

November 29, 1976

Telegram from the Royal Danish Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, 'North Korea's Diplomatic Practice'

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<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/176010>

Summary:

The Danish Embassy in Kuala Lumpur reports on Malaysia's interest in the North Korean smuggling case, and the possibility that North Korea has undertaken similar illegal activities in Malaysia.

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PROTOKOLLEN

KGL. DANSK AMBASSADE
ROYAL DANISH EMBASSY
KUALA LUMPUR

Udenrigsministeriet

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Nordkoreas diplomatiske praksis.

De nordkoreanske diplomaters aktivitet i Danmark og de øvrige nordiske lande har været genstand for en omfattende pressedækning i Malaysia, både med hensyn til tekst og billeder, og bragt med en fremtrædende placering. Hovedlinien i referaterne følger ret nøje, hvad der her er kendt fra dansk og international presse, og man finder derfor ingen anledning til at komme nærmere ind herpå.

Derimod kan der måske være anledning til at nævne, at en ganske kort notits i et malaysisk middagsblad for en uge siden oplyste, at der også havde været tilfælde af tilsvarende uregelmæssigheder i Malaysia, og at en sekretær ved den herværende nordkoreanske ambassade var blevet udvist for nogle måneder siden. Få dage senere bemærkede man i en her modtaget dansk avis, at Malaysia var nævnt som et eksempel på andre lande end de skandinaviske, hvor der havde været vanskeligheder med nordkoreanske diplomater.

Imidlertid traf jeg tilfældigvis kort herefter direktøren for det herværende udenrigsministerium og spurgte ham da, hvad der egentlig lå bagved denne avisnotits. Han svarede omgående, at den var urigtig, og at udenrigsministeriet havde tilstillet aviserne et dementi, som også blev offentliggjort.

Udenrigsministeriet her har utvivlsomt interesseret sig for sagen, idet ambassaden nogle dage forinden modtog en opringning fra en medarbejder i protokolsektionen, der bad om at få oplyst, hvad man her på ambassaden kendte til enkeltheder vedrørende sagen i Danmark, specielt med hensyn til de omhandlede kvanta af spiritus, cigaretter og narkotika. Man svarede telefonisk, at der ikke forelå nogen officiel meddelelse, og at der kun kunne refereres, hvad der var offentliggjort i de danske aviser, hvorefter man opgav de der fo-

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rekommende tal. Siden har ambassaden ikke hørt mere til sagen.

Det kan i denne forbindelse fremhæves, at udenrigsministeriet her fører en ret indgående kontrol med, hvad alle herværende ambassader modtager af toldpligtige varer, det være sig fra udlandet eller ex bond, idet alle leverancer skal toldklareres, og alle fornødne klareringsdokumenter skal forinden være forelagt i og godkendt af udenrigsministeriet, hvilket forøvrigt er en ret forsinkende procedure.

Dette ændrer imidlertid intet ved, at den nordkoreanske ambassade også her i landet anvender meget betydelige beløb på propaganda såvel i de - også fra andre lande kendte - helsidesannoncer med Kim Il Sung som det centrale tema, som ved regelmæssig rundsendelse af koreanske aviser og tidskrifter samt bindstærke, smukt indbundne værker med samme hovedtema. Omtrent samtidig med begyndelsen af presseomtalen af Nordkoreas aktivitet i Danmark modtog de herværende ambassader pakker med 8 indbundne værker af denne kaliber.

Den nordkoreanske ambassade i Kuala Lumpur blev oprettet som en chargé d'affaires post i december 1973, og den tidligere chargé d'affaires fik status som ambassadør i juni 1975. Uanset, at de reelle forbindelser mellem Nordkorea og Malaysia er yderst minimale, det være sig kommercielt, kulturelt eller på anden vis, opererer ambassaden med en stab på 3-4 diplomatiske medarbejdere foruden ambassadøren samt lokal stab.

John Rasmussen

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Foreign Ministry

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North Korea's Diplomatic Practice

The activities of North Korean diplomats in Denmark and the other Nordic countries has been subject to extensive press coverage in Malaysia, both in print and visual media, and it has been presented as a case of great importance. The coverage largely follows what has already been published in Danish and international press.

However, it may be worth mentioning a brief notice in a Malaysian newspaper published about a week ago, which claimed Malaysia has seen similar irregularities, and that a Secretary of the North Korean Embassy here was expelled a few months ago. A few days later, I noted that a Danish newspaper mentioned Malaysia as another country where North Korean diplomats had caused trouble.

I happened to meet the Director for the [North Korean] Embassy and asked him what was behind these claims. He immediately denied the claims, and informed me that they had sent a retraction to the newspaper that was subsequently published.

The [North Korean] Foreign Ministry here has undeniably been very interested in the case, as we received a phone call from an officer of the North Korean protocol section, asking for further details of the case, in particular details regarding the quantities of spirits, cigarettes and narcotics. The Embassy replied that there was no public announcement at the current time, and referred the caller to Danish newspapers, who has published the exact quantities of contraband. After this, the Embassy has not heard back from them.

In this regard it should be mentioned that the Foreign Ministry [of Malaysia] here inspects all duty-subjected imports to all Embassies, both foreign and domestic, as all deliveries are subject to customs declaration, and all necessary declaration forms must be handed to and approved by the Foreign Ministry, which by the way makes deliveries a very slow procedure.

None of this changed however, changes the fact that the North Korean Embassy here too - as they are known to do in other countries - spends a considerable amount of money on propaganda, such as full-page ads with Kim Il Sung as the subject, distribution of propaganda magazines and newspapers, and handsomely bound books on similar topics. Around the time when the smuggling story began to unfold, all Embassies here received parcels with 8 nicely bound volumes of this nature.

The North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur was established as a chargé d'affaires-post in December 1973, and the former chargé d'affaires was granted Ambassador status in June 1975. The [North Korean] Embassy does operate with a staff of 3-4 people, although any practical relationship between Malaysia and North

Korea is virtually non-existent, both in commercial, cultural and other terms.

[SIGNATURE, ILLEGIBLE]