

Rear Admiral Cathal Flynn, USN (Ret.)

Remarks at the Pan Am Flight 103 Commemoration at The Cairn, Arlington  
National Cemetery

December 21, 2010

Thank you, Glenn.

My thanks also to Mary Kay Stratis. And to Frank Duggan (whose family hails from the same county of Ireland as we Flynnns – Jack and I – do).

It is an honor to be here, to speak on hallowed ground where we remember all who have served and many who have died in our nation's conflicts.

There are many reasons that make it fitting for The Cairn to be here in the National Cemetery. An important reason is that those you loved, those who perished on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 1988, are war dead, the targets in Muammar Gadaffi's savage act of war against the United States.

Now, for the last nine years, the United States has been in a fierce conflict with terrorists, striving to subdue savagery and safeguard civilization. Many service personnel whose last resting place is here gave their all in battle with terrorists.

But the struggle against terrorism is not only a matter for our armed forces abroad; it is also a matter of homeland security.

The world knows that airliners and all who fly in them are repeatedly the targets of terrorist savages. We also know there are many bands of defense for the airliners: intelligence, covert actions, military operations, border controls, and law enforcement. But ultimately defense depends on aviation security, the protective measures at the airports and on the airliners themselves. It is here that the Victims of Pan Am Flight 103 have had such great, enduring influence.

There have been some other committed, effective advocates for aviation security. We think of Senator Frank Lautenberg and Congressman Jim Oberstar.

But none have advocated with such competence, persistence, and – above all – moral authority as your members. I think particularly of Glenn Johnson and Bob Monetti, and their years' long work on the government's Aviation Security Advisory Committee. And of Kathleen Flynn and George Williams, who so ably served on the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security in 1996-97.

All have understood the issues, all have stood for what is right, all have caused us in government to try harder to do what is right. All have given signal service to this nation.

It is my association with them, and through them with all of you, that makes me conscious that is such an honor to have spoken here today.