

SECOND WIND

Second Wind is an occasional column of opinion by Gateway staff.

by Gunnar Blodgett

Re: Informal Enquiry concerning the alleged bombing of South Korean flight 007 over Sakhalin. Sources: Popular Media reports in the *Edmonton Journal*, the Toronto-based *Globe and Mail* and radio and TV stories.

Early Thursday morning, September 1, Korean Air Line flight 007 disappeared just north of Hokkaido, Japan — this much is known. So far, evidence pointing to either an American surveillance operation or a deliberate Russian attack is inconclusive, yet the world seems quite ready to believe the latter charge despite the absence of a proper investigation.

What, then, are the "facts"?

"Fact": South Korean Air 007 was travelling some 500 miles west of its scheduled flight path when it entered Soviet air space. This was claimed by the Russians and later confirmed through American sources, including Secretary of State George Bush.

"Fact": The same airliner did not have its navigational lights on while traversing this space, information also confirmed by the Americans.

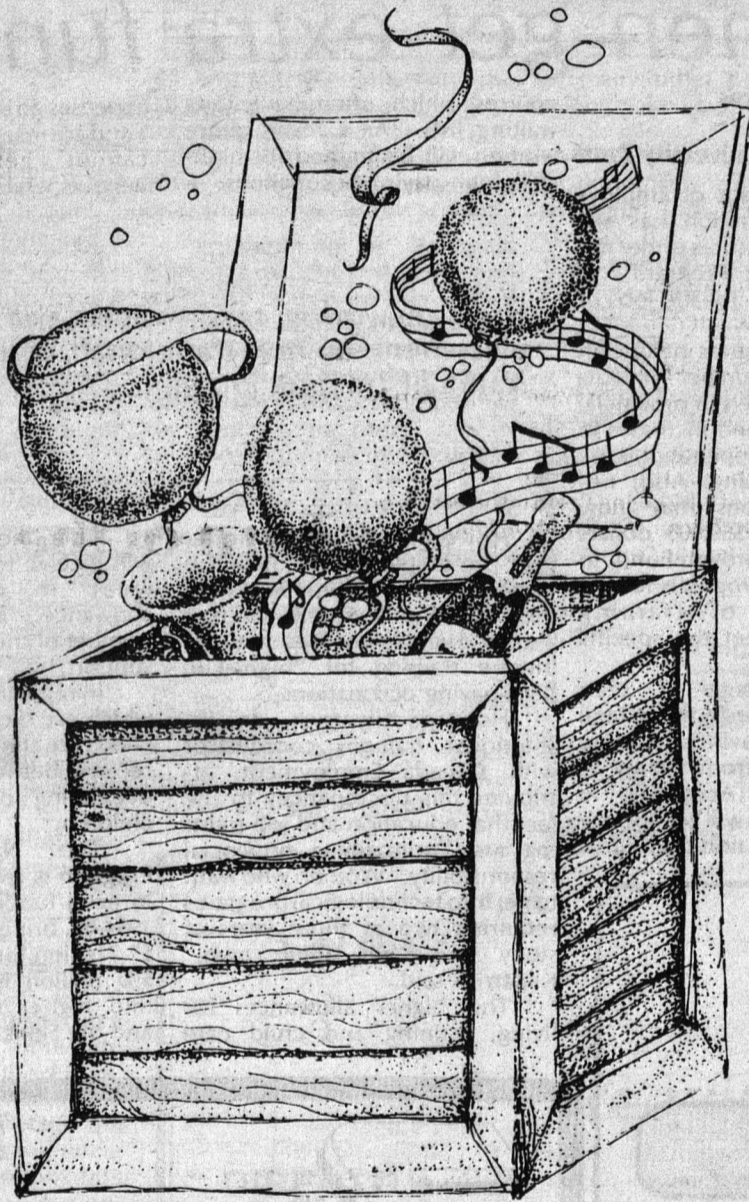
"Fact": The same airliner maintained radio silence during its entire flight over Kamchatka and Sakhalin, despite Soviet attempts to contact it from the ground and air. Bush tried to excuse this by

saying that communications at this time were impossible. Even if this is so, why would the liner ignore the visual signals of the aircraft pursuing it?

"Fact": The Americans waited until three hours after the airliner's scheduled landing, or some four hours after the Japanese reported its radar disappearance, before officially declaring it missing.

The Russians claimed to use a standard procedure in attempting to establish communication with the Korean airliner. The use of this procedure was not denied by the Americans. Upon detecting the presence of the plane, the Russian base tried to contact it by radio from the ground, then from the air. Failing that, the Russian planes which had been sent up indicated emergency landing, first by saving their wings, and finally by firing tracer bullets along the flight of the airliner. This procedure, according to Professor Les Green of the Political Science Department of the U of A, is a recognized standard international procedure. If the plane refuses to respond, then the recognized measure to ensure security is to shoot down the plane.

Until we can ascertain whether the Soviets did actually follow this procedure, and if they did, why the Korean pilot did not respond, this *Trial by Media* will be both farcical and unworthy.



CHOPPING BLOCK

by Jens Andersen

Sometimes one gets so tired of Student's Union politics...

I am not referring to the SU-SORSE civil war, where the only issue seems to be mutual dislike, though this battle is tiresome enough. The issue is the SU banning of Right to Life pamphlets because of "questionable" photographs.

Apparently the pictures of dead fetuses were too much for some weak stomachs. One suspects, however, that if the photos had been of, say, innocent children slaughtered in Lebanon or El Salvador, people like Don Millar and Peter Block would have been in favour of presenting "the brutal truth." In short, it is not the disgusting nature of the photos they objected to, but the message behind them.

I trust no one will mistake me for a Right-to-Lifer here. My own opinion is that the Right-to-Lifers engage in contemptible emotionalism, and that the



messiness of abortion is not an argument against it any more than the tackiness of a placenta is an argument against childbirth. But I see no reason for suppressing these people's right to distribute contrary propaganda.

The argument used against freedom of speech always boils down to the allegation that the ideas or portrayals put forth are damaging to the viewer. This viewer is always a poor, fragile soul, with not too much brains, who would instantly succumb to the pernicious propaganda.

No doubt this is true in some cases, but probably damn few. A human, even when possessed of low intelligence, is almost always so passionately attached to his or her opinions that nothing short of dynamite could change their mind.

This is especially true in the abortion issue, where the hysterics of the Right-to-Lifers have had no visible effect on public opinion. The trend seems to be a glacial movement towards more liberal abortion laws, which nothing short of an underpopulation crisis can stop.

At any rate, suppression of the Right-to-Lifers can only enhance their image by giving them martyr status. And by gagging them, the censors implicitly suggest that Pro-choice people cannot hold their ground in open debate, a dangerous and unjustified impression to foster.

Council should revoke the decision, and allow the abortion debate to continue free from any restriction on expression.

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