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## MOSCOW'S THRIVING LIBYAN CONNECTION

### INTRODUCTION

Colonel Muammar Qaddafi, obsessed by his personal quest for Arab leadership, has transformed Libya into the most militantly anti-American state in the Arab world. In pursuit of his vision of forging a unified Arab empire, he has entered into a strategic marriage of convenience with the Soviet Union. Moscow has fed Libya massive quantities of sophisticated arms, military training, technical assistance, and help in repressing its increasingly rebellious people. In return, Qaddafi has extended to Moscow access to Libya's military infrastructure, oil for energy-hungry Soviet satellites, hard currency, a staging base for the training of anti-Western terrorists, and subsidies for Soviet client regimes in Syria, South Yemen, and Ethiopia.

Although Colonel Qaddafi took an anti-Soviet posture after he came to power in 1969, he has drifted steadily into the Soviet camp. In recent years the Kremlin and Qaddafi have muted policy differences and expanded military cooperation. Despite divergent ideological orientations, Moscow and Tripoli now share compatible, if not identical, regional goals. Both seek to undermine Western, particularly American, influence in North Africa and the Middle East; both are determined to block a U.S.-brokered settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict; and both work to subvert existing pro-Western regimes in the area.

The Libyan air attack on a Sudanese radio station in Omdurman this March and the shooting death of a London policewoman outside the Libyan "People's Bureau" in April 1984 are only the most recent episodes of Qaddafi's violent disregard for international law. In both cases the Libyan government literally got away with murder.

Trade-hungry European states continue "business as usual" with the Libyans. Washington should press its European allies to join the United States in imposing an economic quarantine on Libya. This not only would constrain Qaddafi's mischief-making but would weaken his domestic political base of support, thereby accelerating his eventual downfall at the hands of his own people. Until this happens, Washington should extend sufficient military and economic assistance to Qaddafi's pro-Western intended victims to frustrate his military and subversive designs.

North Africa is a "bonus area" to Soviet planners in that it is a paramount concern of Western security in the Mediterranean Sea, while only a marginal consideration to the security of the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> Not only is North Africa a major source of energy supplies to the West, but if the North African rimland should pass into hostile hands, it would pose a threat to Western sea lines of communication to Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Israel, and the Persian Gulf. A Soviet strategic foothold in North Africa would allow Moscow to leapfrog NATO's southern flank, thereby exposing Western Europe's soft underbelly. Moreover, it would furnish the Soviet Union a conduit into central Africa and an air bridge into southern Africa.

#### SOVIET GOALS IN NORTH AFRICA

Soviet policy toward North Africa has been reactive and opportunistic. Moscow has exploited regional tensions such as the Arab-Israeli dispute and personal rivalries such as the long-running Qaddafi-Sadat feud to insinuate itself into a position of regional influence. Moscow also has been quick to capitalize on friction between North African states and the West. As in other parts of the Mediterranean basin, "the troubles of the West have constituted, in nearly direct ratio, opportunities for the USSR."<sup>2</sup> As Qaddafi's radicalism has alienated the West and exacerbated Libyan isolation, the Soviets and Libyans have entered into a mutually wary strategic embrace.

The Soviet Union has relied on skillful diplomacy to undermine Western influence and supplant it with its own. Strategic opportunism, not communist ideology, has been the driving force behind the Soviet penetration of North Africa. Moscow often sacrificed local communist parties to serve its own interests and turned a blind eye to crackdowns on communists in Algeria and

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<sup>1</sup> John Waterbury, "The Soviet Union and North Africa," Ivo Lederer and Wayne Vucinich, eds., The Soviet Union and the Middle East (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1974), p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> John Campbell, "Communist Strategies in the Mediterranean," Problems of Communism, May-June 1979, p. 2.

Egypt. More recently, the Communists have been forced into ideological competition with Islamic Fundamentalists for the loyalties of potential revolutionaries throughout the Arab world.<sup>3</sup>

Soviet interest in establishing a military foothold in North Africa dates back at least to the July 1945 Potsdam Conference. There Soviet dictator Josef Stalin made an unsuccessful bid for trusteeship over the Libyan province of Tripolitania, the former Italian colony, as reparation for the damage caused by ten Italian divisions on Soviet territory during World War II. Stalin was rebuffed, as he was when he tried to obtain an outlet in the Mediterranean in Turkey and Greece.

