

August 3, 1967
Telegram from Pyongyang to Bucharest, No. 76.279,
TOP SECRET, August 3, 1967

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Summary:

A. Lazar and G. Chubotarenko from the Soviet Embassy in Pyongyang discuss the purge of Pak Geum-cheol from the Korean Workers' Party.

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On August 2nd, in a conversation between A. Lazar and the Third Soviet Secretary, G. Chubotarenko, the Soviet diplomat pointed out the following issues:

1. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Soviet Union made more than ten invitations to various Korean delegations (youth, labor union, women, friendship association, military, twin cities, etc) to come to the Soviet Union to take part in the activities meant to mark the great event.

It appeared, the Soviet diplomat said, that the Soviet Embassy had received assurances from the Korean leadership that all delegations which the Soviet invited would give a positive response soon. Our ambassador will send an invitation to the Workers' Party of Korea Central Committee, but we do not have the certainty that the North Koreans will give a positive response at the highest level.

On November 7th, it is scheduled that several Soviet delegations visit Pyongyang, among which the Friendship Association, a group of party activists (on vacation), the choir and dance ensemble from the Pacific military fleet, etc.

2. On the issue of Soviet-Korean relations, G. Chubotarenko pointed out that these are very good, and he emphasized in this respect that in the last quarter only six or seven Korean military delegations at the level of Deputy Minister went to the USSR, that a few days ago they signed an additional protocol for goods worth 10 million rubles, that this year 100 undergraduate students and 50 graduate students and Korean interns came to the Soviet Union for their studies. The Soviet diplomat mentioned that the USSR and the DPRK have recently perfected a series of new accords on various topics, which entail an intense exchange of delegations and cadres. G. Chubotarenko showed that there are intense exchanges on military issues as well, meaning that a lot of North Korean officers are currently receiving their advanced training in the USSR, and that hundreds of specialists - Soviet advisers on areas related to navy, air force and missiles are currently operating in North Korean military units, where they are offering technical assistance to the North Koreans.

3. On the issue of the recent Plenum of the Workers' Party of Korea Central Committee, we noticed that the Soviet diplomat sought to minimize the gravity of the removal from the Korean party leadership of two of the members of the Central Committee, and of all other cadres, underlining instead that according to the information gathered by the Soviet Embassy, the removal of the respective elements from the party leadership was the result of several mistakes committed by these people, rejecting the idea that they were an anti-party and anti-Kim Il Sung faction, as rumors in the diplomatic corps have it.

G. Chubotarenko pointed out that they knew that Pak Geum-cheol [Pak Kum Chol], the former member of the Politburo Presidium of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, was guilty of not understanding the political line of the party, for which he was removed from his function and appointed the head of a factory in the countryside. All the other former party cadres were guilty of even more serious mistakes, which plighted the revolutionary movement in South Korea.

Signed: N. Popa