

“In Their Own Words”

Very often, the deepest penetration into the truth of a matter occurs when we allow, without comment, the pivotal players and the keenest commentators to speak for themselves. And so it is with the case of KAL 007.

On KAL 007's condition *after* missile detonation

Lt. Col. Novoseletski, Smirnykh Air Base Flight Division acting Chief of Staff to Combat Controller Titovnin while tracking KAL 007 on radar:

“Well, what is happening, what is the matter, who guided him in, he locked on, why didn't he shoot it down?”

Gen. Kornukov, Commander of Sokol Air Base, Sakhalin, and tactical commander of the shootdown to Lt. Col. Gerasimenko, acting Commander, 41st Fighter Regiment:

“Well, I understand, I do not understand the result, why is the target flying? Missiles were fired. Why is the target flying? [obscenities]. Well, what is happening?”

On typical last words from the Cockpit Voice Recorder tapes of planes about to crash

U.S. Air, Flight 427, Sept. 8, 1994, Pittsburgh, PA:

Captain: Oh God, Oh God...!
Approach: US Air.
Captain: Four Twenty-seven, emergency!
Copilot: [screams]
Captain: Pull
Copilot: Oh...
Captain: Pull...Pull...!
Copilot: God!
Captain: [screams]
Copilot: No!

End of tape

Atlantic Southeast Airlines Flight 529, Aug. 21, 1995, Carrolton, Georgia

Captain: [to copilot] Help me. Help me hold it. Help me hold it. Help me hold it.
Cabin: [vibrating sound of the stick shaker indicating beginning stall]
Copilot: Amy, I love you.
Cabin: [Sound of grunting; sound of impact.]

End of tape

Compare with KAL 007, Captain Chun speaking to Copilot:

18:27:20: Now we have to set this.

18:27:23: Speed.

18:27:26: Stand by.. stand by.. stand by...

Set!

End of tape portion handed over by Russians

On KAL 007's wide spiraling descent over tiny Moneron Island and the immediate rescue missions ordered by the Soviets

Lt. Col. Gerasimenko: (6:34)

Turning left, right, apparently it is descending.

Gen. Kornukov: (6:36)

It is over Moneron.

Titovnin:

They lost the target, Comrade Colonel, in the area of Moneron.

Novoseletski:

In the area of Moneron?

Titovnin:

The pilots do not see it, neither the one nor the other. The radio forces have reported. RTF has reported that after the launch, the target entered a right turn over Moneron.

Novoseletski:

Uh-huh.

Titovnin:

Descending.

And lost over Moneron.

Novoseletski:

So, the task. They say it has violated the State border again now?

Titovnin:

Well, it is the area of Moneron, of course, over our territory.

Novoseletski:

Get it! Get it! Go ahead, bring in the MiG 23.

Titovnin:

Roger. The MiG 23 is in that area. It is descending to 5,000 [meters]. The order has been given. Destroy upon detection.

Novoseletski: (6:47)

You don't have the sunrise there yet?

Titovnin:

No, it will be in about thirty minutes.

Novoseletski:

Prepare whatever helicopters there are. Rescue helicopters.

Titovnin:

Rescue?

Novoseletski:

Yes. And there will probably be a task set for the area where the target was lost.

Titovnin:

Roger. Is this to be done through your SAR [Search and Rescue]?

Novoseletski:

Eh?

Titovnin:

Assign the task to Chaika through your SAR, Comrade Colonel, Khomutovo does not come under us and neither does Novoaleksandrovka. We have nothing here.

Novoseletski:

Very well.

Titovnin:

Novoaleksandrovka must be brought to readiness and Khomutovo. The border guards and KGB are at Khomutovo.

Gen. Strogov (Deputy Commander of the Far East Military District: (6:54)

Hello... Hello, Titovnin... You s... [obscenities] I'll lock you up in the guard house. Why don't you pick up the phone?

Titovnin:

Comrade General, everyone was busy here.

Strogov:

You have nothing there to be busy with. Busy! What kind of nonsense is that? So, where is Kornukov?

Titovnin:

Kornukov is here.

Strogov:

Put him on the phone.

Titovnin:

One minute. He is reporting to Kamenski, Comrade General.

