Public Law 98-98
98th Congress

Joint Resolution

Condemning the Soviet criminal destruction of the Korean civilian airliner.

Sept. 28, 1983
[H.J. Res. 353]

Whereas the United States joins with the world community in expressing its outrage over the actions of the Soviet Government on August 31, 1983, which caused the destruction of Korean Air Lines flight 7 with the loss of two hundred and sixty-nine innocent lives;

Whereas on August 31, 1983, Korean Air Lines flight 7 inadvertently entered Soviet airspace;

Whereas Soviet authorities tracked Korean Air Lines flight 7 for more than two hours, but did not adhere to all the internationally recognized procedures necessary to warn the aircraft that it was off course and to protect its passengers;

Whereas a Soviet Air Force fighter fired air-to-air missiles at Korean Air Lines flight 7 and destroyed the unarmed, clearly marked civilian airliner with two hundred and sixty-nine innocent men, women, and children from fourteen nations aboard, including sixty-one of our fellow citizens;

Whereas among the victims was a distinguished Member of Congress, the Honorable Larry P. McDonald;

Whereas the highest levels of the Soviet Government have lied in an attempt to justify this unconscionable act and have continued to deny access to the area where the airplane went down;

Whereas the Soviet Government has publicly proclaimed its intention to repeat its murderous act if another airliner wanders inadvertently into Soviet airspace; and

Whereas this cold-blooded barbarous attack on a commercial airliner straying off course is one of the most infamous and reprehensible acts in history: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the United States hereby—

Soviet destruction of Korean airliner, condemnation.

(1) condemns the Soviet crime of destroying Korean Air Lines flight 7 and murdering the two hundred and sixty-nine innocent people onboard;

(2) calls for a full and frank explanation from the Soviet Union for this brutal massacre;

(3) extends its deepest sympathies to the families who lost loved ones, and supports their rights to obtain reparations from the Soviet Union;

(4) calls on the Soviet Union to assist international efforts to recover the remains of the victims;

(5) calls for an international investigation by the International Civil Aviation Organization into this heinous incident;

(6) declares its intention to work with the international community in demanding that the Soviet Union modify its air defense procedures and practices to assure the safe passage of commercial airliners;

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(7) finds that this tragic incident, and the Soviet Government's refusal to acknowledge responsibility for its wanton conduct, will make it more difficult for the United States and other nations to accept the Soviet Union as a responsible member of the international community; and

(8) urges our allies and other nations to cooperate with the United States in continuing to demand that the Soviet Government unequivocally apologize for its actions, fully compensate the families of the innocent victims, and agree to abide by internationally recognized and established procedures which are purposefully designed to prevent the occurrence of such tragedies.

Approved September 28, 1983.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.J. Res. 353 (S.J. Res. 158):

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 129 (1983):
Sept. 14, considered and passed House.
Sept. 15, considered and passed Senate.
WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTAL DOCUMENTS, Vol. 19, No. 39 (1983):
Sept. 28, Presidential statement.