

Memorandum on an Information of 1 February 1968

[Source: MfAA C 1023/73; translated by Karen Riechert]

Embassy of the GDR in the DPRK, Pyongyang

2 February 1968

Stamped: confidential matter

On the day the "Pueblo" had been seized, there was no light in North Korea in the evening, for they were obviously afraid of serious consequences. Ever since, there are permanently jets in the air. Massive defense forces are concentrated in the harbor area. Although we believe the situation already being stabilized, there are rumors that people still expect the outbreak of a war. According to public talk, in case that South Korea should not attack, the DPRK would be required to do it. The situation should be ripe for that. A clear indication would be that workers in South Korea had risen up for armed struggle. There was much talk in this context, the DPRK would possess nuclear weapons. People are said to be convinced, that in case of war, the Soviet Union would fight on the side of the DPRK using nuclear weapons. China would also do so, because the "Pueblo" had invaded territorial waters of the DPRK and China would take sides in the wake of such an outrageous provocation.

A relative, who had already been called to the mountains for several months in summer to dig bunkers, is said to be assigned there again. Recently, the militias have exercises every Saturday and Sunday in larger groups, whereby they practice in particular long marches. All Koreans, starting at the age of five, have to carry their necessities in a backpack all the time.

[...]

Signed: Herrmann