



communiqué

N°:
No.: 111

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 7, 1983

CANADIAN REACTION TO SOVIET GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON KOREAN AIRLINES

The following statement was made by the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, on September 6, 1983 à 1715 hours. A transcript of questions and answers following the statement is also included.

"The statement that has been issued, it is the first statement that has been issued in the name of the Soviet Government and I think that is an indication that the Soviet Union is attempting to respond to the requests for an explanation. There is certainly no way that I can be satisfied with the statement having read it just a little while ago. The acknowledgement that the Soviet fighter did indeed "stop" this civilian airplane is made, but that acknowledgement that the interceptors "stopped" the civilian aircraft is overshadowed by the package in which the acknowledgement is wrapped.

There is absolutely no acceptance of responsibility for the incident. In fact in the statement the Soviet Union transfers "entire responsibility" for the incident to the United States and that surely is not plausible on the basis of facts. I am glad that the Soviet Union has in the concluding paragraph expressed or extended condolences to the families, but it has expressed no regret at its own action. It expresses no regret at "stopping" the civilian aircraft. Indeed the statement descends into the lure of fiction when it suggests that this whole event was preplanned by the United States. That this civilian passenger plane had been put on a spy mission and that, if that effect was

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