

June 4, 1962

**Information about a Conversation between the
Ambassador of the DPRK Comrade Gwon Yeong-tae
and Comrade Alfred Kurella**

Citation:

"Information about a Conversation between the Ambassador of the DPRK Comrade Gwon Yeong-tae and Comrade Alfred Kurella", June 4, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, SAPMO-BA. Translated for NKIDP by Bernd Schaefer.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/110513>

Summary:

The North Korean Amabassador in East Germany evaluates politics, the economy, schooling, and the military in South Korea

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from ROK Ministry of Unification

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

SED Central Committee
Department of Foreign Policy and International Relations
[SAPMO-BA, Berlin, archival signature missing]

Berlin, 4 June 1962

Information

about a Conversation between the Ambassador of the DPRK, Comrade Gwon Yeong-tae [Kwon Yong Thae],
and Comrade Alfred Kurella on 1 June 1962

The meeting was held upon request of the Korean ambassador. The ambassador explained he is instructed to inform our party about the situation in South Korea. He handed over an appeal from all social associations of the DPRK to the Korean people and asked,

- to publish this appeal in our press and
- support through our foreign representations the distribution of this appeal.

He said, he also handed this appeal to Comrade Paul Wandel at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The appeal is said to unmask the criminal action by the U.S. aggression forces and the Park Chung Hee clique. It also contains the position of [DPRK] party and government on questions of Korea's reunification. Comrade Kurella asked whether there are new considerations and proposals by the KWP leadership pertaining to tactics regarding South Korea and reunification. The ambassador responded, the material includes nothing new that goes beyond decisions of the 4th Party Congress. Currently the main task consists in chasing the aggressive U.S. Army out of South Korea, since South Korea's occupation by forces of the United States is the main obstacle to Korean reunification.

The ambassador provided the following additional explanations about the situation in South Korea and the consequences of the one year of rule by the Park Chung Hee clique:

The situation gets worse by the day. All the people who advocate freedom, democracy, and unification are getting arrested and sentenced. Over the course of 10 months, the military clique has issued about 2,000 reactionary laws and instructions. In the first week of the military clique's rule alone, 23 political parties, 338 mass organizations, as well as 2,300 newspapers, publishers and agencies were banned.

Within 8 months, investigations were conducted against about 130,000 patriots. 230,000 people were arrested during that period. Every 100th South Korean is either arrested or under investigation. The South Korean courts issue about 900 sentences daily. The South Korean people can no longer breath freely under this reign of terror.

The economic situation is disastrous. About 90 percent of medium and small businesses, which represent the bulk of the country's economy, have closed down. In this year alone, 1,400 businesses were closed down. Industrial production is just one

third of production during the last years of Japanese rule; in agricultural production it is 75 percent. Currently 3.4 million South Koreans are without food. This number will grow during the course of June to almost 10 million. The Five-Year-Plan the South Korean rulers are talking about is planning for a growth in industrial production of 40 percent. Yet this is unachievable. The Five-Year-Plan does not serve the increase of living standards, but almost exclusively funds the expansion of military bases and the construction of airports, ports, streets etc. This plan is supposed to be implemented with the aid of foreign monopolistic capital and calculates with capital investment from the United States, West Germany, Italy, and Japan in the amount of 1.4 billion dollar.

The education system is close to bankruptcy. In the last year alone, 21 universities were closed and 10,000 students kicked out. About 35,000 classrooms are lacking in South Korean schools. The South Korean students do not have textbooks. About 800,000 children are not able to visit a school at all.

The number of sick people in South Korea is astonishingly high. More than 41 percent of the people suffer from serious illnesses.

Many academics, among them even famous scholars, have become unemployed. Only writers who write about cruelties and crime are able to make a living. The others have to do manual labor.

The American imperialists and the South Korean rulers are preparing for a new war against the DPRK. Among other indicators, the large military maneuvers at the DMZ with 75,000 American and South Korean forces testify to that. In this year alone, 300,000 young people have been conscripted into the army. The Americans openly declare they will never give up South Korea. 31 percent of military U.S. expenditures for East Asian countries go to South Korea. The United States are planning for 1962 to invest 25 percent of all military spending abroad for South Korea.

Though the appeal does not contain anything substantially new, it unmaskes what happened under the rule of the Park Chung Hee clique just within a year. It is supposed to make a contribution to condemn the criminal actions of the United States and the South Korean military regime before the entire world.

Comrade Kurella thanked for the information. He referred to some commonalities and differences between the situation in Korea and in Germany. In this context he emphasized different tactics concerning the issue of reunification. Comrade Kurella stated, we have understanding for the situation in Korea. We will continue to do everything to support the requests of the fraternal Korean party for supporting their struggle within the framework of our abilities.

Responding to a question of the Korean ambassador, Comrade Kurella explained the development of the Academy of the Arts into a socialist academy.

CC:

27x Politburo

5x Central Committee, Department Foreign Policy and International Relations