadership, militaries most of all, have not fully grasped the concession made in favor of U.S. troops stationing in South Korea, an issue which remained outside the final document adopted on 21 November.

On the other hand, the realist spirit in which the U.N. has solved this issue is ignored in North-South relations. Polemics on various topics is intensifying. On the backdrop of political tensions on both sides, throughout the last days military elements have sprung, motivated by the repeated entry of DPRK ships in the territorial waters of islands recently claimed by the North (next to Haeju port in the Yellow Sea). This course of action, explained by DPRK as a means of exercising legitimate control in these territories, is seen by authorities in Seoul as the most serious incident since the 'Pueblo Case' in 1968 which triggered a state of military alert from the part of South Korea, coupled with the threat that a future similar attempt would result in retaliation.

In case DPRK aimed these actions at supporting student movements in South Korea, the result was the opposite, as the general mobilization of the army is on the verge of resulting in the forceful repression of youth movements.

We note that conversely, the authorities in Seoul used this action to pass through parliament-without objections-the military budget for 1974.

Signed: Aurelian Lazar

☐☐: ☐1☐☐☐- Ion Ciubotaru ☐☐

☐☐: Aurelian Lazăr