

November 12, 1974

GDR Ambassador Pyongyang to Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Berlin

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Summary:

Excerpt from East German ambassador's message about the defection of a North Korean security officer. The officer describes the increasing promotion of Kim Jong Il as a potential successor to his father.

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Radio Seoul reported about four weeks ago that a high-ranking DPRK security officer fled from Gaesong to South Korea. In addition to slanderous remarks against the DPRK, he made statements about the family of Comrade Kim Il Sung largely resembling our own observations we made among our inner circles of [North Korean] friends. According to them, party meetings were held across the DPRK to swear loyalty to Kim Jong Il, the son of Kim Il Sung, in case something grave might happen to Kim Il Sung. There are the first large photos of Kim Il Sung's eldest son showing up in offices, featuring slogans of statements he made on reunification or socialist construction.

Together with recently increased attention towards the son comes a higher profile of his mother, Kim Il Sung's first wife. ... The entire issue is highly non-transparent and delicate. The Korean comrades do not comment on it; our observations must be made over the long term and with a lot of sensitivity. Museum visits once in a while can provide informative clues.