

On January 29, D. Tsvetkov, First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Pyongyang, informed comrade A. Lazar about the following:

1. On two different occasions, the Soviet Chargé d'affaires visited Pak Seong-cheol, the Foreign Minister of the DPRK, to inform him about the US proposal for the USSR to mediate the USS Pueblo incident and about the Soviet refusal to do so. Pak Seong-cheol appreciated the position of the Soviets, underlining that it proved [the Soviet Union] respected the sovereignty of the DPRK.

Our opinion is that, through the two meetings with the Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Soviets probed the position of the North Koreans towards the incident and towards the prospects of resolving the situation.

2. Tsvetkov said that on January 27 the Soviet Ambassador to Pyongyang returned to his post, and that he would be ready to take action to moderate the Korean leadership, bringing it back with its feet on the ground, but he would not act until the position of the People's Republic of China was known (maybe it will be too late —our note). 'We believe that it is not impossible that behind the Koreans stand the Chinese, and if Soviet advice runs against the Korean line, that may bring about the exact opposite outcome from what we envision,' said the Soviet diplomat.

The fact that the Soviet Ambassador returned to Pyongyang on a special plane makes us think that he did not come back alone, but together with several other Soviet leaders, to discuss the current situation with the Korean leadership.

3. The Soviet diplomat showed that the Soviet air fleet in the Pacific was ordered to move close to the military ships deployed by the US from its Seventh Fleet in the Sea of Japan.

4. With respect to the internal situation, Tsvetkov said that Soviet diplomats thought that the DPRK had secretly called for general mobilization and that they obtained reliable information that large troop movements were being moved towards the southern and the eastern borders.

Signed: N. Popa