

May 26, 1986

**Report on Conversation between Prof. Manfred
Gerlach and Kim Il Sung**

Citation:

"Report on Conversation between Prof. Manfred Gerlach and Kim Il Sung", May 26, 1986, Wilson Center Digital Archive, SAPMO-BA, DY 30, 2460. Translated by Grace Leonard.
<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113200>

Summary:

Report on the warm reception of Professor Manfred Gerlach by Kim Il Sung. Topics discussed include gratitude for Kim's reception in the GDR; Kim's desire for a reciprocal visit by Honecker; the need to further wide relations between the DPRK and GDR; and the unrest in South Korea.

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

To the members and candidates of the Politburo, EH [Erich Honecker], 26 May 86
 Berlin, 26 May 1986
 To Comrade Erich Honecker
 Dear Comrade Honecker, As you know, Manfred Gerlach was received by Kim Il Sung during the former's trip to the DPRK. During this meeting, Kim Il Sung made some statements that were specifically intended for you. I am sending you this excerpt from the report in the enclosure. Sincerely, [s] Enclosure]. Herrmann II The meeting with Kim Il Sung

1. The meeting with Kim Il Sung lasted over an hour and was very friendly and open. Kim Il Sung spoke frequently, interrupting remarks by Prof. Dr. Gerlach (on statements about the XI Party Congress of the Socialist Unity Party, the GDR's peace and security policy, the USSR's peace program, the alliance policy of the Socialist Unity Party and issues of internal development in the GDR, the status of relations between the GDR and the DPRK, praising the policies and achievements of the DPRK) to express his thanks, to make assenting comments, or to make additional statements expressing his affirmation. Kim Il Sung's comments can be categorized as follows:

- Emphatic, very sincere appreciation for his visit to the GDR in 1984. He said he will never forget the visit, the time he spent with Erich Honecker, "his best friend and comrade-in-arms", the extremely warm welcome the people of the GDR gave him. As soon as his train crossed the border and reached the first city, the entire population received him with jubilation, and his first impression was: This is truly a strong force that can withstand even its greatest foes.
- The expectation of a visit by Erich Honecker to the DPRK. After Erich Honecker's warm regards were conveyed to him, Kim Il Sung combined his thanks with a request that his own warm regards be conveyed. He said he was touched by these greetings and was very happy to receive them. He stated that he waited every day for news that Erich Honecker is coming to the DPRK. If he comes, he intends to receive him with extraordinary warmth and to personally show him the progress that has been made over the nearly 10 years since his last trip to the DPRK. He said he wants to discuss the international situation with him, the situation on the Korean peninsula and in Asia, and to talk about views on these topics. He said he is very hopeful that Erich Honecker will visit and asks only that he not come in December during the cold season, as he did last time. He experienced such a warm reception in the GDR that if he wants to reciprocate the visit must take place in the warm season. He said Erich Honecker absolutely must come in order to encourage our people and the population of South Korea in their struggle. It is worthwhile to demonstrate before the entire world how both countries (even though they are divided) work together and diligently for socialism and peace. He has great personal respect for Erich Honecker, who has brought the entire population together in the GDR while Germany has been divided and who has built a developed socialist society. He greatly appreciates his accomplishments in achieving solidarity among Socialist countries, assuring world peace, the solidarity the people of the GDR have with the Korean people, and the material and moral support. Relations between the GDR and DPRK He said that since the Treaty of Friendship was signed in 1984, relations between our countries and peoples have grown much deeper. He stated that he is very happy that this is evident in all areas of politics, the economy, and culture. We are unanimous on all issues, there are no differences of opinion. Our task is to become even closer, as outposts of socialism in the east and west to fight against nuclear war, to assure world peace, and to continue to build socialism. Reagan is using every resource to prepare for nuclear war, but the peoples of the world oppose this and even his own allies waver. He said he is therefore convinced that we can assure peace and continue to build socialism even better if we wage this battle correctly. It is clear to us: this era of peace must be preserved. We must have better science and technology than the capitalist countries. The most important thing is to wage the battle so that socialism is completed. He stated that in 1984 he became personally acquainted with the GDR's success in building socialism, and that after his visit in all the meetings of the Politburo and Central Committee he said in no uncertain terms that the people of the GDR—who are very disciplined, aggressive, and organized—will achieve victory. The outcome of the XI Party Congress of the Socialist Unity Party, the peace initiatives, and the new tasks for social/economic progress in the GDR typify very successful development in the GDR—developments he is well informed of, developments that are just as gratifying to him as the re-election of Erich Honecker as Secretary General. He requested that Erich Honecker be told that everything is going well in the DPRK. The Korean Workers Party continues to wage the battle and wants to speed up development. Work is still ongoing in terms of

successfully realizing the resolutions of the VI Party Congress and the 3rd Seven-Year Plan. He said that realizing the Nampo Plan opens up great economic opportunities, including resolving transport issues and reclaiming land. 300,000 hectares of land are to be reclaimed by 1990, so that in a few years it will be possible to have an annual grain harvest of 15 million tons. Appreciation of alliance policies. He said he is very pleased to have met the Chairman of a Party such as the LDPD that, together with and under the leadership of the Party of the Worker Class, and with Erich Honecker at the top, fights on a united front, marching toward socialism. We have the SPK and a Christian party. We want to combine these resources and build socialism together. He said he believes the GDR will also wage the battle for socialism successfully and effectively in its political/moral unity in the future as well. The situation in South Korea. In South Korea the people are now waging a good battle against the puppet regime and the US occupiers. It is not just students who are fighting, but broad elements of society. A wide united front is forming, and although it is not yet able to drive the US out of South Korea, it is still very important for developing consciousness and increasing vigilance among South Korea's populace. He said the dictator is trembling, and Schultz and Weinberger have had to stiffen the regime's spine. But there is no injection that can save a man who is already dying. So, the situation is good. We continue to build socialism, the populace of South Korea continues its battle to rid itself of its dependence on the US. At the conclusion of the meeting, in the name of the Korean people, Kim Il Sung conveyed warm greetings to the people of the GDR. He was visibly pleased with the gift from the LDPD delegation (oil painting by a Dresden painter of the view from the bastion of the mountains along the Elbe).