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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Point Mugu NAS, California)

For Immediate Release

September 2, 1983

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
UPON DEPARTURE FROM POINT MUGU

Point Mugu Naval Air Station
September 2, 1983

9:38 a.m. PDT
12:38 p.m. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: First let me just say that Nancy and I were deeply saddened last night to learn of the death of Senator Henry Jackson. He was a friend, a colleague, a true patriotic, a devoted -- devoted servant of the people. He will be sorely missed, and we both extend our deepest sympathy to his family.

Now, in the wake of the barbaric act committed yesterday by the Soviet regime against a commercial jet liner, the United States and many other countries of the world made clear in compelling statements that expressed not only our outrage but also our demand for a truthful accounting of the facts. Our first emotions are anger, disbelief, and profound sadness. While events in Afghanistan and elsewhere have left few illusions about the willingness of the Soviet Union to advance its interests through violence and intimidation, all of us had hoped that certain irreducible standards of civilized behavior nonetheless obtained. But this event shocks the sensibilities of people everywhere.

The tradition in the civilized world has always been to offer help to mariners and pilots who are lost or in distress on the sea or in the air. Where human life is valued, extraordinary efforts are extended to preserve and protect it. And it's essential that as civilized societies we ask searching questions about the nature of regimes where such standards do not apply.

MORE

Beyond these emotions, the world notes the stark contrast that exists between Soviet words and deeds. What can we think of a regime that so broadly trumpets its vision of peace and global disarmament and yet so callously and quickly commits a terrorist act that sacrifices the lives of innocent human beings? What can be said about Soviet credibility when they so flagrantly lie about such a heinous act? What can be the scope of legitimate mutual discourse with a state whose values permit such atrocities, and what are we to make of a regime which establishes one set of standards for itself and another for the rest of humankind.

We've joined in the ^{call} for an urgent United Nations Security Council meeting today. The brutality of this act should not be compounded through silence or the cynical distortion of the evidence now at hand.

And tonight I will be meeting with my advisers to conduct a formal review of this matter, and this weekend, I shall be meeting with the Congressional Leadership.

To the families of all those on the ill-fated aircraft, we send our deepest sympathy, and I hope they know our prayers are with them all. (Applause)

END

(9:39 A.M. PDT)

(12:39 P.M. EDT)

SOVIET (all caps)

ONE

don't have
any more
copies from
this in
speechwriting.

(NSC/Bakshian)
September 2, 1983
10:30 a.m.

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

Secretary Shultz and I have already expressed not only our outrage but also our demand for a truthful accounting of the facts surrounding the murderous Soviet attack on an unarmed passenger plane.

Let me try -- briefly and simply -- to put into words what I believe all of us must be thinking and feeling.

Our first emotion is one of sadness and disbelief. While events in Afghanistan and elsewhere have left few illusions about ~~the willingness of the~~ Soviet standards of behavior, all of us had hoped that even the Soviets respected certain basics of civilized behavior. When Soviet airliners stray from their assigned flight patterns in the United States or other countries -- and they have, most recently near Pease Air Force ~~Base in Connecticut~~ ^{our submarine naval base in Groton, Ct. and in New Hampshire} -- we follow procedures to prevent a tragedy rather than to provoke it. In societies that respect human life, every effort is taken to preserve and protect it. It is only fair to ask searching questions about the nature of regimes that shun basic standards of humanity.

This raises a second point: the stark contrast between Soviet words and deeds. We share with the Soviet Union an important mutual obligation to reduce our nuclear arsenals and to prevent the use of weapons of mass destruction. But what is the integrity of a nation that broadly trumpets its vision of peace and global disarmament, but callously sacrifices innocent human lives? Where is the basis for trust -- the common ground for

meaningful dialogue with a state whose values permit such criminal behavior? And what are we to make of a regime which sets one set of standards for itself and another for the rest of the world?

A serious situation requires a calm and well-thought-out response. Therefore, I intend to make no further comment until I have returned to Washington, examined the latest information, and fully reviewed the appropriate options. One thing is certain: At a minimum, the Soviet Union owes the civilized world the fullest possible explanation and apology for this inexcusable act of brutality against innocent civilians.

