

November 8, 1976

**Cable, US Embassy Seoul to the Secretary of State,
'Egypt Reportedly Expels North Korean Diplomats'**

Citation:

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Summary:

This cable discusses unconfirmed rumors that Egypt secretly expelled North Korean diplomats accused of selling black market goods as well as the possibility that the South Korean government might attempt to have the story published through some Middle Eastern news outlet.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 /090 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0436

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8922

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR KN EG

SUBJ: EGYPT REPORTEDLY EXPELS NORTH KOREAN DIPLOMATS

REF: CAIRO 15139

1. EMBOFF DISCUSSED CONTENTS REFTEL WITH MOFA INFORMATION DIVISION II DIRECTOR KIM CHOE-YONG AND MID-EAST DIVISION DIRECTOR MUN CHU-WAN NOVEMBER 5. MUN SAID HE HAD NOT HEARD OF REPORT OF EGYPTIAN EXPULSION OF 8 NORTH KOREAN DIPLOMATS. KIM SAID, HOWEVER, THAT REPORT HAD COME FROM "INFORMATION OFFICER" IN ROK CONGEN CAIRO WHO HAD LEARNED OF "RUMORED" EXPULSION FROM CAIRO-BASED CBS TV CORRESPONDENT JOHN W. SHEAHAN AND E. ELDIN SHAWKAT OF AL AHAM RESEARCH AND MATERIAL SECTION. ACCORDING TO THESE TWO MEN EIGHT NORTH KOREAN DIPLOMATS IN CAIRO WERE APPREHENDED BY EGYPTIAN POLICE "ONE WEEK BEFORE OCTOBER 19" WHILE SELLING BLACK MARKET GOODS. THEY WERE SECRETLY DEPORTED BY CAIRO GOVERNMENT ACCORDING TO RUMOR. KIM SUGGESTED THAT EMBASSY CAIRO MAY WISH TO CHECK STORY FURTHER WITH SHEAHAN AND SHAWKAT REPORTED EXPULSION WAS NOT UNLIKE SECRET EXPULSION OF NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR FORM CAIRO IN 1971. KIM SAID IT

WAS WELL KNOWN IN CAIRO THAT EGYPTIANS HAD AT THAT TIME SUSPECTED

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NORTH KOREANS OF SMUGGLING WATCHES INTO EGYPT. WHEN NORTH

KOREAN EMBASSY RECEIVED TWO BOXES WHICH EGYPTIANS SUSPECTED CONTAINED CONTRABAND WATCHES EGYPTIANS ARRANGED TO HAVE ONE BOX DROPPED ON GROUND SO THAT IT BROKE REVEALING SMUGGLED WATCHES. EGYPTIANS THEN EXPELLED NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR BUT DID SO SECRETLY AND WITHOUT PUBLICITY BECAUSE OF DESIRE TO AVOID EMBARRASSING NORTH KOREANS.

3. KIM SAID EGYPTIANS DESIRE TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT FOR NORTH KOREANS STEMMED FROM COMBINATION OF FACTORS NOT LEAST OF WHICH WAS PRERSONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRESIDENT SADAT AND KIM IL-SUNG ESTABLISHED DURING SADAT VISIT TO PYONGYANG. KIM ALSO SAID EGYPT-NORTH KOREA MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WAS IMPORTANT FACTOR IN EGYPTIAN DESIRE NOT TO EMBARRASS NORTH KOREANS PUBLICLY.

4. KIM SAID ROKS WOULD PROBABLY SEEK OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE STORY OF NORTH KOREAN EXPULSION FROM EGYPT PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPERS IN SOME MIDDLE EAST COUNTRY. HE SAID IN PAST ROK HAD ARRANGED TO HAVE SUCH STORIES PUBLISHED IN LEBANON BUT IN VIEW OF CIVIL WAR THERE THIS NOT NOW POSSIBLE AND ROKS WOULD PROBABLY TRY SOMEPLACE ELSE.

5. COMMENT: ROKG APPEARS TO SMELL BLOOD AND MOFA JUDGMENT MAY BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED THEREBY. WE ARE INCLINED TO AGREE THAT ENTIRE STORY OF NORTH KOREAN EXPULSION SEEMS TO REQUIRE SUBSTANTIATION BEFORE IT CAN BE CONSIDERED MORE THAN A RUMOR. NONETHELESS, IN VIEW OF LIKELIHOOD THAT SOME ELEMENT OF ROKG, PROBABLY ROK CIA, WILL TRY TO GET STORY PUBLISHED IN SOME OTHER MID EAST COUNTRY IN ORDER TO FURTHER DISCOMFIT NORTH KOREANS, EMBASSY CAIRO MAY WISH TO TRY TO PIN DOWN ORIGINS OF STORY WITH SHEAHAN AND SHAWKAT. END COMMENT.
SNEIDER

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