

SPECIAL REPORT

Foreign Media Reaction

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DOWNING OF SOUTH KOREAN PLANE BY USSR - II

Summary

Second day media coverage of the Soviet attack on the South Korean passenger jet emphasized President Reagan's statement that the Kremlin was lying about the facts of the case in response to the Soviet claim the plane was on a spy mission.

The attack was condemned in most of the world's media in extensive and impassioned comment. Many saw it as "a slap in the face" to the peace movement. Conservative De Telegraaf of Amsterdam said the incident "will further open the eyes of the friends of peace who have trouble imagining that they can immediately grasp the hand of those friendly Soviets who are just as afraid as we are."

The Soviet claim was received wryly by many media observers. Paris' conservative Quotidien, for example, noted that "this plane filled with sleepy people was, according to TASS, conducting intelligence operations...Nobody is fooled."

The independent Times of London judged the President's statement as his "toughest anti-Soviet remarks since coming to office." Papers in many countries ran interviews with key government officials expressing shock.

Some speculated as to what level the order to down the airliner was given. A number thought it was "a local decision." Tokyo's moderate Yomiuri said, "If so, we have a frightening situation."

Others such as the Frankfurter Rundschau suggested that the attack reflected "not only the evil character of the Soviets but the fatal automatism of the mechanism of reaction...The persons responsible reacted like mechanical robots..."

Many writers worried about the state of East-West relations in the wake of the tragedy. Dublin's liberal Irish Press said that "relations between Moscow and Washington were bad enough. This will make them worse."

United States Information Agency

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WESTERN EUROPE

BRITAIN

President Reagan's Statement and Soviet Spy Plan Charge

President Reagan's anger and statement that the downing of the South Korean passenger plane was "a terrorist act" and that the Soviet charge that the KAL Boeing was a spy plane was a lie, dominated heavy coverage of the incident in today's media.

"Kremlin Has Twisted Facts"

London headlines today said "U.S. Accuses Russia of Terrorism and Lies--A Spy Plane, Says Moscow," "Angry Reagan Sends AWACS and F-15s to Search Area" and "Punishment Call at U.N. by Seoul" (Times), "Moscow Admits 'We Fired Tracer Shots,'" "Kremlin Has Twisted Facts--Reagan" and "TASS Regrets Air Deaths But Claims U.S. to Blame" (Guardian), "Russia Admits Shots at Jet--Reagan Sees Advisers on Retaliation for 'Atrocity,'" "U. S. Revulsion and Dismay Over Russian 'Infamy'" and "Kremlin Claims Intrusion Was 'Pre-planned Act'" (Daily Telegraph), "Was Andropov the Target?" (Daily Mail), "Shot Down Jet on Spy Mission Claims Kremlin" and "Lies! Reagan Rages at Kremlin" (Daily Express).

"President Reagan's Toughest Remarks Since Taking Office"

The Times' Moscow correspondent today reported, "The Soviet Union yesterday said the South Korean airliner..was being used as a spy plane..."

The paper's Washington correspondent Nicholas Ashford wrote today, "In his toughest anti-Soviet remarks since coming to office, President Reagan yesterday accused the Soviet Union of telling flagrant lies about the Korean airline disaster and cast doubts about Moscow's credibility in future arms reduction negotiations..."

"The President's statement came amid growing speculation that the order to shoot the airliner down had been taken at the highest level in Moscow and not by a junior regional commander..."

In an editorial today, the paper said, "The U.S. Administration is under strong public pressure to retaliate....But it is better to avoid over-reaction in the heat of the moment..."

"Arms control talks must continue since an even higher interest is involved..."

"Closest Soviets Will Come to Apology"

Today's liberal Guardian ran a report that "the Kremlin late yesterday afternoon issued the closest it may come to an apology for 'the leading circles in the Soviet Union' for the loss of human life which had occurred after the destruction of South Korea's jumbo jet.

"But the same statement distributed by TASS also accused the United States, and especially the CIA, of deliberately allowing the Korean plane to enter Soviet airspace..."

