



MANSOUR O. EL-KIKHIA

LIBYA'S QADDAFI

THE POLITICS OF CONTRADICTION

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Mansour O. El-Kikhia

University Press of Florida

Gainesville/Tallahassee/Tampa/Boca Raton

Pensacola/Orlando/Miami/Jacksonville

Athens Regional Library
2025 Baxter Street
Athens, GA 30606

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02 01 00 99 98 97 C 6 5 4 3 2
02 01 00 99 98 97 P 6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

El-Kikhia, Mansour O.
Libya's Qaddafi: the politics of contradiction / Mansour O. El-
Kikhia.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-8130-1488-3 (alk. paper).

ISBN 0-8130-1585-5 (pbk. alk. paper).

1. Libya—Politics and government—1969- . I. Title.

DT236.E45 1997

961.204'2—dc 20 96-44107

The University Press of Florida is the scholarly publishing agency
for the State University System of Florida, comprised of Florida
A & M University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida Interna-
tional University, Florida State University, University of Central
Florida, University of Florida, University of North Florida,
University of South Florida, and University of West Florida.

University Press of Florida
15 Northwest 15th Street
Gainesville, FL 32611

*To Mansour R. Kikhia
and
the People of Libya*

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CHRONOLOGY

- 1832 Forced abdication of Yusif Pasha al-Qaramanli
- 1842 Sanusi zawiya established in Cyrenaica
- 1856 Sanusiyya movement recognized by Ottoman Sultan
- 1902 Sanusiyya movement clashes with the French
Sayyed al-Mahdi al Sanusi dies; leadership of the movement passes
to Sayyed Ahmad al-Sharif
- 1911 Italy invades Libya
- 1915 Italian-Sanusi Agreement of Akramah
- 1918 The Tripoli Republic
- 1921 Italian-Sanusi Accord of Bu-Maryam
- 1922 Idris recognized as Amir of Cyrenaica
- 1923 Italian Fascists revoke all treaties with Amir Idris and reconquer
Tripolitania
Military resistance intensifies in Cyrenaica under the leadership of
Omar al-Mukhtar
- 1927 Majority of Cyrenaicans imprisoned by the Fascists in concentra
tion camps, thousands perish
- 1932 Omar al-Mukhtar captured and executed in the town of Sulug
- 1942 Churchill pledges to Omar Pasha Mansour that Cyrenaica will not
return to Italian control
Qaddafi is born in Sirt
- 1943 German and Italian forces evicted from Libya by Montgomery
British Military Administration
- 1949 United Nations assumes responsibility for Libya
Adrian Pelt appointed UN commissioner in Libya
United States and Libya sign promissory notes to establish a
military base in Tripolitania
- 1951 Libya gains independence under King Idris as a constitutional
monarchy
- 1953 Libya joins Arab League
- 1954 Mustafa Ben-Halim signs formal agreement with the United States
to establish Wheelus Air Base

- 1955 Libya joins the United Nations
- 1959 Oil discovered in Cyrenaica
- 1961 Libya emerges as a major oil exporter
- 1962 Libya joins OPEC
- 1964 Nasser condemns foreign bases in Libya
Popular demonstrations in Benghazi supporting Nasser
- 1968 Libyan oil workers strike in support of Nasser's speech condemning Libya's foreign air bases
- 1969 Muammar al-Qaddafi assumes power as a result of a military coup
Foreign banks are nationalized
Adam al-Hawaz and Musa Ahmad attempt a coup against Qaddafi
- 1970 Tripoli Charter (union among Libya, Sudan, and Egypt)
Qaddafi calls for the pooling of Arab resources against Israel
U.S. forces evacuated from Libya
Multimillion-dollar arms deal with France for Mirage III and V jet fighters
Nassar dies
- 1971 Federation of Arab Republics (Egypt, Syria, and Libya)
Tobruk-Benghazi Declaration (merger between Egypt and Libya)
Qaddafi demands more revenue from oil companies to begin the upward spiral of oil prices
- 1972 Union between Libya and Egypt
Agreement and trade cooperation with Mauritania
Trade and investment agreements with Chad
Soviets expelled from Egypt by Sadat
- 1973 Qaddafi publishes *The Green Book* and launches his cultural revolution
The formation of People's Committees
Failed unity march on Egypt
Foreign oil companies assets partially nationalized
Hassi Messaoud Accords (union between Algeria and Libya)
Ramadan (Yom Kippur) War
Relations between Qaddafi and Sadat sour
- 1974 Gerba Accord (union between Libya and Tunisia)
Libya-Soviet arms agreement
Economic, agricultural, and cultural cooperation with Chad
- 1975 The United States refuses to allow the export of ten C-130 military transport aircraft purchased by Libya
Members of the RCC Omar al-Mihaishi and Bashir al-Hawadi attempt a significant coup against Qaddafi, who purges the armed forces in its aftermath

- Libyan formally annexes the disputed Aozou Strip, which it has held since 1973
- 1976 First General People's Congress convenes, and the Arab Socialist Union is disbanded
University students in Benghazi demonstrate against the regime, which quells the riot through imprisonment, public hangings, and expulsion of students
- 1977 Qaddafi declared a *jamahiriyya*.
Revolutionary Command Council abolished
Cultural cooperation agreement with Angola
Economic and technical cooperation agreement with Ethiopia
Twenty-two officers implicated in the August 1975 coup attempt are executed
Egyptian-Libyan border war
Revolutionary Committees established
- 1978 Second volume of *The Green Book* published and implemented
Regime confiscates private property, ends ownership of rental property, and bans private enterprise
Libyan cabinet is replaced by General People's Committees
Libyan government issues new conscription law decreeing three to four years of military service for all Libyans between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five, and militia service to all males between thirty-five and fifty-six
- 1979 Qaddafi sends troops to Uganda in support of Idi Amin
Libyan embassies become "people's bureaus"
Qaddafi changes Libya's currency
Population is given only three days to deposit liquid assets in banks
Individual bank withdrawals limited to LD1000 annually
- 1980 Compulsory recruitment of civil servants into the military begins
Mutual defense accords with Chad
Private savings accounts are eliminated
Union of Libya and Syria is announced
Libyan militia units are deployed into Chad
- 1980 Campaign against anti-Qaddafi dissidents "stray dogs" worldwide begins
Libyan military and political cooperation accords (Aden Treaty) with Ethiopia and South Yemen.
- 1981 Reagan administration declares Libya a "Terrorist Supporting Nation"
Two Libyan aircraft are shot down over the Gulf of Sidra by U.S. aircraft

- Tripoli Communiqué (Chad/Libya union)
- Beginning of what Libyans termed as "Dark Decade" of Qaddafi's rule
- 1983 Second major Libyan invasion of Chad begins
- 1984 Libyan dissidents abroad targeted by Qaddafi's hired assassins
- Shortages in the supplies of food and consumer commodities reach critical stage
- Regime orders all Libyan exiles to return to Libya or face the death penalty
- British policewoman is killed by gunfire from Libyan people's bureau in London during anti-Qaddafi demonstration by Libyan exiles
- Britain severs diplomatic relations with Libya
- Members of the Libyan National Salvation Front attack Azazia Barracks
- Oujda Treaty (union between Libya and Morocco)
- Libya is accused by Egypt of laying mines in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Suez
- Coup attempt at Misratah results in the arrest of hundreds of military personnel
- 1985 Thousands of Egyptian and Tunisian guest workers are expelled by Qaddafi
- Serious infighting in Qaddafi's inner circle
- Attempted coup by Qaddafi's cousin Hassan Ishkal
- 1986 Libya accused of supporting Palestinian attacks of Jewish targets at Rome and Vienna airports; the United States suspends economic relations with Libya
- The United States provokes Qaddafi in the Gulf of Sidra; in air attacks against Libyan patrol boats and missile base at Sirte, 200 Libyans perish
- U.S. air strikes against Tripoli and Benghazi; 120 Libyan civilians die
- Morocco abrogates treaty with Libya
- 1987 Qaddafi loses war in Chad; Libyan forces withdraw to Aozou Strip
- 1988 Secret unity agreement negotiated by Libya and Algeria
- Libya joins the Magharibi Economic Union
- 1992 The United Nations imposes air-travel and arms-sales embargoes on Libya
- 1995 Qaddafi threatens to withdraw from the United Nations, and revoke Libya's adherence to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty
- Coup attempt by military in Misuratah fails; armed forces purged
- Serious clashes between security forces and armed Islamists in Benghazi

PREFACE

I started this project in 1981 with three goals in mind. The first goal was to write a manuscript that compares pre- and postrevolutionary Libya. The second was to examine the political, economic, and social systems in each of these periods. I felt that my Libyan origin and my ability to communicate with Libyans on Libyan terms would give me a distinct advantage in understanding their concerns and feelings and hence would ultimately give the manuscript a Libyan point of view.

Before I enunciate my third goal, let me set the parameters of this work. Serious scholars of Libyan politics will find much in this book that they already know and much that they do not. It must be understood, however, that they are not the target audience. The primary target audience are their students, nonspecialist academics, journalists, government officials, and most important of all lay people with an interest in Libya or others who need to learn about the country from a single source. All readers will find this book, in the words of reviewers, the "fullest accounting of Libyan politics available in any language." It is "well balanced," "avoids polemics," "elegantly written" "intelligently argued," and until we are able to conduct field research in Libya, is "probably the best that we will have for a while."

Unfortunately, the little that is published by Libyans on Libya tends to fall into three categories: historical works and pro-Qaddafi and anti-Qaddafi literature. Writers in the first category, many of whom still live and work in Libya fearing reprisals, understandably limit their writing to either Libya's colonial period or nonpolitical issues. The writers in the second category concentrate much of their focus on the virtues of General Qaddafi's Third International Theory and the merits of its applicability. The works of writers in the third category can be found in the numerous Libyan opposition journals and books published in England and the United States. My purpose is neither to condemn nor to condone but only to provide a true political, economic, and social portrait of a country that is sorely misunderstood. In the process I have utilized the information provided by authors in these three categories to distill what I believe to be the driving forces behind the difficult process of Libyan development.

My third goal was to provide an informative and controversial analysis to students of Libyan and Middle Eastern politics. However, while writing the manuscript, I felt obliged to take into consideration the large potential non-academic audience. My concern with this group resulted from an incident in 1980 while on a visit with a cousin to Frankfurt, Germany, along with later similar incidents in the United States.

Upon handing our Libyan passports to the immigration officer in Frankfurt airport, we were told to wait until all the other passengers had been processed. An hour later the officer, with our passports in his hand, beckoned us to his counter. He looked up at us and casually asked, "Are you terrorists?" I was taken aback and insulted by the question, but I remained calm. My cousin on the other hand in his usual dry wit, which hid his anger, asked the burly German, "Are you a Nazi?" Not expecting that response, he apologized and said he had been merely joking. My response to him as we were leaving his counter after retrieving my passport was "So were we."

The vilification of Libya by the Western media began in 1980 with the Reagan administration. Initially, the target of the attacks was General Qaddafi, who was described by *Newsweek* as "the most dangerous man in the world." However, soon after, the assault encompassed all Libyans, who found themselves vilified in print and in film. My sincere hope is that the present study will rectify some of these negative images and demonstrate to readers that Libyans are neither better nor worse than any other people. It is true that General Qaddafi's regime has on many occasions operated in the international arena in a manner that is beyond the realm of the rational. It must also be understood that in many instances his policies in Libya have also been beyond that realm. In that regard, Libyans are the victims and not the culprits. General Qaddafi's regime has imposed a heavy toll on Libya during the past quarter of a century, but ultimately, living under this regime is a learning process, and the Libyan character will undoubtedly emerge from this idiosyncratic experiment stronger and saner than it has ever been before. All developed societies have passed through similar processes of development, and the lucky ones have learned to adapt, innovate, and not repeat past mistakes.

I would like to thank first the University of Texas at San Antonio for its support. I also thank the anonymous reviewers who took the time to read and comment on this manuscript; your kind words were inspiring and your suggestions were appreciated. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the help and support of the many Libyans who were willing to discuss many issues with me and who took the time to comment on the manuscript and provide constructive criticism. Among them my appreciation goes to Nuri R. Kikhia, Saleh Judah, Munsif al-Buri, and Mohamad Makhoulf for all their contributions toward making this work a better one. Mansur R. Kikhia, I have dedi-

cated this book to you, and I look forward to the day when you are released by your abductors. I wish I could name all the wonderful Libyans who volunteered their time to answer questions and verify much of what has been written in Western sources, but by using their names I am liable to jeopardize their lives. I would also like to thank all the Western scholars—particularly Lisa Anderson, Mary-Jane Deeb, and John Wright—who have found Libya interesting enough to write about. Your work is deeply appreciated. I would also like to thank Ray Gay, Carlos Garza, Shirly Cotton, and Carrol Iverson at the FACTT Center at the University of Texas, San Antonio. Special recognition must also go to Leon Waddy for the his innovative designs. My special appreciation goes to Clement Henry Moore at the University of Texas in Austin, and Henry Schuler at the Center for International and Strategic Studies in Washington for their insightful reviews of the manuscript, their positive and negative feedback as well as suggestions. Their knowledge of Libya and North Africa was of great support to me in bringing this work to fruition. My sincere thanks also must go to my mentors Peter Merkl, Haru Fukui, and the late Wolfram Hanrieder at the University of California in Santa Barbara. Their support over the past fifteen years will always be cherished. My thanks and love go to my wife, Nageia, and my sons, Omar and Taz, and my special thanks to my daughter, Logeain, for the long hours of typing she has done for me all these years. Their patience and understanding made this difficult task a bit easier. Finally, my deep appreciation must go to Dr. Dwight F. Henderson, Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Texas at san Antonio, for the financial and moral support that made this work possible.

One

The Politics of Contradiction

Few regimes in the Third World today can claim to be as enduring as that of General Muammar al-Qaddafi of Libya.¹ Since appropriating power a quarter of a century ago, he has survived a multitude of economic, political, and military assaults on the domestic as well as the regional and international fronts. He plunged Libya, with its small peaceful population and limited resources, into regional armed conflicts with most of its neighbors at enormous cost to population and purse. He succeeded in transforming his country into an international pariah, accused, justly or unjustly, of fomenting mischief and engaging in or supporting international terrorism. In the Western media during the past decade, the term "Libyan" has become synonymous with "terrorist," and Qaddafi has emerged as the "ogre" against whom all other dictators in the world are measured. This reputation has negatively impacted Libya's international standing and has ultimately resulted in a weakening of its international sovereignty. This occurred first through direct military attacks such as those by U.S. armed forces on the cities of Benghazi and Tripoli in 1986, in which over two hundred Libyans lost their lives, and second, through a variety of embargoes, most recently the UN embargo of April 15, 1992. This Anglo-American-sponsored embargo was imposed on Libya in retaliation for the downing over Scotland of an American civilian aircraft by a terrorist bomb which the regime of General Qaddafi was accused of orchestrating.

Qaddafi might indeed be a dictator and a very smart one, at that. During his tenure thus far, he has proven himself to be a quick learner and a survivor. He practices a peculiar form of *Realpolitik* that is based on his experiences, one that is more Machiavellian than Bismarckian in orientation. Moreover he has proven himself to be a master of the art of manipulation. Central to his complex personality is his unpredictability, which at times, when combined with his ability to manipulate, provides for a dangerous domestic and international Libyan policy. Qaddafi's "Third International Theory," which embodies his views on the world and society, is a homespun ideology, heavily influenced by his personality. Like many other Third World leaders, he has attempted to

distance himself from Eastern and Western ideologies by adopting a mixture of developmental concepts from Nasserism and classical Marxism, along with Islamic socialism.² This ideology, the official and unofficial framework for the country's development and politics for the past two decades, can be categorized as a local idiosyncratic ideology. Developed by General Qaddafi in the early 1970s, it was then incorporated into his highly promoted Third International Theory.

LOCAL IDEOLOGIES AND THEIR VARIANTS

Local idiosyncratic ideologies are prevalent in societies that are in essence traditional but have been subjected to modern military institutions and technology. In many cases, slow societal changes have enabled the military, usually the first group to experience rapid change, to seize and maintain power.³ Local idiosyncratic ideologies are also those that are formulated by individual rulers upon attaining power. W. Howard Wriggins in *The Ruler's Imperative* analyzes the means by which rulers of developing countries in Asia and Africa attempt to maintain power.⁴ The most popular means have been by rulers promoting an ideology.⁵

Idiosyncratic ideologies are characteristic of Third World regimes that have attained power by displacing regimes of the independence period. Newly emerging, less-developed countries that were granted independence, or attained it nonviolently, customarily adopted the political systems of their former colonial masters. However, very few of the independence era regimes still exist. The majority have passed through more than one change since independence. The few regimes surviving more than two decades after independence owe much of their stability and survival to coherent ideologies that were used as guiding frameworks for political and economic development. This is not to imply that ideology kept the survivors in power but that it kept them in power longer. Through ideology, leaders can project their personalities, build an organization, develop the economy, and expand or contract political participation.

By definition no two idiosyncratic ideologies are the same. Certain features are common to all, but because of the local nature of these ideologies not only are their objectives different, but their working environments are different as well.⁶ There are a variety of political, sociological, cultural and historical explanations for the lack of any meaningful constitutions in LDCs. Most interesting perhaps are those that analyze the role of the leader. A large number of leaders in the Third World have thus far refused to be limited by any constitutional framework to avoid being forced to share power with other institutions which they would have to create as part of the constitutional framework. The

trend has thus far been either a lack of constitutions or constitutions that endow the executive with too much power. Hence with very few exceptions most of these ideologies tend to be vague and quite general. An excellent illustration of the elusiveness and vagueness of these ideologies is Tanzania's Julius Nyerere's concept of *Ujamaa*: "*Ujamaa* or 'familyhood' describes our socialism. It is opposed to capitalism, which seeks to build a happy society on the basis of the exploitation of man by man; and it is opposed to doctrinaire socialism which seeks to build its happy society on a philosophy of inevitable conflict between man and man."⁷

Having stated his opposition to both Western and Eastern ideologies and by extension, their modes of development, he articulated his own conception of Tanzania's future development process: "we in Africa have no more need of being 'converted' to socialism than we have of being 'taught' democracy. Both are rooted in our own past, in the traditional society which produced us. Modern African Socialism can draw from its traditional heritage the recognition of society as an extension of the basic family unit. But it can no longer confine the idea of the social family within the limits of the tribe, nor, indeed, of the nation. For no true African Socialist can look at a line drawn on a map and say 'the people on this side of the line are my brothers, but those who happen to live on the other side of it can have no claim on me'; every individual on this continent is his brother."⁸

Like Nyerere, other leaders in the developing world such as Gamal Abdul-Nasser of Egypt, Patrice Lumumba of the Congo (now Zaire), and Mao Tse-tung of China emphasized the need for unique ideologies to guide their societies. Less ambitious homemade ideologies were those advocated by Ne Win and U Nu, as well as the present military junta, of Myanmar (previously Burma).⁹ The Burmese revolution, in spite of all its innovations, remains, according to a number of Asian scholars, a "simple revolution" with an ideology limited to changing only a limited number of values.¹⁰ In other countries around the globe where the process of modernization was slow, the armed forces became the primary means of change. It is thus no surprise that the majority of states ruled by the military adopted some type of local idiosyncratic ideology to guide their development.¹¹

Due to their idiosyncratic nature, these ideologies appear to be temporary since they die with the death of their creators. Nasserism died with Nasser in 1970, African socialism with Lumumba in 1961, and Chinese Communism with Mao in 1976. This is particularly true in cases where no permanent, popular political institutions have been created. This is in part due to the experimental nature of such ideologies. Formulators of these ideologies attempt to forge new societies from the ones they inherit without discarding much of the

old. Torn between the need for renovation and the need for continuity, the majority of the Third World leaders compromise by creating new frameworks for old concepts.

A local ideology can be very successful as a political belief system. It can provide a structure for understanding and interpreting the world. It can furthermore provide a prescription for individual or collective actions, in addition to being a constructive tool in conflict management. Like other types of ideologies, a local ideology shapes people's lives by encouraging a sense of commitment to actions and social mobilization.

Many of these ideologies have gone the way of their formulators. Most, however, have left deep imprints, in some cases very negative ones, such as those left by Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge in Kampuchea, a worst-case scenario, or present-day Singapore where human engineering and development is quite successful, in spite of the fact that the regime is quite idiosyncratic and in some instances dictatorial. The Qaddafi experiment lies somewhere between these extremes, although closer to the latter than the former.

General Qaddafi overthrew a traditional regime by utilizing a local traditional ideology. Societies such as Libya are sometimes called "neotraditional" or "neopatrimonial" because they have survived into the modern era with their culture and traditional social structures largely unchanged.¹² In most, civilian groups have established control through political machines operating through the traditional, tribal, and village structures in rural areas. The elites maintain cohesion through a system of patronage, spoils, and privileges distributed among urban interest groups and tribal elites.

In states where ideology is molded by traditions, the ruler is usually endowed with a certain degree of legitimacy even though that ruler may appear, by Western standards, despotic. The cases of Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Swaziland, Malawi, and Iran illustrate this point. All these societies are despotic, nonmilitary, and devoid of any meaningful political organizations that serve others besides the ruling elite. Control in these societies is maintained more through socially ingrained traditional and religious laws than by modern secular laws. Modern instruments of coercion, such as the police, army, and secret services exist, but are used only if the ruling authority feels that the religious and cultural sources of its power are threatened.

Neotraditional political systems have been on the decline as a direct result of modernization and, to a lesser degree, Western and Eastern ideological bombardment. The pressures exerted on local beliefs and traditions by exposure to education, mass media, technology, and influences from other parts of the globe, have eroded the very foundations of neotraditional ideologies.¹³ Local traditional ideologies tend to be based on prevailing cultural and societal norms.