Under Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Union began making headway in eroding Western influence along the Mediterranean's southern shore. The centerpiece of Soviet policy was Egypt, which Khrushchev wooed with arms sales, economic assistance, and a vague ideological solidarity based on anti-colonialism, anti-zionism, revolutionary change, and "socialism." The 1955 Czech arms deal, the first major Soviet arms transfer in the postwar Middle East, was the initial installment of what became an enormous transfusion of Soviet weapons to Egypt. Under Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet Union continued to exploit the Arab-Israeli conflict to gain influence, prestige, and bases in the Arab world.<sup>4</sup>

Sandwiched between revolutionary Algeria, which fought France to a standstill to attain independence in 1962, and Nasser's Egypt, which became Moscow's prime client in the Middle East by the late 1960s, Libya received little Soviet attention for many years. Although diplomatic relations were established in 1955, Libyan-Soviet interaction was minimal until the aging, pro-Western ruler, King Idris, was overthrown by a military coup in 1969.

#### THE RISE OF QADDAFI

On September 1, 1969, a small group of Libyan army officers, calling themselves the Free Unionist Officers Movement, launched a successful and relatively bloodless coup d'état. The coup unfolded while joint Soviet-Egyptian-Syrian naval maneuvers were underway near the Libyan coast, a circumstance that led to speculation about foreign coordination.<sup>5</sup> Muammar Qaddafi, a charismatic

<sup>3</sup> Arnold Hottinger, "Arab Communism at Low Ebb," Problems of Communism, July-August 1981, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> See James Phillips, "As Israel and the Arabs Battle, Moscow Collects the Dividends," Heritage Foundation Backgrounder No. 291, September 20, 1983.

<sup>5</sup> The Libyan plotters may have been in touch with Egyptians involved in the planning of the joint naval maneuvers. Soviet naval units were arrayed in a screen between the main British base at Akrotiri, Cyprus, and Libya. See: Jessie Lewis, Jr., The Strategic Balance in the Mediterranean (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1976), pp. 75-78.

27-year-old lieutenant, soon emerged from the twelve-man Revolutionary Command Council as Libya's supreme leader. He was consumed by an overriding ambition to succeed Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser as the heroic Arab leader who would galvanize the Arab world and realize the dream of pan-Arab unity.

Because of his messianic view of his own role, Qaddafi persistently attempted to expand his power base by merging his tiny nation of three million with neighboring states--Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, Chad, Malta, and even Syria. All his schemes for unification were spurned in succession. While other Arab rulers were willing to share Libya's oil wealth, they were not willing to share power with the mercurial Libyan leader.

Frustrated in his dealings with Arab heads of state, Qaddafi turned instead to radical Arab movements, revolutionaries, and terrorists who flocked to Libya in search of financial backing. In addition to disbursing Libyan oil revenues to those he deemed to be working for Arab unity, Qaddafi bestowed favors on groups that shared his other major goals: the destruction of Israel, the defeat of the West, and the revitalization of Moslem Arab society. Tripoli soon became the Mecca to which a wide spectrum of anti-Western terrorist groups made a pilgrimage in search of money, arms, and training.

Libya's oil wealth gives Qaddafi the means of meddling in the internal affairs of target states, particularly those plagued by economic problems and political turmoil. Qaddafi's Bureau for the Export of the Revolution coordinates subversion on a worldwide basis.<sup>6</sup> The Libyans have fomented political violence or staged outright military interventions in at least 28 different states, including Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, Chad, Lebanon, Iran, and the Philippines.<sup>7</sup>

The "Islamic Legion," Qaddafi's version of the French Foreign Legion, was created as an adjunct to the Libyan army to intimidate Libya's weaker southern neighbors. Up to 10,000 non-Libyans working in Libya were induced to enlist or were pressed into the Islamic Legion, including 2,800 Sudanese, 1,250 Chadians, 750 Egyptians, 500 Nigerians, and 500 Bangladeshis.<sup>8</sup>

The Soviets were among the first to forge military ties with Qaddafi. Less than a year after the 1969 coup, Soviet tanks began appearing in Libya.<sup>9</sup> Despite these early arms sales, Soviet-Libyan

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<sup>6</sup> See John Cooley, Libyan Sandstorm (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1982), pp. 187-228.

