Wilson Center | Digital Archive
International History Declassified
digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org

January 25, 1988

Intelligence Note from West Germany’s National Olympic Committee to the International Olympic Committee on the possibility of North Korean terrorist threats to the 1988 Seoul Olympics

Citation:

"Intelligence Note from West Germany’s National Olympic Committee to the International Olympic Committee on the possibility of North Korean terrorist threats to the 1988 Seoul Olympics", January 25, 1988, Wilson Center Digital Archive, International Olympic Committee Archives (Switzerland), SEOUL’ 88, POLITICAL MATTERS 1988-89; SEOUL ’88/ POLITIQUE (JANVIER – JUILLET). Obtained for NKIDP by Sergey Radchenko. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113492

Summary:

A letter from Willi Daume, a member of West Germany's Olympic Committee, discussing intelligence that suggested North Korea would attempt to disrupt the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Transcript - English

WILLI DUAME
Helene-Mayer-Ring 31
D-8000 Munich 40
January 25, 1988

Personal and strictly confidential
Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch
President
International Olympic Committee
Château de Vidy
CH-1007 Lausanne

Dear Juan Antonio Samaranch,

I am referring to my letter of July 20, 1987, in which I pointed out that according to confidential information of respectable secret services one reckons with North Korea to plan potential obstructions for the Seoul Olympic Games in 1988. Furthermore they had indicated that Seoul did not expect the communist world to consider a boycott of the Seoul Games, if North Korean demands to the IOC were not met. These expectations have in the meantime come true.

Now I was informed that Pyonyang has been starting to carry out obstructional activities. There was this terrible bomb attack on a commercial South Korean plan that crashed. And according to international news agencies the arrested agent Kim Hyon admitted to have placed a bomb in that South Korean jet plane, which then exploded. Korean party paper 'Rodong Sinmun' is quoted in this article even threatening with a war in the long term.

As evidently the political relationship between Pyonyang and Beijing has deteriorated, my sources think that in this situation only the Soviet Union has real political influence on the North Korean government at the moment. Obviously North Korea is afraid of offending Moscow by terrorist acts etc. as the Soviet Union has confirmed to take part in the Seoul Games, regardless of a North Korean participation. Pyonyang is, however, still urging Moscow. I don't know whether the IOC has possibilities to influence the Soviet government via the NOC of the USSR, so that Moscow in turn [could] urge the North Korean government to refrain from that kind of criminal plans, which would set the whole world against the North Korea regime. My sources think that the political influence of the USSR on Pyonyang is – particularly for economic reasons – very strong.

Dear Juan Antonio, may I ask you to treat this information strictly confidential. I suppose that you might be able to try to preserve the Seoul Games and the future of the Olympic movement from harm via decisive political ways.

I am looking forward to seeing you in Calgary.

With best regards,
Yours sincerely,

(Willi Daume)