However, in addition to these traditions and culture, local idiosyncratic ideologies manifest, the character traits and identities of the leaders implementing them.

THE POLITICS OF CONTRADICTION

Analysis of Qaddafi's ideology reveals an innovative, eclectic mixture of ideas cemented together by the colonel's complex personality. Much of his ideology betrays an idealistic simplicity, often lacking an understanding of the forces that shape human development and, in some instances, human relations. For the past quarter of a century Qaddafi has been able to keep Libyan society on the edge of uncertainty. Most political and economic systems in the world today, even the most traditional and despotic, are quite clear about what they demand of their individual societies, and therefore many of these societies are able to adjust to survive. The Libyan political system offers no such relief for Libyan society because in 1974 General Qaddafi implemented a political, economic and cultural system to keep that society in a state of constant flux and permutation. The rules of the game in Libya continually change. Much like a shapeless, liquid-filled balloon that is constantly agitated just enough to keep the liquid in motion but is never allowed to develop enough kinetic energy to breach the outer wall, Libya's political and economic system is a system of controlled chaos.¹⁴ The genius of General Qaddafi is his ability to maintain and manipulate this chaos while simultaneously remaining inside it. He creates the chaos because the survival of his regime hinges on continued turbulence. Continuous rapid change ensures instability.

One secret to his success in maintaining his regime and weathering so many domestic and international storms is the use of what will be referred to here as the "politics of contradiction," which is the basis for the creation and preservation of the chaos. On the face of it, Libya is much like other developing societies undergoing political and social experimentation. The formal institutions, while appearing to be democratic and novel, are neither. What Qaddafi borrowed from the ideas of thinkers from Plato to Mao, including the Prophet Mohamad and Nasser of Egypt, are evident in these institutions. They include popularly elected representatives, as well as grass-roots organizations, ministries, army, police, bureaucracies, and trade unions. However, in Libya, there are no political parties, and all formal political activity must be conducted within a People's Congress, where all the representatives of the formal institutions meet to develop and approve policies.

Officially, the People's Congress is the most powerful political institution in the land, yet unofficially the Congress and all its members are subject to the whims and edicts of an informal structure of government. In Libya the

informal structure of government is made up of a revolutionary vanguard committed to the thoughts and writings of General Qaddafi as outlined in *The Green Book*.¹⁵ The Libyan leader constantly maintains that he has no control over the revolutionary committees and although he attempts to distance himself from them, he has rarely rejected their policies. Revolutionary committees have a great deal of latitude in interpreting and implementing the Libyan leader's thoughts. General Qaddafi's role is a combination of Plato's "philosopher king" and the U.S. Supreme Court. He does not usually interfere in the legislation or execution of policies, but does retain the power of veto over whether a policy conforms to his ideology or not. Revolutionary committees are free to interpret him and he has often adopted what he felt to be an interesting interpretation of his own ideology. However, he is sometimes astute enough to wait for a grass-roots response. If the response is positive, the decision becomes part of the ideology. If the response is too negative, he turns it over to the formal centers of power for discussion and evaluation. This approach usually gives him ample time to evaluate and perhaps modify the issue. If, however, he likes the policy, he can get the People's Congress to approve it and thus divert popular anger from himself to the larger body. On the other hand, if popular opposition is too strong and the issue is not significant to the General, he permits the People's Congress to reject it and hence demonstrate the democratic nature and flexibility of the system.

One such issue came up during the early 1980s when a revolutionary committee suggested the abolition of elementary schools and the undertaking of elementary education in the homes as a means of saving funds. General Qaddafi found the idea to be fascinatingly novel. He talked about home education, held seminars to discuss its advantages, even tried to get the People's Congress to approve the proposal. He stopped the process short and postponed the debate over home education only after vigorous opposition from Libyan females. The only area that has withstood General Qaddafi's constant assault has been the traditional domain of the Libyan female: the home. Compared to her male counterpart the Libyan female is more productive. Women work in and outside the home, run the informal economy, and generate and possess more wealth than men in spite of the fact that a disproportionate number are illiterate and uneducated. Many saw the home education debate as an attempt by the state to weaken their position.¹⁶

Interestingly, even the informal structure of power is not immune from constant agitation and chaos. General Qaddafi is constantly purging it and changing its composition. The informal structure of power, when it first emerged, was composed of a collection of People's Committees, only to be purged and replaced by the Revolutionary Committees, which were in turn replaced by the Ideological Committees. The latest in the series have been the

Cleansing Committees established on September 1, 1994. The primary aim of these purges was to weed out "counter-revolutionaries" and to prevent any committee member from accumulating too much wealth and following. A second aim is a bit more complicated and reflects the growth and changes in General Qaddafi's own personality. These committees are supposed to represent a true reflection of General Qaddafi and therefore as the Libyan leader changes the committees follow suit. More importantly, these purges demonstrate the traditional and, perhaps, the tribal aspect of Qaddafi's personality, along with the special attention that the regime gives to traditional blood ties.

Over the past two decades these purges have provided the colonel with excellent opportunities for placing relatives in positions of leadership at all levels of the informal structure, and have provided ample opportunity for these young men and women to achieve influence, education, and wealth, as well as privileges not available to other segments of the society. Thus, they owe their total allegiance to the colonel and, in the past few years, have emerged as the ears, eyes, and backbone of the regime. They emulate Qaddafi in dress, mannerism, and even, when possible, in hairstyle.

What is General Qaddafi's position within this setting? That question will be answered fully in chapter 5, but it suffices here to state that he has no official title or role; however, his status as the "philosopher," the "inspired," and the "inspirer" assures him of the leading role in any political, economic, or social activity or process anywhere in the country. Everyone in the formal and informal structures assumes a secondary role to him, including the nominal head of state of the formal structure, who owes his position to him.

Libyan history and its historical evolution will be the topic of chapter 2. In it I will attempt to demonstrate the diversity of Libyan society and the forces responsible for that diversity. I will also investigate the impact of history and colonialism on the Libyan character, as well as the links that bind the country's population to other peoples of the region.

In chapter 3, I will deal with the ideological forces prevalent in Libyan society during both the monarchy and the revolutionary periods. A comparison between the local ideology that existed during the monarchy and the local idiosyncratic ideology of the Qaddafi period will reveal the similarities and differences between both systems. I will also provide the reader with a comprehensive analysis of the centers of power, institutions, parties, and the common people in both periods, to demonstrate how the politics of contradiction were created and implemented by the revolutionary regime to achieve a society whose only blueprints are in the mind of General Qaddafi. I will also analyze the formal as well as the informal structures of power, each with its individual cluster of committees.

The economy and the process of development in Libya since independence

will be the topic of chapter 4. Particular care will be taken to illustrate the goals of development under both types of regimes and the successes and failures achieved within each ideological period.

The impact of the politics of contradictions on Libyan society during the regime of General Qaddafi will be the topic of chapter 5. I will explore the makeup of the informal sector of power and its relation to General Qaddafi with his own shifting *weltanschauung*. Most interesting is the fascinating way that Libyan society has had to adapt to survive and cope.

The goals of Libyan foreign policy will be the topic of chapter 6 and 7. I will look at Libya's foreign policy base, and examine the country's relations with the Arab world, as well as with Africa. The link between Qaddafi's ideology and Libya's foreign policy adventures will also be discussed. Particular emphasis will be placed on evaluating the changing relationship between General Qaddafi and the United States and identifying the causes for these changes. Of particular interest in this chapter are the sources of conflict between the Libyan leader and the United States that led to the severing of relations in 1980, the bombing of Libya in 1986, and the imposition of UN sanctions in 1992. The clash between Qaddafi's personality and ideology, and the American political tradition as a source of that conflict, will also be a topic for analysis.

In chapter 7, I will look at Egypt's influence over General Qaddafi and the role it has played in shaping Libyan foreign policy. Nasser, Sadat, Egypt's peace with Israel, and the impact they all had on Libya's relations with the United States and the former Soviet Union will be analyzed. Chapter 8 will conclude this work by summing up the politics of contradictions.

Two

Through the Eyes of History

Libya, like so many Third World countries, is still struggling with its past. Its new leaders are constantly emulating its old leaders, its new battles are a continuation of old wars, and its new achievements are the glorification of past achievements. In this chapter I focus on the various cultural, political, and economic shifts the country has experienced and the effect that these shifts continue to have on decisions pertaining to development.

EARLY DIVISION

Geography

The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya the Great¹ is the fourth largest country on the African continent, with an area approximately the size of Germany, France, and Holland combined. In addition to its 1,800-kilometer coastline on the Mediterranean, which earned it the name "the Gateway to Africa," Libya shares borders with six other African countries: Tunisia and Algeria to the west; Niger, Chad, and Sudan to the south; and Egypt to the east. However, in spite of its vastness Libya is a sparsely populated country with fewer than five million people, 57 percent of whom live in three main cities on the coast.² At present only about 10 percent of the country is habitable, with most of the people living in a strip about 100 kilometers wide, parallel to the coast, stretching from Tunisia to Egypt. An immense desert wasteland lies between that narrow coastal strip and the people of the interior, who are clustered around a number of large oases. Relief from this desert exists for the most part as two comparatively narrow stretches along the Mediterranean. One stretch, known as the Jabal al-Akhdar (Green Mountain), is located in the eastern highlands and plateau areas of northern Cyrenaica; the other is Jabal Nafusa, located in the Tripolitanian Hills in the western part of Libya. Centered on the coastline is the Gulf of Sidra, the southern shore of which is occupied by the Sirtica, the formidable desert about 400 kilometers wide.

These natural barriers of sea and land not only hampered the spread of the cultural and political influence of conquering civilizations that settled in the eastern, western, and southern parts of Libya, but also brought about the early delineation of the whole area into what has now become its three traditional regions: Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan. These regions, though officially ceasing to exist politically and administratively with the coming of the 1969 revolution, do still play quite an important role culturally and in some instances politically.

Greek Influence

Cyrenaica occupies the eastern half of Libya. Its name derives from Cyrene, the first Greek city in North Africa, which was founded in 631 B.C. By 431 B.C. four more Greek cities had been established, thereby bringing all of the coast of Cyrenaica under Greek influence. These five cities, which became republics and experimented with a variety of democratic constitutions, came to be known as the Pentapolis. The inhabitants of these cities resisted invaders from both east and west, but due to intense intercity rivalries they seldom cooperated in these efforts—a fact that resulted in their being easily overrun by the armies of Cambyses in 525 B.C.. Thus the Pentapolis existed as a province of the Persian Empire for the next two centuries. By 331 B.C. it had been returned to Greek rule under Alexander of Macedonia. It was incorporated with Egypt and given to Ptolemy eight years later, upon Alexander's death. Cyrenaica, however, remained under Greek rule, its kings being drawn from the Ptolemaic royal house, until 74 B.C., when Cyrenaica was joined to Crete as a Roman province.

Punic Influence

Tripolitania, on the other hand, was settled by the Phoenicians in 900 B.C. in an effort to extend Carthage's hegemony and influence over much of North Africa's west coast. The Punics established permanent settlements in the area and built three magnificent cities which came to be known as Tripolis or "three cities." Unlike the Greeks of Cyrenaica—who established very little contact with the Berbers, their southern neighbors—the Punics, possessing sound mercantile minds, established and cultivated excellent relations with the Berbers in the region by trading with them, teaching them, and learning from them. Thus, while the Berbers of the east were largely unaffected by the Greeks, those of the west were, within a very short period of time, totally Punicized in language and custom. Furthermore, Carthage, along with the Tripolis of the

west, was later able to draw support from these tribes in its fight against Rome during the Punic Wars of 264 and 218 B.C.³

The Punic Wars brought an end to Carthage and its former glory. The Romans destroyed what was left of the city in 146 B.C. to forestall any kind of Carthaginian revival. However, the influence of Punic (Semitic) civilization on North Africa remained deep-seated. The Berbers displayed a remarkable gift for cultural assimilation, readily synthesizing Punic cults into their folk religion. The Punic language was still spoken in the towns of Tripolitania and by the Berber farmers on the coastal countryside in the late Roman period.⁴

Until the seventh century A.D. when the Arabs moved in, Libya changed hands from the Romans to the Vandals and, finally, to the Byzantines. During the early Roman period, this country enjoyed a certain amount of prosperity due to the Pax Romana. Libya was even able to make a political contribution to the Roman Empire by providing it with a ruler, Septimus Severus (reigned A.D. 193–211). The “Grim African,” as he came to be called, made Leptis Magna, fifty miles west of present-day Tripoli, an important cultural and commercial center second only to Rome.⁵

By the fifth century A.D., Libya was divided as a result of religious controversy. The theological battle that erupted between Rome’s Latin patriarch and Alexandria’s Coptic patriarch divided the country, with Tripolitania following Rome and Cyrenaica following Alexandria. This theological controversy between Donatism and Monophysitism that divided Christianity into western and eastern churches became a vehicle for social revolt at a time of political deterioration and economic depression.⁶ During this period the Vandals were invited into the area by a rebellious Roman official (A.D. 429). It took the Vandals only a few years to establish themselves in North Africa, which they used as a springboard to conquer Sardinia and Corsica. They finally sacked Rome in A.D. 455.

Within a century the Vandals’ kingdom fell to the Byzantines, who in 533 reconquered North Africa for the Roman Empire. The Byzantines were never able to fully reoccupy North Africa, nor were they able to restore the old Roman political and social order that the Vandals disrupted. The region’s economic health, which had declined under the Vandals, further deteriorated under Byzantine rule: to meet military expenditures, heavy taxes were imposed on an already overtaxed economy. Thus, within a short period of time the towns and public services such as aqueducts and roads, which had once enabled the area to prosper, were abandoned and left to decay, eventually to be reclaimed by the desert. Byzantine rule in North Africa did nothing except prevent the ascendancy of the Berbers in the coastal regions.

ARAB CONQUEST

Byzantine rule prevailed in North Africa for approximately a century and a half. Finally in 642 the Byzantines had to bow to an army of conquerors that initially did not seek to colonize but to spread an idea: that of uniting the individual, the state, and society under the omnipotent Will of God. The idea was the new monotheistic religion of Islam, and the conquerors were the Arab Muslim armies under the leadership of Umr ibn-al-As.⁷

The mounted Arab forces that first crossed into Cyrenaica in 642 encountered no resistance until they reached Tripolitania, at the far western end of Libya. There was very little resistance from the Byzantines, who were easily dislodged from their coastal strongholds. The main resistance came from the Berber tribes of the interior, who were not subdued until 663. The Berbers, or the Garamentes as they were known, are assumed to be the ancestors of the present-day Tuaregs. The Garamentes settled in Fezzan long before 1000 B.C. and were able to establish a powerful kingdom that controlled the Saharan trade routes connecting the northern coast with southern Libya. The Carthaginians used them as “carriers of goods—gold and ivory purchased in exchange for salt—from the western Sudan to their depots on the Mediterranean.”⁸ The Romans at first fought the Garamentes, but eventually they made a lasting peace with them. Germa, their capital, was invaded in 633 by Uqba bin Nafi, who finally ended their very stiff resistance to Arab advancement in Tripolitania. As Ruth First writes in *Libya: the Elusive Revolution*, “in the mountains and desert, where they [the Berbers] guarded their independence for centuries, Islam was accepted, but Arabic and Arabs were not; and after the first Arab conquest, North Africa, including Libya, remained overwhelmingly Berber.”⁹

This situation was not to change until the Fatimid Caliphs, founded by the Mahdi, were able to arrange, as a result of a bit of political juggling, to move two tribes, the Bani Hilal and Bani Sulaim, from Arabia to upper Egypt and on into Libya and the rest of North Africa. The number of Hilalian families who moved into Libya has been estimated to be as high as 200,000.¹⁰ According to the Fatimids, this move was punishment inflicted on the Arabs for rebelling against Fatimid rule.¹¹ Yet whatever the reasons for the relocation of these tribes, the act in itself had very profound political, economic, and cultural consequences in North Africa.¹² The tribe of Bani Sulaim decided to settle in Libya, while the Hilalians continued their westward expansion until they reached Morocco on the Atlantic coast. This mass migration across the Maghrib—that is, throughout all of North Africa west of Libya—completed the Arabization of that region and thus led to the existence of common social organizations, values, and to some degree, a common language. However, nowhere in North

Africa has this process been so thorough as in Cyrenaica, whose inhabitants claim to be the only real Arabs in the Arab world.

Tripolitania, until the end of Ottoman rule, was more closely linked to the West than to the East. Its close proximity to Europe on the one hand and to the interior of Africa on the other, enabled it to play an important role as a commercial center in a thriving Mediterranean world on the verge of an industrial revolution.¹³

A NEST OF CORSAIRS

Until the Ottoman occupation of 1551, Libya remained relatively immune to events occurring in other parts of the Mediterranean. Hapsburg Spain occupied a number of seaports along the coast, including Tripoli in 1510. However, Spanish rule was short-lived. By 1524 Charles V had entrusted the territory to the Knights of St. John of Malta. It was reconquered fourteen years later by Khair al-Din, better known as Barbarossa or Red Beard.¹⁴

During the sixteenth century, Tripoli became a center of Corsairs.¹⁵ Along with the rest of the Barbary Coast, as it came to be known, the city proved to be useful to the Ottomans financially and strategically. Financially, Tripoli supplied the regency in Istanbul with a steady income derived from the Saharan trade routes on the one hand and from piracy and ransoms on the other. Strategically, the emergence of Tripoli as a considerable naval power suited Turkish naval strategy in the Mediterranean, which was aimed at severing Europe's trade routes. According to Robert Rinehart, French, Dutch, and English fleets bombarded Tripoli periodically in reprisal for the damage done to their shipping, but the great powers also found the Barbary pirates a useful check on their commercial competitors in the Italian maritime states.¹⁶ Thus, while the Mediterranean was the center of the world's commercial activity, the European states found it quite profitable to employ the services of the Barbary Coast pirates to do their dirty work.¹⁷

The Karamanlis

Tripoli's position and influence was further strengthened with the ascendancy of the Karamanlis to power in 1711. Ahmed Karamanli (reigned 1711–45), the founder of this dynasty, was as intelligent and resourceful as he was ruthless. He subdued hostile tribes and won their allegiance through a sophisticated system of reward and punishment.¹⁸ Thus, with his position consolidated in Tripolitania, he extended his influence to Cyrenaica and Fezzan. Internationally, he pursued an active foreign policy with the European powers, often pitting one against another to extract loans and tributes to replenish his coffers. Ahmed's grandson, Yusuf (reigned 1795–1832), pursued the same policies when

he ascended to power after a bloody civil war during which he personally claimed the lives of his own father and brother.

Like his grandfather, Yusuf was his own man. He pursued a foreign policy independent of the Porte (Istanbul), one based on what he perceived to be his own interest. Yusuf thus defied both the Porte and the British when he aided Napoleon during the Egyptian campaign of 1799. He intimidated not only the European powers but also the United States by attempting to coerce her into paying an annual tribute of \$250,000.¹⁹ The United States refused to pay that amount and offered a lump sum payment of \$18,000.²⁰ As a result of this perceived insult, the U.S. Consulate in Tripoli was sacked. The United States regarded this as a declaration of war and dispatched the U.S.S. *Philadelphia* to teach Yusuf a lesson he would long remember. However, the *Philadelphia* was captured and its crew taken prisoners. This incident was perceived as a direct blow to American prestige and prompted the United States to send a small detachment of Marines, who, with the aid of Yusuf's brother Ahmed, his 400 Arab horsemen and Greek gunners, were able to occupy the port of Derna in Cyrenaica. Derna was used as a bargaining chip in the negotiations that ensued. Yusuf agreed to release the *Philadelphia* crew and to sign a peace treaty with the United States; however, he demanded and received \$68,000 from the United States as a condition for sealing the agreement.²¹

With the defeat of Napoleon, the Western powers felt more confident in confronting the Barbary Coast and decided to end their payments of tributes. This act deprived the area of badly needed funds and had profoundly adverse consequences on the economy of Tripoli.²² The problem was exacerbated when Britain and France pressed for payment on behalf of Tripoli's creditors. Yusuf tried to raise the money through higher taxes levied on farmers and small merchants, but all he received in return was stiff resistance. His trying to tax an already overtaxed, unproductive, and parasitic economy led to a civil war which brought about the abdication of Yusuf in favor of his son, Ali, in 1832. Two years later, Turkish troops intervened when Ali asked Sultan Mohamad II to prevent a European takeover of Tripoli.

Turkish Rule

Turkish intervention did not change conditions in Libya. It can, however, be credited with preventing the French from occupying that country, as they had done Algeria a few years earlier, in 1830. In 1835 the Libyan economy was in shambles; only local economies, built on sharing and bartering among the tribes, were left. The Turks attempted to stimulate agriculture and increase agricultural production in order to give the province a sturdier tax base. However,

they failed in that aim, largely due to corruption, revolt, and repression—the three characteristics of nineteenth-century Ottoman rule. The Ottoman Turks attempted very little and accomplished even less because the region was a backwater province in a decaying empire that was known as the “sick man of Europe.”²³

Outside of Libya’s borders, the world was developing rapidly. Empires were being created, and new trade routes were established within the framework of the Pax Britannica. The Mediterranean itself became a backwater as this expansion of trade continued. Most of the trade was conducted between the Europeans and the United States. Using the Monroe Doctrine, the United States emulated the European powers and carved a sphere of influence for itself encompassing all of Latin America.

These changes in the patterns of trade affected Libya more than any other North African country. The sea-trade routes that the British and the French established with West Africa made the Western Trans-Saharan trade routes obsolete. The Eastern route, too, became obsolete a few years later with the opening of the Suez Canal. Those two routes had been Libya’s trade lifelines, and now both were severed. Algeria and Tunisia were French protectorates and could depend on the rooster to come to their aid if they needed it. Egypt had the Nile and, moreover, the British considered that country to be of such vital interest that they would undoubtedly have come to its rescue if necessary. However, Libya, with no natural resources, could only count on a weak Turkey to come to its aid, and even that possibility was questionable.

