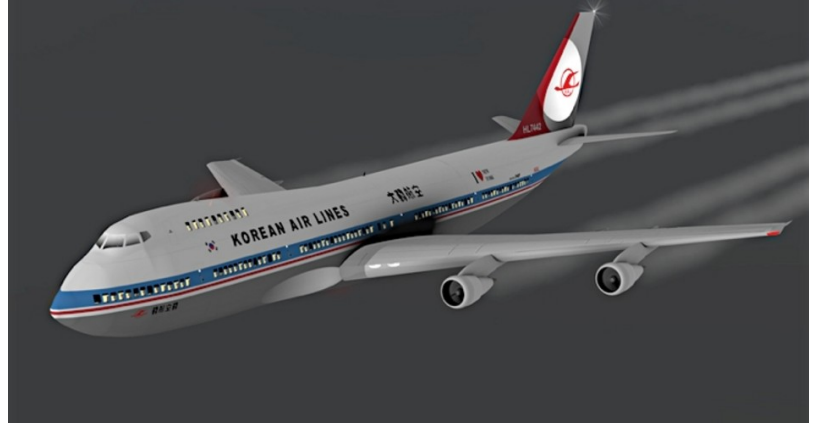




Written by [Alex Newman](#) on September 1, 2012

Activists, Victims' Families Want New Investigation of Flight KAL 007 Shot Down by Soviets

Twenty-nine years ago, on September 1, 1983, [Korean Air Lines Flight 007 \(KAL 007\)](#) was [shot down by the Soviet Union carrying 269 innocent](#) passengers. Among them were 61 Americans including a sitting U.S. Congressman, [Democrat Rep. Larry McDonald of Georgia](#). It was widely reported, and much of the world believes, that everyone on board was killed. But family members of the victims, activists, and experts who spent years researching the matter are convinced that many survived and are still alive somewhere in Russia. Now, they want a new official investigation.



Retired firefighter Jim Morse, a citizen activist in his sixties who lives in Massachusetts, recently [started a petition asking President Obama and House Speaker John Boehner to launch a new inquiry into the matter](#). Like many of the victims' families and researchers who have studied the evidence, Morse thinks there is a very real possibility that at least some of the passengers — if not most — survived the attack. Many may still be alive.

"I believe the plane made a water landing and there were survivors based on the evidence, some of which was held by the former Soviet Union for up to nine years such as, the jet made a 12 minute spiral descent, no bodies were ever found and no luggage was ever recovered," he told *The New American*. "I would like to ask anyone reading this story to take a minute and [sign my petition](#) and spread the word to all your friends and family."

Because only Congress or the president can initiate a proper investigation and the fact that it is a federal election year, Morse said he would be "surprised and delighted" if any official action were to be taken in the near term. He has already been busy sending the petition and his concerns to Obama and other elected officials.

Somebody at Sen. Scott Brown's office told Morse that the senator would bring it to Congress, but his staff did not respond to repeated requests for comment by *The New American*. However, even if there is no immediate response, Morse does not plan to give up, saying he will continue his efforts to find the truth after the election.

"The same day I heard about KAL 007 and Congressman Larry McDonald, I also heard a speech by the 'Patriot Pastor' Garrett Lear about how important it is for one person to take action even he is the only who believes in what he is doing," Morse continued. "I do believe in 'The Power of One.' "

But he is hardly alone in his quest for answers. Bert Schlossberg, the director of the [International Committee for the Rescue of KAL 007 Survivors](#), had a father-in-law on the flight. He has dedicated more than two decades of his life to researching the issue and even wrote a book about it entitled [Rescue 007: The Untold Story of KAL 007 and Its Survivors](#). Schlossberg's research is part of what



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inspired Morse to start his petition.

Based on vast amounts of publicly available evidence including government documents, past investigations, debriefings of ex-Soviet personnel, and information that is not yet public, Schlossberg determined that flight KAL 007 actually made a water landing. Despite the widely accepted narrative that the plane was blown up in mid-air by a Soviet fighter jet, Schlossberg is absolutely convinced the crippled plane actually landed in the water almost intact. More importantly, he says, most of the passengers survived.