The paper's Washington correspondent Harold Jackson reported that "in the strongest attack he has launched on the Russians since coming to office, Mr. Reagan described their actions as 'barbaric,' 'brutal' and 'atrocities.'"

Another report in the paper said that "the British Government yesterday threw its weight behind American-led demands for full explanations, reparations and punishment for the destruction of plane..."

In an editorial the paper said, "The TASS statement was neither adequate nor convincing..."

"President Reagan Bristling With Anger"

Today's conservative Daily Telegraph had the report of Washington correspondent Frank Taylor that "President Reagan, bristling with anger ...yesterday accused the Soviet Union of a 'terrorist act' and of flagrantly lying about the tragedy."

In another story the paper said, "Secretary Shultz declared last night that the Kremlin was trying 'elaborately and brazenly' to cover up the fact it had shot down the airliner."

"Americans Believe Have to Share Planet However Russians Behave"

According to the Financial Times today, "Amid all the emotion, the majority view in America remains that Americans share the same planet with the Russians and have to live with them, however, disgracefully they behave..."

TASS Statement "As Sickening as It Is Absurd"

In the view of nationalistic Daily Mail today the statement from the Kremlin on the incident was "as sickening as it is absurd, couched in the most poisoned terms of the Soviet propagandists, claiming that the jumbo jet was a Western spy plane. This empty bluster is almost as sickening as the tragedy itself."

"Outrage Is Not Enough!"

The sensationalist Sun declared, "Outrage is not enough. Why should we in the West go on dealing with the Reds as if they were civilized human beings and not barbarians?"

FRANCE

"Reagan Accuses"

In Paris today, headlines included "Reagan to Andropov: What Could Be the Extent of Mutual, Legitimate Discussion With a State Whose Values Permit Such Atrocities?" and "Reagan Accuses!" (Le Matin), "Regan Denounces 'Terrorist Act'--Soviets 'Regret' and Accuse" and "Moscow: Korean Jet Was Spy Plane" (Liberation), "269 Dead (red ink) and Killers Are Free" (Quotidien de Paris) and "269 Spies Aboard?" (Parisien Popular).

"Now They Have to Cynically Lie"

Conservative Quotidien said today, "Killing was not enough for them. Now they have to cynically lie..."

Pro-Socialist Le Matin remarked, "Thanks to TASS, this story will be horrible to the end, because Moscow, far from apologizing, accuses: the spies are everywhere. This plane, filled with sleepy people was, according to TASS, conducting intelligence operations. Nobody is being fooled..."

Leftist Liberation said, "The Soviets are pleading shared blame: they regret and they accuse....They reverse the thrust of the proof..."

Communist Paper: "American Government Has Furnished No Proof"

Communist Humanite ran headlines such as "Profound Emotion Throughout World" and "Bring Everything to Light--Establish the Truth" over a front-page comment that held, "This affair is one more reason to intensify the fight against the arms race..."

"Thus far, the American Government has furnished no other proof of (the attack) than the recording of what is presented as an exchange of messages between the fighter pilot and his command post..."

"Charges Pit Two Superpowers Face to Face"

Mass appeal Parisien Popular today said, "This occupation of spying appears at once easy and extremely serious: easy because it is virtually unverifiable, serious because it pits the two super powers against one another face to face..."

WEST GERMANY

"Worldwide Indignation"

Headlines today were "Worldwide Indignation" (West Deutsche Allgemeine), "Attack Condemned as Crime--U.S. Leaders Call for Sanctions Against USSR" (Koelner Stadt-Anzeiger), "Reagan Accuses Moscow of Committing Act of Terror" (General-Anzeiger) and "Washington: Barbarism of Soviet Government--Bonn: Act of Utmost Brutality" (Frankfurter Allgemeine).

"Chancellor Kohl: 'Notorious Act of Extreme Barbarism'"

Bonn's independent General-Anzeiger today reported that Chancellor Kohl condemned the Soviet action as a "notorious act of extreme barbarism" that reflects "unusual coldbloodedness..."