THE SANUSI MOVEMENT

The atmosphere of decay was congenial to the emergence of a new force in Libya which took the form of a religious movement. This movement was led by its founder, Mohamad bin Ali al-Sanusi (1787–1859). Born in Oran, Algeria, the Grand Sanusi, as he came to be known to the people of Libya, traveled widely in the Arab world, became educated, and later taught at some of the outstanding Islamic centers of learning. His reputation as a scholar was surpassed only by his image as a holy man. His teachings found receptive ears and hearts among the Bedouins because of the relative austerity of their lives and their moderation in all things. He advocated neither Sufism nor orthodoxy but a combination of both that sat very well with the character of the Cyrenaican Bedouins. His teachings forbade fanaticism and the use of stimulants and the other such aids to contemplation often employed by dervishes. The Grand Sanusi stressed hard work in earning a livelihood rather than depending on alms. Receiving alms, he believed, would only lead to voluntary poverty, a condition that he discouraged. His first school was established in

the town of al-Beida in 1843 among the tribes of the Green Mountains. The small oasis of al-Jaghboub was chosen as the center of the movement because it lay at the intersection of the pilgrimage route to Mecca and the trade routes linking the Sudan with the Mediterranean.²⁴

To spread his influence throughout the region the Grand Sanusi instructed his followers to build rest houses for travelers along these routes. But before long, these structures evolved into something more than mere rest stops, for the Grand Sanusi wanted them to be, first and foremost, religious centers. Among its other functions, a lodge served as a school, caravansary, social and commercial center, court of law, and poorhouse; it introduced order in an area plagued by disorder and filled an important vacuum in the lives of the tribes. Soon a network of these institutions stretched from Arabia to the Ivory Coast. Usually situated in desolate places or on tribal borders, these lodges provided a place of high culture and safety in the desert wilderness. They were comprised of a mosque, guest rooms, apartments, quarters for the brothers (*Ikwan*, as members of the order were called) and servants, gardens, and a cemetery. The *Ikwan*, under the leadership of an elder, pious, and learned member of the order, aided the various tribes in the design and the construction of these lodges, which then became the property of the order, not of the individual sheiks managing them. The sheiks served as arbiters in tribal disputes and were in many instances recognized as the moral leaders of the community they served. Within half a century, through this intricate yet simple network, the Sanusi order was able to bind what was once an amorphous amalgam of parochial tribal interests into a powerful religious and commercial force. Thus the Sanussiyya movement was responsible for the reestablishment of very close ties between the inhabitants of southern Libya and those living in today's Chad, Niger, Cameroon, and Nigeria. These areas were once referred to as the "Libyan Hinterland" and are still inhabited by small Libyan minorities. Before his death in 1859, the Grand Sanusi expanded his school in al-Beida to facilitate growing Sanusi missionary activities.

The moving force behind this expansion was, oddly enough, not the Grand Sanusi, but his son, Mohamad al-Mahdi. Because of his forceful personality and outstanding organizational talents, al-Mahdi brought the order to the peak of its influence. By the time he died in 1902, he had established 146 lodges in Africa. More importantly, however, he had brought virtually all of the Bedouins of Cyrenaica under the order's influence. Under the aegis of the order, the tribes of Cyrenaica owed loyalty to a single leader, despite their otherwise extremely divisive rivalries and feuds. Thus a loose umbrella organization forged these otherwise disparate elements into a common unit bound by loyalty and sentiment. Al-Mahdi moved the order's headquarters 650 kilometers south from al-Jaghboub to the oasis of al-Kufra, which was closer to the Sudan

and the Sahel. From there he could better supervise missionary activities that were then being threatened by the French, who began to see him as a strong rival hostile to their colonial expansion into Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa.²⁵

The French had by 1902 pacified Algeria by quelling the religious revolt of Abdulkarim al-Katabi and were in no mood to face similar confrontation in their newly acquired territories in Equatorial Africa. The Sanusi movement's first confrontation with a European power resulted from France's attempts at closing the potentially threatening missionary lodges. Al-Mahdi died in 1902, the same year that a holy war was proclaimed to resist French inroads in the Sanusi sphere of influence.²⁶ The reins of power fell into the hands of al-Mahdi's cousin, Ahmed al-Sharif, who led the order as regent for al-Mahdi's son, Mohamad Idris al-Sanusi (later King Idris of Libya). Ahmed al-Sharif did not have the tactical ingenuity of his cousin, and, as a result, the war with the French was not a success. It brought about the destruction of many of the lodges in West Africa and the loss of Sanusi influence in that area. However, in Chad, Niger, and northern Nigeria, Sanusi influence remained strong—a fact due more to the strength of Islam as a religion than to the strength of the Sanusi order itself.

COLONIZATION

The First Italian-Sanusi War of 1912–16

By 1910, all of Africa, with the exception of Libya and Ethiopia, was firmly under the control of European powers as a result of the breakdown of the Pax Britannica and the beginning of the second phase of colonization. Unified only in 1860 and thus a late starter in the race for colonies, Italy was able, through a series of diplomatic agreements, to win the major powers' recognition of its sphere of influence in Libya. Italy had originally coveted Tunisia as a potential colony but had to comply with the establishment of a French protectorate in that country. Thus the marginal Turkish provinces in Libya, with whom Italy had already intensified its long-standing commercial interests, seemed to offer an obvious compensation for Italy's humiliating acquiescence to France.

The Treaty of Lausanne (1912) between Turkey and Italy enabled the former to disengage itself from Libya. The treaty, however, stunned both the Libyan population and Turkish soldiers in the country, because it was clearly ambiguous: ostensibly granting the Libyan provinces independence, it recognized Italian demands and sovereignty over the provinces.

Until 1912, Libya was officially a part of the Ottoman Empire. In reality, however, Turkish rule was nominal. In what had once been Turkish North Africa, Algeria and Tunisia came under French rule. Egypt, which had been a

semi-independent state under the heirs of Mohamad Ali, was by then under British occupation. Libya, the poorest of all, was the farthest away from Istanbul. As long as the Libyans paid their taxes, Turkish rule was always remote and indifferent. Just as severely cold temperatures in December and January proved to be Russia's best ally in confronting Napoleon's armies, and just as the English Channel has saved Britain on more than one occasion—most recently, from Hitler's armies—Libya's poverty and fierce tribal resistance were the two most important factors in its ability to resist invaders. Libya became independent after its second Arab invasion in the eleventh century and remained so until falling under Italian control in 1912. It did not take long for the Italians to encounter the same forces other invaders had encountered before them.

When the Italians invaded Libya in 1912, they arrived with the hope of establishing a colony similar to French Algeria and British India. They desired a colony where Italians could settle, one that would thus bring riches and prestige to Rome. It took thirty years of active and passive Libyan resistance to shatter that dream. No sooner had the Italians landed than armed resistance broke out in the two provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.

In Tripolitania, the most populous of the provinces, resistance was stiffer, and Italian troops were routed on more than one occasion. However, due to internal differences and the absence of an agreed-upon leadership among the Tripolitarians, the conquerors overcame their resistance and militarily subdued the province in a short period of time. With Tripolitania occupied, the struggle moved to the eastern and the southern parts of Libya, where resistance took on a very different form. "In Cyrenaica and the Fezzan," as First has explained, "despite heavy losses, the tribes had begun the guerrilla warfare so suited to their terrain and their traditions of turbulent independence. When parts of Cyrenaica were overrun, resistance flared in Fezzan led by Sanusi forces supported by Tuareg and Tebu from even the farthest corners of the desert. At one stage the Italians were forced to retreat into southern Algeria for French protection. It was apparent that as long as the Bedouins were at large and unsubdued, there was bound to be resistance that Tripolitania alone was unable to summon."²⁷

The resistance was dealt a setback when, under pressure from the Axis, Ahmed al-Sharif conducted a number of abortive assaults on Marsa Matrouh and other British outposts in Egypt's western desert. Ahmed al-Sharif realized the possible consequences of these attacks, but his desperate need for munitions, which only the Turks and Germans could provide, induced him to take the gamble. The Libyan setbacks in Marsa Matrouh forced Sayyid Ahmed to relinquish his leadership to his cousin Sayyid Mohamad Idris and flee to Turkey aboard a German submarine, and from there go to Saudi Arabia.²⁸ It

is, however, worth mentioning that Sayyid Ahmed al-Sharif was the last of the great leaders of the Sanussiyya movement who earned the respect and reverence of his people and the peoples of the Libyan Hinterland.

Sayyid Idris, despite being described by some as a "quietist" who was "temperamentally prone to vacillation and evasion" and known to have an "aversion for directness in thought or action," promptly entered into negotiations with the British to salvage the most from a bad situation.²⁹ In a stroke of good diplomacy the British engineered a truce in 1916 that ended the first Sanusi-Italian war. It was agreed, in First's words, that the "Sanusi were to recognize *de facto* Italian order in the towns, while the Italian administration recognized the *de facto* rule of the Sanusi order in the country."³⁰

The British found the agreement reasonable. They hoped that the Sanusi order, intact and in control of the countryside, would serve to check the spread of Italian and French influence in the area. According to British intelligence sources, there was a "difference of opinion in the Sanusi family on the war and other matters."³¹ This difference centered around the feasibility of attacking the British in Egypt. Sayyid Idris opposed his cousin, Sayyid Ahmed, on that point and was reputed to have even opposed the alliance with the Axis. Sayyid Idris realized that the real power in the Arab world lay with the British, and a loss to them would mean making peace with the Italians. Thus the truce of 1916 provided the British with an opportunity to increase their influence in an area vital to their economic security. This episode in Libya's history coincided with the emergence of a wave of Arab nationalism in Egypt and the Fertile Crescent. The popular *Wafd* movement was clamoring for independence and the evacuation of British troops from Egypt.

Italian holdings in Libya were reduced to a number of cities. Moreover, even the privilege of such diminished occupation cost the invaders a great deal financially. "Italy found herself paying regular subsidies to the army, police force, and Sanusi tribal sheiks and notables," First writes, "while even Sanusi officials, scribes, chiefs of irregular bands, informers, and political counselors were on the payroll. Idris was recognized as Amir, and had his own flag, along with a handsome monthly subsidy. In return the tribes were supposed to disband and disarm."³² This was something they were not willing to do.

The Second Italian-Sanusi War of 1923–31

Italian rule during the period of its first war with the Sanussiyya movement was so minimal that Tripolitania declared itself independent and established itself as *al-Jumhuriya al Tarabulsiya* (Tripolitanian Republic). Cyrenaica also boasted a parliament. Efforts by the Sanussiyya order to make use of Italy's inability to pursue an aggressive war in Libya after World War I, and unify the country, failed—a fact largely due to the refusal of a number of Tripolitanian

leaders to fall in behind the Sanusi banner. This refusal, coupled with the Tripolitani-ans' inability to produce a leader or a political force capable of uniting the disparate strains in the region, made them easy prey for Italian fascism. The Fascists in Italy decided, as Ruth First goes on to explain, that "Italy was disillusioned with her attempt at rule by compromise" and opted for a change in tactics, the result of which was again an early conquest of Tripolitania. Thus by the time these unwilling leaders swallowed their pride and turned to the Amir "as a possible source of unity" by offering him Tripolitania, it was too late. In early 1922, Giuseppe Volpi, the new governor of Tripolitania, "having in effect anticipated Fascist colonial policy by some ten months," started the military reconquest of the province. Realizing the potentially disastrous threat a union of Libya's three provinces could pose, Volpi suspended all constitutional arrangements and declared martial law."³³

Idris was faced with a dilemma: to accept the unity offer and face a much stronger Italy or to refuse and lose Tripolitania forever. His acceptance of the unity offer heralded the beginning of the disastrous second Italian-Sanusi War of 1923–31. The use of regular army units supported by airplanes and motorized units enabled the Italians to subdue Tripolitania and Fezzan and to bring military resistance to an end in these areas. Cyrenaica, on the other hand, again used a different type of tactic, which proved to be much more effective in countering the Fascists. As First puts it, "Italian tactics were to exploit old feuds, to run furrows of blood (*solci di sangue*) between tribe and tribe and one section and another, and to seek out collaborationists to be used against the patriots, or the *rebelli*. But even among those guilty of the worst kind of complicity, the Bedouins who joined the Italian forces as irregulars, police, labourers, and camelmen, there was assistance to the patriots, when the opportunity presented itself. Battalions drawn from the submissive elements of the population constituted a sort of a depot of men, arms, and ammunition for the Sanusi formations."³⁴

Occupation forged a nationalism never before witnessed in this fragmented country. Under the leadership of Omar al-Mukhtar the resistance flourished and became more organized. Its limited supply of human and material resources convinced its leadership of the importance of maintaining a small yet highly mobile and effective strike force. The number of Libyan freedom fighters rarely exceeded 700 at one time. A system of shifts (*Dour*) was adopted, allowing each tribe periodically to contribute men to continue the resistance, relieve the tired, and replace the casualties. In addition to providing soldiers, every tribe paid a tithe for the purchase of weapons and munitions, and provided food, shelter, and clothing to the movement. Many tribes were contributed aid whenever they were called upon, as long as they had the means and could do so much hardship for them. Indeed the Italians soon discovered that

"'All Cyrenaica was hard hostile rock beneath the shallowest covering of local collaboration.' The Italians found themselves not fighting an army but a people."³⁵

By 1929 the coastal areas and northern lowlands of Cyrenaica were firmly under Italian control. However, the wooded hills of the Green Mountains, where the Fascists had hoped to settle half a million of Italy's landless peasants and unemployed by 1960, were still unconquered.³⁶ Rodolfo Graziani, infamous as "the butcher of Fezzan," decided to pursue a policy of "occupation at all costs." To end the resistance in Cyrenaica, Graziani knew that the population had to be eliminated. He had the will and the means to accomplish the task.

The Reign of Terror

During the Reign of Terror of 1930–31, it became clear that the Fascists meant "occupation at all" Libyan "costs." In these two years, over 24,000 Cyrenaicans were executed. Moreover, almost all the remaining population of Cyrenaica was herded into concentration camps in the desert lowlands. Those who were able to escape, says John L. Wright, "were bombed and strafed by aircraft as they fled into the desert." However, even that barbarity did not stop the military resistance. Food and some munitions were still reaching the Sanusi forces from abroad by way of Egypt. Libyan emigrants in Egypt and the Arab world worked diligently to get vital supplies needed to maintain the momentum of the resistance. In order to sever these supply lines, Graziani disbanded all Libyan units in the Italian army, denied food to the camps, and erected a barbed-wire fence at the Libyan-Egyptian border, which stretched 350 kilometers. The country was "scourged into submission," as Wright puts it: "By turning Cyrenaica into an armed camp by arrests, deportations, confiscations, executions, and by the use of an overwhelming weight of modern military equipment, the Italians finally mastered the resistance and cornered the last, exhausted fighting bands in the fastnesses of the Gebel Akhdar. In September 1931 Omar Mukhtar, having defied fascist Italy for nine years, was ambushed and captured; after a summary court martial, he was publicly hanged at Sulug. His death effectively ended the resistance and in January 1932 Badolio officially proclaimed the end of the Cyrenaican War and the pacification of Libya."³⁷

With Libya under their control, the Italians arrived in convoys and settled in the most fertile areas. Libya was fast becoming a "fourth shore" for Italy. The Fascists figured that in Cyrenaica alone, ten million sheep would provide the best wool for Italy's factories; twenty million olive trees, the purest oil; and an unlimited number of vines, the tastiest grapes and wine in the world. However, only two years after Italy's first serious attempt at colonization, World War II broke out to dash these dreams.³⁸

THE END OF COLONIZATION

And what price did the Libyans pay? World War II, which proved to be disastrous for most of the world, was even more so for Libya. With more Libyans dead than alive, the country had lost more than half its population to Italy and to the war. Depending on who was leading the offensive among the combatants, most of the coastal cities such as Benghazi, Derna, and Tubruk were leveled more than once. No sooner had the war ended than painful truths were disclosed by the British Military Administration (BMA). Wright explains: "By the end of the Second World War, Libya was in a sorry state. The people were politically retarded, undereducated (illiteracy was estimated at 94%), untrained and impoverished: annual income per capita was barely 15 pounds; infant mortality was a horrifying 40%; there was little trade and much unemployment. . . . In Cyrenaica, much of the infrastructure had been destroyed and most Italians had fled. Tripolitania had been less damaged and still had an economically and socially vital community of some 40,000 Italians; about one third of them still lived on the colonial farms, many of which were just becoming commercially productive."³⁹

Three decades of Italian rule had taken their toll on Libya. Like many countries emerging from colonial rule, Libya found itself in the unenviable position of having to start at the lowest level on the political and economic scale. Initially, none of the victorious powers wanted to assume responsibility for Libya, given the tremendous capital needed to make it habitable. Indeed, Italy hoped only to reclaim the country in a final attempt at recovering the millions of dollars it had spent since 1911. However, it was highly doubtful that the Libya of 1946 would yield any economic benefits. Italy's adventure in North Africa had provided nothing for the Libyans. What little infrastructure there was, the Italians had built for the Italians, and over ninety percent of that had been destroyed during the war. The Libya of 1946 proved to be an excellent example of the catastrophic effect of colonialism in the Third World. What the Italians left behind was a country with a decimated population; a below-subsistence level, stagnating economy; and a political vacuum almost impossible to fill. That the country's population survived was indeed a miracle. Claudio Segrè summed up the prospects of the Libyans under continued Italian rule:

The claim that the Libyans benefited from the colonization is misleading at best. Certainly the Italians introduced modern agricultural techniques and offered financial and technical advice to stimulate indigenous agricultural development. But even if these opportunities had developed beyond the stage of token gestures, economic equality for Libyans seemed a remote prospect. As the racial laws of 1938 and the "special citizenship" of 1939 indicate, the Italian colonial regime, like other European

colonial regimes, had no intention of granting genuine economic or civic equality to the indigenous peoples. The Italians were too humanitarian—and too dependent on indigenous labor—to think of exterminating the Libyans. Hence the regime planned to integrate them into the Italian scheme of things. Under colonial rule Libyans would have always been second-class citizens. As in so many other colonial countries, the Libyans gained the full benefits of the Italian colonization only after independence.⁴⁰

Against this background of political, economic, and social destitution, the Libyan question came before a forum of World War II's victors, where the country's fate, like that of so many others, was decided.

CONCLUSION

Except during its early history, Libya has never had an agricultural base. In addition to being fragmented, its economy has since the Punic Period been a subsistence economy, relying more on the country's geographic trading position than on internal production. This fact is further demonstrated by Libya's relatively small number of inhabitants. The land did not yield much, and each wave of invading settlers found living conditions too harsh. It was only natural for these settlers to either backtrack to Egypt or continue westward to Tunisia and the rest of North Africa, where settlement was more attractive. In short, for the past millennium, Libya has not had the necessary ingredients for the viable agricultural base essential for survival, let alone for the creation of surpluses to attract colonization or to spur industrial production.

Throughout its history Libya has had more religious than secular leaders. More importantly, however, at no time did it have one unifying leader for all its provinces. The tribal society continued until the end of World War II, when a Libyan constitution and national institutions were created by the United Nations. It is not surprising, then, that Libya does not have democratic institutions today. The absence of a democratic tradition has created a political vacuum periodically filled by strong dictatorial leaders who have kept themselves in power through the use of force. The majority of these leaders have ruled in a whimsical, idiosyncratic manner, often leading to disastrous political and economic consequences for the country.

A final issue, and one that calls into question the validity of analyzing Libya as a single entity, is its high degree of cultural fragmentation. Libya's three provinces developed independently of each other, each evolving through different historical experiences and traditions. Over a period of time, this separation resulted in deeply rooted hostilities among the various provinces—hostilities and rivalries that in the past prevented the unification of Libya and

thwarted attempts at a unified resistance in the face of external aggression. Such division among the provinces, each with its own separate history and set of heroes, can in part be explained by geography. Yet even after unification, there existed a strong sense of regionalism that not only hampered the development of nationalism but was also responsible for the unfair distribution of resources. Paradoxically, despite this clear separation, there seems to be an underlying recognition that the destinies of the three provinces have always been interconnected.

The following chapters attempt to shed some light on these forces and on the process of reversing the political and economic factors that continue to hinder Libyan development. Since no intrinsic democratic institutions have yet emerged, it is necessary to analyze the country's progress, or lack of it, by looking at Libya's leaders, their ideologies, and the effect these have had on political institutions and economic development in this country since its independence.

Three

State Structures and Political Development

Since independence, Libya's ideological transformation has passed through two distinct phases: emulation and experimentation. This chapter deals with the interaction between ideology and political and economic development in Libya during these two phases.

EMULATION

Ideology within this phase can be characterized as a local traditional system of beliefs. As in all traditional societies, ideology emanates from the cultural, societal, and economic norms that have developed and shaped that particular society. Power relations within the state, tribe, family, and caste are usually defined and enforced not so much by a document or police power but by tradition and popular consensus. In the aftermath of World War II, Libya appeared to be no different from any other traditional society in the Third World. Its social structure was dependent on the extended family, which played a pivotal role in nurturing its members, shaping their basic values, determining their occupations, selecting their spouses, caring for them through all stages of their lives, and providing protection from outside, hostile forces. In return, it was the duty of these members to avert or minimize internal conflict by obeying the dictates and rules within the structure. Libya was during that phase a neopatriarchal society.¹

Such traditional societies are characterized by poorly differentiated agrarian, family-based, barter economies. Development in traditional societies is not generated by innovation, technology, industrialization, or market economies dominated by public and private corporations—elements that have proven to be quite effective in generating surplus goods and services that benefit a society as a whole. The economy of such a static system is not designed to achieve much beyond mere subsistence; only dynamic and thus healthy political systems are capable of generating free market economies. Lack of growth might also result from the absence of natural resources. A more fundamental reason for economic stagnation, however, is the inability of traditional politi-

cal systems to come to grips with political and economic innovations that might endanger their rudimentary organizational structure. Many of these structures are usually dominated by hereditary tribal chieftains, who “justify their authority on the basis of lineage, religion, or tradition, and who, either individually or with the assistance of close relatives, perform both the input functions of interest articulation and interest aggregation (reading the masses) and the input functions of rule making, rule application, and rule adjudication.”²

All social, economic, and political patterns within traditional societies are justified by a combination of religion, tradition, myths, norms, and mores. In most of these societies, beliefs and behavior are accepted as having a supernatural origin or blessing—a basis that justifies the operation and perpetuation of the traditional society itself. Dissent in these societies is usually considered dissent against God’s will. This fatalism, combined with passivity and conformity, are the three basic moving forces of traditional societies.

