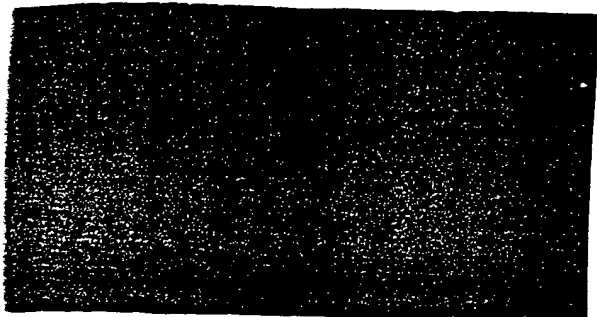


~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

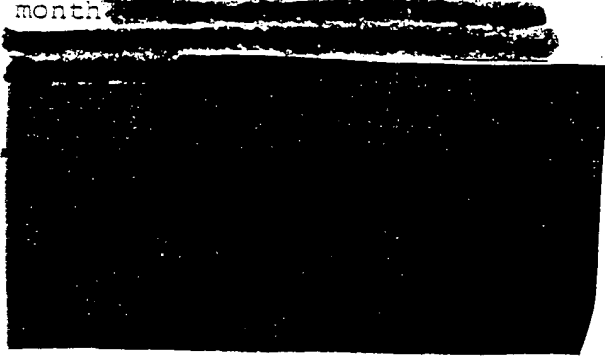
PUEBLO IMPASSE- UNBROKEN

The North Koreans continue to imply strongly that their handling of the Pueblo crew will be dependent in large part on US actions. They are clearly intent on using the crew as hostages to forestall US pressure and induce concessions.

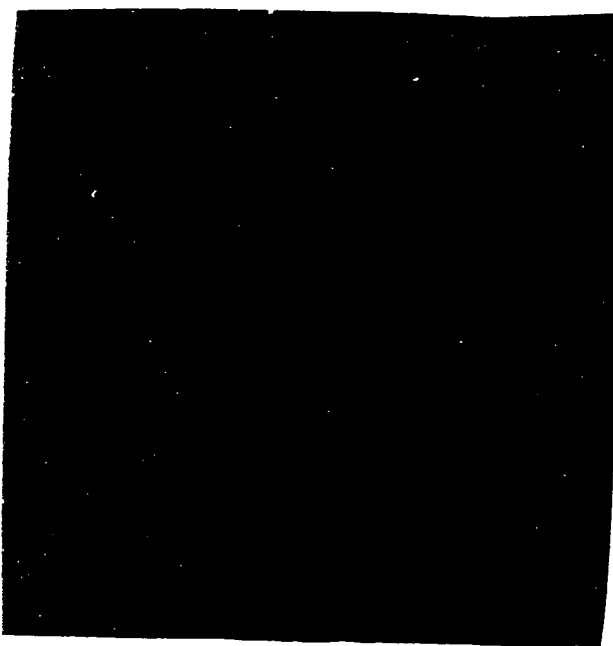


General Pak Chung-kuk, the senior North Korean representative at Panmunjom, on 19 February warned that Pyongyang would carefully watch every future US move and cautioned the US to act "discreetly." He pointedly protested the US build-up since the Pueblo seizure and US plans to increase military assistance to South Korea.

There have been widespread press reports in Seoul of an imminent cabinet shake-up growing out of the North Korean attempt on President Pak's life last month. [REDACTED]



In addition, during the past week various North Korean spokesmen have again warned that the crew may be punished in accordance with North Korean law.



Six Soviet combat ships which deployed in reaction to the US naval task force off Korea have returned to Vladivostok. Three other combat ships and five auxiliaries continue to follow the US forces. [REDACTED]

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22 SEPT 99

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]