Left-leaning Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich reported that FRG President Karl Carstens, in a telegram to South Korea's president, characterized the incident as an "inhuman assault on civil aviation." The paper said that Social Democratic leader Hans-Jochen Vogel called the attack "depressing and disgusting..."

"This Mean Crime Is So Monstrous..."

Pro-Christian Democratic Bonner Rundschau today had an interview with Minister of State Juergen Moellemann citing him as saying, "This mean crime is so monstrous that it is hard to comment on it adequately..."

"The countries of the Western community must agree in...political consultation on a common course and refrain from presenting their individual national conclusions to the public..."

Bonn's conservative Die Welt observed that now "a Reagan-Andropov meeting seems to be impossible for a long time to come....It may turn out that Andropov does not have his military apparatus under control..."

"Crime Reflects Fatal Automatism of the Mechanism of Reaction"

Conservative Frankfurter Allgemeine held that "the incident is like an ironical exclamation mark after almost a decade of Soviet hubris, a decade of Soviet arms buildup and expansion."

Left-of-center Frankfurter Rundschau said today, "What the killing of 269 people reflects is not only the evil character of the Soviets, but the fatal automatism of the mechanism of reaction. The persons responsible acted like a mechanical apparatus..."

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FINLAND

"Since Superpower Did It, It's All the More Shocking"

An editorial in leading Helsingen Sanomat today said, "In the absence of accurate information one has to assume that the United States is right..." The paper declared the attack was "to be condemned as much as earlier similar actions by Bulgarian, Israeli and Rhodesian rebels.

"But since the plane...was shot down by a superpower, the incident is all the more shocking. Superpowers must be able to exercise restraint..."

SWITZERLAND

"American Right Has Found Martyr in Larry McDonald"

Middle-of-the-road Tribune de Geneve ran a correspondent's report from Washington on demonstrations in front of the Soviet embassy. The writer said, "Clearly the American right has found its martyr in the person of Larry McDonald..."

NETHERLANDS

Calvinist Trouw judged today, "No matter what statement the Kremlin comes up with...it will never be acceptable as a rationalization or explanation..."

Conservative De Telegraaf suggested, "The incident will further open the eyes of those friends of peace who have trouble imagining that they can immediately grasp the hand of those friendly Soviets who are just as afraid as we are..."

SPAIN

"Who Is Source of World Tension?"

In Madrid today, conservative ABC said, in an editorial, that "if American fighters had downed a passenger plane of a small nation, what would the world have said? What would the progressive press especially have said?"

"The cries of indignation have been heard from around the world. But it happens that the plane...was brought down by Soviet fighters. This seems to contradict all of the schemes they try to peddle as to the source of tensions in the world."

AUSTRIA

"Peace Movement Has Received Slap in the Face"

In Vienna today, influential Die Presse ran the statements of political leaders condemning the attack. Independent Kurier said in an editorial, "The international peace movement has received a slap in its face. They say Ronald Reagan is a trigger happy cowboy while the Soviet Union is regarded as an element of peace and level-headedness..."

"This dangerous illusion of the peace demonstrators has now been shot down in coldblood..."

IRELAND

"Consequences Must Be Guarded Against As They Are Dreaded"

Dublin's liberal Irish Times maintained in an editorial today, "Relations between Moscow and Washington are bad enough. This will make them worse. In a matter of hours, a highly combustible atmosphere has been created, the consequences of which must be guarded against even as they are dreaded..."

ICELAND

"Soviet System Is Military Machine Suffering Paranoia"

Reykjavik's Dagbladid said yesterday that "the automatic cruelty of the Soviet system lucidly appeared....This mass murder will not be understood unless one realizes the function of the system which lies behind it. This system is not an ordinary society, but a strong, military machine suffering paranoia..."

EASTERN EUROPE

YUGOSLAVIA

"Too Severe a Punishment"

Belgrade's Politika said today the incident was "an unworldly and unreasonable deed" and the worse setback for East-West relations since the Cuban missile crisis.

