

The Crash of Flight 3804

A Lost Spy, A Daughter's Quest, and the Deadly Politics of the Great Game for Oil

Charlotte Dennett

Foreword by Daniel C. Dennett, III

\$27.95 USD • \$37.95 CAD • £21.99 GBP

Hardcover • 6 × 9 • 368 pages

12 black-and-white maps

ISBN 978-1-60358-877-5

On-Sale Date: April 2, 2020

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While unraveling the mystery of a master spy's death, an investigative journalist reveals the truth behind an era of endless wars in the Middle East by following the pipelines

In 1947, Daniel Dennett, America's first master spy in the Middle East, was dispatched to Saudi Arabia to study the route of the proposed Trans-Arabian Pipeline. It would be his last assignment. On the way, a plane carrying him to Ethiopia went down, killing everyone on board. Today, Dennett is recognized by the CIA as a "fallen star" and is an important figure in US intelligence history. Yet the true story behind his death remains clouded in secrecy.

In *The Crash of Flight 3804*, investigative journalist Charlotte Dennett digs into her father's counterintelligence work, which pitted him against America's wartime allies—the British, the French, and the Russians—in a covert battle for geopolitical and economic influence in the Middle East. Through vivid storytelling, extensive research, and deep analysis of region-defining maps, she reveals how feverish competition among intelligence networks, military, and Big Oil interests have fueled indiscriminate attacks and targeted killings that continue to this day. By introducing the reader to all the major players, the book delivers an irrefutable indictment of these devastating forces and how the brutal violence they incite has shaped the Middle East and birthed an era of endless wars.

The Crash of Flight 3804 provides important context for understanding the region and what's provoking the growing crisis today, while bringing new questions to the fore, including:

- As the US continues to be on the brink of war with Iran, what oil infrastructure and vulnerable chokepoints (Strait of Hormuz, Petrolina Pipeline) figure into the Trump administration's calculation?
- What new conflicts lie ahead with the signing of the EastMed undersea gas pipeline agreement between Greece, Israel, and Cyprus as the battle for Eastern Mediterranean resources heats up?
- To what lengths has the US negotiated with the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and ISIS to secure Big Oil's holdings in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen—and was the Pentagon's goal of defeating ISIS a fraudulent pretext for America's occupation of Syrian provinces and a land grab for oil?
- What part does Ukraine play in the energy-dominance struggle between the US and Russia?
- Did the infamous double agent Kim Philby, who worked for the British while spying for the Russians, have anything to do with Daniel Dennett's death?
- Why have the US and China made North Africa the next major battleground, and what will Turkey's recent targeting of Libya's gas fields add in the Great Game for Oil?

Part personal pilgrimage, part detective story, Dennett's insightful reportage and deft critique examines what happens to international relations when oil wealth hangs in the balance, shining a light on what so many have actually been dying for.

To request a review copy or author interview please contact Sean Maher at (802) 295-6300 ext 122 or smaher@chelseagreen.com

Author availability: Vermont, by phone or arrangement

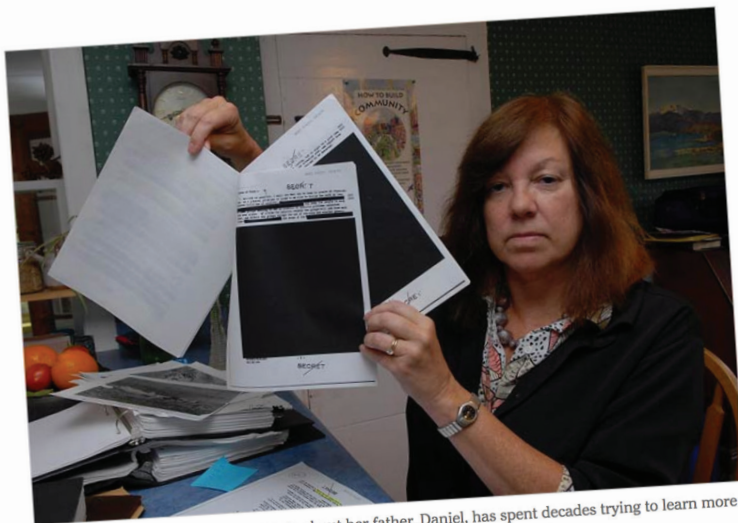
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The New York Times

OCT. 23, 2007

A Dead Spy, a Daughter's Questions and the C.I.A.

