

**October 20, 1976**

**Cable, US Embassy Copenhagen to the Secretary of State, "'Diplomatic Gang' Seen Active in All of Scandinavia'**

**Citation:**

"Cable, US Embassy Copenhagen to the Secretary of State, "'Diplomatic Gang' Seen Active in All of Scandinavia", October 20, 1976, Wilson Center Digital Archive, 1976COPENH03530, Access to Archival Databases (AAD).  
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/155151>

**Summary:**

This cable summarizes Danish media coverage of illegal North Korean smuggling in Denmark and other Scandinavian countries. It focuses especially on press theories about the way in which the North Korean Embassies used illicitly gained funds.

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Original Scan

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 COPENH 03530 210824Z

53

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 NEA-10 ISO-00 SNM-02 PM-04 NSC-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01

SP-02 /070 W

----- 023018

R 201625Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3450

INFO DEA HQS WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG 1308

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS COPENHAGEN 3530

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SNAR KN DA

SUBJ: "DIPLOMATIC GANG" SEEN ACTIVE IN ALL OF SCANDINAVIA

REF: COPENHAGEN 3512

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 COPENH 03530 210824Z

SUMMARY: DANISH MEDIA CONTINUED TO DEVOTE PRIME SPACE TO THE NORTH KOREAN DIPLOMATIC SCANDAL. ATTENTION TODAY (OCTOBER 20) WAS DEVOTED TO STORIES ON ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE POLICE IN SWEDEN AND FINLAND WHICH ARE BEING INTERPRETED AS PROOF OF SIMILAR ILLEGAL NORTH KOREAN ACTIVITY IN THOSE COUNTRIES. SPECULATION CONTINUES ON HOW THE PROFITS FROM THE ILLICIT ACTIVITIES WERE USED AND FEATURE ARTICLES DISCUSS NORTH KOREAN DEBT DEFAULTS AND NORTH KOREA AS A REFUGE FOR TERRORISTS. DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER NOW STATES THAT HE BELIEVES THE CRIMES WERE NOT COMMITTED FOR THE PERSONAL ADVANTAGE OF THE DIPLOMATS; HE EXPECTS REPLACEMENTS TO STAFF THE EMBASSY TO ARRIVE SOON AND CONTINUES TO EXCLUDE A BREAK IN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. ALL PAPERS REPORT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE POLICE IN SWEDEN AND FINLAND AND CONCLUDE THAT IN THOSE COUNTRIES TOO THE NORTH KOREANS HAD ABUSED THEIR DIPLOMATIC STATUS. AKTUEL (SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC) REPORTS THAT THE NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR IN STOCKHOLM DENIED TO THE PRESS THEIR HAVING DONE ANYTHING WRONG. THE PAPER COMMENTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR DID NOT REFER TO HIS PRIOR EXPULSION FROM NORWAY IN THE CONVERSATION WITH THE SWEDISH PRESS REPRESENTATIVES.

2. AKTUEL ALSO CARRIED AN INTERVIEW WITH A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DANISH-NORTH KOREAN FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY WHO REVEALED THAT ALTHOUGH THE NAME OF SOCIETY HAD BEEN USED AS PUBLISHER ON A VAST ARRAY OF POSH BOOKS (MOSTLY EXALTING KIM IL SUNG) PUT OUT BY EMBASSY, THE SOCIETY WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE. "WE DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF MONEY", THE SPOKESMAN IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID.

3. BERLINGSKE TIDENDE ( INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE) FRONT-PAGED A SPECULATIVE ARTICLE ON HOW NORTH KOREANS USED PROFITS AND FROM TRADE IN NARCOTICS, LIQUOR AND CIGARETTES. THE AUTHOR ASSERTED THAT THE PROCEEDS WERE USED TO TRAIN AND EQUIP MORE THAN 5000 TERRORISTS WHO HAD FOUND REFUGE IN NORTH KOREA IN THE LAST FEW YEARS. LIKE LIBYA, THE ARTICLE SAID, NORTH KOREA HAS BEEN GUILTY OF ORGANIZING A LONG SERIES OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 COPENH 03530 210824Z

THE FAR EAST AND EUROPE, INCLUDING HIJACKINGS AND ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS.

4. THE PROBLEMS OF THE DANISH COMPANIES SABROE AND DANNEBROG IN COLLECTING DEBTS OWED BY NORTH KOREA WERE DISCUSSED IN THE WIDER CONTEXT OF OVERALL NORTH KOREAN INDEBTEDNESS. POLITIKEN (INDEPENDENT LEFT-OF-CENTER)

STATES THAT NORTH KOREAN FOREIGN DEBT IS BETWEEN \$1,200 MILLIONS AND \$2,000 MILLIONS. THE FEATURE ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THE NORTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT PUTS ITS DIPLOMATS TO WORK TO HELP PAY EXPENSES.

5. MIN AVISEN (THE DAILY OF THE "NATIONAL" COMMUNIST, SOCIALIST PEOPLE'S PARTY) EDITORIALIZED ON THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF NORTH KOREANS' CRIMES NOTING THAT ALTHOUGH "SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA" (READ US IMPERIALISM) WAS NOT CHANGED ONE IOTA BY THE NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR'S BEHAVIOR IN DENMARK, GREATER DIFFICULTY WOULD BE ENCOUNTERED IN TRYING TO PERSUADE OTHERS OF "THE MAGNIFICENCE AND STRENGTH OF NORTH KOREAN STATE".

6. THE PRESS APPEARS GENERALLY UNINFORMED REGARDING THE PRESENT ACTIVITIES OF THE EXPELLED DIPLOMATS. THERE ARE SOME REPORTS OF THE DEPARTURE OF TWO AND THE ARRIVAL OF TWO NEW ONES. INFORMATION (LEFTIST INTELLECTUAL) CARRIES A STATEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER K.B. ANDERSEN IN WHICH HE DENIES KNOWLEDGE OF THE ARRIVAL OF NEW PERSONNEL TO MAN THE NORTH KOREAN EMBASSY. POLITIKEN REPORTS THAV EMBASSY PERSONNEL, APPARENTLY FED UP WITH ATTENTION FROM THE PRESS, HAVE MOUNTED A LOUDSPEAKER OUTSIDE THE CHANCERY THROUGH WHICH LOUD NORTH KOREAN MUSIC IS TRANSMITTED IN AN EFFORT TO DROWN OUT THE BARRAGE OF PRESS INQUIRIES.

7. FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSEN, IN PRESS INTERVIEW AND ON TELEVISION, STATED THAT IN THE LIGHT OF THE IMPLICATION OF NORTH KOREANS IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THEY ACTED IN A PERSONAL CAPACITY. HE DOUBTED THEY WOULD BE PUNISHED ON RETURN HOME. PRIME MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN IS QUOTED UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 COPENH 03530 210824Z

IN INFORMATION AS SAYING THAT THE NORTH KOREANS WOULD HAVE NO REASON TO FEAR ANYTHING WHEN THEY RETURN HOME.  
DEAN

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** NARCOTICS, TOBACCO, DRUG TRAFFIC, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL EXPULSIONS, ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 20 OCT 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976COPENH03530  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760395-0404  
**From:** COPENHAGEN  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19761034/aaaabdbg.tel  
**Line Count:** 158  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 COPENHAGEN 3512  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ullricre  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 17 JUN 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <17 JUN 2004 by DuboseBM>; APPROVED <17 DEC 2004 by ullricre>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** "DIPLOMATIC GANG" SEEN ACTIVE IN ALL OF SCANDINAVIA  
**TAGS:** PFOR, SNAR, KN, DA, XZ  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006