Strogov:

So, what you need to do now. Contact these... [obscenities], these sailors, these, what do you... [obscenities]?

Titovnin:

Border guards?

Strogov:

Huh?

Titovnin:

Border guards?

Strogov:

Well, the civilian sailors.

Titovnin:

Understood.

Strogov:

The border guards. What ships do we now have near Moneron Island, if they are civilians, send [them] there immediately.

Titovnin:

Understood, Comrade General.

On the mystery of no bodies and no luggage at the supposed crash site of KAL 007

General Vladimir Kamenski, Chief of Staff of Soviet Far East Military District Air Defense Forces:

“It is still a mystery what happened to the bodies of the passengers and crew on the plane. According to one theory, right after the rockets detonated, the nose and the tail sections of the jumbo jet fell off and the mid fuselage became a sort of wind tunnel so the people were swept through it and scattered over the surface of the ocean. Yet, in this case, some bodies ought to have been found during the search operations in the area. The question of what actually happened to the people after the attack has not been given any distinct answer.”

James Oberg, former NASA official. Specialist in crash analysis:

“Remember that it took the downed plane about 10 minutes to plunge toward the ocean. During this time, many passengers, if not all, put on their life vests. In addition, they certainly strapped themselves in with seat belts. No matter how hard the aircraft hit the water, it is difficult to imagine all 269 people disappearing without a trace. Some of the passengers should have been carried to the surface precisely by their life belts. Some should have remained at the bottom, strapped to the seats. All of them could not have disappeared.”

On the surprise of the Soviet divers on not finding bodies or luggage in the underwater wreckage of KAL 007

Viyacheslav Popov:

“I will confess that we felt great relief when we found out that there were no bodies at the bottom. Not only no bodies; there were also no suitcases or large bags.”

Captain Mikhail Igorovich Girs:

“Submergence 10 October. Aircraft pieces, wing spars, pieces of aircraft skin, wiring, and clothing. But – no people.”

“Something else was inexplicable to us - zipped up clothes. For instance, a coat, slacks, shorts, a sweater with zippers - the items were different, but - zipped up and nothing inside. We came to this conclusion then: Most likely, the passengers had been pulled out of the plane by decompression and they fell in a completely different place from where we found the debris. They had been spread out over a much larger area. The current also did its work.”

V. Zarkharchebko, G. Matyevnenko, V. Kondrabayev:

“I did not miss a single dive. I have quite a clear impression: The aircraft was filled with garbage, but there was really no people there. Why? Usually when an aircraft crashes, even a small one... as a rule, there are suitcases and bags, or, at least, the handles of the suitcases.”

“But the main thing was not what we had seen there, but what we had not seen—the divers had found practically no human bodies or remains.”

On the inner conflict of Soviet commanders over shooting down an unidentified aircraft and one that is over international waters

General Kornukov to General Kamenski, Far East Military District Air Defense headquarters:

...simply destroy [it] even if it is over neutral waters? Are the orders to destroy it over neutral waters? Oh, well.

Comrade General [Kamenski], Kornukov, good morning. I am reporting the situation. Target 60-65 [KAL 007] is over Terpinie bay tracking 240, 30 km from the State border, the fighter from Sokol is 6 km away. Locked on, orders were given to arm weapons. The target is not responding to identify, he cannot identify it visually because it is still dark, but he is locked on.

Kamenski:

We must find out, maybe it is some civilian craft or God knows who.

Kornukov:

What civilian? [it] has flown over Kamchatka! It [came] from the ocean without identification. I am giving the order to attack if it crosses the State border.

Kamenski

Go ahead now, I order...[?]

Kornukov (to Gerasimenko):

Oh [obscenities] how long [does it take him] to go to attack position, he is already getting out into neutral waters. Engage afterburner immediately. Bring in the MiG 23 as well,... while you are wasting time, it will fly right out.

On the Soviet's successful deception of the U.S. and Japan in its attempt to persuade them that the Soviets too were looking for KAL 007 and its black box – when in actuality, they had found both (and had already abducted the passengers)

Top Secret Memo dated November 1983 from Defense Minister Dimitri Ustinov and KGB head Victor Chebrikov to Soviet Premier Yuri Andropov:

“...Simulated search efforts in Sea of Japan are being performed by our vessels at present in order to disinform the U.S. and Japan. These activities will be discontinued in accordance with a specific plan.”

