(U) Cryptologic Almanac 50th Anniversary Series

(U) KAL-007: The SIGINT Perspective

[(U) This article first appeared in 1997.]

~~(S//SI)~~ [redacted]

~~(S//SI)~~ [redacted]

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 403
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

~~(S//SI)~~ The Japanese launched search planes to investigate thepossibility of an airline crash. While the search planes were up and circling north of Hokkaido, [redacted]

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~~(S//SI)~~ [redacted]

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[redacted]

~~(S//SI)~~ [redacted] The Reagan administration, engaged in a determined propaganda war with the Soviet Union, was the least likely group to have kept such a secret. [redacted] It was a propaganda war, and the Reagan administration won the round handily. The Soviets were subjected to worldwide condemnation. A Soviet official claimed that it was the most damaging blow of the ColdWar, one from which the USSR never recovered.

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~~(S//SI)~~ [redacted]

(U) No twentieth century event except the assassination of JohnF. Kennedy has produced so many conspiracy theories. Writers both respected and marginal dove into the contest to see who could concoct the biggest whopper. The predominant genre was that the flight was actually planned by the CIA as a deliberate overflight to elicit Soviet reaction, in complete disregard for the lives of the innocents aboard. One writer claimed that the flight was timed to coincide with "spy satellites" whizzing overhead at the time the aircraft was in Soviet airspace. Another, who appears to have run off with the prize for creative writing, believed that someone aboard the aircraft set off a self-destruct device to prevent the airliner and its supposed espionage equipment from falling into Soviet hands. This explanation conveniently absolved the Soviets of even tangential responsibility for the tragedy, placing the blame instead on a CIA operative on board.

~~(S)~~

(U//~~FOUO~~) The Soviets recovered the "black boxes" from the aircraft about two months after the shootdown, but this fact was not revealed until 1992, after the Cold War was over. And no wonder -- the instruments completely corroborated the American version of events [redacted]

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Almanac 50th Anniversary Series

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