

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT
1 September 1983

MISSING PLANE/
JAPAN

JENNINGS: Good evening. Everyone but the Soviet Union says that the Soviets did shoot down a Korean 747. Two hundred sixty-nine passengers and the crew were on board, and in the absence of any wreckage we can only assume their fate. One of the passengers was Congressman Larry McDonald of Georgia. The attack on a commercial airliner, whether the Soviets knew it was that or not, has caused an outrage.

MCWETHY: American intelligence sources say what was left of the plane ended up in the northern part of the Sea of Japan. The debris is within the 12-mile territorial limit of the Soviet Union. The Russians contend that they repeatedly tried to signal the aircraft to land by radio and by visual signals.

U.S. sources confirm that the Soviets did radio the Korean airliner but got no response. The extreme detail with which Secretary of State Shultz laid out what the U.S. knew about this incident was, according to intelligence sources, only a fraction of the material which the National Security Agency and the CIA had compiled. Nonetheless, it was considered unprecedented in its precision. STANSFIELD TURNER (Former Director CIA): What the secretary of state said surely tells the Soviets how good our capabilities are. It doesn't tell them necessarily how we got that information.

MCWETHY: Intelligence sources say *Elint spy satellites plus heat-detecting satellites and listening posts in South Korea and Japan were all used to gather information on what happened. But why the Soviets fired at the Korean jetliner still remains a mystery. TURNER: They don't have to be suspicious. They're paranoid about people penetrating their air and sea space and have been over all the years. They have shot down planes before, but only military planes.

MCWETHY: There are two other theories still unconfirmed. One, that the Korean plane was somehow fitted with spy cameras and was deliberately over-flying sensitive Soviet military installations, and two, that the Russians used an electronics device to confuse instruments in the Korean plane and draw it off course. Neither of those theories are confirmed. Despite all the tough talk today by the Reagan administration, Pentagon sources say there is to be virtually no military show of force in response. A few F-15 fighters have been moved from Okinawa to Japan, but as yet nothing else has been ordered, even though there are two American aircraft carriers at sea in the Pacific. John McWethy, ABC News, the Pentagon.