The state in traditional societies is not powerful. Its power is not derived from the loyalty of the citizens, which in most cases is minimal, but from the legitimacy endowed to it by family heads or tribal chiefs.³ Kinship obligations to individual rulers supersede moral obligations to the state. Thus the normal coercive organs needed in developed societies are usually conspicuously absent from the traditional societies. The family or the tribe acts as discipliner, not the state. Any external force that attempts to change this relationship is usually vigorously opposed by the dominant power structure. Indeed, the elites of traditional societies oppose any form of development because it means a shedding of the narrow ties of kinship and other loyalties, and thus a weakening of their own power. Development means replacing their idiosyncratic rule with one based on merit and occupational, political, and social obligations within a framework of nationalism.⁴ Development also might mean replacing fatalism, passivity, and conformity with innovation, achievement, and creativity. Novelty in traditional societies is suspect. For if it is not checked, it can break the traditional bonds and set in motion a process that, from the point of view of the elite, could mean the end of their rule. Education, information, and an improvement in the economic conditions of the citizens in a despotic, traditional state usually bring about questions that neither central governments nor traditional elites can answer. As traditional societies develop, the traditional coercive organs of the tribe, family, or caste are replaced by the modern coercive institutions of police forces, armies, and secret services. Paradoxically, in societies lacking food, water, roads, education, and other necessities and basic services, these organs are usually provided with expensive, technologically innovative machines, weapons, and other imported goods.

Libyan independence coincided with the rising tide of nationalism in the Arab world as a whole and in North Africa in particular: this period included

the Egyptian Revolution in 1952, the beginning of the Algerian War for Independence, the question of Palestine, and the emergence of the Ba'thist movement in Syria. Libyans, like so many other Arabs, were caught in this atmosphere of confusion and agitation, which was by and large anti-Western. In those years, three schools of political thought emerged. Politics throughout the monarchy period reflected the jousting among these schools, as each tried to direct the country's political and economic development along its line of thought.⁵

The first was the Pan-Arabist school, championed by the followers of President Gamal Abdul-Nasser of Egypt. A more outspoken advocate of this school was the Ba'thist (Resurrectionist) group. These two groups combined Pan-Arab and socialist ideas and opposed any alignment with the West. Both groups displayed a sympathetic view towards cooperation with the Soviet bloc. The Pan-Arabists dropped the Soviet bloc connection in 1959, when President Nasser repudiated the association of communism with Arab nationalism as a consequence of the violent treatment that Communists and Communist sympathizers suffered at the hands of Arab nationalists throughout the Arab world. Nowhere was this more apparent than in post-1958 Iraq when the new coup leaders under Abdul-Karim Kassem sought to establish a Communist regime at the expense of the country's Islamic and occasionally democratic character.⁶

Young Libyan Arab nationalists viewed the post-independence regime and its "alien" institutions as an artificial structure imposed upon them by foreign powers.⁷ To them, any regime not striving to be part of a larger Arab empire (an empire advocated by Nasser stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf) was neither national nor legitimate. However, although many Libyans aspired to join such a union, organized support was small and limited to a segment of the articulate intelligentsia that had been educated abroad and returned from neighboring Arab countries after independence.

Similarly articulate and backed by strong arguments, the religious elements in Libyan society formed the backbone of the second school of thought vying for power. This school represented the "old fashioned" al-Azhar graduates, the Sanusi's followers, and others influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood and Islam as a whole. This group, once the dominant force in Libyan society, represented a combination of tradition and the status quo with little innovation. The Islamists called for social and economic reform based on Islamic principles and the rejection of all ideologies that conflicted with Islam, including Nasserism and Ba'thism. Islamist nationalism was far more encompassing than either Nasserism or Ba'thism: Islamists called for the unity of all Muslims on earth, irrespective of color, ethnicity, or nationality. They did, however, agree with the nationalists in their opposition to foreign influence and radical ideologies.⁸

The religious nationalists formed the backbone of the Sanussiyya movement.⁹ However, upon ascending to power, King Idris attempted to secularize the political system, rein in radical traditionalism, and bring about change. In the process, he relegated the Sanussiyya order—and with it, religion—to a secondary position, from which it dealt only with spiritual affairs rather than political matters. That proved to be a costly move in the long run, for it robbed Idris of his traditional support, while his newly implemented secular system did not go far enough in satisfying the disgruntled nonreligious elements in the society.

However, for a short period of time the king's policies encouraged members of a third school of thought to emerge at the helm and assume the difficult task of running such a fragmented society: the realist school. Mainly made up of civil servants and some intellectuals, it advocated a form of Libyan nationalism. Opposed to the first school, the idealist, and the second school, the religious, this "Libyan school" attempted primarily to shield the country from foreign ideological influences that might further deepen the fissures in an already fractured society. Its members attempted to pursue policies aimed at internal cohesion and the creation of a Libyan nation rather than policies that fit competing ideologies. They were sensitive to foreign influences yet hesitant to pursue any ideology that would have exposed the newly independent country to conflicts it had neither the will nor the ability to enter into.¹⁰ Indeed, this group advocated only what it felt would serve Libya's interest. Yet for all its good intentions, the group manifested a policy of timidity that pleased no one and robbed their influential policymakers of the ability to formulate a Libyan ideology, to mobilize Libya's citizens, and to integrate the fragmented society into a nation-state.

Poverty of Resources

At the end of World War II, Libya emerged as one of the poorest countries in the world. Italian occupation left no indigenous political institutions, and the North African campaign against the Nazi Germany destroyed much of the country's infrastructure. Furthermore, the victors failed to agree on the status of Libya and thus decided to turn over the administration of the country to the United Nations. But Libya was lucky to be entrusted to the UN, for that body was instrumental in providing a political framework acceptable to a deeply fragmented society.¹¹

The Libyan Constitution of 1951—developed by a think tank composed of international scholars and policymakers, including Libyans, and headed by Adrian Pelt, a commissioner appointed by the United Nations—was a model constitution.¹² It was unique in that it created a balance among the three traditional regions of the country: "a balance among three provinces vying for

quality of status," writes Majid Khadduri, "despite the great disparity in resource, population, and cultural levels."¹³

Cyrenaica, the largest in size of the three provinces but the second in population after Tripolitania, presented the most difficulty in Libyan unification. With their cities demolished by the 1940 North African Campaign and their population more than halved during thirty years of Italian rule, a large majority of Cyrenaicans felt that under no circumstances should they allow their province to fall under Italian rule again. The Cyrenaican leadership, in return for aiding the Allies' war effort, extracted a promise from the British to support Cyrenaican independence at the conclusion of the war. Thus in 1949, Cyrenaica was declared independent—a move enraging the majority of Tripolitanian leaders.

Tripolitanian elites, always torn by tribal and factional feuds, were unable to agree on an acknowledged, common leader, nor were they able to agree with the Cyrenaicans on Sanusi leadership. These divisions prevented them from "collaborating" with the Cyrenaicans, as Khadduri puts it, "in the liberation of their country."¹⁴ Moreover, the uncertainty of the postwar politics in the province and the existence of a large Italian community were beyond what the Cyrenaicans could tolerate. By seizing the opportunity and declaring their independence, the Cyrenaicans escaped Italian rule and were in a position to lend a helping hand to their reluctant and suspicious brethren in Tripolitania.¹⁵

Tripolitanians were the most educated and sophisticated Libyans. They tended to be less religious than Cyrenaicans and more open to Western and Eastern influences than their tribal compatriots. It was only natural for a diversity of political opinions to emerge among Tripolitanians—a fact that hindered the emergence of a unified leadership. The politically less-developed Cyrenaicans quickly reached a consensus on Idris al-Sanusi, who provided a "balanced" leadership among the political factions, while in Tripolitania political parties existed in a state of virtual anarchy. "Feudal and family loyalties continued to play significant roles in the shaping of political groups," Khadduri explains; "nationalism, which had not yet taken root in the country, could not supersede these traditional loyalties. As a result numerous political groups emerged and their leaders, vying for recognition, failed to coordinate their activities."¹⁶

Some—such as *Al Hizb al-Watani* (Nationalist Party), formed in 1944—favored the ascendancy of Tripolitania in a completely independent and united Libya or else the trusteeship of a united Libya under the Arab League.¹⁷ *Al-Jabha al-Wataniya al-Mutahida* (United National Front, or UNF), formed in 1946, advocated the independence and unity of Libya under Sanusi leadership. Dissidents from the two parties split to form a third, *al-Kutla al-Wataniya*

al-Hurra (Free National Bloc, or FNB), which was also formed in 1946. The FNB advocated an independent and united Libyan republic with a leader other than Idris, to be chosen by a constituent assembly. Its leader, Ali al-Fagih Hasan, called for membership in the Arab League and the Arabization of the Libyan bureaucracy, which had until then been controlled largely by resident Italians. The objectives of the Egyptian-Tripolitanian Union Party are quite apparent from its name. The party called for a union of Tripolitania (including Cyrenaica) under the Egyptian crown. The Labor Party, formed in 1947, and the Liberal Party both advocated a united Libya under the *amirate* (leadership) of Idris al-Sanusi.¹⁸

In addition to these movements, four organizations were formed by the Italian settlers after the war. The first of these was the Italian Representative Committee, led by Admiral Fenzi and Count Sottocasa. This committee was, according to Khadduri, formed in 1947 as an Italian advisory council for the chief administrator, in place of the Provincial Commissioner's Council, which had exhibited left-wing leanings and was felt by the settlers to be unrepresentative. Composed of former Fascists and others with right-wing leanings, the committee enjoyed a large measure of support among the Italian settlers for its uncompromising demands for Italian trusteeship over Libya.¹⁹

Second among these movements was the Italian Association for the Progress of Libya. Formed in 1948 by Enrico Cibelli, a former member of the Italian Advisory Council, this organization was composed of and supported by Italian intellectuals sympathetic to communism. The group was strongly opposed to the Italian Representative Committee and advocated Italian trusteeship of Libya only if independence were considered impossible. A third important group was the Popular Democratic Front. Inspired by the Popular Democratic Front in Italy, this organization appealed to the working class of all ethnic communities, not just Italians. Led by Avaro Felici and supported by left-wing sympathizers, the party favored the independence of Libya. The last of these groups was the Libyan Economic Front. Led by Domenico Cattiti, this loosely organized body was essentially a nonpolitical one, concerned with the economic development of the country. Like the group itself, Cattiti's schemes were grandiose and impractical.²⁰

All Libyan Arab parties agreed on the idea of Libyan independence, unity of the three Libyan provinces, and their membership in the Arab League. The main disagreement was over who would lead. Some members were for Idris, and others were not. Cyrenaica's action in 1949 in effect provided the Tripolitans with only two options: either to join the existing independent Cyrenaica under Idris and help wrestle the southern province of Fezzan from the French, or to refuse to join Cyrenaica under Idris and take their chances with the covetous eyes of the Italians and the Big Four—in which case Tripolitania might

at the very most become a trusteeship, with Fezzan lost forever to France's African empire.

Fortunately for Libya, after much internal haggling, rivalry, and disunity, the traditional elites in all three provinces agreed in 1950 to form a united, federal Libya under the leadership of Idris al-Sanusi. A federal system was chosen because neither Cyrenaican nor Fezzani elites were willing to see their respective provinces simply "dissolved" into a union with Tripolitania. Cyrenaican and Fezzani elites, more than anyone, understood that once a union was established, it would be only a matter of time before the political center of gravity shifted from their provinces to the more economically developed Tripolitania, which contained over half the country's population.²¹

Unlike Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and to some extent Fezzan were still agricultural entities. Neither had evolved to a feudal stage, let alone to a bourgeois stage of development. Indeed, they were a semi-feudal societies. In Cyrenaica, business was rarely held in any esteem; hence, few local inhabitants engaged in it. The field of trade and its opportunities were left wide open for newcomers, particularly those arriving from the western city of Misurata. Driven out of Tripoli by tough market competition, a large number of Misuratans migrated to Benghazi, an area free of competition; today a large number of the inhabitants of Benghazi trace their roots to Misurata.

Thus, under the circumstances, a federal system offered the best framework for the political and economic unification of the three provinces. Furthermore, the federal system enabled the king to play a dual leadership role: on the one hand, he continued to act as a traditional religious head, as leader of the powerful Sanusi order in Cyrenaica and Fezzan; on the other hand, he became the secular head of state as a constitutional monarch in Tripolitania, where the Sanusi order was not able to elicit a following. Indeed, Tripolitania's choice of Idris as a leader was intended, in large part, to promote a compromise between the differing political factions. This fact was quite apparent as early as 1946, when a delegation representing the United National Front presented Idris with a plan for unity suggesting that the Sanusi amirate be confined to the person of Idris and not be made a hereditary office. In addition, the United National Front proposed a parliamentary and constitutional form of government.²²

It is interesting that most of the country's political parties (three in Cyrenaica and six in Tripolitania),²³ which spontaneously emerged after the war and were in large part responsible for shaping the national political system, either dissolved themselves or, having failed to formulate new principles that appealed to the public, were forced to disappear. All the parties, not yet characterized by any real ideological differences, emerged to meet specific goals: total independence, the unity of the three provinces, and membership in the Arab League.

These goals were achieved in the early 1950s, and the parties were expected to fade into obscurity. Libyan parties of that period, with the exception of the Omar al-Mukhtar Association and the National Congress, were an extension of groups that revolved around leading feudal or tribal chiefs.²⁴

The structure of these parties was traditional, and since they did not carry on any important social or cultural activities in the country as a whole, they could not be classified as popular. On the contrary, as Khadduri maintains, the majority of the public outside the main cities had no clear understanding of the significance of party platforms. The parties were in fact "mouthpieces" for the country's educated, merchant, and traditional elites. As soon as another system that allowed these people to express their views emerged, the need for this type of party diminished. In Khadduri's words: "The leaders as a rule were either members of well-known families or wealthy city dwellers. Among the tribes, the chiefs spoke for the tribesmen and these, especially in Cyrenaica, were under Sanusi influence. The tribal and rural communities supported the authoritarian and patriarchal principles of government which had been the accepted pattern in the history of this part of the world."²⁵

It should thus come as no surprise that these same elites helped in devising a political system that not only discouraged the emergence of any openly political parties but also further consolidated their own political and economic power within a modern constitutional framework. This framework indirectly embodied all traditional values and institutions that existed prior to its formulation.

Majid Khadduri is to some extent correct in his assertion that the pre-independence parties had lost their *raison d'être*. He is, however, quite wrong in assuming that all of them had lost their legitimacy. The National Congress in Tripoli and the Omar al-Mukhtar Association in Benghazi were powerful forces of change that did not disband themselves but were forced to disband through the imprisonment of their leaders and the closing down of their offices. Both organizations, given the opportunity, would have emerged as the nuclei for a democratic opposition that would have curtailed the excesses of the monarch and his appointed prime ministers.

The Libyan Constitution of October 7, 1951, established a federal constitutional monarchy. Federalism provided a balanced system for the three provinces and enabled each province to manage its own internal affairs. The promise of autonomy encouraged all three to overcome their reluctance to enter into a union. More importantly, however, autonomy enabled the traditional elites within each province to continue ruling. Formulators of this constitution instituted—in addition to the monarchy established prior to the promulgation of the constitution—a bicameral parliament and a supreme court. All three institutions preserved the traditional order of things to include invest-

ing the monarch with dictatorial powers. The king was supreme and was—to use the words of the English jurist Sir William Blackstone—not only “incapable of doing wrong, but of thinking wrong.”²⁶

As the Libyan Constitution itself put it, the monarch was “invisible” and “exempt from all responsibility” (art. 50). He was endowed with the powers of approving laws and ordering their enforcement, proclaiming martial law, calling general elections, and convening the parliament. He also had the power to open, adjourn, prolong, or dissolve parliament, and when parliament was not in session, he had the right to issue decrees that had the force of law (arts. 65–67).²⁷ The king was further granted the power to select and dismiss the prime minister, the cabinet, or individual ministers (art. 180). He could also do the same with provincial governors.

Parliament was composed of two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate represented the provinces. It was composed of twenty-four members, half of whom were appointed by the king for a renewable eight-year term. The other half were elected by the legislative assemblies of the provinces. Representation in the House consisted of one deputy for every twenty thousand male inhabitants. The right of suffrage was not universal but limited to males who fulfilled certain criteria. According to the Libyan Federal Electoral Law of 1951, which was revised in 1955, any male was eligible to vote if he: (1) was a Libyan subject, (2) was at least twenty-one years old, (3) was not a lunatic or mentally defective, (4) had not been convicted of any crime, (5) was not an undischarged bankrupt, and (6) was not a member of the armed forces or the police.

Any draft law rejected by the king became law only after being confirmed by a two-thirds majority in both houses and communicated to the palace within thirty days (art. 136). However, no draft law rejected by the king has ever passed in parliament, for the king has had the support to block it in the Senate. Furthermore, any bill rejected by either house could be reintroduced in the same session (art. 112). This enabled the king to pass or block bills emanating from the House or the Senate.

For those very few deputies or senators who did not belong to the elite and who had attained their posts through their own hard work and merit rather than by giving large feasts, cash, and promises to voters, parliamentary immunity was a blessing. All members of Parliament were supposed to have absolute freedom of speech and to enjoy parliamentary immunity: they could not be arrested or brought to trial while parliament was in session. However, parliamentary immunity could be stripped away from a member by the particular chamber to which he belonged.

The third important cog in the governmental wheel was the judicial system. The constitution established three types of courts: civil courts, religious

courts, and the Supreme Court. The first arbitrated all matters that pertained to civil, commercial, and criminal laws, in addition to actions for or against the government—national or provincial.²⁸ Islamic issues such as charitable organizations (*waqfs*), divorce and inheritance, and other personal matters were within the jurisdiction of the religious courts. The religious courts' authority was most evident in rural and tribal communities, where the civil court system was, by and large, too advanced for the traditional strata of the population.²⁹ The third branch of the judiciary was the Supreme Court. Unlike judges of the civil and religious courts, who were appointed by the minister of Justice, members of the Supreme Court were appointed by the king. They enjoyed full immunity and could not normally be removed from office.³⁰ Very much like the United States Supreme Court, Libya's highest judicial authority was called upon to arbitrate disputes between the federal government and the provinces, to decide on the constitutionality of laws, and to act as the highest court of appeal in the country. For a period of ten years after its creation, the Libyan Supreme Court was staffed by a number of foreign judges in addition to Libyans.³¹

For all its apparent sophistication, the Libyan political system with its seemingly advanced institutions, was archaic in its actions. Among the deputies were tribal leaders, while the majority of ministers were from affluent families. Prime ministers were chosen on the basis of their connections to the palace, regardless of their education or ability to govern. For the first two years after independence, the political climate in Libya was vibrant and alive with the infusion of new ideas from a very small educated segment of the political elites. From 1951 to 1969, however, the country was ruled by the institutions and laws that had been ruling it for the past millennium.

During the pre-oil era, Libya had no particular ideological orientation. Politically, it adopted Western institutions and laws that were in turn reshaped by the ruling elites to maintain the traditional status quo. Economically, the country adopted a free-market system, even though internal trade was minimal. For in two-thirds of the country, no merchant class had yet developed, nor was there an industrial output. Any agricultural output was consumed internally.

The Politics of Wealth

The influx of the wealth that oil generated in 1964 had a profound effect on political and economic systems. Until then, the political system had been synchronized and was compatible with the economic system. The subsistence economy placed very few demands on the political structure. The lack of roads and other means of transportation and communication kept each region of the

country isolated from the others, thus forestalling any type of popular discontent.

The oil wealth broke through this isolation. As regions became more accessible through roads, telephones, and air travel, it became very difficult for the government to develop one area of the country without developing the others. Furthermore, the rivalry for influence and wealth between Cyrenaica and Tripolitania was so intense that it hindered the choice of a capital for the country. Until the mid-1960s, Libya was one of the few countries in the world with two capital cities: Benghazi and Tripoli. Fearing the consequences of naming only one of these two cities the capital of the country, the prerevolution government opted instead for a compromise whereby Tripoli was the winter capital and Benghazi the summer capital. The cost of moving the government and the diplomatic corps to and fro annually was far greater than Libya could afford in money or in time.

This policy of appeasement was also very evident during the era of prosperity. Policy planning and financial allocations were not based on the needs of the country as a whole but on the appeasement of the major cities of Benghazi and Tripoli, which grew at the expense of the rest of the country. This phenomenal growth, typical of most major cities of the Third World, served as a magnet that attracted people from all parts of the country.

However, even that growth was not based on the needs of the cities. What was constructed in one city would have an identical counterpart constructed in the other: structures identical in size, shape, and appearance. This policy did not change until a point of saturation had been reached, when so many projects were being undertaken in both cities that it was beyond either city's capacity to absorb them. In addition, tribal leaders, particularly those from the Cyrenaican Highlands, felt a need to redirect a large portion of that wealth to their own areas of influence.