The paper said, "Even if the jumbo jet pilot was not precisely on course or did not obey the warnings of the Soviet fighter, it is still to severe a punishment to fulfill its own purpose..."

HUNGARY

"Provocation Sharpening International Atmosphere"

In Budapest today, Nepszabadsag ran a long story on the incident carefully citing TASS as the source.

Magyar Hirlap carried the story on page three under the headline "Provocation Sharpening International Atmosphere: TASS Announcement Concerning the Disappeared Aircraft."

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

JAPAN

"Reagan: 'Barbaric Act'"

Tokyo's NHK, TBS and Fuji television today focused attention on the highlights of President Reagan's statement just before his departure from California and U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Lichenstein's speech at the UNSC.

The networks said the President strongly criticized the KAL incident as a "barbaric act" and that he questioned the credibility of the Soviet Union for shooting down the airliner.

NHK television carried a report saying that Mr. Reagan had decided that the KAL incident would be the main topic of next week's talks between Secretary Shultz and Foreign Minister Gromyko.

Confusion in the Kremlin?

Today's conservative Sankei said the Soviet Union is continuing its "silence" and that behind this silence appears to be confusion in the Kremlin leadership over the KAL incident.

The paper cited a military source in Tokyo as saying that the Soviet Far East command has the power to take independent combat action without receiving orders from Moscow. The source reportedly believed that the missile-firing order was given without the Kremlin's knowledge.

"Soviet Secrecy Has Fueled Japanese Anti-Soviet Sentiment"

Moderate Yomiuri stated in an editorial today that "the Soviets should immediately clarify the circumstances of the tragedy and identify the persons responsible.

"It is hard to imagine that the action this time was taken on direct instruction from Moscow's supreme military command. Perhaps the decision was made by a local commander. If so, we have a frightening situation."

The paper added that "the secretive Soviet attitude, including rejection of Japanese searches in the waters where the Korean plane is believed to have crashed, only serves to fuel anti-Soviet feeling among the Japanese people."

"The Soviets Must Reveal the Truth"

Liberal Asahi of Tokyo said today "we request that the Soviet Government reveal the truth quickly and sincerely in order to avoid escalation of East-West tension and to prevent recurrence of such incidents."

"We Agree With President Reagan"

Moderate Mainichi wrote: "We demand that the Soviet Union reveal the facts quickly and sincerely and take convincing measures.

"President Reagan has criticized the Soviet action as a barbaric and heinous act. We feel the same way."

HONG KONG

"George Orwell's World Has Arrived"

Today's independent Economic Journal judged that the incident showed that the Soviet Union is "the world's most dangerous player with fire" and that it allowed people to see how the major powers are monitoring each other, indicating that "George Orwell's horrible world (of 1984) has now emerged on the international scene."

The paper went on to state that the United States "is trying to use the incident to tear down the mask of the USSR as a 'peace-lover.' The effect of the downing of the plane will be a further escalation of U.S. arms expansion and a lessening of criticism against it."

"Actual Sanctions Are Called For"

The pro-Taiwan Hong Kong Times urged that there be substantive sanctions against the USSR because "the Communists only know power and fear reprisals. Empty condemnations do not have much effect on them...It is only with actual sanctions that we can have some sort of deterrence against unscrupulous perpetrators of crime."

INDONESIA

"Reagan Entitled to Self-righteousness"

Today's English-language Jakarta Post described the KAL incident as "evil, plain and simple" and said that President Reagan is now "entitled to some good old God-fearing self-righteousness."

The paper went on to recount the "lame response" offered thus far by the Kremlin and concluded, "We join the rising chorus calling for an international and concerted stance throughout the world community to deplore, condemn, and severely penalize the Soviet Union for this abominable and wretched act."

Strong Direct Action Against USSR Urged

Independent Kompas of the same city said this incident should be followed by strong, direct action against the USSR and suggested "for example, forbidding Aeroflot plans to land at any other airports, and banning docking rights for all Soviet commercial and passenger vessels world-wide."