<sup>7</sup> See Ian Butterfield, "Neutralizing Qaddafi: Containing Libyan Aggression," Heritage Foundation Backgrounders No. 157, November 25, 1981; also Daniel Pipes, "No One Likes the Colonel," The American Spectator, March 1981.

<sup>8</sup> William Gutteridge, Libya: Still a Threat to Western Interests, (London: Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1984), p. 21.

<sup>9</sup> Ronald Bruce St. John, "The Soviet Penetration of Libya," The World Today, April 1982, p. 133.

relations remained cool. The Kremlin attempted to ingratiate itself with Qaddafi by awarding him the Order of Lenin in July 1971 "for his work for universal peace." But Qaddafi remained aloof, troubled by the Soviet tilt toward India in the 1971 Indian-Pakistani war and what he considered to be insufficient Soviet help to the Arabs in their struggle against Israel. Qaddafi helped put down the communist coup in Sudan in August 1971, criticized Iraq for signing a 15-year Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union in April 1972, and welcomed President Anwar Sadat's expulsion of Soviet military personnel from Egypt in July 1972.

Another source of Libyan-Soviet friction was ideological. Qaddafi rejected Marxism as a product of the 19th century Europe that he held partially responsible for Arab disunity. As a fervent Moslem, he was repelled as much by the atheism of Soviet communism as by what he perceived to be the materialism of Western society. He initially adopted a posture of "positive neutralism." In practice, however, he became aligned more with the Soviet bloc than with the West. It was not long before American and British military bases inside Libya were closed, while the Soviet bloc advisors inside Libya steadily grew in number. Since then, the two states have been drawn together by compatible foreign policy goals.

#### THE SOVIET-LIBYAN MILITARY CONNECTION

The first major Soviet-Libyan arms deal was consummated in 1974. Qaddafi's relations with Sadat had deteriorated because the Egyptian President had initiated the October War of 1973 without giving Qaddafi advance notice and had concluded a disengagement agreement with Israel. When Egyptian-Libyan tensions rose to the breaking point, Sadat withdrew Egyptian support and technical assistance from the Libyan armed forces. Pakistanis initially replaced the Egyptians, but Qaddafi's insatiable appetite for advanced weaponry led him to Moscow; potential Western arms suppliers had grown increasingly alienated by his radical foreign policy. The Soviets were pleased by Libya's virulently anti-Western policies, particularly Libya's determination to prolong the 1973-1974 Arab oil embargo even after other Arab states had rescinded it. Both the Soviets and the Libyans resented Sadat's independent foreign policy and his rapidly improving relations with Washington. The Libyans sought a counterweight to the emerging Egyptian-American axis, while the Soviets sought to recoup the prestige and military bases that they had lost in Egypt.

In January 1974, Moscow ordered its Eastern European satellites to buy oil at a Libyan oil auction. In May 1974, Major Abdel Jalloud, Libya's second in command, traveled to Moscow and concluded the first in a series of arms sales agreements that remain the largest ever reached by the Soviets. They have been worth up to \$16 billion. Soviet warplanes, tanks, armored personnel carriers, and artillery pieces began pouring into Libya.

By mid-1974, 1,500 Soviets had arrived to operate ten Soviet-supplied anti-aircraft missile batteries around Libya's main airbase. In 1975, the Libyans received 30 advanced MiG-23 combat aircraft along with seconded Soviet pilots and technicians to operate and maintain them.<sup>10</sup> Soviet advisers came to permeate the Libyan armed forces, often reaching down to battalion level. Tu-22 Blinder-C reconnaissance/bomber aircraft that had not yet been supplied to Moscow's Warsaw Pact allies were turned over to the Libyans, although virtually no Libyans were ready to fly them. Since April 1979, Soviet pilots have used these Libyan Air Force Tu-22s to stage reconnaissance flights over NATO facilities and naval deployments in the Mediterranean theatre.

