

On March 16, A. Lazar had a conversation with Wang Peng, counselor and Chargé d'affaires of the People's Republic of China, from which we took note of the following important aspects:

Contrary to the harsh language used previously by Chinese diplomats toward the DPRK party and state leadership and DPRK internal and foreign policy, it was noticeable that Wang Peng completely changed his approach, having become an active supporter of the forceful line promoted by the DPRK.

The Chinese diplomat has repeatedly underlined that the war preparations of the DPRK are welcome, since it is certain that the United States wants to expand the battlefield in Asia, not only in Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia, but definitely in Korea as well. He added that the outbreak of war in Korea is inevitable, a logical consequence given that the country cannot remain separated indefinitely and that for the DPRK, this would be a just liberation war.

Wang Peng said that as far as he knew, both parties had made intense war preparations, but the sole difficulty was the poor political training of the masses in South Korea, whose training was comparably inferior to the South Vietnamese masses, to withstand a long-term war and offer substantial help to the liberating forces from the North.

A. Lazar said that given the situation in both Koreas, he did not contest the possibility of war reigniting, yet the diplomatic corps commented on the idea that the United States had found itself in a preposterous position in Vietnam and that because of the upcoming elections it would be impossible to open a new front in Vietnam.

Wang Peng answered that this idea had the potential to demobilize the Korean people and it did not mirror reality, because it was still possible that the Americans would start a war in less than a week or two. We, the Chinese diplomat added, share the conviction of the Korean comrades that war is drawing near and the People's Republic of China has repeatedly declared that it would grant its full support to the DPRK.

A. Lazar added that it was beyond any doubt that in case the DPRK was attacked, it would receive the full support of socialist countries and especially from the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union. In this respect, the Romanian diplomat added, it seems that Premier Zhou Enlai sent a message to comrade Kim Il Sung in which Zhou Enlai had assured Kim Il Sung of the support of the People's Republic of China in its anti-American struggle.

Wang Peng did not deny the existence of a message but with noticeable surprise he said he had not known about such a document, but judging by its essence, it wouldn't be too different from the Chinese governmental declaration released immediately after the incident with the USS Pueblo spy ship.

A. Lazar tried to find out more about the results of the recent Sino-Korean economic negotiations. In this respect Wang Peng, just like in our previous conversations with him, avoided giving any concrete facts, figures, but he said that the amount of commercial exchanges for 1968 had increased compared with 1967; that the Chinese, to the best of their abilities, had almost entirely satisfied the demands of the Koreans, especially in terms of coke, coal (2 million, in terms of last year's supplies), cotton, tires, salt supplies, etc. Wang Peng avoided giving a full answer to the question referring to the number and branches in which Chinese specialists are working in the DPRK, but he pointed out that Korean demands for technical-scientific assistance have multiplied lately and these demands include matters related to technical-military items. After pointing out that Sino-Korean bilateral relations have been reinvigorated and that the prospects for mitigating past quarrels are good, Wang Peng said that 'I started to realize that at the basis of Soviet-Korean relations lay no political-ideological principles and the DPRK would have manifested its personality earlier on if it hadn't been tied to the Soviet economic and military aid.' He added that the DPRK would have the opportunity to verify that in the upcoming war, the People's Republic of China would be its most reliable friend.

A. Lazar asked whether the Chinese Embassy received the [Romanian] Agerpress bulletin on the consultative meeting in Budapest. Wang Peng thanked us for the respective materials and said that he had been informed about it by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and about the position of the Romanian Communist Party at the meeting.

After the Romanian diplomat briefly presented the point of view of the Romanian Communist Party adopted by the Central Committee of the RCP on February 14 and the decision adopted on March 1 with respect to the international consultative meeting, Wang Peng said that personally he held in high regard the efforts and the principled position of the RCP at the consultative meeting. Wang Peng added that through the meeting in Budapest the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union demonstrated yet again its desire to enshrine as urgently as possible the split in the international workers' and communist movement.

Signed: N. Popa