A Soviet seaman's report published in *Izvestia*:

"I recall there was a moment when Japanese search vessel *Keiko-Maruo No. 3*... dropped anchor next to *Mirchink*;... At that time [Soviet Pacific Fleet] Admiral Sidorov, gave an order—immediately equip a trawler stationed on Sakhalin with grapnels (devices to cut mooring cables or hawsers) and send it to a station next to the *Keiko-Maruo*. As soon as the vessel lowered its apparatus, the trawler was supposed to cut the control cable of the Japanese... See how far it went: this was outright banditry! The only thing that saved the *Keiko-Maruo* was the false 'pinger' planted by our Navy. The Japanese also took the bait of its beacon signal and went to the wrong area."

Fifth Memo:

Top-Secret

To the Attention of Comrade Yu.V.Andropov [Soviet Premier]

...Assessment of the factual data obtained by the analysis of the flight recorders and the stand the US Administration adopted after the airplane was shot down confirm that we encountered a thoroughly planned high scale political provocation by the US Intelligence Community which had two objectives. In the first place incursion of an intruder plane into the airspace of the USSR was to create a situation favorable for gathering intelligence on our Air Defense installations in the Far East by use of various systems including the Ferret spy satellite. If the intruder plane could fly through Soviet airspace unpunished, the US would be likely to launch a campaign to stress inefficiency of our Air Defense in the Far East. In the second place, if the flight is terminated, a global anti-Soviet campaign was ready to be started in order to condemn the Soviet Union. Our unraveling the clandestine and provocative nature of the flight as well as participation of the US Intelligence Community in its preparation prevented the US from achieving their goals in full.

Since the action was thoroughly planned by the US, efforts were made to conceal its real objectives. Though objective confirmation that the incursion into the airspace of the USSR was intentional has been obtained by deciphering the data from the flight recorder, it cannot serve as conclusive evidence that the flight was on a spy mission. Therefore, if the flight recorders shall be transferred to the western countries their objective data can equally be used by the USSR and the western countries in proving the opposite view points on the nature of the flight of the South Korean airplane. In such circumstances a new phase in anti-Soviet hysteria cannot be excluded.

In connection with all mentioned above it seems highly preferable not to transfer the flight recorders to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) or any third party willing to decipher their contents. The fact that the recorders are in possession of the USSR shall be kept secret.

As far as we are aware neither the US nor Japan has any information on the flight recorders. We have made necessary efforts in order to prevent any disclosure of the information in future...

Looking to your approval.

D.Ustinov, V.Chebrikov

[Note: Ustinov was Defense Minister and Chebrikov headed KGB]

Mikhail Prozumentshchikov, Deputy Director of the Russian State Archives of Recent History comments on the shooting down of KAL 007 in RIA Novosti, September 1, 2003 - the twentieth anniversary of the tragedy.

"Large numbers of American, Japanese and Soviet planes and ships concentrated in the area of the incident. They did not so much as co-operate to look for the remnants of the airliner as interfered with each other's efforts and even deliberately provoked each other (US ships repeatedly announced in Russian that if Soviet planes flew over them, they would be shot down). But since the USSR, for natural reasons, KNEW BETTER WHERE THE BOEING HAD BEEN DOWNED [emphasis added], and also thanks to a wind blowing towards the Soviet coast, the principal exhibits from the sunken plane came into Soviet hands... Even with deepwater ships available to the USSR and the US, it was very problematical to retrieve anything, ESPECIALLY AS THE USSR WAS NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED [emphasis added]."

On passengers of KAL 007

Senator Jesse Helms on his last meeting with passengers Noelle and Stacey Grenfell (from a statement issued to the International Committee for the Rescue of KAL 007 Survivors, Inc., on Feb. 13, 2002):

"I'll never forget that night when that plane was just beside ours at Anchorage airport with two little girls and their parents.

I taught them, among other things, to say I love you in deaf language, and the last thing they did when they turned the corner was stick up their little hands and tell me they loved me.

I'll never forget that, and I know you won't."