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"If Shultz Is Correct"

Today's nationalistic Indonesian Observer hesitated to put the full blame for the incident on the USSR, saying that "if what was alleged by Mr. George Shultz proves to be correct, then that Soviet jet fighter must be condemned."

MALAYSIA

All media today strongly condemned the Soviet action and cited the Malaysian Deputy Foreign Minister's statement on the "unpardonable" and "wanton act of savagery and arrogance," as well as statements by President Reagan, Secretary Shultz and other world leaders.

Call for a "Total Boycott of All Russian Aircraft"

Leading Malay-language Utusan Malaysia wrote in an editorial today: "While waiting for further explanation from the Kremlin about this atrocity perpetrated by their armed forces, the entire world should undertake a total boycott of all Russian aircraft."

"What About the Soviet Spy Sub in Swedish Waters?"

The conservative New Straits Times of Kuala Lumpur remarked today that "Moscow has so easily forgotten (that) its spy submarine ran aground in Swedish waters in a restricted zone. Should Sweden then have, by the same token, fired a missile at the 56 crew members?"

AUSTRALIA

The story remained lead in all media today. Except for one or two isolated articles or commentaries noting that under strictest interpretation the Soviet action was "legal," the tenor of all coverage was condemnatory.

"Secretary Shultz Spoke For Most of the World"

Today's nationally-circulated Australian stressed that "The U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Shultz spoke for most of the world's people when he expressed his 'revulsion' and 'grave concern' at this incident of tragic savagery..."

"The incident has added weight to the arguments of those who have warned that the provision by the West of high technology to the Soviet Union is akin to selling them the rope with which they will hang us."

THAILAND

"How Callous Can Russia Get?"

Bangkok's leading English-language Nation Review said today in an editorial headed "Air Tragedy: How Callous Can Russia Get?" that "an over-careful, sensitive man like U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz would not have flatly accused the Soviet Union of shooting down the Korean airliner unless he had full proof as to how it was shot down..."

"One thing is sure and that is that the nations of this world cannot let this incident pass without taking retaliatory action."

SOUTH ASIA

INDIA

The downing of the jet was the lead story in most papers today. Coverage focused on statements by the United States and South Korea. Sidebar stories reported TASS charges that the plane was on a spying mission, and the cautious reaction of the Indian Government to the event.

Headline Treatment

Typical headlines today were "U.S. Seeks U.N. Meet on Korean Plane Loss...Moscow Is Lying: Reagan" (Indian Express), "S. Korea Wants Apology and Compensation...U.S.A. Shows Restraint" (Hindustan Times) and "Russia Lying About Crash, Says Reagan" (Times of India).

"The Evidence Is Damning"

The lead editorial in today's left-of-center Times of India headed "From Russia By Mistake" said: "The rhetoric of the Americans need not have been taken seriously in different circumstances. But in this case the evidence is damning, if not for Moscow, at least for a set of unduly tense and incredibly rash pilots of the Soviet Air Force..."

"Moscow must offer an unqualified apology and adequate compensation for the bereaved. Its silence adds to the crime of its commander."

"The Reagan Administration may well be trying to get the maximum possible propaganda advantage out of this tragedy. But that is no reason why Moscow should not frankly own up to the crime."

"Soviet Authorities Owe An Explanation"

An editorial in the Chandigarh Tribune maintained today that the incident "was an avoidable embarrassment, certain to be exploited to the full by the United States. The Soviet authorities owe an explanation to the moral conscience of the world.

SRI LANKA

"The Soviets' Monumental Indifference"

Today's Island of Colombo said the "unprovoked and mystery-ridden shooting down by the Soviet Union of (the South Korean plane) is an act of outrage that is hard to beat even in these times of all-pervasive terrorism and defiance of all accepted social norms.

"What is double shocking about the whole tragic episode is the monumental indifference shown by Soviet officialdom...and the Orwellian blanket of obfuscation which the Soviet authorities seem intent on throwing over the whole issue."

BANGLADESH

"Soviets Admit Warning Shot"

Dhaka's independent Ittefaq headlined today "Moscow Admits Warning Fire on South Korean Airliner." Sister New Nation said "Soviets Admit Warning Shot."

