

preparation of the claim. We have also been in telephone contact with them and have told them we will assist them in any way possible. Once our consultations are complete, we will decide on a quantum figure for this claim on behalf of the families and submit it to the Soviet Government. I assure you, as I do the families, that should Soviet recalcitrance to discuss the issue continue the issue will move to a prominent place in our entire bilateral relationship.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: Whatever sanctions are implemented people are inevitably affected. In this case, the suspension of Aeroflot service has unfortunately caught a number of Canadians in the U.S.S.R. with no direct flight home. We recognized this potential problem from the start but could not let it stand in the way of what the Government considered an effective and appropriate response. To ensure hardship is kept to an absolute minimum, I have asked our embassy in Moscow to provide every assistance to stranded passengers, including financial help to those who need it to get home. I am pleased to report, Mr. Speaker, that so far the problem has been managed. Canadians are booking on other flights and where financial loss has resulted, the embassy has come to their assistance. We will continue to do all we can to keep any discomfort to Canadians to a minimum.

The House is aware that the Moscow Circus was to begin a tour of Canada at the time of the tragedy. It had arrived in Halifax and was preparing for its first show. Public opinion resulted in the decision of Provinces, cities and arena owners to cancel the performances. We respect those decisions.

The Soviet authorities have now decided to take the circus home. We have to let them take the circus home. Therefore, I have decided to permit Aeroflot flights to come into Halifax in order to take the property and the animals back to Moscow and in order to take the performers back to their country. I believe that is an appropriate action at the present time.

I want to conclude by saying the Government is taking a series of measures and initiatives in our bilateral relations as I have described; in western councils, at Madrid, at Brussels and in New York. We will continue to do that. We will press forward at the International Civil Aviation Organization to demonstrate to the Soviet Union that our limits of tolerance went down with that Korean airliner. We want to maintain our demands for compensation for the victims, and we want to ensure by implementing every suitable procedure and regulation that this event will not be repeated.

The world is outraged. The world is in a state of disbelief that an event of this proportion should occur ending the lives, so abruptly and without any warning, of innocent people. The world is in a state of disbelief that the Soviet Union has not come forward and admitted its responsibilities and has not come forward with a clear cut policy to the world and with a free and generous offer of compensation. The world tonight waits upon the Soviet leadership.

S.O. 30

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (2040)

Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel): Mr. Speaker, in joining in this debate tonight on a topic which I think is appropriately being brought before the House, I would like to emphasize at the beginning how the tragedy, which has already been referred to so effectively by the mover of the motion and by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen), could not have occurred at a worse time. At a time when there are international negotiations continuing with the hope that there will be a meaningful agreement with respect to the control and, hopefully, the reduction of arms in the world, we are caught up in this tragic slaughtering of 269 innocent civilians who chose to take KAL flight 007. I say that because, while we are perfectly correct tonight in condemning, as the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) has condemned, and as the Secretary of State for External Affairs has condemned, the action of the Soviet nation in shooting down this aircraft, we must always weigh the facts—and I implore the House to weigh them always—to ensure that a proper balance be maintained, and that we do not inadvertently cause something to be said or do something that would jeopardize ongoing discussions with respect to disarmament, in particular the discussions which are taking place in Geneva.

In that connection I note that in the *New York Times* of only yesterday the following was indicated:

U.S. negotiators at the Geneva talks on medium-range nuclear missiles have been empowered to make new concessions, according to Administration officials.

Referring to President Reagan it continued:

—one key official said:

“The President has not taken away Nitze’s authority to act, but the timing of any new moves on our part has obviously been affected and the whole atmosphere for the talks has been poisoned by what the Soviets did.”

I read that into the record both to indicate the hopeful sign that the U.S. administration does have some grounds to be willing to negotiate and that it is willing to offer those suggestions. I also want to emphasize how this incident, according to that Washington official, has soured the tone of those discussions and negotiations.

If I may I would like to stress this evening that we must in this debate do only what we feel we must do in the condemning of the Soviet action. Let us not in the name of mankind do anything which might jeopardize ongoing discussions that may lead to meaningful disarmament in the world.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stevens: I say that because I too would like to add my words of condemnation of the Soviet action to those which have already been offered in the debate. I listened closely to what the Secretary of State for External Affairs indicated as being the appropriate actions taken by the Government with respect to the tragic shooting down of the Korean aircraft. But I feel we must ask ourselves, while the debate continues, what are the circumstances. Have we done enough to indicate in the most effective possible way our condemnation of the Soviet