The king was dependent on these leaders for support and on loyal tribes as a source of soldiers for the Cyrenaican Defense Forces (CDF),³² and he had very little choice but to support the leaders' nominees to top governmental positions, including the premierships. Tribal leaders were not bothered by the fact that most of their nominees, including a number of prime ministers, could neither read nor write. By 1966, much of the country's wealth was diverted to the eastern part of the country. A number of new cities were planned in the Green Mountain, and work was initiated on the third capital of Libya, the city of al-Beida.

The rapid and massive influx of wealth into poor societies has often proved to be destabilizing. Fortunately for Libya, the destabilizing effect of sudden wealth was quite slow in developing, for even though there was a great deal of

waste, some benefits did reach the poor. Although consecutive conservative governments provided money and opportunities to most segments of Libyan society, these governments refused to permit parallel waves of political reforms and liberalization to develop. Consecutive governments sought to diffuse calls for more political reform and liberalization temporarily through the infusion of more money into the system. Ironically, the infusion of money merely hastened the demise of the traditional political structure. An important effect was the change in the perception of the ordinary Libyan. By the mid-1960s the government had overtaken the tribe as the source of benefits and security for the individual. The tribal structure was still strong, but it was no longer viewed as the sole source of power. Yet because the state had neither the means nor the ability to play the role of the tribe, it continued to rely on tribal leaders. Paradoxically, the majority of young people in the population began to hold the government responsible for issues that had thus far been within the jurisdiction of the tribe.

Another important factor was the emergence of a new middle class involved solely with the service sector of the economy: a class of people whose livelihood depended on the commissions they obtained from the sale of a growing list of consumer goods and materials that were being imported to meet the needs of a booming economy. The benefits derived from these transactions were so enormous that during the latter half of 1960s not only tribal leaders but also the majority of high ranking civil servants began to take part in these transactions. Even prime ministers found the accumulation of wealth too enticing, and many resigned as soon as they established economic links with the multitude of foreign firms operating in the country. Some established economic links while in office and were replaced when word of their activities reached the palace.³³

Few prime ministers benefited from their position as much as Mustafa Ben-Halim. He has been accused of accumulating illegal earnings at every stage of his political career. His first major compensation was from the United States government, which paid him the sum of one million dollars when he signed the Libyan-American base agreement in 1953. With few exceptions, foreign companies were not permitted to enter the Libyan market without paying Ben-Halim commissions totaling millions of dollars. Many of these payments were made to his engineering and construction firm, Libeco. The jewel in Libeco's crown was the Bechtel Corporation, which built the first oil pipeline in Libya and, after 1959, facilitated for Mustafa foreign contacts and arranged for companies to come to Libya.³⁴ The American construction giant was forced by Mustafa to pay him a retainer of \$2,500 a month as, in the words of Laton McCartney, "walking around money" and pay his firm Libeco 10 percent "of its net profits on *all* projects" in Libya.³⁵

In time Bechtel emerged as Ben-Halim's intermediary with oil companies that did not want the bother of dealing with Libeco or other local merchants. Bechtel handled all problems including those relating to construction, road and refinery building, as well as engineering services. The total cost was an eighteen-percent fee for Ben-Halim and a few others, which Bechtel tacked onto its operating charges. The American giant continued to play an important role in enriching Mustafa until the revolution, when it arranged for him a Saudi nationality and passport.³⁶ Ben-Halim's wealth opened a great number of doors for him. He was, however, disliked and had to rely a great deal on the al-Shalhi family and some corrupt members of the Sanusi family. Questionable policy practices by the Shalhis, Ben-Halim, and Abdullah Abed al-Sanusi proved to be devastating to Libya's politics and economy, and ultimately led to the demise of the monarchy and the ascension of Muammar al-Qaddafi a few years later. In his memoirs, *Safahat Matwyya*, Mustafa Ben-Halim denied the charge of corruption. Excerpts from his book, which became a best-seller, were published in the London-based Saudi Arabian newspaper *Ashuq Al-Awsat* over a period of six months during 1994. The excerpts initiated an interesting debate on the pages of the newspaper between Ben-Halim and his adversaries, including the former prime minister Mohamad Ben-Uthman al-Sayd.

Perhaps one of the most important events that weakened the fragile Libyan polity was the unification of the three provinces and the demise of the federal system in 1962. The argument provided by the government at the time was that unity of the provinces under a single authority would in the long run lead to the unity of the people of Libya, reduce the costs of running the state, and eliminate bureaucratic red tape. In reality, however, two forces were behind the push for the elimination of the federal system. The first was the oil companies. Oil was by then flowing, and the oil companies did not want to deal with federal and state regulations simultaneously. Hence they lobbied hard for a change in the system. The second force was individuals with close associations to the palace. The king had on more than one occasion offered to resign and was little interested in the accumulation of power. But to individuals such as the Shalhi brothers, particularly Al-Busairi and, after his death, Omar—both of whom has assumed pivotal positions in the palace—a unitary system would concentrate power in their hands, and therefore they encouraged the king to bless the modification of the political and economic structure. In hindsight a federal system would have made it very difficult for the coup to emerge and consolidate itself in the short span of seven years as it was to do.

Social Mobilization

The active participation of Libyans in the political process was conspicuously absent during the monarchy because popular political participation did not serve the interest of the ruling elite. The last two prime ministers of the monarchy initiated a number of programs aimed at removing political and economic obstacles in the path of young Libyans aspiring to political office, but these programs were too little too late to maintain the people's faith in the political system. In short, during the post-oil era the government was unable to provide a new ideology for a newly emerging, highly politicized population.

Mass mobilization in Libya was, oddly enough, undertaken by the Egyptian government of President Nasser. As early as the mid-1950s, particularly after the Suez Canal crisis, young Libyans were enthralled by and fascinated with Abdul-Nasser. To the majority, he represented the hearts and minds of the Arabs. Indeed, Nasserism was the dominant ideology among the younger generation of Libyans. Three factors were pivotal in the spread of Nasserism in Libya: the media, Egyptian migrant workers, and Libyans living and studying in Egypt. The "Voice of the Arabs" beaming from Cairo was at that time the strongest Arab radio station. Its strength dwarfed all other broadcasts emanating from the Arab world—particularly those of Libya, which were seldom heard outside Benghazi and Tripoli. Through that important medium, President Nasser was able to deliver his message of "Freedom, Socialism, and Unity" to the ears and minds of millions of Arabs thirsting to be filled after enduring the vacuum created by long years of colonialism and effete regimes. Libya's proximity to Egypt further reinforced the message by enabling hundreds of Egyptian school teachers and workers drawn by the oil boom to take on jobs in all parts of the country. Egyptian labor and intellectuals built Libya economically and academically ten years after the discovery of its oil fields. The final group responsible for the spread of Nasserism were Libyans educated in Egypt.³⁷

It was only natural that Libyan students in Egypt would apply their expertise in Libya. Egyptian laws became Libyan laws, Egyptian public administration became Libyan administration, and Egyptian practices became Libyan practices. It is noteworthy that Libyans took what was Egyptian and applied it as it was, regardless of its shortcomings or impracticality. In addition, a large segment of the Libyan civil service was Egyptian, either on loan from the Egyptian government or hired through local contracts. The Libyans who came in from Egypt found the Libyan system quite easy to adopt. Egyptian influence permeated Libyan life—including the judiciary, which, for lack of trained Libyan judges, was run by graduates from Al-Azhar University of Cairo.³⁸ At the

grass-roots level, Egyptian influence was more apparent; renowned for their oratory, proper use of the Arabic language, and knowledge of Islam, Egyptian Muslim clergy (or imams) began preaching and leading prayers, including Friday sermons, in Libyan mosques.

Lulled into a false sense of security by the presence of foreign military bases, Libyan governments made no attempt to come to terms with the emerging politicized opposition. This opposition—spearheaded by intellectuals, students, and employees in the oil industry—pressed Libya's authorities to take a more active role in Arab affairs, to terminate the American and British "occupation" of the country and to open up the political system for true representation and freedom of political action and speech. Despite the student riots of 1964, in which four students were shot by security forces, and the oil workers' strike in 1967 that demonstrated solidarity with the Arabs in their war with Israel, Libyan governments continued to be oblivious to this emerging popular discontent and resumed the old practice of injecting more capital into the economy in the hope that money would cure all.

As its lack of a clear economic policy made apparent, monarchy could not meet the demands of changing economic conditions. The *laissez-faire* ideology that Libyan leaders promoted was too slow in bringing benefits to the majority of Libyans, who were themselves often slow in joining the foreign residents in their burgeoning business ventures.³⁹ Those who did take part in this process amassed wealth and even rose to prominence in the governing circles, but they were not able to command the loyalty that the traditional elite had commanded a decade earlier.⁴⁰ The monarchy fell as a result of its inability to control its economic policies and its timidity in defining an ideological position for itself that was compatible with the popular ideologies of the region. By the time the revolution did take place in 1969, even prominent members of the ruling elite with very close connections to the palace had realized that if they did not act rapidly to consolidate power, they would soon lose it.⁴¹ However, as events were shortly to prove, they did not act fast enough: they were displaced by a revolution on September 1, 1969.

EXPERIMENTATION

The twelve men who made up the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) were members of the armed forces. Highly influenced and motivated by President Nasser's speeches and actions, they formed the first cell of resistance in Libya's southern city of Sabha in 1959 under the leadership of Muammar al-Qaddafi, a student in Sabha's Secondary School. Qaddafi, though only fifteen years old, was instrumental in educating the group in Nasserist philosophy and in plotting the means by which Nasser's Arab revolution could be imple-

mented in Libya. He led discussions about his mentor's speeches and planned his coconspirators' future actions and careers. Realizing that civilian potential for upward mobility and power was limited, Qaddafi urged the group to join the military.⁴² The newly created Military Academy in Benghazi offered the best opportunity for achieving power in the shortest period of time.

Qaddafi's militancy and his outspoken call for more Libyan support of Arab causes brought him into conflict with the local authorities in Sabha. As a result, the group moved to the coastal city of Misurata, where they continued their education. Upon graduation from Misurata Secondary School, they were admitted to the Military Academy in Benghazi, from which they graduated as junior officers. Their stay in Benghazi enabled the group to broaden the movement by recruiting military sympathizers, who, after the revolution, came to be called the "Free Officers." In addition, the University of Libya in Benghazi provided the group with the opportunity to recruit civilian Nasserites and other intellectuals, who were ready to take part in bringing about a change of regime.⁴³

Qaddafi's group acquired power through the standard Third World coup d'état. The coup first struck at the main police force centers and then occupied the palace and important ministries, along with the radio stations of Benghazi and Tripoli. This was quickly followed by the arrest of the royal family, members of the Royal Diwan, cabinet ministers, senior army and police officers, and members of Parliament.⁴⁴ The coup encountered very little resistance, and within a day all facets of power were firmly under the control of the RCC. As in the revolution in Egypt two decades earlier, the new rulers suspended the constitution, abrogated all laws, and ruled by decree.

Muammar al-Qaddafi shrewdly realized that in order for him to fashion a new Libyan society in his own image, he had to confront grass-roots opposition, not just the bureaucratic structure he overthrew. Opposition came mainly from the still-powerful traditional elites, religious leaders, and non-Nasserite forces opposed to the monarchy. What followed was a period of consolidation and an attempt to bolster the image of Qaddafi. On the domestic front, the first decrees issued by the RCC promoted Qaddafi to colonel and terminated the military-base agreements with the United States and Britain. That was followed by the expulsion of twenty thousand resident Italians. The bureaucracy was revamped and purged of most of its senior officers, who were in most cases appointees from Libya's major tribes.⁴⁵ Following these changes in the bureaucracy, Qaddafi reduced the powers of the latent opposition, beginning with the tribal leaders. Administrative boundaries in the country represented tribal boundaries; by redrawing these boundaries the Libyan leader was

able to increase the holdings of the small tribes that supported him, at the expense of the larger and more powerful tribes upon which the monarchy had rested.⁴⁶

On the international scene, Qaddafi supported all Muslim movements wherever they existed. Libya's petrodollars aided Muslim insurgents in the Philippines, Eritrea, Uganda, the Central African Republic, Chad, and elsewhere.⁴⁷ Aid went to Pakistan, which in turn honored the Libyan leader by renaming Karachi Football Stadium the Muammar al-Qaddafi Stadium. Aid also found its way to Indonesia, Malaysia, Yugoslavia, and other countries with Muslim inhabitants, mostly for building mosques and schools and for reviving Islam. Indeed, Qaddafi emerged within a few months after the revolution as a champion of Islam.

The Libyan leader was wary of the tribal system, even though he did use it to consolidate his power. Far more formidable opposition came from the religious leaders who had thrived during the old regime. Again, Qaddafi realized that a frontal assault on this group would not leave him unscathed and could even cost him the support he already had among the masses. He thus adopted a religious posture and decreed religious laws. Among these were the prohibition of alcohol and an adherence to the Islamic principles that the monarchy had not followed, such as laws governing usury and the dress code. The Libyan media took every occasion to portray Qaddafi, in his character and actions, as the embodiment of all that is religious. By not attacking the religious leaders, Qaddafi hoped that he would overshadow and then eliminate—or at least diminish—their influence.

The final group he had to contend with was the non-Nasserites. With this group Qaddafi embarked on a dialogue.⁴⁸ In long televised meetings the leader of the RCC discussed with representatives of these groups ways and means of opening up the system, eliminating poverty, and distributing wealth within a new political and economic framework. In many of these meetings, genuine ideological and political dialogues did take place; for the first time in Libyan history the majority of Libyans were exposed to ideologies they never knew existed.

Yet despite apparent political liberalization, no political activity was actually permitted. The new regime banned all political parties after establishing the Arab Socialist Union, a political assembly identical to the one instituted in Egypt by President Nasser. All Libyans were required to be members of that body. The Libyan leader took these measures, on the one hand, to consolidate his hold on the Nasserites in Libya, and on the other, to play for time until he firmly controlled the country. He eliminated all existing and potential opposi-

tion and finally instituted his own brand of ideology. What is also clear today is that during the first three years of his rule, Qaddafi himself did not appear to have an idea of how the country should be run.

With his mentor next door, he attempted to shape Libyan society in the image of Nasser's Egypt with the hope that both countries could be unified under a single government. Indeed the first years of the revolution witnessed the "Egyptianization of Libya," which culminated in the declaration of union between the two countries in 1970. The Libyan flag was changed to look like the Egyptian flag, and the Libyan national anthem was replaced with a popular Egyptian military tune.

Most important, however, was the Egyptian influence on the Libyan armed forces. Here again the majority of officers in all branches were Egyptians, and so was the military hardware: Libya had not yet bought arms of its own. Indeed Libya's first aircraft orders from France were Egyptian-inspired.⁴⁹ And according to media reports, some of the Libyans sent to France for training on the new Mirages were Egyptians traveling under Libyan passports.⁵⁰ Qaddafi was more than happy to see the influx of Egyptians into Libya, so much so that by the end of 1970 all visa restrictions between the two countries were dropped, allowing for the free movement of goods and people. Egyptian labor was crucial for the phenomenal economic growth in Libya during those years as a result of the increased oil income.⁵¹

ARAB SOCIALISM

Libya's official slogan since the revolution has been "Freedom, Socialism, and Unity." However, during the early years of the new regime, the attempt to fulfill this slogan's ideals met with only partial success. The country was able to free itself from direct foreign influence as represented by U.S. and British military bases, but within Libya there was no freedom for Libyans. Political movements of any type were tantamount to treason.

Unity is still a sacred goal to the majority of Arabs. With Nasser's help, Qaddafi was able, at least on paper, to make headway. As a professed Arab nationalist, the Libyan leader personified that aspiration, yet his fiery political temper and threats to Arab leaders who did not endorse his plans became a source of worry for those who did join him. It came as no surprise that within a few years after the death of Nasser in 1970, Arab countries that had united with Qaddafi—such as Sudan, Tunisia, Syria, and even Egypt—had second thoughts about their association with Libya. Nonetheless, Qaddafi's intentions were well received by the majority of Libyans.

The second part of the slogan was not applied in the Marxist sense of the term until 1977. Despite the cash at their disposal, Libyan leaders initially did pursue a policy of Libyan socialism. All developmental planning was under-

taken by the state in the form of five-year plans. Since the regime was initially reluctant to do away with the private sector, prior to 1977 there was a marked ambivalence in economic policies. Qaddafi permitted public and private sectors to operate simultaneously.⁵² Indeed, the private sector flourished under the regime to a degree never before witnessed, even during the monarchy. This fact was largely due to the Libyanization of commerce whereby only Libyans were allowed to register companies and business partnerships.⁵³

Private capital was given a free hand and was further bolstered by generous government loans and contracts. The charter drafted for the Arab Socialist Union allowed for "non-exploiting capitalists," yet it did not elaborate on what distinguishes an exploiting capitalist from a nonexploiting one. It appears that initially, Qaddafi saw the need for a private sector synchronized with the needs of the economy, and he thought that exploitation could be prevented by taxation.⁵⁴

The abundance of public corporations did not allow Libya to be a socialist state. The majority of these public corporations did not take any part in the developmental process, for they, unlike the companies of the private sector, were more dependent on imported capital goods and skilled managers. Public companies subcontracted all their development projects either to the private sector or, in most cases, to international companies. The process of development, as Ruth First noted, was characterized by the statist style of technocratic planning, where the state not only planned production but also actively intervened in it.⁵⁵ Although Qaddafi claimed that his system was Libyan socialism, it was difficult for many socialists to equate state intervention in planning and production with socialism. Qaddafi's political and economic planning and execution made it hard to categorize the Libyan state.

Nothing during the first three years of Qaddafi's rule indicated that he had any major plans for ruling post-revolutionary Libya. During the fourth year, however, three goals could be discerned—all patterned after those of the majority of Third World revolutions. First among them was the effacement of the majority of the "alien" values and structures of the deposed political system, as well as the reduction of the influence of traditional leaders.⁵⁶ The RCC was successful at uprooting alien values in a very short time since they had never taken a firm hold in traditional Libyan society. Reducing the influence of traditional leadership proved to be more difficult. Second, there was an attempt by the leader of the revolution to establish himself as a new charismatic leader. In this, Muammar al-Qaddafi was also successful initially. In addition to his youth and down-to-earth manner, both of which earned him support among the majority of the lower classes, his support for Islamic causes and promises to implement Islamic laws in Libya endeared him to the conserva-

tive and religious segments of society. The well-to-do classes were also pleased with Qaddafi because he neither nationalized their property as Nasser had done to Egypt's elite, nor did he restrict their attempts to acquire wealth. On the contrary, Qaddafi's first five-year economic plan for Libya provided an opportunity for all participants in the private sector to increase their wealth at a phenomenal rate.⁵⁷ Finally and most importantly, Qaddafi magnified his image as a revolutionary concerned with the well-being of the poor, the deprived, and the oppressed.

It was relatively easy for the new regime to repeal most of the constitution and establish martial law. While promising to institute Islamic law and the Sharia in the near future, the RCC replaced the traditional leaders whom it was able in one way or another to tie to the "negative" deeds of the old regime and bring to trial. Those who were not brought to trial were deposed, first through the process of zoning, and later on the grounds that they lacked education and a knowledge of modern governing techniques. Their replacements were appointed on the basis of their age and their propensity to mobilize and modernize as demonstrated in oral and written examinations. The same procedure was followed in dealing with the bureaucracy, which was totally revamped by the forced early retirement of the majority of senior civil servants.

The Libyan leadership had underestimated, however, the powers of the traditional elites and the degree of the average person's attachment to traditional values. For a number of reasons, the newly appointed leaders failed to command the respect or the following of those they were appointed to mobilize. The majority of the appointees did not have, in addition to high socioeconomic status, either the education and or the receptivity to change that are pivotal elements in leaders attempting to mobilize a traditional populace. Indeed, the respect and loyalty commanded by the traditional elites, and their ability to communicate, dwarfed the new modernizers, who came to be regarded as poor community leaders. More important was the reluctance of the RCC to delegate the necessary authority to these modernizers to allow them to accomplish their daily tasks. Because of this lack of trust in civilians on the part of Libya's leaders, no task, however simple, was carried out by these new bureaucrats before obtaining authorization from the RCC.⁵⁸ The paralysis that gripped the political and administrative systems prevented individual Libyans from carrying out even their simple daily chores. It was thus not surprising that the modernization espoused by the leadership in its new sociopolitical and economic objectives suffered to a point beyond repair because nothing had been modernized. Soon, despite the new slogans and accompanying revolutionary rhetoric, the daily affairs of Libyans were conducted along prerevolutionary lines as if no revolution had taken place.

Thus in the early days of the Libyan revolution, political and economic change was retarded by the incoherent and restrictive policies adopted by the ruling junta, and by an inherent opposition to change in Libyan society, a characteristic of all traditional developing societies. More pertinent to Libya than to other Third World countries was the fact that it was only natural for the average Libyan to question the need for change when he or she was doing so well. Billions of oil dollars infused into all sectors of the economy brought about so much wealth and opportunity that requests for the tightening of belts and saving for the future made no sense, at least not while the government was stuffing the average individual's pockets with far more than he or she could make use of in a lifetime.

The majority of Libyans understood the meaning of state authority. Throughout modern history, they have been subjected in one way or another to rule from above, some of which they readily accepted and some of which they rigorously opposed. The most successful rulers were those who did not directly interfere in individual daily lives but who remained powerful sources of arbitration rather than legislation.⁵⁹

While they understand authority, Libyans never seem to have had any respect for it outside of familial, tribal, or religious structures. Indeed, this attitude toward authority was reflected in the actions and policies of Libya's new leaders. Although tribal districts were reorganized to change the balance of power among tribes, each individual within the RCC maintained strong connections with his tribe and attempted to promote its well-being. While the declared policy of the RCC was anti-tribal, the actual policy indirectly promoted tribalism. The regime often encouraged the tribes to send delegations, letters, and telegrams of approval for various policies, such as the closing of the foreign bases or the expelling of the Italians and other acts undertaken to consolidate the regime's hold. In short, from 1969 through 1973 Libya was a country with a free-market economy and a quasi-tribal political system within a military framework.