Libya has spent an estimated \$10 billion<sup>11</sup> to \$16 billion<sup>12</sup> on Soviet armaments since 1970. Libyan oil revenues, primarily from Western oil-importing countries, became a major source of hard currency for the Soviets, who sorely needed cash to finance food and technology imports from the West without hindering their ongoing military expansion. At the height of Qaddafi's military buildup, two Soviet ships unloaded weapons in Tripoli harbor each day. The Libyans were the first in the Middle East to acquire Soviet T-72 tanks and MiG-25 aircraft, in addition to the Tu-22s.<sup>13</sup>

In 1981 Moscow provided Libya with one dozen mobile SS-12 Scaleboard surface-to-surface missiles with a range of over 650 miles.<sup>14</sup> These missiles, capable of striking NATO bases in Crete, Cyprus, and Sicily, are much more accurate than Libya's 70 shorter range SCUD-B surface-to-surface missiles. Both missile systems, like the Tu-22s, are capable of delivering nuclear warheads, a disturbing consideration in view of Qaddafi's fervent quest for an atomic weapon.

Libya's armed forces, 73,000 strong, are equipped with 2,900 tanks, giving them one of the highest ratios of tanks to soldiers of any army in the world. The Libyans have acquired sophisticated weapons far in excess of their capacity to absorb, operate, or even maintain them. Despite the fact that 1,400 tanks and 450 aircraft are kept in storage,<sup>15</sup> Libya currently is negotiating to buy another \$5 billion to \$10 billion of Soviet arms.<sup>16</sup> Libya's reserve equipment constitutes a potent stockpile of pre-positioned war

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<sup>10</sup> Youssef Bodansky, "Soviet Military Presence in Libya," Armed Forces Journal International, November 1980, p. 89.

<sup>11</sup> D. L. Price, "Soviet-Libyan Treaty in Prospect," Soviet Analyst, April 20, 1983, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Gutteridge, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Efraim Karsh, "Soviet Arms Transfers to the Middle East in the 1970s," Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, December 1983, p. 19.

<sup>14</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1981-1982 (London, 1981), p. 54.

<sup>15</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1983-1984 (London, 1983), p. 59.

<sup>16</sup> The Washington Post, April 29, 1984, p. A17.

supplies that could be used by a Soviet expeditionary force against either NATO or Israel.<sup>17</sup>

#### SOVIET-LIBYAN STRATEGIC COOPERATION

Although Qaddafi's populist Islamic messianism and radical Arab nationalism do not mesh with Soviet communism, there is a strong coincidence of geopolitical interests. Both countries strive to reduce Western influence in the Middle East, but Tripoli does so to build a pan-Arab empire while Moscow strives to substitute its own influence for that of the West. Moscow has been hesitant to identify itself fully with the maverick Libyan leader, aware that it could not control his unpredictable behavior. Because Qaddafi has become a "goat to his neighbors," a high-profile embrace would only hurt Soviet policy in Africa.<sup>18</sup> Moscow has been willing, however, to swallow the embarrassment of Qaddafi's erratic adventures in return for considerable strategic benefits.

Since the mid-1970s the Soviet Union has been constructing an extensive military infrastructure in Libya, much of which is "intended first and foremost for Soviet use."<sup>19</sup> Airbases have been modernized to meet Soviet specifications, and military docking facilities capable of servicing Soviet naval vessels were installed in Libyan ports. Between 1974 and 1980, Moscow invested an estimated \$5 billion in Libyan military facilities over and beyond arms sales.<sup>20</sup> Although Libya has refused to permit the Soviets to establish their own bases on Libyan soil, it has permitted the Soviets to fly Libyan Tu-22 and MiG-25 aircraft from Libyan air bases to monitor NATO naval activity and military bases. Libya also gave the Soviets access to airfields and refueling facilities during Soviet airlifts to Angola and Mozambique.

There are an estimated 1,800<sup>21</sup> to 5,000<sup>22</sup> Soviet bloc military advisers serving with the Libyan army. The total number of Soviet bloc personnel in Libya was reported by a Libyan publication in January 1983 to be over 70,000, including 18,859 Romanians, 18,259 North Koreans, 10,592 Poles, 9,003 Bulgarians, 6,526

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<sup>17</sup> The New York Times, March 14, 1980, p. A11.