By ALAN FEUER



Charlotte Dennett, 60, with documents about her father, Daniel, has spent decades trying to learn more about his death in a plane crash in Ethiopia. Paul O. Boisvert for The New York Times

CHARLOTTE DENNETT is a former Middle East reporter and an investigative journalist and attorney. She is the co-author of *Thy Will Be Done: The Conquest of the Amazon*, an exposé of Nelson Rockefeller and evangelism in the age of oil, which the *Washington Post* called “a persuasive history of how American business and strategic interests interacted to bolster a generation of Latin American dictatorships.”

She is also the author of *The People v Bush: One Lawyer's Campaign to Bring the President to Justice*, which reveals how the false pretext of Iraq's being an “imminent threat” led to the US invasion of Iraq, when all US intelligence organizations declared Saddam Hussein posed no threat. The same false pretext has been offered by the Trump Administration to target Iran.

Charlotte Dennett's brother, **DANIEL C. DENNETT III**, famed philosopher and author of *From Bacteria to Bach and Back: The Evolution of Minds and Consciousness Explained*, wrote the foreword to *The Crash of Flight 3804*.

Charlotte's decades-long struggle with the CIA to get their father's story told—including launching a FOIA suit to get documents released—finally resulted in Daniel Dennett being honored in 2019 as the first Fallen Star and the CIA's calling him a role model for new officers. He was named the agency's “First Star” at its annual memorial wall celebration in May 2019, and Gina Haspel, the Director of the CIA, personally pledged that more documents would be declassified.

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Charlotte is available for interviews. Here are just a few of the topics she can discuss:

The Turkish Military Flex

The book provides important context for understanding why Turkey has long been threatened by the Kurds in northern Syria. In describing one of her father's missions, Charlotte points out that the oil that was known to exist in the northeastern Kurdish region of Syria undoubtedly explained Washington's interest in the region at the time, as well as the need to prevent the Soviet Union's encroachments on the region. That interest persists to this day. Dennett also dives deep into the growing importance of Eastern Mediterranean gas pipelines and what it means for Europe.

Trump, Russia, and Ukraine

The backstory provided in the book will allow readers to see the US-Ukrainian relationship in a true light. Instead of the now-typical narrative that the US is trying to protect a struggling new democracy from Russian encroachment, it digs deeper into the story of the intense energy-dominance struggle that has trapped Ukraine in a battle between two superpowers, the US and Russia. Much of the rivalry, Dennett explains, between those superpowers—from post-WWII years through the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union—has been based more on economic rather than ideological grounds, most notably in energy wars and exemplified in their proxy wars in Syria, and their ongoing battle to control pipeline routes in and around the Ukraine, Crimea, the Black Sea, and the Caspian Sea.

Is Trump getting played?

Donald Trump, a real estate developer who has found the allure of Middle East oil irresistible, is no match for Vladimir Putin, the wily ex-KGB agent who is highly skilled in playing the Great Game. Trump's withdrawal of American troops in Syria, allowing Turkish troops to attack the Kurds in northeast Syria, has been widely denounced as not only a betrayal of our Kurdish allies, but a victory for Russia, Syria, and Iran. Now Russia can help Syria consolidate control over Syrian territory with the final aim of dislodging American troops from oilfields in the northeast which Trump initially withdrew, then redeployed after fierce condemnation in the US, claiming: "We have the oil!" Whose advice will ultimately win out: Russian or American oil oligarchs?