SOCIALISM À LA MODE

Social Engineering

In assessing their record during the first four years in power, Libya's leaders appeared to be stunned by what they saw. Aside from the apparent progress resulting from oil income, the country was in shambles. Government policies had been instrumental in building houses, factories, roads, hospitals, schools, and other infrastructure, yet, much of this development was haphazard and did not conform to any serious development plan." That was to be expected

since the government of General Qaddafi had no clear set of developmental priorities. The state of affairs must have posed an ideological dilemma for the Libyan leadership. Their affinity to Nasserism prompted a halfhearted implementation of certain aspects of Nasserite economic policies as well as Egypt's political structure, the Arab Socialist Union. While Nasserism may have been popular as an ideology among Libyans, it lost its popularity when that ideology was actually implemented. The choice facing the Libyan leadership was whether to continue duplicating the Egyptian experiment or to develop an alternative set of principles that would make the Libyans more amenable to change by first encouraging their involvement in the decision-making process and then by handing them the difficult task of helping themselves. What was adopted was a combination of the two: a solution that reflected the unsettled divisions within the RCC.

The RCC was divided early as to what route the revolution should take. It is very difficult to judge the values of these revolutionary elite, but given their background, demographic origin, education, relative family status, religious fervor, and their individual statements, one is able to discern a set of common values.⁶⁰ In *Political Development and Social Change in Libya*, el-Fathaly and Palmer identify seven important values of the elites that had crystallized during the second year of the revolution: preservation of the revolution, anti-imperialism, Arab leadership, modernization, populism, religiosity, and militarism.⁶¹ The degree of commitment to these values by individual members of the RCC was unclear because the majority of Libyans were not exposed to the thinking of individual RCC members, only to the collective thinking as presented by General Qaddafi, the moving force behind the ruling body. Indeed, the few who did speak in public demonstrated a poor command of the Arabic language, a lack of coherent thought and ideas, and an inability to say anything save a regurgitation of what Qaddafi had said. They all lacked charisma as well as ideas and hence failed to command the attention of the crowds they addressed. In short, they were overshadowed by Qaddafi's personality and oratory skills. It was thus only natural for Qaddafi to emerge as the apparent theoretician of the revolution. His theories were put into practice on April 16, 1973, the Prophet Mohamad's 1,402nd birthday. In a speech at the city of Zwara, he imposed a five-point program that initiated the first cultural revolution:

1. all existing laws must be replaced by revolutionary enactments designed to produce the necessary revolutionary change.
2. the weeding out of all minds from society by taking appropriate measures towards perverts and deviationists.
3. the staying of an administrative revolution so as to get rid of all forms of bourgeoisie and bureaucracy.
4. the setting up of popular committees whereby the people might proceed to seize power. This was meant to insure freedom for the people against the bu-

reaucrats and opportunists. 5. the staging of a cultural revolution so as to get rid of all imported poisonous ideas and fuse the people's genuine moral and material potentialities.⁶²

Ruth First has analyzed that period of the Libyan revolution and came up with some interesting conclusions:

Within days of the speech, two overlaying waves of arrests took place. In some instances individuals were denounced by Popular Committees, but the majority of arrests were carried out by secret police. University lecturers, lawyers, and writers, employees of government ministries, including the attorney general's office and the Tripoli Chamber of Commerce, younger members of prominent coastal families—most of them seemingly individuals identified in the past with Marxist, Ba'thist, Muslim Brotherhood or other political circles—were seized. There had never been any suggestion that "factional" organization existed; the persecution was aimed at those who had not succeeded in identifying with the regime's system of state-run politics. The cultural revolution was against people who "propagate poisonous ideas" alien to the Islamic origins of the Libyan people. The political prisoners were held incommunicado. Unofficial circles calculated that there had been as many as a thousand persons arrested; thus, at the rate of one in prison for every 20,000 Libyans, made the country the most politically confined in the world.⁶³

El-Fathaly and Palmer, on the other hand, maintain:

Libya's popular revolution, it should be noted, showed little of the destructive anarchy that accompanied the Red Guard phase of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Rather, in its Libyan application, the popular revolution became a careful first step toward popular involvement. Heads rolled only in the figurative sense that substantial numbers of managers and bureaucrats found their position of status and authority considerably diminished. There was neither bloodshed nor mass arrests. In fact, the Libyan cultural revolution was far closer to Yugoslavian and Algerian experiments in worker self-management than to its Chinese namesake. More specifically it was to become an experiment in popular self-administration.⁶⁴

The primary objective of the Libyan cultural revolution was mass mobilization and mass participation. General Qaddafi had hoped that, as was the case in China, such an experiment would force the majority of the stagnant population to arise and destroy the traditional centers of power in the state and replace them with popular rule as manifested by the people's committees. However, contrary to the Chinese experiment, the Libyan regime had no cen-

tral political party to take the lead in implementing such a program. All political parties were banned when the RCC came to power. To remedy that deficiency, the RCC used members of the only legal institution in the country, the Libyan Arab Socialist Union (LASU), to initiate the process. Steering committees in each district or zone of LASU were entrusted with overseeing and regulating the takeover of all ministries, bureaucracy, private and foreign companies, schools, and all other existing governmental and nongovernmental bodies. The steering committees were also charged with organizing and supervising the formation of transitional preparatory committees. These preparatory committees, in turn, accepted nominations from members of their zones for the available seats on the popular committees. Once a popular committee was chosen, it assumed the power of the corresponding steering committee of the district, until all the steering committees in the country as well as the LASU itself were assimilated in the new order. In the new scheme of things, the role of the steering committees of the LASU became one of administering the selection and recall of popular committees. El-Fathaly and Palmer explain that "Individuals selected to serve on the preparatory committees were generally teachers, principals, and local government employees; in other words, individuals of some stature, but not members of the traditional local elite structure."⁶⁵

Elections were normally held in large open spaces, where, after accepting the nomination, each nominee had a chance to identify himself or herself and explain in a short speech why he or she was fit for the post. The voting was accomplished by a show of hands rather than closed ballot. The names of those running and the number of votes each had garnered were submitted to the steering committee of the LASU. After the candidates' selection, every zone's popular committee elected from within itself a chairperson and two other members to serve on two other popular committees in the hierarchy: the municipal and provincial popular committees.

Each of Libya's approximately forty-six municipalities oversaw a different number of zones. Every municipality had special occupational committees for teachers, lawyers, farmers, engineers, and other specialized groups. The municipal education popular committee was, for example, made up of representatives from the various schools' elected popular committees. The committee selected to represent the various schools' popular committees also sent a representative to the provincial popular committee. The same was true of all other occupational committees. Once constituted, both the municipal and provincial popular committees became independent bodies, each responsible for its own affairs: the municipal for municipal affairs and the provincial for provincial affairs. Moreover, they each elected chairpersons who became the mayor and governor respectively. Members of popular committees served for no more

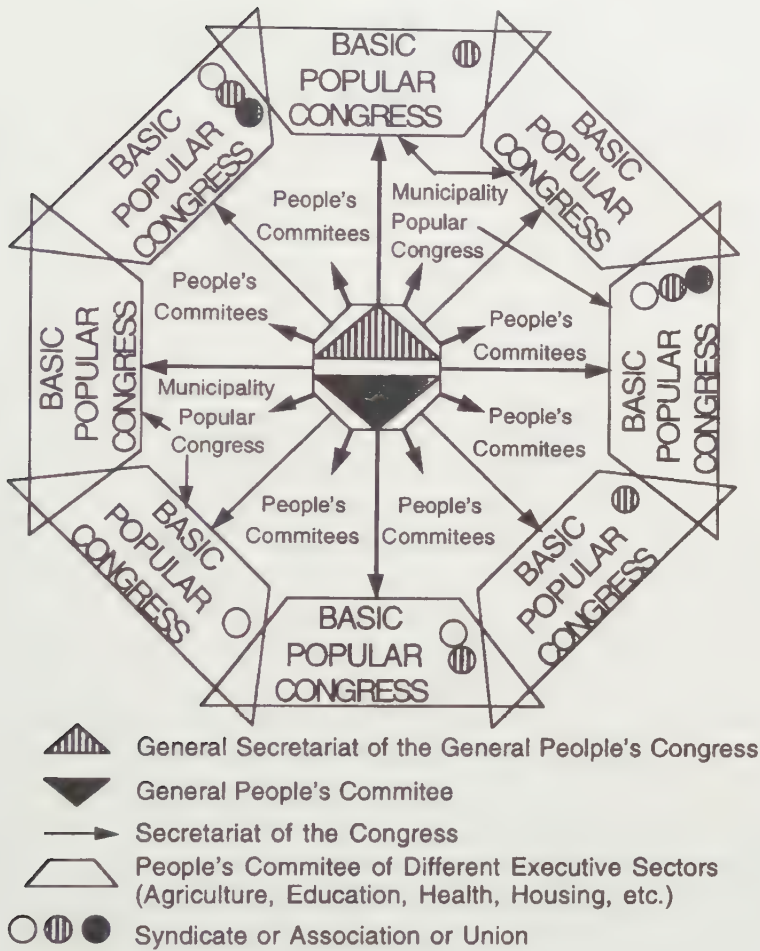


Figure 3.1. The Authority of the People

than two years, and they could be recalled at any time. Indeed, General Qaddafi encouraged the recall of committees as a means, in the words of el-Fathaly and Palmer, of "assuring that committees reclaimed their revolutionary vigor and were not infiltrated by undesirable elements."⁶⁶ It was era of experimentation, and thus there was no particular set of guidelines for appointment or recall. As few as twenty people were able to force the steering committee of the LASU to form a new preparatory committee to organize new selections.

Obviously, the whole process of popular committee formation was chaotic at best. However, it was controlled chaos: while the top leaders remained firmly in command, they encouraged violent shifts and changes to occur haphaz-

ardly throughout the lower strata of Libyan society. There was no doubt that political and social mobilization far exceeded the expectations of the Libyan leadership. A large number of young, educated Libyans took part in the process and assumed positions of authority that ideally would have enabled them to effect profound political and economic change.

That, however, was not the case. These new modernizers were not able to change much because the regime was unwilling to delegate power to the institutions they ran. Chairs of the popular committees were held accountable for political decisions and economic programs they had neither initiated nor were able to change. Rarely afforded the chance to act independently, they had to refer all important matters to the RCC. When some of these modernizers did take independent action and make decisions without consulting higher committees or the RCC, they ran into conflicts with their districts' steering committees of the LASU. With no official guidelines to differentiate the authority and responsibility of the LASU from that of the popular committees, conflicts arose about who should do what, when, how, and most importantly, how much. The only legislation and plans for action were embedded in General Qaddafi's speeches and in RCC decrees. And although the speeches had more validity than the RCC decrees because Qaddafi's word was law, the decrees were more precise in articulating goals and ways of achieving them. As General Qaddafi's speeches tended to encompass many conflicting decrees, the country stood still until a written explanation of what the Libyan leader meant was distributed to the various governmental agencies and published in the official press.

The process of election and legislation was the first fundamental ideological change in postrevolutionary Libya. This transformation marked a shift from a professed Nasserite system to a more local, idiosyncratic one. The new system affected the Libyan economy most of all. Libya's only export commodity was oil. In internal economic development the service sector emerged more powerful than either the agricultural or the industrial sectors, which the government controlled. Four years of plentiful interest-free, very long-term credit, as well as free land and the absence of import tariffs, encouraged a great number of local businessmen to import products to sell or to construct small industrial plants to produce simple consumer goods. Local production became particularly attractive to new entrepreneurs as the government protected local businesses by placing higher tariffs on, and in some cases limiting, imports that competed with locally produced commodities. Most attractive was the abundant and cheap foreign labor that poured into Libya from Egypt, Tunisia, Pakistan, India, Saharan Africa, and the Philippines.

The cultural revolution put an end to this economic activity. In compliance with the revolution's slogan of "partners, not wage-workers," all companies employing laborers were forced to relinquish fifty percent of their ownership

to the workers, who, in return, were required to form popular committees and run the companies. Thus came not only the bureaucratization of yet another important sector of Libya's economy and an anticipated decrease in local production of goods, but also an end to the development of local industrial entrepreneurship.⁶⁷

The Reign of Terror: *Déjà Vu*

The second stage of the "authority of the people," or the cultural revolution, began in 1975 and lasted until 1978. By 1975, Libya's leaders had found that while their decrees did achieve a noticeable increase in social mobilization and political participation, the activity was taking on an amorphous life of its own. Popular committees were instituted and then removed for a variety of reasons, many of which had nothing to do with politics, economics, or efficiency. Moreover, due to a lack of clear ideological guidelines, problems arose among popular committees and, more importantly, between popular committees and steering committees of the LASU. The bickering was to a large degree the result of jurisdictional overlapping and the lack of a defined role for each organization.

From its inception the cultural revolution had precipitated disputes within the RCC. A number of RCC members were opposed to the severe social and political turmoil brought about by Qaddafi's new experiment. Until the turmoil, there had been a certain degree of elitist cohesion within the RCC. Values were complementary, and responsibility was delegated among the ruling body's members. However, Qaddafi's attempts to impose his vision ended the cohesion and brought about intense conflicts within the RCC. Opposition to the Libyan leader finally manifested itself in coups led by two of his colleagues, and the withdrawal of two others from the ruling body.⁶⁸ All who remained were those amenable to accepting the General's means and ends. The failed coup also served as an opportunity for the victorious faction of the RCC to purge the armed forces of dissent. Twenty-one junior officers were arrested, court-martialed, and summarily executed by firing squad. The executions were accompanied by a purge of the armed forces; sensitive posts were allotted to close personal acquaintances of General Qaddafi or to members of his immediate family or tribe.

With all dissent quelled and the country firmly under his control, Qaddafi had free hand to shape the country's future. Before 1975, the newly created institutions were still too weak to be used to impose radical political and economic changes. The new environment provided Qaddafi with all the power he needed to impose change.

Having dispensed with the opposition in Libya, General Qaddafi turned to remedy what he considered to be Libya's political, economic, and social ills.

His solutions to all these problems were manifested in the three segments of *The Green Book*, which he wrote. Part I, entitled "The Solution to the Problem of Democracy, the 'Authority of the People,'" provided what Qaddafi perceived to be the answer to the problems of democracy: "*The Green Book* presents the final solution to the problem of the instrument of governing. All political systems in the world today are the product of the struggle for power between instruments of governing. The struggle may be peaceful or armed, such as the conflict of classes, sects, tribes, parties or individuals. The result is always the victory of an instrument of governing—be it an individual, group, party or class, and the defeat of the people, i.e., the defeat of genuine democracy." Qaddafi further asserted:

Political struggle that results in the victory of a candidate with 51 percent of the votes leads to a dictatorial governing body disguised as a false democracy, since 49 percent of the electorate is ruled by an instrument of governing they did not vote for, but which was imposed upon them. This is dictatorship. Besides, this political conflict may produce a governing body that represents only a minority, for when votes are distributed among several candidates, one of them polls more than any other candidate. But if the votes polled by those who received less are added up, they can constitute an overwhelming majority. However, the candidate with the fewer votes wins and his success is regarded as legitimate and democratic! In actual fact, dictatorship is established under the cover of false democracy. Thus is the reality of the political systems prevailing in the world today. They are dictatorial systems and it seems clear that they falsify genuine democracy.⁶⁹

The solution to these problems, according to *The Green Book*, is the establishment of a popular democracy devoid of classes, elites, political parties, and all other forms of "false representation."

The first cultural revolution went a long way toward providing the political basis for such a system. The existing "revolutionary" framework was modified along lines described in *The Green Book*. The first organizational victim of this structural reorganization was the Libyan Arab Socialist Union (LASU). It was categorized as a redundant structure that hampered the smooth operation of popular committees. A more important reason for abolishing the LASU was the institution's propensity for creating new political elites, a propensity the regime wanted to eliminate before it took hold.

The Green Book provided for the reorganization of the existing system. In 1975, Libya's government was organized at three different levels: zone, municipality, and nation. All zones chose a popular committee from its membership, the chairs of which also served as members in the individual municipal-

ity or branch municipality in which these zones were located. A zone committee was entrusted with settling minor disputes and with serving as a link between the zone and the municipality.

The municipality included administrative and legislative bodies, the branch popular committee, and the basic people's congress. As el-Fathaly and Palmer explain:

The basic people's congress is designed to serve as the legislative body at the branch municipality level. Its members consist of all residents of the branch meeting collectively. The basic people's congress meets quarterly. Its functions include electing a chairman and selecting five members to serve as the branch popular committee. The basic people's congress also makes recommendations and decisions relevant to the needs of the branch municipality and debates the agenda of the General People's Congress which is provided in advance by Colonel Qaddafi. The messengers of the basic people's congress sent to the General People's Congress are usually the chairmen of the basic people's congress and the branch popular committee. Finally, the basic people's congress also serves as a watchdog of the activities of the branch popular committee and the administrative agencies working in its area of jurisdiction.⁷⁰

The third leg of this administrative triad was the General People's Congress (GPC). That body, which met annually, was made up of messengers from the various basic people's congresses. It had no legislative powers, since most legislation was made at the municipality or basic people's congress level, and it merely acted as a coordinator, tabulating and shaping the various recommendations and decisions made at the local level, as presented by the messengers. From the GPC, three agencies were elected by show of hand: the Permanent General Secretariat, the General Popular Committee, and the General Secretariat. The first of these agencies represented the highest executive authority in the country and its chairperson was theoretically Libya's head of state. The General Popular Committee was composed of the various elected ministers, who were first nominated by General Qaddafi. That agency was composed of twenty-two secretariats. It not only headed the bureaucracy but also was the overseer of the administrative committees at the local level.

The third of the agencies selected by the GPC was the General Secretariat. This agency was entrusted with planning and organizing the annual meetings of the GPC, preparing its agendas, soliciting its comments, and tabulating and reviewing the GPC members' comments. Finally, it was responsible for preparing the final text of the annual meeting. That agency, while important, was not permanent and was subject to review annually. Its new pyramidal structure was composed of approximately 1,000 delegates from the basic congresses,

popular committees, and syndicate associations, together with the remaining members of the RCC, which was abolished in 1975. Following the policies laid out in *The Green Book*, General Qaddafi abolished the RCC as the highest governing authority in Libya and replaced it with the General Secretariat of the Congress, which he filled with his former colleagues in the RCC. General Qaddafi himself chaired this body.

Theoretically institution-building in Libya could have been very successful. On paper, the structures provided the opportunity for a large segment of the population to participate. Moreover, the new institutions could have enabled a wider segment of the population to actively involve itself in local government and even to voice its opinion on national and international issues. Yet, for all its positive theoretical attributes, the new system exhibited notable defects when it was actually applied in Libyan society.

First among these defects was fragmentation. Inadvertently or otherwise, there was too much stress, in the words of el-Fathaly and Palmer, on "localistic particularism at the expense of developing a view of a common interest."⁷¹ Trying to satisfy the needs of so many municipalities only produced resolutions and laws that satisfy no one. Second, the inability of the national centers of power to keep tabs on all the matters of *who*, *how* and *where* necessitated high-handed policy decisions from the top. Third, the new system was unable to define the relationships among the various popular committees, the leaders of the basic congresses, civil servants, and political activists inside the popular committees. Thus the power was transferred from all the local institutions to agencies at the national level. That was not a surprising move, since none of those committees was meant to have any power but was to act only as messengers who conveyed the "people's will."

A far more serious problem was nonparticipation. General Qaddafi made it clear from the beginning that the main purpose of popular committees was to "weed out" those who did not conform to his thinking. Those people who would not so conform and who saw no way to express their alternative views simply did not participate. Apathy in Libyan society increased the number of nonparticipants. According to Blenhot and Monastiri, until 1978 the percentage of absenteeism in basic congresses ranged from thirty to fifty percent.⁷²

Many of these problems were to be expected since the new system faced monumental obstacles due to tribalism, fragmentation, illiteracy, and a general backwardness that would have frustrated any modernizer. Most frustrating perhaps were the attempts at imposing a system that relied heavily on conformity in a society that was by nature nonconformist to new ideas. Those attempts resulted in the use of draconian policies to pass major legislation. The new system was an extremely rigid one that allowed no middle-of-the-road policies, its proponents fearing that any compromise would threaten both

its validity and its ability to function. It acted much like a tribal system: any individual who did not conform to it became an outcast and, therefore, was not allowed to share in the benefits the system had to offer. As Raymond A. Hinnebusch has written, "as institutions of participation, as a system of accepted channels and procedures for making decisions and recruiting leaders, universally open to Libyans, the structures Qaddafi has built remain fragile and defective. They remain very much the creatures of the leader who can change the rules of participation at will and can hardly be held accountable in any formal way. They remain virtually closed to those who cannot accept the goals and norms of the system as he has defined them."⁷³

Indeed, Qaddafi's insistence on conformity caused a number of problems. First, as Ruth First says, a rigid ideology "suffocates any political thought or action not initiated by the state"⁷⁴ and therefore contradicts the state's espousal of participation. Second and more serious, politically conscious Libyan intellectuals found either no role or a very limited one to play in the nation-building—a fact that has been evident in the growing number of Libyan dissidents residing in countries around the globe. Most of these Libyan émigrés, now number well over a hundred thousand in number, are university graduates and civil servants who found the system too "stifling" to remain within it.