<sup>18</sup> Colin Legum, "Mapping Potential Conflicts," in Legum, Zartman, et al., Africa in the 1980s: A Continent in Crisis (New York: McGraw-Hill for Council on Foreign Relations, 1979), p. 64.

<sup>19</sup> Bodansky, op. cit., p. 89.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ellen Laipson, "Libya and the Soviet Union: Alliance at Arm's Length," in Walter Laqueur, ed., The Pattern of Soviet Conduct in the Third World, p. 143.

<sup>22</sup> Seymour Hersh, "The Qaddafi Connection," New York Times Magazine, June 14, 1981, p. 54.

Soviets, 5,652 East Germans, 5,407 Czechs, and 1,692 Hungarians.<sup>23</sup> In addition there are hundreds of Cuban, Palestinian, and Yugoslavian advisers and technicians. Qaddafi has sought to minimize his dependence on Soviet personnel by substituting other nationals wherever possible. As an insurance policy, the Libyans also maintain good relations with alternative sources of Soviet spare parts and maintenance know-how--Romania, Yugoslavia, India, and North Korea.<sup>24</sup> Libyan-North Korean relations have warmed to the point that the North Koreans may obtain access to the huge Libyan arms cache in return for their extensive technical assistance programs.<sup>25</sup>

East German intelligence personnel dominate Libyan intelligence agencies and closely supervise Qaddafi's bodyguards.<sup>26</sup> Libyan security personnel are trained in Dresden, East Germany,<sup>27</sup> and Qaddafi enjoys access to Soviet and East German intelligence networks on matters concerning internal dissidents and foreign enemies. Libyan students study at Patrice Lumumba Friendship University and at various KGB camps in the Soviet Union.<sup>28</sup>

The Soviets are thus well positioned not only to protect Qaddafi's hold on power, but also to cultivate the next generation of Libyan leaders and possibly set up one of their own protégés as Qaddafi's successor. If Qaddafi should disappoint the Soviets by trying to duplicate Anwar Sadat's 1972 expulsion of Soviet personnel from Egypt, he may find himself overthrown by a pro-Soviet military coup similar to the coups that displaced President Rubai Ali of South Yemen in 1979 and Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud of Afghanistan in 1978.

In recent years, however, Qaddafi has dropped several hints that he desires to strengthen ties with Moscow. In April 1981 he visited Moscow in pursuit of new Soviet arms, technical assistance for the Libyan oil industry, nuclear technology, and a public Soviet commitment to support Libya in the event of confrontation with an adversary. In July 1981 two Soviet frigates visited the naval base at Tripoli, the first publicized Soviet navy port visit since the 1969 coup. During the summer a Soviet TU-26 Backfire-B bomber landed at the newly expanded Libyan airbase at Kurfa near the Egyptian border, prompting Egyptian Defense Minister Abu-Ghazala to wonder: "Why did the Libyans build a

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<sup>23</sup> Center for International Security, "The Soviet-Libyan Connection: A De Facto Strategic Alliance," February 1984, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Dennis Chaplin, "Libya: Military Spearhead Against Sadat?" Military Review, November 1979, p. 45.

<sup>25</sup> See Avigdor Haselkorn, "Strategic Implications of the North Korean-Libyan Link," forthcoming.

<sup>26</sup> See Melvin Croan, "A New Afrika Korps?" Washington Quarterly, Winter 1980.

<sup>27</sup> Cooley, op. cit., p. 246.

<sup>28</sup> Bodansky, op. cit., p. 89.



base with five miles of runway unless they are going to be used by some other people? They don't have any such airplanes for the Libyans to fly."<sup>29</sup>

Following the August 1981 Gulf of Sirte incident in which two Libyan jet fighters were shot down after they attacked two U.S. Navy jets, and were themselves shot down, Qaddafi proclaimed in his annual speech commemorating his coup: "We desperately need to be in military alliance with any ally who will stand by us against the United States."<sup>30</sup> Rumors of an imminent Soviet-Libyan Friendship Treaty proved to be false, but the trend of Libyan foreign policy was clear. In August 1981 Libya signed a tripartite alliance with two of Moscow's closest allies in the Third World--Ethiopia and South Yemen. This treaty gives Moscow a means of protecting Qaddafi indirectly through its Ethiopian and South Yemeni junior partners. Libya provided its two new allies with \$850 million in aid, considerably lightening Moscow's imperial burden,<sup>31</sup> and significantly complicating the security planning of Sudan and Egypt, which found themselves outflanked by the new alignment.