The latter paper frontpaged several stories on the incident included one headed "A Great Crime Against Humanity."

PAKISTAN

"USSR Admits Firing Missiles"

Media today gave prominent play to the incident, highlighting the Reagan and Shultz condemnation of the incident, the calling of the UNSC meeting and the reaction of world leaders. Media reports also carried the Soviet version of the event. There was no editorial comment as yet.

MIDDLE EAST

JORDAN

"KAL Plane Creates Serious International Crisis"

Electronic and print media today gave straight reporting of the incident with no comment. A typical banner head over a wire service story was "Korean Plane Creates Serious International Crisis."

KUWAIT

Independent, pro-Palestinian al-Watan today summed up in its headline "Reagan: The Soviets Are Liars, An Ugly Crime" and "Moscow: Korean Plane Was Spying."

The English-language Kuwait Times said today that "the Soviet Government would be well advised to tell the whole truth to an extremely worried world, and without losing any time, offer to make amends in a convincingly comprehensive manner."

It finished, however, by reminding its readers of the incident involving the Israeli shooting down of a Libyan jetliner in 1973. It said, "That incident was discussed in the Security Council and--let it not be forgotten tonight--it was the United States that applied an angry veto to shoot down a resolution which sought to blame the Israelis."

BAHRAIN

"Russia's Psychosis Has Been Underlined"

Today's independent Gulf Daily News stated that the incident "has underlined Russia's acute psychosis about national security and an almost obsessive fear of imminent attack....The Soviet Government cannot avoid responsibility for one of the most outrageous violations of civilized behavior in recent years."

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

MEXICO

Headlines in Mexico today included "World-wide Condemnation of Soviet Union for Shooting Down South Korean Plane" (Excelsior), "Reagan Calls Moscow Liar and Terrorist; Soviet Union Replies, 'Dirty Anti-Sovietism,'" (El Dia), "Mankind Condemns Attack on Defenseless Commercial Plane" (El Heraldo de Mexico) and "Reagan Charges Soviet Union as Terrorist" (El Sol de Mexico).

"Western Nations Should Unanimously Break Relations with Soviets"

Conservative El Heraldo de Mexico in an editorial today said, "It is necessary that this sinister, criminal act cause such a reaction in all Western nations that they unanimously, without waiting for U.N. red tape, break relations with the (Soviet) assassin empire...reject any relationship or contact with it until it is forced to abide by the rules of the civilized world."

"Irresponsible Contempt for Human Life"

Nationalistic El Universal in an editorial today, "TASS has made a suggestion which apparently belongs to the fantasy of the worse spy novel--that the plane was on a spy mission....

"However, everything indicates that the Soviets fired against a defenseless civilian aircraft. That would only be justified in cases of extreme belligerence, which is not the case here. Regardless of Soviet allegations that technically it had the right to do what it did, nothing justifies such irresponsible contempt for human life."

Papers reported a statement by the Foreign Ministry that "the Mexican Government regrets deeply the loss of human lives caused by this incident, at the same time it feels it an exhaustive and impartial investigation is necessary because, if it were confirmed that the airline was shot down, we would be witnessing a completely condemnable action, a grave violation of international law and an attempt against the security of air communication."

Soviet Ambassador Claims South Korean Pilot Responsible

Moderate Novedades today reported Soviet Ambassador Rostislav Sergueev regretted the incident because of the loss of the life. However, the paper added, he emphasized that the person responsible for the incident was the pilot of the South Korean aircraft.

Yesterday the Soviet ambassador was quoted by nationalistic El Universal as claiming that the incident "does not endanger world peace" and that this is the second time a South Korean plane has violated Soviet territory "disregarding clear directions and signals."

"Without Trying to Judge Who Is Responsible, Loss of Lives Regrettable"

Leftist-nationalist Unomasuno in an editorial yesterday admitted "the seriousness of the incident...Without trying to judge who is responsible the loss of lives certainly is regrettable..."

