

Beginning of the end for Qaddafi

by an EIR Special Correspondent

In less than 20 minutes, five terrorist training and planning centers were destroyed by the combined deployment of 18 F-111 fighter-bombers and some 14 A-6 and A-7 bombers in the air over Libya. As reports accumulated, 48 to 72 hours after the raid, it became clear that the U.S. strikes on April 15 had scored direct hits where intended, and resulted in a minimum of civilian casualties. Beside the military airports at Benghazi and Tripoli, where some 20 MiG-23 fighters and TU-22 transport planes were destroyed, the most important targets were the terrorist training base of Sidi Billal near Tripoli's naval academy, the Jomhuriya military base near Benghazi, and Qaddafi's personal headquarters at the Al Aziziah barracks in Tripoli's suburbs.

One other crucial target was a building standing amid the diplomatic residential areas of Tripoli and the French, Japanese, and other embassies. According to a report in the April 17 London *Times*, the building was demolished. This report, later confirmed, put an end to earlier debate on the effectiveness of the American raid. Most observers, unaware that this building even existed, thought that the target of the American raid was the security-police headquarters several hundred meters away, and lost no time in denouncing the U.S. bombers' lack of accuracy and unnecessary civilian damage. In fact, this little known, nearly anonymous building in the diplomatic quarter, intelligence services had ascertained, harbored terrorists planning sessions by such figures as Abu Nidal, Ahmed Jibril of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and countless others. They may not have been inside at the time, but some of their essential communications infrastructures was destroyed. With that hit alone, the American raid was a success.

Though the *Coral Sea* and *America* aircraft carriers had their own bombers, reliance on their capabilities alone would have prevented simultaneous strikes in Tripoli and Benghazi and would have required two or perhaps three strikes at different times, endangering the American task force and the accuracy of its strikes. In the event, only one F-111 was actually lost, and it can be stated with certainty that most of the damage done to civilian buildings in Tripoli was caused by the uncontrolled firing of Libyan anti-aircraft missiles showering down on the city.

True, Muammar Qaddafi was not killed in the raid. There

was little chance that the paranoid ruler, always, and rightly, afraid of assassination, would be staying in his barracks. Even if he were, these are not ordinary buildings, but a Hitler-like underground bunker built to resist even nuclear attack. It does

his quarters to seek protection from the American attack elsewhere—but left his entire family behind. His adopted daughter died, his sons were wounded.

Qaddafi was taught a severe lesson, and as events unfolded, the need to go further until his final death or overthrow became more than obvious. As expected, Syria and Iran were quick to come to Libya's moral support. Libya's new foreign minister, Khalid al Mansour, who had arrived in Teheran on April 14, on April 15 organized a tripartite meeting with Iran's Ali Akhbar Velayati and Syria's Farouk Sharar. A communiqué, released after 24 hours of heated debate, called on all "Arab and Islamic nations to break diplomatic and economic relations with the United States [and] end any cooperation with American-connected military, economic, and political institutions." The resolution was taken to mean that Libya, Iran, and Syria will stop all their clandestine efforts to buy American weapons.

Where are Libya's friends?

Libya's call to Syria and Algeria to deploy their air forces against NATO targets in the southern Mediterranean, was a dead letter, of course, as was Tripoli's urgent request for a meeting of the "Defense Council of the Arab League." Arab League Secretary-General Chadli Klibi was then in Brussels, and took his time returning to Tunis. The Arab Defense Council, a gathering of defense and foreign ministers which has not met for more than six years, is not expected to convene now. Instead, an Arab League ambassadors' conference is expected to issue a meaningless denunciation of the United States.

Indeed, while most Arab and Third World news agencies carried obligatory denunciations of the United States, precise statements attributable to governments have been hard to come by. An example is Algeria, which, of course, denounced the raid, but also firmly denounced international terrorism—not the kind of statement Qaddafi was after. Egypt expressed "concern." Tunisia remained silent, as did most African countries with the exception of South Africa and Chad, which supported the raid. Chad proudly announced that it would "support anyone who is committed to getting rid of Qaddafi." Chad, at war with Libyan-backed rebels, was only expressing feelings quietly shared by many others. No tears were shed in Saudi Arabia, where an emergency cabinet meeting convened on April 16—and released no statement! Libya's friends could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Qaddafi's closest friends were the terrorists, and political organizations whose friendship can be measured by the amount

of financial support they receive from Libya. Abu Nidal, Ahmed Jibril, Abu Musa, and others of lesser stature as murderers, expressed outrage, and began worrying about their bank-accounts.