Soviet-Libyan military cooperation crossed a new threshold in November 1982 when joint naval exercises were conducted. In January 1983 a Soviet submarine paid an unprecedented month-long port visit to Tobruk. In March 1984 Qaddafi offered to provide the Soviet Union with bases along Libya's 1,300-mile Mediterranean coast "to vex the United States."<sup>32</sup> Qaddafi also has sought to vex Washington by supporting Nicaragua's efforts to export revolution in Central America.<sup>33</sup>

Soviet-Libyan collaboration is today stronger than ever. While most observers dismissed Qaddafi's 1978 threat to join the Warsaw Pact as rhetoric, few would react so casually today. Libya would be a major Soviet strategic asset in the event of hostilities in Europe or the Middle East. Libyan airbases could be used for the recovery and turnaround of Soviet aircraft launched from Warsaw Pact air bases. Libyan fuel supplies, ordnance, maintenance equipment, and storage facilities would ease the Soviets' logistical burden. Soviet aircraft staging from Libyan air bases could strike at NATO bases throughout the Mediterranean and attack Greece and Turkey from the rear. Long-range Backfire bombers operating from Libya could strike at Western naval forces in the Atlantic Ocean as well as targets in Western

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<sup>29</sup> Armed Forces Journal International, September 1981, p. 50.

<sup>30</sup> FBIS, Middle East and Africa, September 2, 1981, p. Q12.

<sup>31</sup> Oye Ogunbadejo, "Qaddafi's North African Design," International Security, Summer 1983, p. 168.

<sup>32</sup> The Washington Post, April 29, 1984, p. A17.

<sup>33</sup> Manchester Guardian, April 23, 1983. See also: Ray Cline and Yonah Alexander, Terrorism: The Soviet Connection (New York: Crane, Russak & Company, 1984), p. 70.

Europe. Libya clearly would be a well-placed platform for the projection of Soviet airpower that would be invaluable to Moscow in many scenarios.

#### U.S. POLICY TOWARDS LIBYA

Once he took power, Qaddafi ruled with considerable, albeit unofficial, American support. Qaddafi's Islamic credentials and anti-communist rhetoric led Washington to give him the benefit of the doubt. The Central Intelligence Agency reportedly provided Qaddafi with information to thwart at least two coup attempts against his rule in the early 1970s.<sup>34</sup> The honeymoon ended, however, in 1974 as Egyptian-American links solidified and rising oil prices gave Qaddafi a stronger financial base to support terrorism and the export of his radical brand of revolutionary ideology.

The Reagan Administration discarded the conventional wisdom that Qaddafi should be ignored until he had moderated his predatory foreign policy. As a center of international terrorism, Libya received considerable U.S. attention during Reagan's early focus on anti-terrorism. Washington launched a campaign to drive home the costs of outlaw behavior by isolating Libya diplomatically and disrupting its trade relationships. Western states, particularly NATO allies, were requested to ban state visits by Qaddafi. In May 1981 the Libyan "People's Bureau" in Washington was ordered shut by the State Department after Libyan "diplomats" were found to be terrorizing Libyan dissidents living in the United States. In August, the U.S. Navy conducted exercises in international waters in the Gulf of Sirte, as it has done since 1976, to demonstrate Western nonrecognition of Qaddafi's unilateral extension of Libyan territorial waters to include most of the Gulf. A Libyan air attack raised tensions a notch higher.

After reports that Qaddafi had dispatched Libyan assassination squads to kill President Reagan and high officials in his Administration, the President issued an Executive Order in December 1981 that banned U.S. passport holders from entering Libya and triggered an exodus of American personnel from Libya. In March 1982 Washington tightened the screws further by prohibiting the import of Libyan crude oil and the export of U.S. oil technology to Libya. Because of the world oil glut, these economic sanctions played an important role in reducing Libyan oil revenues, thereby limiting Qaddafi's capacity to make mischief. G. Henry Schuler, a leading analyst of Libyan oil matters, estimates that roughly 40 percent of Libya's oil exports had been purchased by the United States for some \$7 billion per year.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> The New York Times, April 30, 1984; see also Cooley, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-86.  
<sup>35</sup> G. Henry Schuler, "A Policy for Dealing with Libya," *SAIS Review*, Winter 1981-1982, pp. 207-210.