A History of Abandonment

Readers will see that the Trump administration's abandonment of the Kurds in northern Syria is reminiscent of the US abandonment of the Armenians in Turkey after World War I—when US leaders failed to act on the Armenian genocide in order to gain a foothold in the oil of the Ottoman Empire. It is also reminiscent of the US abandonment of the Jews during World War II: Charlotte argues in the book that the US failed to rescue Jews from the Holocaust in favor of protecting American oil interests in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia and the War in Yemen

Like most conflicts in the Middle East, the war in Yemen has been portrayed as a "war on terror"—yet Dennett will speak to the fact that it is actually an energy war that has been ravaging the country. In western Yemen, Saudi forces have attacked Iranian-backed Houthi rebels, who by 2015 gained control over much of northern Yemen, including Yemen's capital, Sanaa. They then began advancing toward the oil-producing province of Ma'rib and toward the Bab el Mandeb Strait, a vital corridor through which many of the world's oil tankers pass. In northeast Yemen, a controversial, Saudi-financed oil pipeline is under construction, which will terminate in Yemen's southern port of Mukallah, thus avoiding a possible Iranian blockade of Saudi oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz.

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The War in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has no oil, but the endless war waging there still has its roots in petroleum: The country has been eyed as a major corridor for oil and gas from the Caspian Sea region to markets in Pakistan and India. The Afghan portion of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline (TAPI) has yet to be built due to ongoing warfare in the country. The Taliban, ironically, have long been viewed as the only warriors that can help guarantee security for the pipeline—a prerequisite for international financing. So, the US continues negotiating with them, ignoring the Taliban's inhumane treatment of women, fundamentalist interpretation of Islam, and killing of US troops.

The War in Iraq

The Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) pipeline to Haifa, Israel, built in the 1930s and closed in 1948 by Iraqis during Israel's War of Independence, was a major factor in the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, with an aim to re-open the IPC pipeline once Saddam Hussein was eliminated and replaced by a pro-Israel regime. Dennett reveals that the US, along with Israel, had long aspired to bring about regime change in Iraq. She discovered this in 1975, when she went to Iraq to report on the Kurdish insurgency—backed by the US, Israel, and the Shah of Iran—along the mountainous border with Iran. It was hoped that this Western-backed insurgency would tie down the Iraqi military in Iraq's eastern mountains and weaken the Iraqi regime. Shortly afterwards, however, the Kurds were betrayed when the Shah made peace with the Iraqis, cutting off all funding. Regime change in Iraq got new life when George W. Bush became president. Invading Iraq was on Bush and Cheney's drawing board just weeks after 9/11 along with regime change in Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Iran.

Syria

Syria, much like its bitter enemy, Israel, has become a coveted candidate as a transit corridor for pipelines carrying oil and gas from the Middle East to Europe. In the years immediately prior to the outbreak of war in 2011, the Assad regime reportedly rejected a Western-supported national gas pipeline from Qatar through Syria and on to Europe because it would compete with Russia's monopoly on supplying natural gas to Europe. Instead, Assad favored a pipeline carrying gas from Iran through Syria to Europe in which Russia could dictate terms with its allies, Syria and Iran. Many believe the two competing pipeline schemes contributed to efforts by Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and the US to weaken if not overthrow the Assad regime. The Syrian civil war has thus been termed a pipeline war.

Israel, the Gaza Strip, and Gas

The Eastern Mediterranean is a new hotspot in the Middle East's energy wars. Israel, for years energy-hungry because it had no oil, is now experiencing a natural gas bonanza due to discoveries of abundant natural gas off its Eastern Mediterranean coast. The discoveries are viewed as both a blessing and a curse, for Gazans have laid claim to one of the gas fields and Lebanon to another. Israel's defense officials have admitted their military attacks on Gaza were to prevent Gazans from benefitting from the gas bonanza, arguing the revenues would support terrorism. Israel's objective to remove the Assad regime in Syria and replace it with a pro-American, pro-Israel regime would also enable Israel to establish itself as an energy corridor along the Eastern Mediterranean.

A History of Middle East Spy Craft

In the aftermath of World War II, Daniel Dennett witnessed “a free for all” among the US's wartime allies striving to secure their geopolitical influence in the Middle East. He was ordered to spy on the British, the Russians and the French in Lebanon and Syria. Charlotte paints a picture of how this landscape fed the resulting military-oil-intelligence network that still shapes the region. She has uncovered new information about the most famous spy of the 20th century, the infamous Kim Philby, who was her father's direct counterpart in counterintelligence. Philby worked as a double agent, spying for the British while secretly spying for the Russians. Because he had to serve both masters, and because both the British and the Russians fought the emergence of the US as a major player in the Middle East, he has become a “person of interest” in the author's investigation into her father's death.