Most worried was Sadiq al Mahdi of Sudan, whose party, al Umma, had just won an election with heavy Libyan financing. He immediately organized several tens of thousands to demonstrate against the United States in Khartoum—demonstrations which served as a cover for deployment of a Libyan hit team to shoot an American diplomat there on April 16.

Demonstrations and rallies in several Arab and European capitals were sponsored by the organizations that attended the "World Guerrilla Conference" in Tripoli from March 14 to 18. Several acts of terrorism unfolded. Intelligence sources pointed out, however, that these were not the result of the April 15 raid, but the earlier, March 25 confrontation in the Gulf of Sidra. Qaddafi had given the green light to his teams to act at that time; two to three weeks later, they were operational.

Most of the more serious terrorist plans were aborted. Early in April, Libyan teams plotted the assassination of the U.S. ambassador in Paris; others plotted massacres at the U.S. consulates in Paris and Lyon. On April 16, two Tunisians were arrested in Istanbul. They were plotting the assassination of the U.S. consul. Bomb alerts spread in all capitals. U.S. military authorities in West Germany imposed a 1200 to 0500-hour curfew in military and civilian quarters in at least three cities.

Then, on April 17, three British hostages in Lebanon were executed by the "Arab Revolutionary Cells," the same organization which had plotted the April 2 bombing of a TWA flight with Mei Elias Mansour of the Syrian National Socialist Party. Under her maiden-name of Mei Shahadeh, she was a leading participant in the April 1985 Arab People's Congress in Libya.

Beginning of the end

The American raid was a turning point. A military rebellion erupted inside Libya. Clearly, Washington's intervention was welcome by at least part of the army and the population. As it happened, Qaddafi's East German guards stepped in in his defense. For the moment, he retains power, but the myth of his invulnerability is destroyed. The army, frequently the scapegoat for Qaddafi's domestic failures, now knows that it has friends abroad, whereas before, the U.S. State Department itself could be counted on to protect Qaddafi.

As sporadic fighting continued on April 17 and 18, it grew increasingly clear that this is the beginning of the end for the mad Libyan. This mutiny may be quelled, but there will be others—and in the end, no one associated the 17 years of Qaddafi's reign will survive. West of the Iron Curtain, that is very good news.

Weinberger reassures U.S. allies in Asia

by Linda de Hoyos

It is unlikely that U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's five-nation trip to Asia April 2-14 fully restored the United States in the eyes of its Asian allies as a reliable protector against the Soviet Union, but it did begin that process. In South Korea, Japan, the Philippines, and Thailand, Secretary Weinberger was unequivocal in his declarations of U.S. support for their governments and military. This assurance was all the more urgent, given the fact that, although most Asian allies went on record as supporting the Feb. 22-25 overthrow of Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos, privately the leadership of these nations sees the U.S.-orchestrated coup against Marcos as the United States stabbing a long-time friend in the back. The message coming out of Manila to U.S. allies in the region was: Don't count on the United States—don't trust the U.S.A.

Weinberger left for Asia shortly after the Pentagon's release of its *Soviet Military Power 1986*, which incorporated in its analysis significant features of the June 1985 *EIR Special Report*, "Global Showdown." Particularly in the Far East, the Soviets have engaged in a massive military buildup, concentrating on 1) the South China Sea area, adding the building of a base at Kompong Son in Kampuchea to the Soviet bases already established at Danang and Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam; 2) expansion of the Soviet fleet and a buildup of Soviet bases and forces on the four Kurile islands directly north of Japan; and 3) cultivation of North Korea, with its 800,000-man armed forces, as an asset in the region under Moscow hegemony.

Whereas the so-called Reagan doctrine—better called "Shultz doctrine"—ignores this strategic reality in its bid to foment a "wave of democracy"—Weinberger indicated that the security of American allies—not their ordering of internal affairs—was his priority.

Weinberger lost no time in setting the tone for his trip, with his first stop in South Korea. There is no comparison between the situation in the Philippines and that in the Republic of Korea, Weinberger said in his Seoul press conference April 3, in a direct counter to Korean opposition leaders who claim that the "spring winds" of the February revolution in the Philippines are "blowing northward to South Korea." The statement also challenges the State Department, which has encouraged the opposition in its drive for direct presiden-