Washington clearly had a moral obligation and a strategic interest in ending its financial underwriting of Qaddafi's military buildup and terrorist activities.

Stringent controls now require that U.S. exports to Libya, except medicine and agricultural goods, receive licenses from the Commerce Department. Licenses are denied for high technology items with military applications, oil and gas equipment, civilian aircraft, and heavy road vehicles. As a result, U.S. exports to Libya declined from \$800 million in 1981 to \$200 million in 1983 (several European countries have picked up the slack.) Washington has attempted to widen the economic quarantine of Libya but has been rebuffed by Europeans who perceive Libya as more of an economic opportunity than a dangerous threat. Europeans argue that to protect European economic interests and to forestall Tripoli from developing closer ties to Moscow, the West should bend over backwards to keep lines of communications open with Libya. This argument ignores the fact that the Soviet-Libyan relationship "expanded steadily even when the United States has attempted to reach a modus vivendi with Libya."<sup>36</sup>

#### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In private discussions with U.S. government officials, French officials have justified continued economic relations with Libya on the grounds that Washington is unwilling to apply export controls to European subsidiaries of American corporations.<sup>37</sup> Washington should close this loophole to deprive the Europeans of easy rationales for failing to stand up to the Libyans. Enhanced international economic pressures on Libya not only would reduce Qaddafi's ability to finance his adventures, but would threaten his claim to Libyan leadership and contribute to the incentives the Libyan people have to overthrow him. Growing numbers of Libyan intellectuals, students, middle-class businessmen, and government bureaucrats have become disenchanted with Qaddafi's economic policies, his militarization of society, and his revolutionary gibberish. International economic pressures would undermine Qaddafi's capacity to buy off dissent, leaving him increasingly dependent on the armed forces, which are known to be disillusioned by his costly intervention in Chad.

The United States should publicize the economic and human costs of Qaddafi's foreign policy ventures.<sup>38</sup> It should make the Libyan people more fully aware of the tremendous waste of economic wealth and human lives that is part and parcel of Qaddafi's new Libya. Washington should search out contacts with Libyan dissident groups and the Libyan army to inform them that American

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Middle East Policy Survey, May 4, 1984, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup> Libya's 1980-1981 intervention in Chad is estimated to have cost it \$2-\$7 billion and 1,000 dead and wounded. Newsweek, November 30, 1981, p. 52.

economic sanctions would be lifted once Qaddafi and his Soviet bloc backers had been driven from Libya.

The United States should provide Qaddafi's foreign opponents, particularly Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, and Chad, with stepped-up economic aid to preclude Libyan subversion and military aid to frustrate Libyan military activity. Washington's goal should be to contain Qaddafi's adventurism without precipitating a direct military confrontation, which would defuse internal Libyan opposition and enhance Qaddafi's lagging appeal in the Arab world by allowing him to pose as a David against the American Goliath.

#### CONCLUSION

Moscow has been trying to establish military bases in Libya since the 1945 Potsdam Conference. It now appears to be succeeding. Although Colonel Qaddafi has refrained thus far from formally granting the Soviets exclusive base rights, he has given them wide access to Libya's military infrastructure and allows Soviet pilots to fly Libyan aircraft on reconnaissance missions in the Mediterranean. Growing strategic cooperation, including joint naval maneuvers, has strengthened Western suspicions that Libya's huge stockpile of arms may serve as pre-positioned supplies for a future Soviet expeditionary force.

The West cannot afford "business as usual" with Colonel Qaddafi. Libyan adventurism should be contained by military and economic aid to North African states vulnerable to coercive Libyan pressures. Libya should be quarantined economically to reduce its mischief-making capabilities and to underscore to the Libyan people the real costs of Qaddafi's erratic aggressions. With Washington's encouragement, Qaddafi's downfall can be accelerated.

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