“Almost no work has been done with respect to the possibility of survivors using the material that Russian Federation supplied Soviet real time military transcripts chronicling the shoot down and the secret missions to Moneron [a small Russian island in the sea of Japan],” Schlossberg told *The New American*. “These transcripts show that KAL 007 did not crash after the missile attack and descended slowly being tracked until curvature of the earth made further tracking impossible, but that the Soviets expected there to be survivors and indeed the mission orders for the rescue are included in the military transcripts.”

According to Schlossberg, the new information makes subsequent reports of survivors, as well as stories of the Soviet divers who found no bodies or luggage, even more credible. It also adds weight to stories of the plane being emptied of passengers and crew before being sunk and blown up to simulate a high-altitude, high-speed crash, Schlossberg explained. Another researcher, the late Robert W. Lee, [believed the flight made an emergency landing on land in Soviet territory](#).

“All this is grounds for a new investigation,” Schlossberg continued, adding that he has new information on Rep. McDonald that is not yet public but has been shared with lawmakers on the Foreign Affairs and Intelligence committees. “There is no reason, in the light of the above, why a reopening of the issue would not result in the coming home of any of our loved ones who are still alive, after the long years of detention on Soviet and post-Soviet lands and conditions. There is no reason not to pursue the credible reports of survivors including Democratic Congressman from Georgia Larry McDonald.”

In addition to Rep. McDonald, a very conservative Democrat who was also the head of the liberty-minded John Birch Society, hundreds of innocent people went down on that flight. Many of their family members and friends have never given up hope that their loved ones are alive and might return home someday either. More than a few have already signed [the petition seeking a new investigation](#), too.

“There is a lot that can be pieced together from the different sources we have available to us — notably the transcripts of the Soviet ground-to-ground and ground-to-air communications from the time of the shoot down, the audio from the Cockpit Voice Recorder recording, and the data from the Digital Flight Data Recorder,” said Charisma LaFleur, who had two family members aboard including her grandfather Alfredo Cruz. “By putting it all together we can paint a pretty good picture of what happened, and that picture is very different from the popular view of what happened.”

LaFleur told *The New American* that the U.S. government absolutely must launch a new investigation into the facts surrounding the KAL 007 shoot down. “Not just as an academic exercise to know the truth. Not so that damages can be paid to the victims and their families. Not so that those responsible can be held accountable. Washington, D.C., should launch the investigation to uncover actionable intelligence about the fate of the passengers and crew, and to use whatever means they can to bring them home,” she said.

According to LaFleur, one of many who believe survivors may still be living somewhere in Russia, there



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is plenty of evidence to warrant a new investigation. Some of that evidence, she added, only came to light more recently and so, would not have been available when earlier investigations were conducted. There is also new and better technology today that might be able to help investigators in analyzing existing evidence. Finally, there is testimony from people who have come forward since 1983, and each story represents a piece of the puzzle that must be put together.

“I hope that the petition will set a chain of events in motion that will ultimately result in the rescue and safe return home of the surviving passengers and crew of KAL 007. My desire for anything else — even for the truth about what happened and why — pales in comparison to that,” she explained to *TNA*.

“Please take action, and do it quickly. It has already been 29 years since the incident, and with each year that passes, people grow older and pass away, memories get foggier, and our chance of finding survivors grows slimmer.”

But LaFleur is convinced that it is not too late. “Whenever I start to despair and give up hope, my mind goes back to Rita Denise Metcalf, a 7-year old girl who was on that fateful flight. I was also 7 years old at the time. We were the same age. She’d only be 36 this year,” she concluded. “There were 21 other children with her on the flight that were under the age of 12. For their sakes, and the sakes of the rest of the passengers and crew, and their families, let us not sit back and turn this into an academic exercise, or worse, do nothing. With urgency and purpose, please, let us bring them home!”

To read a comprehensive article about the questions surrounding flight KAL-007 published in 1991 in the print edition by *The New American* magazine (later posted online), please click here: [KAL 007 Remembered: The Questions Remain Unanswered](#).

Photo: Artist's rendition of HL7442, the Boeing 747 lost during KAL Flight 007



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