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On the Current Situation in the DPRK

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Summary:

North Korea is said to have started acknowledging the World War II and Korean War-era assistance of the USSR and China once again. Some Western literature is now available in the DPRK. And a flurry of construction projects have begun outside of Pyongyang.

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Capt. Schulze Frank Ludwig"

HA II/AKG, HVA III, delivery to the liaison officer of the KGB via
Comrade Colonel Brückner

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Our department has received the following unofficial evaluation of the situation in the DPRK:

In contrast to Summer 1983, a positive change in the attitude toward the USSR and the socialist community of states can be felt everywhere. Thus, for example, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of liberation, the liberation memorial on top of Morang Hill in Pyongyang was grandiosely reconstructed and this holiday was fashioned as a magnificent demonstration of Korean-Soviet friendship. At the same time, notably, there took place a great appreciation of the Red Army's historic liberation [of Korea], which for the last one and a half decades had been almost completely negated. In this regard, the deed of Red Army Lieutenant Novichenko, who in 1946 gave his life to save the Korean party leadership from a counterrevolutionary attack and who is portrayed as a symbol of Korean-Soviet friendship, was heavily propagandized. For this purpose, a two-part motion picture about Novichenko was made in cooperation with the Soviet Union and widely broadcasted in DPRK cinema and television.

On the occasion of the anniversary of the Great Socialist October Revolution there also took place a wreath ceremony at the liberation memorial involving the DPRK's party and state leadership. Concurrently, there was a special broadcast with Soviet documentaries and motion pictures on the third channel of Korean television, which usually only broadcasts on Saturdays and Sundays.

At the beginning of November, the 35th Anniversary of the Chinese People's Volunteers' participation on the Korean front was conducted with numerous events and delegations to appropriately serve as a "counterweight," as it were. In doing so, it is still stressed that one wants good relations with the Soviet Union and the PRC, that is despite all the reservations regarding Chinese foreign policy, which are not officially expressed, however. Yet tendencies toward an opening to the outside are particularly noticeable in cultural and publishing politics. Thus, the previously mentioned third television channel solely broadcasts foreign films and media, or rather, educational shows.

On the book market one can find a great number of translations of world literature, so that besides the previously available authors one can now also find, for example, Jules Verne, Cervantes, Dumas, Conan Doyle, H. G. Wells. But the largest part of these new releases consists of a 100-volume series called "Selected Works of Children and Youth Literature," whose publication is said to have occurred on the

initiative of Kim Jong Il. Generally, this palpably reflects the publication program of south Korean publishers, which presumably is adopted, i.e., copied, without much scrutiny, whereby even "Tarzan," "Lassie's Adventures," "Donald Duck," and many other British and American issues get published.

Due to the low number of copies published, however, these publications' impact on the masses is limited, though it is possible to borrow them from libraries.

Another noteworthy new tendency is that they [the North Koreans] have begun to reduce the serious differences between capital and province. This is evidenced, among other things, by the generous construction projects in provincial capitals and similar cities such as Namp'o, Wönsan, and Kaesöng.

[\[1\]](#) IMS signifies "Unofficial Collaborators"