

Winter 1992

Emerson, Steven, and Brian Duffy. *The Fall of Pan Am 103: Inside the Lockerbie Investigation*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1990.

This is a work of "investigative journalism" in the best sense of the word from two journalists with impressive credentials in reporting on national security affairs for publications ranging from *U.S. News & World Report*, to the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. However, it is an investigation necessarily incomplete as events since the publication of the book have made clear.

When the book went to press the commonly accepted version of events was familiar to anyone with an interest in political terrorism. Elements of Ahmed Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command (PFLP-GC) placed a bomb aboard Pan-Am Flight 103. They did so at the behest of the Iranian government which was anxious to avenge the shooting-down of an Iranian airliner over the Persian Gulf in mid-1988 by the USS *Vincennes*. West German authorities actually detained the alleged bomb-maker and numerous of his colleagues in custody in October 1988 some two months prior to the bombing. However, despite discovering two bombs fitted with barometric detonators (an obvious weapon destined for use against aircraft) the Germans released all but two within a matter of days, a still inadequately explained mystery.<sup>1</sup>

In their inquiry Emerson and Duffy went well beyond the bare bones of the story, conducting interviews with over 250 people in Europe, North America and the Middle East. These included middle-rank and high-level intelligence and law enforcement officials. The majority of their comments were made on the record which is remarkable in itself as Emerson and Duffy were reporting on an extremely sensitive, ongoing criminal investigation with international repercussions. The authors also had access to internal government reports, court documents, and confidential as well as unclassified law enforcement and intelligence files in the US, FRG, Sweden, Israel and elsewhere.

Emerson and Duffy make clear their methodology in the following statement: "... we have used the standard journalistic technique of beginning with the public record and amplifying or amending its contents with our own reporting." (p. 279) The last section of the book, "Note on Sources and Methodology," is especially useful as it gives a chapter by chapter outline of the interviews and reports from which the information in that chapter derived.

The end result of this painstaking investigation is a detailed account of not just the downing of Flight 103. It also sets this incident in the context of transnational terrorism reaching back to the early 1970s and ongoing international cooperation against this phenomenon.

If the book can be said to have a central theme or thread running throughout, it is the repeated stalling and intransigence of the German authorities once Flight 103 had gone down and suspicions began to center on the PFLP-GC cell which the Germans had rounded-up in October. Whether this stemmed from an attempt to protect one or more confidential informants

within the cell cannot be ascertained, but the theory is raised and given a thorough airing.

The authors conclude their investigative report with a summary of what was known at the time the book went to the publisher in early 1990. They also examine the outstanding speculative theories concerning how the bomb was smuggled aboard Flight 103, whether it was just one of a series which was disrupted by the German arrests, and flaws in the subsequent investigation in the FRG.<sup>2</sup>

Emerson and Duffy have provided a valuable service in this detailed account not only of the actual act of terrorism, but also the problems inherent in this type of investigation. Their thoroughness and the clarity in which they illuminate this complex and ongoing story is worthy of praise. However, with subsequent events culminating in Anglo-American indictments of two Libyan government agents for the bombing the book begs a second, revised edition.<sup>3</sup> I look forward to an updated version of an excellent source.

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#### Endnotes

1. These events are covered in overview in their chapter on the PFLP-GC in Neil C. Livingstone and David Halevy, *Inside the PLO* (New York: William Morrow, 1990), pp. 212-16. The pair retained by the Germans, Hafez Dalkamoni and Abdel Fatar Ghadanfar, were sentenced in June 1991 for two attempts to bomb US military trains in West Germany in 1987-88.
2. In November 1990, at the British public inquiry into the bombing, a British police officer made the first public statement at the inquiry indicating the bomb was in unaccompanied luggage and placed aboard Flight 103 from a feeder flight at Frankfurt. Investigators from the German Federal Criminal Office were quoted at that time as saying they had no proof of this, had seen none from the British, and believed the suitcase could just have easily been smuggled onboard at Heathrow. *Winnipeg Free Press*, 13 November 1990.
3. In September 1990 the official French investigation into the 19 September 1989 bombing of a UTA aircraft over Chad alleged the bomb was very similar to that used at Lockerbie and also carried in a Samsonite suitcase. The suspect named in the report is linked to the Libyan government and believed to have deplaned at Ndjamena before the flight left for Paris. Syria is also named in the French report. *Times* (London), 4 September 1990.

In late December 1990, CBS News and the British *Independent* newspaper independently reported a Libyan link to the Lockerbie bombing. Unnamed investigators reported the discovery of a computer chip in the bomb's detonator which matched one in another radio-cassette bomb found on a Libyan agent arrested at Dakar airport, Senegal in February 1988. Subsequent news reports and *Sunday Times Insight* journalist David Leppard's book, published in the summer of 1991, fleshed out the alleged Libyan connection. *Sunday Times*, 30 June 1991, *Times* (London), 15 November 1991, and David Leppard, *On the Trail of Terror* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1991).

Despite the Anglo-American indictments in November 1991 and President Bush's publicly stated exoneration of the Syrians, Israeli officials remain convinced of Syrian involvement through the PFLP-GC. *Ottawa Citizen*, 21 November 1991.