A final problem inherent in the system in Libya, and one that led to a third internal revolution there, was the inability of the leadership to keep in touch with local governance, especially in the absence of a political party. According to General Qaddafi, in *The Green Book*, "the party system aborts democracy" and therefore "to make a party you split society." As Qaddafi wrote:

The party is the contemporary dictatorship. It is the modern dictatorship. It is the modern dictatorial instrument of governing. The party is the rule of a part over the whole. It is the latest dictatorial instrument. As the party is not individual, it exercises a sham democracy through establishing parliaments and committees and through the propaganda of its members. The party is not a democratic instrument at all because it is composed of people who have common interests, a common outlook or a common culture; or who belong to the same locality or have the same belief. They form a party to achieve their ends, impose their outlooks or extend the hold of their belief on the society as a whole. A party's aim is to achieve power under the pretext of carrying out its program. And yet, democratically, none of these parties should govern the whole people because of the diversity of interests, ideas, temperaments, localities and beliefs, which constitute the people's identity. The party is a dictatorial instrument of governing that enables those with one outlook

and a common interest to rule the people as a whole. Compared with the people, that party is a minority.⁷⁵

Realizing this deficiency, General Qaddafi decided to establish a vanguard in the form of revolutionary committees responsible only to him. The creation of this vanguard coincided with the application of the second part of *The Green Book* in 1978 in the government's dealing with economics in what came to be known as the second cultural revolution and the establishment of the "state of the masses."

Après Moi le Déluge

This stage in Libyan development dealt with transforming the then semi-laissez-faire economic system into a socialist one. In accordance with *The Green Book* slogan "partners, not wage-workers," the management of all economic enterprises relying on workers to run them was taken over by the workers. By having control over the means of production, Qaddafi maintained, workers would be able to shatter the bonds of slavery that the employer-employee relationship embodied. "The wage-worker," he declared, "is like a slave to the master who hires him. He is ever a temporary slave, since his slavery lasts as long as he works for wages from the employer, whether the latter is an individual or a state."⁷⁶

General Qaddafi's prescription for the problem as he saw it was as easy and straightforward as the problem. In his usual simplistic fashion, he wrote: "The ultimate solution is to abolish the wage system, emancipate man from his bondage and return to the natural laws which defined relationships before the emergence of classes, forms of government and man-made laws." In the new system, the workers ran each individual enterprise and shared in its profits. According to General Qaddafi, production would, in the final analysis, conform to the principle that "He who produces is the one who consumes."⁷⁷

The second problem that General Qaddafi dealt with in *The Green Book* was "need." Citing the traditional sayings "A person in need is a slave indeed" and "In need freedom is latent," the Libyan ideologue delineated three needs that have been, according to Qaddafi, the primary causes of exploitation. The first of these needs was a dwelling, which Qaddafi understood as basic for "both the individual and the family." "Therefore," he declared, "it should not be owned by others": "No one has the right to build a house, additional to his own and that of his heirs, for the purpose of renting it, because the house represents another person's need, and building it for the purpose of rent is an attempt to have control over the need of that man and 'In Need Freedom is Latent.'"⁷⁸ The solution put forward by *The Green Book* was very simple: it made all renters the owners of the houses they occupied.

Income was the second element of need defined by the Libyan leader: "The income is an imperative need for man. Thus the income of any man in the society should not be a wage from any source or a charity from anyone. For there are no wage-workers in the socialist society, only partners. Your income is a form of private ownership. You manage it by yourself either to meet your needs or to share in the production, where you are one of its main factors. Your share will not be used as a wage paid for any person in return for production." And the final need defined by *The Green Book* was a vehicle or means of transportation: "The vehicle is a necessity both to the individual and the family. Your vehicle should not be owned by others. In the socialist society no man or any other authority can possess private vehicles for the purpose of hiring them out, for this is a domination of the needs of others."⁷⁹

Land in General Qaddafi's scheme was "no one's property" and thus belonged to all. Its tenancy hinged on its use by those occupying it. In essence then, the new economic system was based on defined needs and individual endeavor: "Under the new experiment you work for yourself to satisfy your needs rather than exploiting others to work for you, in order to satisfy yours at their expense, or working to plunder the needs of others. It is the theory of the liberation of needs in order to emancipate man."⁸⁰

This theme of individual work is consistent throughout the second part of *The Green Book*, also manifesting itself in the concept of household: the new system forbade the hiring of domestic servants and thus forced individuals to do their own housework. In short, Qaddafi declared, "The Third Universal Theory is a herald to the masses announcing the final salvation from all fathers of injustice, despotism, exploitation and economic and political hegemony. It has the purpose of establishing the society of all people, where all men are free and equal in authority, wealth and arms, so that freedom may gain the final and complete triumph."⁸¹

The first two parts of *The Green Book*, according to General Qaddafi, served as a basis for the establishment of the *jamahiriya* (state of the masses) society.⁸² Neither volume claims to be holistic but only to serve as a foundation. The Libyan leader emphasized that analyzing *The Green Book* by itself was not enough for understanding his theory, which he believed was better explained by a series of domestic and international symposia. What was certain was that most of the explanations underwent constant change as a result of the incremental application of Qaddafi's theory.

The *jamahiriya* spelled drastic political and economic change. A number of goals were set and policies for achieving them were implemented: "Wealth must be destroyed, exploitation by Marxist or Capitalist government must be ended. Wealth must be possessed by people, not private companies, feudalist establishments, or exploitative and opportunistic classes. The opportunist classes

must be destroyed and wealth must be distributed equally among individuals. The oppressive relationship between man and man must be destroyed. Man must not enslave his fellow being; there must be no rent or lease, nor trade for profit."⁸³

Implementing policies to achieve these goals meant the nullification of all previous policies established by the revolution. Hardest hit perhaps was the class of entrepreneurs that the revolution had taken great pains to establish during the first four years after the overthrow of the monarchy. Indeed, after 1978, employment was restricted to three categories: government employees, corporate employees, and self-employed workers. Government employees, like those elsewhere in the world, manned the bureaucracy, the civil service, and other governmental agencies. Corporate employees were members of corporations which theoretically were semiautonomous, with self-generated revenues. However, since there was no apparent production, almost all of these corporations had to rely heavily on government subsidies for income. The self-employed, including all those with vocational training, were limited: they were not allowed to "hire" any help and thus had to do all of the work themselves—a restriction that, of course, put a cap on their incomes.

REVOLUTIONARY LEGITIMACY

Perhaps the most interesting concept that has emerged in the past few years in Libyan politics is "revolutionary legitimacy." This concept is constantly used to justify actions or edicts that at first glance might appear to contradict *The Green Book*. Libya has no durable constitution: all of its laws were dissolved by an RCC edict in 1969. The constitution was replaced by a series of changing revolutionary controls in 1973, 1978, 1984, 1989, and 1992. *The Green Book* does not provide answers for even a fraction of the daily problems that confront the country both internally and externally. Furthermore, General Qaddafi has in the past few years dissociated himself from any formal position in the government while retaining the positions of "leader of the revolution" and "chief of the armed forces." He has taken for himself the role of the "Grand Legislator" to see that the "will of the people" is served in accordance with his thoughts as outlined in *The Green Book*.⁸⁴

A major problem, obvious as early as the mid-1970s, was how to implement Qaddafi's thoughts "correctly." As the situation stood then, too few people made too many decisions, and in the final analysis, whenever there was any controversy on how to handle even the smallest of situations, everything was frozen until an explanation or an answer to the inquiry was handed down by Qaddafi himself. He needed a political party, yet he had banned political parties. Indeed—as the many posters and billboards in every Libyan city, town,

and village emphasized—even the *contemplation* of establishing or belonging to any political party was treason.

What thus emerged was not only logical but also quite innovative. Qaddafi decided to establish revolutionary committees, which, in addition to reporting directly to him, also served as preservers of the revolution. In fact, using *The Green Book* as a guide, the revolutionary committees were entrusted with ruling the country. They assumed the responsibility for revolutionizing the society and arresting, prosecuting, and executing their enemies. They were set up in all state-run institutions, including the armed forces, to supervise revolutionary mobilization in the “new jamahiriya society” or the state of the masses. Indeed, in 1978 Libya witnessed what Karl Marx termed the “withering away of the state.”

No one in the country, save the General, was immune from the harassment of revolutionary committees. Even Abdulsalam Jalloud, long thought of as the General's sidekick and an influential member of the Revolutionary Command Council, was no match for them. While heading the committees he tried in 1982 to exert some control over them and their “excesses,” which had included publicly hanging individuals. Not only were his orders ignored and rejected, but in a show of force some revolutionary committee leaders arrested his relatives and eliminated his supporters from within their ranks. Today Jalloud has been marginalized and stripped of his power, both by these committees and by General Qaddafi, to whom they directly report. Little is heard of him since he was replaced in influence by Qaddafi's brother-in-law Abdula al-Sanusi, as well as other less prominent figures such as Ibrahim al-Bishari, Abdulsalam al-Zadmah, Saeed Khishah, and Musa Kawsah, among others.

Structurally, revolutionary committees were parallel to the people's committees. For every people's committee a revolutionary committee was instituted, yet none of the revolutionary committees has any official function. Each is semi-autonomous and is responsible for implementing the General's thoughts in its particular area of control. The aim of these committees, according to General Qaddafi, is to weed out all those with links to the past and instill in them the revolutionary fervor, to impose *The Green Book* and other revolutionary programs, to end absenteeism, and finally to insure that national needs prevail over regional or local needs.⁸⁵

In certain ways General Qaddafi has made the revolutionary committees official guardians of the Libyan revolution. Their responsibilities, as outlined by el-Fathaly and Palmer, are: “1-Bringing to the attention of the basic people's congress those issues that may have been overlooked in their deliberations; 2-Suggesting that certain decisions or recommendations made by a basic people's congress be reconsidered in light of those national priorities stressed in Colo-

nel Qaddafi's speeches; and 3-Focusing the attention of the masses on the recalcitrant behavior of various individuals and groups, including officers of the basic people's congresses and members of the popular committees. The members of the revolutionary committees were to become the true cadres of the revolution."⁸⁶

Since their inception by self-proclaimed revolutionaries, these committees have evolved into the real force in Libyan politics. They have since become the main and in some cases the only link between the leadership and the masses. Reporting directly to General Qaddafi, who occasionally meets with them individually and en masse, these committees usually have the final say in matters ranging from what is taught in schools and universities to who is nominated for positions on the popular committees at the people's congresses levels. They have evolved into a filter, the aim of which is to remove nonrevolutionary elements from all positions in Libyan government.

Despite these committees of every type, the system still remains fragile and dependent on direct control by General Qaddafi. Even the revolutionary committees have no life of their own, and they were not intended to have any; they will survive only as long as the "revolutionary guide and protector," General Qaddafi, is in power. The decentralized system of "direct democracy" he has created over the past decade has not only imprisoned him within its confines but has made it almost impossible for the General to detach himself from it without the whole structure's collapsing.

General Qaddafi, or the "thinker of the revolution" as he likes to refer to himself, has created what he claims to be a practical and novel system. More than two decades of Qaddafi's rule have demonstrated that the Third International Theory, while novel, is inapplicable. He will continue to be the preeminent figure in his revolution, its single guide and the final source of legislation. Qaddafi himself has often described his revolution as an experiment, and perhaps history should judge it on that basis alone.

Four

Economic Growth and Wealth Distribution

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Libya achieved independence on December 24, 1951, at the height of the cold war, after a series of diplomatic jousts between the world powers. The colonial experience and ensuing World War II had by then brought to a halt all forms of agricultural and semi-industrial production in the country. Colonialism was particularly harsh in the case of Libya. Italy had succeeded in isolating the indigenous Arab population, depriving it of both its traditional means of subsistence and any benefits that colonialism might have brought.

Italy hoped to settle landless Italian peasants from the Mezzogiorno, the poorest region of Italy, in Libya. To the majority of these peasants the harsh and rigorous lives they were to lead in Africa came as no surprise.¹ So the Fascists confiscated 225,000 hectares of the most fertile land on which they settled over 100,000 Italians.² The local population was excluded from the settlements that housed the new conquerors, since there was little need for Libyan labor. The Agrarian Colonization Corporations, which ran the farms, initially used Italians as hired workers, later making them part owners of the land and, finally, full owners after twenty years.³ The colonial policy of pushing Libyans off their land threatened the livelihood of the Libyan farmer and, in addition, hurt the traditionally nomadic Bedouins. Sheep, the Bedouins' sole means of subsistence, were, according to United Nations Commissioner Adrian Pelt, decimated. Large numbers of sheep died when driven to the southern desert pasturelands, where there was less grass and frequent drought.⁴

Local nonagricultural production also suffered greatly from competition provided by government-subsidized, cheaper Italian goods. Primitive local manufacturing of agricultural products, along with local handicrafts, came to a halt as a result of competition by new agricultural processing and small consumer goods plants set up for the benefit of the Italian settlers. In addition to being isolated from agricultural and industrial activities, Libyans were also kept as far as possible from government. Except for the lowest clerical and

manual levels, virtually all government and industrial jobs were reserved for Italians.

Thus it was only natural that the most serious problem facing post-independence Libya was the virtual nonexistence of an educated and trained labor force. The indigenous population had practically no access to education or public health services. All forms of middle and secondary education, as well as technical training, were prohibited to Libyans, a situation leaving the country ill-equipped for self-government. This inability to produce an educated, trained cadre capable of shaping both a modern society and a responsive government persisted in Libya well into the 1950s, even after a decade of vigorous programs offering technical assistance from foreign-aid agencies. That dismal state of affairs led to the World Bank Mission's "characteristically" restrained comment that "As a result of no fault of its own, Libya has remained heavily dependent on foreign administration and technical personnel, and the training of Libyans to replace them is still the most difficult of all problems associated with economic development."⁵

Due to the primitive nature of local Libyan agriculture, yields were low or high in accordance with rainfall and land fertility. The efficient and technically advanced Italian agriculture was more successful but at the expense of Libya's marginal water and soil resources. Furthermore, not only were the Italians' methods environmentally destructive and thus shortsighted; they were also unprofitable: Italian agriculture in Libya depended for its existence on generous subsidies from Rome, which could have been withdrawn at any time. Indeed, Italian financial losses in both Libya and Ethiopia far exceeded any tangible gains that the Italians might have made during the whole period of colonization.⁶ As early as 1916, only four years after the Italian invasion, Carlton J. H. Hayes wrote: "Supporting troops in Libya was tremendously expensive; it was said to cost something like \$200,000 a day. The total expense of acquiring the new colony soon surpassed \$200,000,000; and in addition, new millions had to be spent on harbor improvements, docks, and railways before Libya could become a valuable possession. Some parts of Libya are indeed fertile and fruitful; but most of the interior was little more than an expanse of desert not at all adapted to colonization."⁷

Like the colonial one preceding it, the post-independence economy had to rely on foreign subsidies to make up for its deficits. According to Benjamin Higgins, in a study sponsored by the United Nations and the United States in 1953, it had been customary for the Libyan economy to operate at a deficit.⁸ That fact is further born out in a report by the Ministry of National Economy.⁹ According to both reports, all public utilities, along with railways, ports, and gas-works, were operating at a loss. Most of the light industry and farms set up by the Italians were also operating at a loss, as were the wheat- and to-

tabacco-growing experiments in the eastern and western parts of Libya. The task of financing the deficit was undertaken by a number of agencies for overseas aid from 1950 until 1961, when oil revenues emerged as the major source of income for the Libyan government.¹⁰ During that period, little emphasis was placed on industrial production by any of the international benefactors due to the limited pool of educated workers, let alone skilled ones. Greater emphasis was placed by those agencies on the implementation of programs dealing with public works and more efficient agricultural development. The greatest problem which existed then, and which still persists today, is the attitude of most Libyans toward work. Benjamin Higgins was not far off the mark in writing that Libyans have been "conditioned by centuries of foreign rule, the vagaries of the climate, recurrent droughts, malnutrition, and an emphasis on contentment rather than an emphasis on material accumulation. Ordinary income incentives do not seem to be completely effective in persuading Libyans to work harder, longer or better. Yet if Libyan productivity is to rise significantly, some incentives must be found to increase the quality of effort expended."¹¹

Libya's ability to produce enough to maintain, at minimum, a constant standard of living became the first major goal of all foreign agencies. During the first few post-independence years, planning, skills, and capital were all foreign. The Libyan Economic Planning Committee (LEPC) set a course for economic development that addressed those needs, teaching Libyans to become more productive and to work more efficiently. For example the First Development Plan (1952–57) proposed by the LEPC emphasized training, education, agricultural research, and the repair of public works and utilities. Planners hoped that by increasing productivity, the agricultural sector, which employs the most Libyans, would also prosper. The majority of experts believed that it would be far more advisable to teach Libyans to be productive at their customary work than to teach them anything new. They all advised that the country, as Higgins put it, "has one major untapped resource: the latent skill of its people. Raising the productivity of the Libyan economy must consist largely of improving the productive methods used by the people in their present occupations. The emphasis in the plan is accordingly on teaching Libyans to do better what they are already doing."¹²

Prior to the discovery of oil, Libya had no significant industrial base. It produced only semi-industrial, agricultural-related goods such as tobacco, olive oil, and dates, and traditional textiles, such as carpets and blankets. Many of those products were exported along with tiles, brick products, limestone, and animal hides. For a number of years after independence, the major exportable item of any worth was scrap metal collected from the remains of abandoned military equipment left by the Europeans during World War II.

Congressional documents show that Libyan officials regarded their country's sole asset to be its strategic location.¹³ Most officials, including the prime ministers of the pre-oil period, believed that they should capitalize on this principal asset. To the defense-minded U.S., acquiring bases was not a commercial enterprise, but to resource-starved Libya, the granting of military bases to the Western powers *was* a commercial enterprise. The first independent Libyan government made it clear from the beginning that the idea of a Libyan contribution to the collective defense of the "Free World" was "sentimental" at best. Libya's poverty required the lease of its base rights at a fair price to insure national survival. Thus—even though Libya supported the United States, "whose lack of colonial aspiration endeared it to Libya"—it could not afford to be sentimental and give away its base rights.¹⁴ During the early 1950s, defense against French or British "aggression" was much more comprehensible to the average Libyan than defense against Soviet imperialism, which was scarcely understood and seldom mentioned. However, the country's dire need for assistance obliged its policymakers to swallow their national pride, cast aside the notion of sovereignty, and establish agreements with the various powers. An attempt was made by Libya's first prime minister, Mahmoud Muntasser, to increase U.S. influence at the expense of the British and the French. He succeeded by telling King Idris's personal friend, U.S. Ambassador Henry Villard, that there was a "growing body of opinion that the U.S. should assume primary responsibility for the Libyan nation rather than the U.K. or France."¹⁵ That "body of opinion" convinced U.S. policymakers of its seriousness: by 1955, American money paid to the various Libyan-American developmental and aid agencies began to outstrip not only British subsidies, but the combined total subsidies from British and other international agencies.¹⁶

Libya's relations with the U.S. proved to be very profitable for Libya, and to a lesser extent, so did those with Britain and the United Nations. Economic reality was stark, the room for maneuvering limited. Since no viable Libyan governmental institutions had by then been developed, Libya relied on the "goodwill" of neighbors, world powers, and the international community in general.

However, of all the pre-oil governments, none was more successful at fostering that goodwill than the government of Mustafa Ben-Halim, an able and shrewd prime minister, who ascended to power in 1954. He was described by the American consul at Benghazi, Mr. Summers, as "authoritarian, ruthless, personally ambitious, and when he was Nazir of works in Cyrenaica,"¹⁷ he was generally considered dishonest." Much of his power rested on strong connections in the palace, connections that facilitated the neutralization or silencing of opponents. According to Summers, Ben-Halim had very little regard for

"constitutional niceties" and had "often said [that the] constitution is much too advanced for Libya."¹⁸

Prior to becoming prime minister, Ben-Halim was a businessman; after ascending to power, he saw no reason why he should not run the country as a business enterprise. Like any good businessman, he realized that the most efficient use of aid could only come about if the Libyan government did not interfere in its dispensation. Ruth First maintains in *Libya: The Elusive Revolution* that the Libyan government was barely consulted by the aid agencies, "perhaps on the ground that as Libya could pay for nothing herself, her intentions could safely be disregarded."¹⁹

During Ben-Halim's short tenure (March 1954 to April 1957), useful laws were passed. A good example was the Petroleum Law of 1955, which divided the country into four zones that were further subdivided into ninety-five concessions. Unlike the practice hitherto adopted in other Middle Eastern countries, wherein very large concessions had been given to one major oil company, Libya intended to pursue an open-door policy of inviting many concessionaires to undertake oil operations in competition with each other. Besides persuading the largest number of oil companies to come to Libya, policymakers hoped to insure that major international oil companies did not obtain control, either jointly or separately, over all Libyan oil resources which might be found.²⁰

To guarantee that Libya benefited from exploration, the laws obliged the companies to ensure a "minimum expenditure, during the first five years, of \$80,000 annually for every 15,000 square kilometers,"²¹ regardless of whether oil was found or not. The 1.28 million square kilometers (excluding 37,000 sq. km. of off-shore concessions) that were parceled out became an important source of hard currency. This article in the law was designed to insure that a company did not obtain a concession and leave it idle. The \$80,000 clause, according to some oil experts, would not have amounted to the cost of drilling one wildcat well in five years.²² These fees, rents, and royalties supplemented income received from the military bases, U.S. aid, and revenue from international agencies such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).

Thanks to Ben-Halim's planning, when oil was discovered in abundance in 1961, Libya was in fairly sound shape financially. The country was not rich, and the people did not live comfortably; infant mortality was high, and poverty was still rampant. But compared to a decade earlier, Libya had progressed from near destitution to a more hopeful state of poverty. There was no unemployment, and the country was no longer plagued by fiscal deficits; the budget was balanced, and the government had neither domestic nor foreign debts.

