

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JANUARY 14, 1977

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification two related Protocols done at Montreal on September 25, 1975 entitled:

- a) Additional Protocol No. 3 to Amend the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Carriage by Air, signed at Warsaw on October 12, 1929, as Amended by the Protocols done at The Hague, on September 28, 1955, and at Guatemala City, March 8, 1971 (hereinafter, Montreal Protocol No. 3); and
- b) Montreal Protocol No. 4 to Amend the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Carriage by Air, signed at Warsaw on October 12, 1929, as Amended by the Protocol done at The Hague on September 8, 1955 (hereinafter, Montreal Protocol No. 4).

The report of the Department of State with respect to the protocols is enclosed for the information of the Senate in connection with its consideration of them. The two protocols provide a set of modernized rules applicable to international air carriage of passengers, baggage, and cargo to replace currently applicable provisions of the 1929 Warsaw Convention, to which the United States has been party since 1934.

The United States has been one of the leaders in the efforts which have resulted in the adoption of Montreal Protocols No. 3 and No. 4. For nearly two decades the United States, while recognizing the value of a unified legal regime which would assure stability in international air transportation, has sought to ensure that the regime would be responsive to the needs of today's international air travelers and shippers. To this end this government has been in the forefront in urging amendments to the Warsaw Convention to provide for no-fault liability of air carriers, increased limits of liability, and rapid settlement of claims at a fair level. Ratification of Montreal Protocols No. 3 and No. 4 by the United States will significantly advance these efforts to increase the economic protection of users of the international air transport system. Ratification by the United States will be an invitation to those States which have hesitated, while awaiting United States action, to approve the Protocols.

Montreal Protocols No. 3 and No. 4 are part of what would be a comprehensive package of benefits available to United States citizens traveling to and from the United States by air and to international shippers by air. This package would include a proposed domestic plan to supplement recoveries under the new protocols in cases of passenger injury or death, which is now being considered by the Civil Aeronautics Board.

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The development of a comprehensive system of compensation for injured parties in aviation accidents, and modernized rules relating to baggage, ticketing procedures, and cargo documentation and damage provisions are achievements that, upon the entry into force of Montreal Protocols No. 3 and No. 4, will bring the legal regime which has developed under the 1929 Warsaw Convention into today's world. For these reasons, I recommend that the Senate give prompt consideration to these protocols and give its advice and consent to ratification at an early date.

GERALD R. FORD

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
January 14, 1977

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