"Condemnable to Use This Tragedy Immorally As Political Weapon"

Marxist-oriented El Dia yesterday characterized the incident as "more than regrettable" and noted that "if, as Western sources say, the plane was shot down by the USSR, we would face one of the most flagrant acts of intemperance provoked by the current climate of East-West tensions. If, on the contrary, it only was a regrettable accident, it is also as equally condemnable to use this tragedy immorally as a political weapon."

BRAZIL

"Deserves Repugnance and Condemnation"

The shooting down of the South Korean civilian airliner was prominently played yesterday by Brasilia's three dailies.

Headlines included "USSR Shoots Down Korean Civilian Airliner" "(Soviet) Military Plane Received Order to Shoot the Airliner" "U.S. Heard Everything Before the Tragedy" "USSR's Explanations Do Not Convince US." (pro-Government Correio Braziliense), "Brazil Repudiates Soviet Action" (independent Jornal de Brasilia) and "Soviet Military Plane Shoots Down Korean Airliner With 269 Aboard" (independent Ultima Hora de Brasilia).

Jornal de Brasilia quoted Brazilian Foreign Minister Guerreiro that the shooting was an "extremely serious fact" which deserves "repugnance and condemnation."

"Shultz Does Not Know What He Is Talking About"

In Sao Paulo, radio news programs yesterday stressed the protest against the Soviet Union released Thursday night by the Foreign Ministry. Under the banner headline, "USSR Shoots Down Jumbo and Kills 269," O Estado de Sao Paulo devoted the upper half of its front page to the incident. Folha de Sao Paulo gave third of front page, headlined "USSR Shoots Down South Korean Jumbo, Kills 269."

Liberal Folha de Sao Paulo ran columns by New York and Paris commentators. Paulo Francis, writing from New York, said, "It was a Soviet act of barbarism....In the USSR, these things are always decided at the highest levels. The crime came from above. In order to change this perception it would have been necessary for Shultz to have bluffed us. I do not believe that.

"The shooting down of the plane is legal. Shultz says it is not. He does not know what he is talking about or it is his demagoguery. An invader plane of an air space must land if it is intercepted by the invaded. It maybe shot down in the case of a refusal...

"But a civilized nation does not shoot down passenger planes...It is an act of unjustifiable violence. It is the typical product of Soviet paranoia and of our time....It strengthened Reagan and weakened Andropov."

"Sympton of Excessive Nervousness of Soviet Military"

Claudio Abramo, writing from Paris, said, "The crime committed against a defenseless plane will have more serious consequences for the USSR than the invasion of Afghanistan and the direct intervention in Poland. It is a symptom of the excessive nervousness of the Soviet military command and reveals a profound tension and latent instability."

"There Is NO Justification"

In an editorial headed "Brutality and Stupidity," Folha said, "There is no justification for the extreme measure of the attack and the shooting down of a civilian plane, particularly in peacetime. It is difficult to know which is the more deplorable aspect in this episode: the brutality with which almost 300 lives were eliminated or the cold war stupidity which leads those responsible for the security of a superpower to perceive enemy ghosts even in a peaceful passenger plane."

COLOMBIA

"Incredulity Turned Into Indignation and Horror"

Headlines in Bogota yesterday included "Russians Down a Commercial Airliner" (El Tiempo), "Cowardly Soviet Massacre" (El Espectador), "Soviet Fighters Knock Down a Korean Plane With 269 Persons" (El Siglo) and "World-wide Consternation Over the Russian 'Massacre'" (La Republica).

VENEZUELA

Papers throughout the country yesterday carried the incident as a front-page lead story. Coverage was limited to wire service dispatches. Headlines included "U.S. Demands Soviets Explain Attack on Jet (The Daily Journal), "Red Alert 44 Years from WW II, Moscow Does Not Answer Washington" (Ultimas Noticias) and "Reagan Seeks Explanation from Moscow for Destruction of South Korean Airplane: 269 Passengers and Crew Dead" (El Nacional). There were no editorial commentary or statements by public officials.