Ben-Halim understood more than anyone Libya's strategic position and the potential income that was to be derived from the Western powers, who were prepared to give substantial budgetary and developmental aid. From 1952 to 1956, Libya's total foreign aid amounted to \$64 million. It was \$112.7 million from 1956 to 1960. The doubling of foreign aid can be attributed to Ben-Halim's support for pro-Western regimes in general and for the Eisenhower Doctrine in particular.²³ However, there was a "negative" side effect: harsh criticism of Libya's pro-Western stance by some Arab and non-Arab countries. Looking back, it is easy to vindicate Libyan pre-oil policymakers. Just keeping the country intact, given Libya's widespread poverty and lack of resources, was a miracle. John Wright has said correctly that "While it is easy to criticize the early post-independence governments for allowing the country to 'live off its geography' and 'become a base for imperialism,' it is hard to see what alternatives there were at the time, given the kingdom's desperate and inevitable reliance on foreign financial support and its clear inability to defend itself."²⁴

The Libyan economy during the pre-oil period was agriculturally-based, roughly divided between crop and livestock products. Agriculture contributed only thirty percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), yet absorbed over seventy percent of the labor force. Trade exports and the semi-industrial sector also depended on agriculture for raw materials and were thus hostage to annual climatic conditions.²⁵ As the majority of funding for internal development came from outside Libya, by the time oil was discovered in marketable quantities, the country was in a far better position than it had been a decade earlier. Although oil ushered in a new era by providing a crucial new resource, the country's main resource, its people, in the words of Rawle Farley, "remained uninvolved in the development process" during this period.²⁶

EFFORTLESS GROWTH

Libya caught the eye of a number of oil companies looking for potentially oil-rich areas in the Middle East. Libya looked promising: besides the initial encouraging drilling results, the country appeared to be the most stable on the African continent. Furthermore Libya's 1955 Petroleum Laws were reasonable, and the Libyan government not only invited companies to explore but also provided the facilities they needed.

Upon discovering oil in abundance, "Libya was transformed overnight into a beehive," as John K. Cooley puts it. International companies big and small "swarmed like bees to the Libyan honeycomb."²⁷ To the oil companies this was a country relatively immune to events in the Suez Canal area, since it had a pro-Western government. It was also very close to European ports and contained high quantities of low-sulfur oil that needed little refining. To top it

off, Western military bases could be relied on to intervene in emergencies.²⁸ Such propitious conditions drew not only the major international oil companies, referred to as the Seven Sisters, but also the independents such as Continental Oil (Conoco), Marathon, Amerada Hess, Nelson Bunker Hunt, and Occidental Petroleum, to take part in the international oil game for the first time.

The influx of this tremendous wealth freed Libya for the first time in its history from dependence on foreign income. More importantly, it freed the country from dependence on military-tied subsidies from the United States and Britain. But oil can be both a curse and a blessing to a developing country. On the one hand, it provides cash for development, and on the other, it disrupts traditional social structures. As long as Libya had no discovered natural resources, it was immune to many of the problems that plagued other countries in the Third World. Prior to the discovery of its oil fields, Libya had nothing tangible to lose, and much to gain, from its relations with other nations. Development was slow, yet sure, and it was beginning to effect genuine change in the skill levels of many Libyans. Foreign funding and management can be credited with much of the progress Libya made, and high quality foreign technical and management expertise was readily available. Unfortunately for Libya, the newfound riches pumped into its economy dead-ended the road to development overnight.

Within a decade of the discovery of oil, Libya had become a classic example of a dual economy: the modern petroleum sector and the traditional nonpetroleum sector. This dichotomy was initially very distinct, largely because no connection existed between these two sectors, save labor transfer from the traditional to the modern sector. Financial, technical, and managerial decisions affecting the modern sector were made outside the country and ignored the needs of the domestic nonpetroleum economy. The traditional sector received a very small portion of the profits, royalties, and taxes paid by petroleum companies. As early as 1962, the disastrous impact of oil on agriculture was apparent. Until then, agricultural production had been slowly increasing. The effect of the reversal was best described by Ali Attiga:

Libyan agriculture was left to stagnate in its low level of development and the consumer turned to the world market for the purchases of his daily food. Oil-induced prosperity provided him with essential income for such purchases and it also provided the country with the essential foreign exchange for significantly increased imports. At the beginning of oil exploration, the total value of imported food and food produce was about 0.5 million Libyan pounds. By 1968 it was 27.6 million. On the other hand agricultural exports had declined, from a value of 1.23 mil-

lion pounds in 1956 to 600,000 in 1961, and only to about 32,000 in 1968. This was not enough to pay for Libya's import of food for one-third of a single day.²⁹

Within a few years after oil production began, Libya joined the ranks of the export enclaves. Libya was in far worse condition than most. It was cash-rich but developmentally poor. Government expenditures and development programs were totally dependent on oil revenues. With no productive domestic sector and consumption dependent on imports, the Libyan economy was totally disjointed. Most damaging, however, was the lack of a relationship between production and income. Libya's income was derived not from producing oil but from taxing oil. Its other income, foreign aid, came from sources outside of Libya's economy. In short, there were no links among the proceeds of production, effort, and incentive. A situation that closely resembled that of the rentier state was evident in Libya in the 1960s—a state centered, as Ruth First says, in “the generation of an expensive product by an industry that employs very few people and very few local resources, so that popular participation in productive economic activity is extremely low.” Proceeding on the basis of the works of Robert Mabro, the first scholar to apply the rentier state model to Libya in 1969, First explains: “The rentier state can achieve a dramatic rise in per capita income without going through the social and organizational changes usually associated with the process of economic growth.”³⁰

That was precisely the case in post-oil Libya. Since the only technological advancement was in the oil sector, little change was evident in the social structures or standards of education and training in nonpetroleum sectors. Despite Libya's newfound riches, the long-term prospects for development and growth were marginal at best. That was the result, in part, of the uncontrolled manner in which new funds entered the economy: the natural progression of development from agriculture to industry to services was skewed. What resulted in Libya was precisely the reverse, a tremendous growth in the nonproductive service sector at the expense of the other two. The whole economy was suddenly geared towards providing ancillary services to the foreign-owned oil sector. As First's continues, “accommodations, pipelines and storage tanks, supplies to the desert and provisions for the army of workers, foreign and Libyan: and then indirectly, since this sector also expands rapidly as government revenues purchase the advantages of development: housing infra-structure, education, and administration. Why bother with productive investment when revenues are already guaranteed, the rentier state asks itself? Agriculture and industry therefore tend to stand still.”³¹

Many of Libya's policymakers understood that oil revenues offered unusual prospects for development, giving them the ability to take certain shortcuts in socioeconomic development. However, it was these shortcuts that cre-

ated the greatest problems for newly rich oil states like Libya. This was particularly true when such countries were devoid of developed infrastructures. The most rational policies were those that discouraged pooling resources merely to steer them toward the development of the oil industry. Indeed, only policies geared toward preparing a manufacturing infrastructure were capable of speeding up Libya's shift from a rentier state to a producer state.

The first five-year plan, drawn up in 1963, attempted to build an infrastructure by allocating 70 percent of oil revenues to its development. Although the government envisioned spending 169 million Libyan pounds by the end of that first plan, 290 million pounds were spent during that time, and—if development can be measured by the building of roads, houses, schools, and electrical power plants, and the consumption of goods and services—the country had made much headway by the time the revolution took place. Within five years, the high level of material development in Libya was staggering, by all accounts.

Among the tangible results were over 2,000 kilometers of roads (built in just two years, 1967–68), universities, hospitals, public utilities, schools of all levels, and a number of new cities with over 50,000 inhabitants. Most impressive were the gains made in housing, where allocations were only second to the oil sector. The flood of Libyans migrating to the coastal cities and towns forced the government to undertake a number of projects to house the extremely poor who had settled in shanty towns on the outskirts of major coastal cities. The boom did not put an end to these suburban slums, which were eliminated only in 1975 after a decline in rural migration. The majority of housing construction was, however, undertaken by the private sector, which made use of long-term, interest-free loans and other government subsidies. By then, the annual construction rate for government-built dwellings had surpassed 16,000.³² In a matter of a few years, cities doubled and quadrupled in population and in size. For example, Tripoli's population increased from fewer than 150,000 in 1962 to 300,000 in 1969 and to 1,000,000 in 1979.³³ Since then, the increase slowed due to lack of housing and services. Unfortunately for Libya, the overwhelming majority of new migrants were ill-equipped to make a significant contribution to their country's development. In fact, workers left their farms to find employment not in the productive sectors of the cash economy but in nonproductive government activities where jobs and wages had become the most convenient means of distributing oil revenues.³⁴

In his analysis of Libya's economy during the 1960s, Robert Mabro noted the social and financial cost of such revenue distribution:

Wealth brings the temporal horizon closer. It persuades people to call for miracles here and now, and strengthens the political pressure for immediate distribution. A government, even a very sensible one, will not al-

ways know how to resist. It often gives in and offers everyone direct or indirect means of consumption. A classic method is to offer every citizen who wants it a job. The size of the payroll increases beyond all measure. For in order to avoid dangerous political discontent, the state multiplies the posts in its own bureaucracy. In Libya the government smothered the administration with useless civil servants, workers, orderlies and watchmen. A job created by the state is often "disguised unemployment" and the salaries paid to employees who scarcely work a "disguised hand-out."³⁵

The quality of life of farmers improved substantially in the years immediately preceding the revolution. An important study of Libyan agriculture reports that by 1968 total investment per farm in western Libya was running 30 Libyan pounds per uncultivated hectare and 50 pounds per hectare of cultivated area: only 40 percent of this money came from loans,³⁶ so farmers themselves financed 60 percent of that investment. Twenty-eight percent of Libya's farmers earned extra income by holding off-the-farm jobs: 17 percent held additional full-time jobs and 11 percent held part-time jobs. Additional income for 33 percent of the farmers came from their eldest sons, who obtained high-paying jobs in the nearest city. In fact, by the end of the first development plan, agriculture, oddly enough, became a wage leader since the daily rate of pay was one Libyan pound, 43 percent higher than government pay and 33 percent higher than oil industry pay. Agricultural wages were only surpassed by construction industry wages of 1.2 pounds per day.³⁷

Good agricultural pay did not, however, stem rural-to-urban migration of those extremely deficient in the mix of skills required to fuel the country's rapidly changing economic and bureaucratic infrastructures. The supply of farm labor dwindled further; neither the younger generation nor the traditional farmers wanted to work on the land. The young were by then getting educations, and the old were getting wealthy. Both groups saw too many opportunities for easy living in the urban environment—opportunities that made a lifetime of toil on the farm seem well worth giving up.

Mabro found that in addition to jobs on the farm, there were a great many employment opportunities in other sectors of the Libyan economy. Yet unemployment among Libyans remained high. Voluntarily many Libyans refused employment while waiting for government jobs: "expectations of both the rural and urban unemployed," writes Mabro, were "that a position in the government sector would in due course become available."³⁸ The security and advantages of government employment attracted both farm owners and farm laborers. Government jobs paid good wages, made few demands, and provided employees ample opportunity to also work in the private-service sector.

Libya had a productive work force; however, that work force was not Libyan. Until 1970 a small Italian minority was actively involved in the economy. It was particularly active as a result of Jewish immigration to Palestine. Italians rapidly filled the business vacuum created by the departure of the Jewish community after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. But the discovery of oil brought an end to that trend. Libyans found themselves sharing their oil riches with foreigners. Indeed, true to the Arab proverb that "the one-eyed in the land of the blind is king," foreigners, and Italians in particular, became kings in the land of the blind. Their education and technical skills enabled them to make full use of Libya's wealth, unlike the majority of Libyans. They made more use of government loans for agriculture than the indigenous population.³⁹ In addition to being the holders of the largest share of fertile agricultural lands, Italians became the traders and skilled labor force.

While the Libyan was waiting for a government opening, the Italian and the Greek were making full use of available loans and subsidies in the *laissez-faire* economy. Foreigners established small factories or became involved in the import of consumer goods, while the majority of Libyans looked down on jobs in trade in favor of "prestigious" civil service or other jobs. Few Libyans were engaged in business, and that trend did not change until the benefits and the wealth of business became apparent among the foreign minorities and the small number of enterprising Libyans that went into partnership with them. People increasingly held two jobs: one in the government and the other as a private entrepreneur in the service sector. By 1968 the Italian labor force was augmented by an army of foreign workers from all parts of the globe. The majority came from Egypt and Tunisia, Libya's eastern and western neighbors. The majority of the Egyptians and Tunisians were semi-skilled or unskilled, so they were paid very low wages by Libyan standards but it was more than they could earn in their native lands. With labor so cheap, Libya's households and small businesses started competing for hired help. Libyan butchers, shopkeepers, farmers, and plumbers, all excited by the opportunities of cheap labor, imported foreigners to do menial work, leaving themselves as managers. Indeed, foreign proxies filled all occupations, even watchmen, while most Libyans made money in the marketplace as middlemen. This situation was to persist well into the 1970s. As development continued to be bought, not earned, an ancient attitude towards work resurfaced: "Manual labour is commonly regarded in Libya as undignified, and most boys who go to secondary school or university consider it beneath them to work with their hands."⁴⁰

As with all economic booms in the developing world, the Libyan boom was accompanied by informal "kickbacks" and other corrupt practices by high-ranking officials in the Idris administration. After a short period of honest dealing immediately after the revolution, graft became endemic again. None-

theless, while the wealth of the 1960s did encourage crime, it also had its positive effect—most notably on education, health, and to a lesser extent, housing. A new class of merchants and entrepreneurs, politicians, and senior civil servants also emerged, yet the majority of the population remained poor, undernourished, and illiterate. The inevitable clash between what was now the materially advanced and newly prosperous sector of society and what was still predominantly a primitive rural community was the source of new grudges. As John L. Wright has explained, “Resentments fed the popular suspicion that oil wealth was not being fairly distributed but, with official collusion, was rapidly accumulating in the hands of a minority of enterprising Libyans and their resident foreign associates.”⁴¹

Wright assessed the situation in the country during the 1960s: “Two almost contradictory forces seemed to be at work in Libya in the ‘60s. On the one hand was the popular desire to share in the tangible benefits of the oil boom, and on the other an undefined yearning for the intangibles, either political or spiritual, beyond mere foreign-induced material progress. In the event the regime, perhaps because it was essentially more paternal than totalitarian, was not able to provide swift satisfaction for the aspirations of modern Libyan society, nor to calm its fears about its own transformation as it sped into an uncertain future.”⁴²

1969—PRESENT: PLUS ÇA CHANGE, PLUS C’EST LA MÊME CHOSE

The twelve men that made up the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) came to power on the first day of September 1969.⁴³ It came as no surprise to most Libyans that the army had the ability to wrest the reins of power from a small powerful group close to the palace and from a few generals controlling the police and the military. The timidity displayed by the post-oil governments of the monarchy in foreign affairs, particularly those dealing with Arab unity and the Arab-Israeli conflict, only increased the latent hostility and opposition of the younger generation. That generation refused to be bought by the government’s unabashed distribution of wealth to its friends. Thus, when the revolution came about, many middle-level government officials and a large segment of the younger generation—which had endured the frustration caused by the mismanagement of government funds—were the first to support the new regime. The deposed centers of power had been controlled by a very small group of men who clung to power, refusing to allow any large-scale political participation. Until the revolution, these men blocked all attempts to elevate other individuals into positions of leadership. This same group encouraged the populace’s preoccupation with the new wealth at the expense of freedom for individuals and institutions. Consequently, few had energy to give to poli-

tics, and the few glimmers of opposition were either quickly suppressed or closely watched.

The RCC inherited a Libya totally locked into the international capitalist system. The country's export of oil in exchange for manufactured goods and foodstuffs had placed it among the export enclaves of the world. In other export enclaves, advanced capitalistic modes of production in export commodities had caused a dramatic acceleration of economic growth. In Libya, the only direct impact of oil on the rest of the economy was through government expenditures and local purchases of food and services by the oil companies. The young army officers inherited a country not only unable to feed itself but also devoid of an industrial sector and a financial or industrial bourgeoisie, with only a dispersed and fragmented commercial class to sell products to the internal market.⁴⁴

Upon seizing power, the RCC was in a position to change many of the development patterns in Libya. Its decrees showed that its members were more interested in rectifying what they perceived to be past injustices and malpractices than in laying down a firm foundation for rational development. One of the new regime's first decrees doubled the minimum wage and lowered rents, further injecting funds into an already saturated economy. The wage decree in particular narrowed the wage gap between the skilled and the unskilled. That act left few incentives for a worker to become better trained or more skilled. Libyan government sources maintained that the first three years of the revolution witnessed an annual increase of 22,000 native newcomers to the labor force.⁴⁵ The ministerial committee on employment, which conducted the survey, determined that only one in three persons had been educated above the elementary-school level or had any vocational skills. Indeed, the land of milk and honey had few skilled workers. Unfortunately, in its first few years, the revolutionary government was far more interested in symbolic grand gestures than in real development. To differentiate fact from fiction in Libyan development, one must analyze two main sectors: agriculture and industry.

The Agricultural Sector since 1969

Of the 20 billion Libyan pounds (approximately 60 billion in U.S. dollars) spent on development since 1970, expenditures in the agricultural sector and its infrastructure have consumed a disproportionate share. An average of 11 million Libyan pounds (33 million in U.S. dollars) has been spent monthly since 1970. For irrigation, more than 3,000 water wells have been dug, until 1983 at the rate of one every two days. Over 22 million fruit trees have been planted, in addition to 234 million other trees in forests. Land reclamation, according to the political leadership, has been a top priority of the political leadership

leading to the reclamation of 1.5 million hectares of desert. On top of that, the Libyan government claims that during the past 20 years, over 25,000 kilometers of agricultural roads have been laid.⁴⁶

Despite this lavish spending and these claims of achievement, the agricultural sector has been the most mistreated. Policymakers have refused to come to terms with the natural limitations on the country's agricultural production. In addition to the poor quality of the soil, water shortages have plagued agricultural production since 1968. The high pre-1969 level of investment in agriculture did yield a return, albeit a short-term return, at the long-term expense of agriculture as a whole. Libyan agriculture depends on rain, yet 90 percent of the country gets no rain. Where it does rain, the average precipitation is approximately 200 millimeters per year, far below the 300-millimeter level needed for constant crop production.⁴⁷ Eastern Libya, with up to 350 millimeters of rain annually can sustain agriculture. Still, the country has no significant permanent water sources. The traditional Libyan farming relied until very recently on coastal underground water. Overuse during the past decade has depleted that resource.

Prior to colonization, because no mechanical pumps were used in Libya, much of the irrigation was done using traditional water-lifting systems, with their limited capacity. Since 1920, when the Italians began to introduce water pumps to feed their thirsty farms, the level of surface water began to fall. The decline was not as serious then as it became after 1965, when oil production technology was introduced into the agricultural sector in the form of electric pumps. The fallacy that underground water was limitless and could be used without regulation was finally made obvious in the late 1970s, when the coastal wells began pumping up sea water. Fresh water needed to supply domestic and agricultural projects was rapidly being depleted.⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the agricultural policies of the RCC have promoted prestige; its main aim has been to demonstrate that the revolutionary era is far more efficient and beneficial than the one preceding it. With so much money at their disposal, policymakers believe that all is attainable. After visiting Libya in 1973, Ruth First wrote: "The idea seems to be that money can buy anything, and that more than enough can buy everything. Often, though, one gets the uneasy feeling that these young men of the new regime have not come to grips with the problem of their own country."⁴⁹

Spending was thought to be the answer to all of Libya's agricultural problems. The resulting waste is perhaps best exemplified by the Kufra Agricultural Project, a classic example of an attempt at agricultural independence gone wrong. Kufra, a large oasis in the middle of the eastern Libyan desert, was found to contain an undetermined quantity of underground water. All geo-

logical experts agree that a huge supply of fossil water exists under the Great Sahara, but no one has been able to calculate the amount.

In 1966, on the advice of his agent, Omar Shalhi (head of the royal court), the entrepreneur Armand Hammer offered the Libyan government a deal it could not refuse. Hammer's Occidental Oil Company submitted a bid for the country's most promising oil concessions and won them with a promise to reinvest five percent of its profits in the Libyan economy. He promised to build an ammonia plant at Zuwaytina and, by developing the vast water deposits in the Sahara, to initiate a revolutionary agricultural experiment in the Kufra area. "Having drilled the wells to reach the underground water," First explains, "Occidental's pilot project was an exercise in hydroponics. The soil is devoid of organic matter, but careful balancing of soil, water, and chemicals by highly skilled imported technicians, some from desert 'miracles' in Arizona, grew several hundred acres of lush green alfalfa. Sheep were flown in by the Libyan air force to feed on the crop, and the desert agricultural project seemed launched on an experimental basis at least."⁵⁰

The Kufra project was an expensive showcase for the monarchy. Three years after the project's inception, Occidental was no longer eager to continue with it and was jubilant at the RCC's decree nationalizing it. It had proved to be a costly venture that relied totally on foreign technology and expertise. Taking it over and promising to transform it from a showcase into a productive agricultural project, the RCC invested a great deal of political and financial capital. By 1973 the scheme was in full operation. Alfalfa and other grains, some of which fed the growing sheep population, were produced on 10,000 hectares of reclaimed land. The Libyan government had hoped that irrigation by an advanced system of pivot sprinklers would also support massive lamb breeding, enough to make the country self-sufficient. Encouraged by the first results, the RCC pressed for an extension of the project from 10,000 to 50,000 hectares. As Ruth First goes on to report, the experts who were brought in for a feasibility study called the project "unique," "remarkable," and "technically feasible," but they forgot to mention that "under present conditions of industrial and agricultural development in Libya all production inputs for irrigated agriculture including fertilizers, pesticides and improved seeds must be imported, largely from Europe and North America. The same goes for all farm machinery, sprinklers, irrigation equipment, spare parts and supplies including even baling twine. Any interruption in supply would mean massive crop loss and would disrupt the sheep production program."⁵¹ In addition over eighty percent of the labor force continues to be foreigners, mostly from Egypt, