

## Lockerbie

### *Adequately Explained by Stupidity?*

Lockerbie, Luggage and Lies

Morag G. Kerr

Leicester: Matador Books, £12.99, p/b

[www.troubador.co.uk/troubador](http://www.troubador.co.uk/troubador)

**A**bout half of this book is a study of baggage-handling systems in airports. Another large chunk is about the forensic examination of the explosion and the attempt to determine where the bomb was placed in the cargo hold. I found much of this boring and some difficult to follow: it needs studying, note-taking. This made me feel the way I did as a JFK assassination beginner encountering the more arcane end of the research, such as the autopsy evidence. I skipped bits of it (Kerr provides handy summaries at the end of the detailed sections). But the detail is necessary because Kerr wants to show that the received versions are false, that the official investigations (and the Scots judges) mishandled and misinterpreted the evidence; and how the bomb got on the plane, and where it was in the hold, is at the centre of it.<sup>1</sup>

Kerr believes, and believes she demonstrates, that the bomb was planted at Heathrow, whose luggage-handling system was wide open to intruders, and not at Hamburg where a PFLP-GC group was making bombs to blow up planes. That bomb-making cell looked like a big clue and was the focus of the investigation for a long time. *But how did they get the bomb on the plane?*

Then some of the clothes in the bomb debris were identified as having been purchased in Malta and since the two Libyans were there at the right time, and a flight from Malta fed into the flight out of London – *voilà!* Case solved! She doesn't see direction by the spooks: she sees an investigation derailing itself. The Germans couldn't find a link between the plane and the PFLP – *How did they get the bomb on the plane?* – and the British were reluctant to investigate Heathrow,

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<sup>1</sup> This book arrived the day that Exaro published material showing (again) that the US intelligence people didn't believe the Libya-dunnit story. See <<http://www.exaronews.com/articles/5166/lockerbie-us-intelligence-maintained-doubt-about-libya-s-role>>.

so both fell with enthusiasm on the Malta solution; and, she concedes, both sets of investigators genuinely believed the case was solved.

*But how did the Libyans get the bomb on the plane? We're back to baggage-handling; and the Malta system, as she explains in great detail in the opening chapters, was the most watertight of the three. The later discussion explains why the earlier minute examination of baggage-handling was necessary.*

Kerr is a drole writer: chunks of dull technical stuff are punctuated by things like this (admittedly the best example) on p. 178:

'There is another possibility. Perhaps the senior detectives were so convinced of the involvement of the German-based cell of the PFLP-GC that they couldn't conceive of the bomb not having come from Germany. In other words, perhaps those in charge of this investigation were as dumb as a bag of hammers that failed hammer school.'

I think the case she makes is plausible: the bomb was planted at Heathrow and the Libyans are innocent. But the last detailed account of the story I read was Paul Foot's, which was a long time ago, so what do I know?<sup>2</sup>

*Robin Ramsay*

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Kerr is the subject of an entry on Wikispooks at <[http://wikispooks.com/wiki/Morag\\_Kerr](http://wikispooks.com/wiki/Morag_Kerr)>.