Radio and TV coverage was extensive. TV reports generally stressed that there was great consternation in governmental and public sectors in the United States.

PERU

"Transgression Incites World Tension"

Media registered shock and harsh condemnation of the Soviet action. Wide-circulation pro-Government Expresso headlined: "Transgression Incites World Tension; US. Calls Act 'Repulsive and Inexcusable,'" and the mass circulation tabloid Extra had "World Indignation over USSR Criminal Attack."

Exception to this type of condemnation of the Soviet action came from pro-Communist Diario de Marka which buried the story on page 12 under the headline "South Korean Plane With 269 Passengers Has Not Appeared."

ECUADOR

"Ecuador Rejects the Soviet Union"

Newspapers in Quito and Guayaquil yesterday gave front-page coverage to wire service stories. Independent-liberal Hoy's headline stressed "World Tension Over the Attack."

Conservative El Tiempo, in an article headlined "Ecuador Rejects the Soviet Union," quoted Ecuadorean Foreign Minister Luis Valencia as saying that "no type of argument can serve as justification for the attack on a commercial aircraft whose exclusive function is the transport of passengers, even if it was following a mistaken route or was lost."

SOUTHERN CONE

Newspapers in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay gave front-page coverage to wire service stories. There were no comments except in Asuncion.

PARAGUAY

"Deserves the Label of 'Repulsive and Inexcusable'"

Major circulation ABC Color of Asuncion in an editorial yesterday described the act as "coolly deliberated. Under these terms we are, therefore, and without any doubts, facing a cruel act of war done while at peace. The additional circumstances that it was done to a commercial airliner incapable of defending itself, make it a criminal act...that well deserves the label of 'repulsive and inexcusable' given by Mr. SHultz."

Second largest circulation Hoy noted that "these innocent dead...will sleep in an unknown tomb without the statements of even one of these groups which specialize in weakening democracy saying one word. But this silence is also eloquent...and will make people think."

Tribuna in a front-page comment said, "Mankind, frightened by an act that reveals such abominable wickedness, cannot escape the consternation provoked by such an act of incredible bellicosity in peace time."

CHILE

"Such Instances as This Make Us Fear For Tomorrow"

Chilean TV and radio commentators condemned the Soviet attack. Santiago's Channel 13 in an international news commentary on Thursday night asserted that "the fact that the Soviet Union should have shot down an unarmed commercial plane with 269 people aboard is, in itself, deplorable. However, what makes it particularly condemnable is that it was not a question of a Soviet missile fired by mistake against an unidentified target.

"Quite the opposite...they knew perfectly well that it was unarmed non-military aircraft and, in spite of this, they fired a missile against it....Such instances as this make us fear for tomorrow..."

COSTA RICA

"We Do Not Remember a Subhuman Act of Similar Magnitude"

Leading La Nacion of San Jose in an editorial yesterday said, "We do not remember in recent history a subhuman act of similar magnitude; a sign so evident of the disregard for human life, an arbitrariness so naked. Everyone--governments, organizations and citizens ought to raise their voices in condemnation."

La Republica in an editorial wrote, "All humanity, including the Soviet people, have to react with indignation and horror in the face of this savage act, and ought to be pained to the core of their being that there is an attempt to hid the crime committed, denying the facts and eluding the punishment that its authors deserve."

PANAMA

"More Likely It Was a Local Decision"

Opposition La Prensa yesterday ran a commentator by the writer Guillermo Sanchez who said, "I do not think Soviet leaders ordered the attack on the Korean aircraft. It is more likely that it was a local decision."

NICARAGUA

"The United States Made a "Strange Complaint"

Sandinista TV news totally ignored the incident on Thursday evening. Pro-Government Barricada and El Nuevo Diario yesterday gave low-key coverage featuring a TASS report.

FSLN organ Barricada, in a locally-written lead, said that events surrounding the incident were still "unclear," but that the United States had made a "strange complaint" which seemed the "artificial creation" of a doubtful diplomatic incident.

Papers in El Salvador and Honduras ran front-page headlines over the story. There has been no editorial comment to date.