Before leaving, I want to say a word about a great American whose passing we all mourn. Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson was one of our finest statesmen -- a courageous champion of freedom and human rights and a man who always put country before party. He was a man of keen intelligence and great integrity, and I often turned to him for counsel when the security and foreign policy of our country were concerned. Scoop will be missed by all of us, and Nancy and I join with millions of other Americans in expressing our deepest sympathy to the family of this true American hero.

(NSC/Bakshian)
September 2, 1983
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true

(NSC/Pakistani edit)
September 2, 1983

Love - This draft was sent out, it should mention the UN session. Probably needs extensive rework. Bob

Draft Presidential Statement

murderous Soviet attack on an unarmed passenger plane.

respected,

issuance

for meaningful dialogue

~~In the wake of the revolutive act committed yesterday by Soviet fighters against an innocent commercial jet liner, Secretary Shultz made a clear and compelling statement that expressed not only our outrage but also our demand for a truthful accounting of the facts. I issued a similar statement through Larry Speakes.~~

Let me at this moment try - briefly and simply - to put into words what I believe all of us must be thinking and feeling.

Our first emotion is one of sadness and disbelief. While events in Afghanistan and elsewhere have left few illusions about the willingness of the Soviet Union to advance its interests through violence and intimidation, all of us had hoped that certain irreducible standards of civilized behavior, nonetheless obtained. But this event shocks the sensibilities of people everywhere. When Soviet airliners deviate from their assigned flight patterns in the United States or other countries - as they do, and as they did most recently near Otis AFB in upstate New York - procedures are followed to prevent tragedy rather than to provoke it. Where human life is valued, extraordinary efforts are extended to preserve and protect it, and it is only fair proper and necessary to ask searching questions about the nature of regimes where such standards do not apply.

That shun basic

This draws us then to a second thought: the stark contrast that exists between Soviet words and deeds. We share with the Soviet Union an important mutual obligation to reduce our nuclear arsenals and to prevent the use of weapons of mass destruction. But what can we think of a nation that so broadly trumpets its vision of peace and global disarmament, and yet so callously and quickly authorizes an act to sacrifice the lives of human beings. What in short can be the scope of legitimate mutual discourse with a state whose values permit such acts? And what are we to make of a regime which sets one set of standards for itself and another for the rest of human kind?

the world?

A serious situation requires a calm and well-thought out response.

Therefore,
I intend to take no further *comment* step until I have returned to Washington, and *make* can discuss the facts and the options that currently exist. At a minimum, I would hope that the brutality of this act would not be compounded through silence or the cynical distortion of the evidence now at hand. *One thing is certain:* At a minimum, too, the Soviet Union owes the watching civilized world the fullest possible *(explanation and)* apology *for this inexcusable act of brutality against* ~~innocent~~ *innocent civilians.*

examined
~~reviewed~~ *the latest* *information* ~~facts~~ and *fully reviewed* ~~our options~~ *the appropriate options.*

(Bakshian)
September 1, 1983
12:30 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

I believe I speak for all Americans, and for nations and people throughout the world who cherish civilized values, in protesting the Soviet attack on an unarmed, civilian passenger plane. The 269 passengers and crew of the Korean Air Lines Boeing 747 have lost their lives in an unwarranted act -- an act of violence that flies in the face of international law and basic humanitarian standards. The United States joins with other members of the international community in demanding a full explanation for this appalling and wanton misdeed.

Mrs. Reagan and I want to express our deepest sympathy to the families of the victims. Our prayers are with them in this time of bereavement. And they have my personal assurance that we will make every effort to get to the bottom of this tragedy and to prevent its repetition in the future.

(Bakshian)
September 1, 1983

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

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Mrs. Reagan and I want to express our deepest ~~personal~~ sympathy to the families of the victims. ~~of~~ Our prayers are with them *in* at this ~~tragic~~ time *of bereavement.* And they ~~can~~ ~~may~~ have ~~xxxxxxx~~ my personal assurance *we will make* that ~~xxxxxxx~~ every effort will be made to ~~xxxxxxx~~ get to the bottom of this tragedy and to prevent its repetition in the future.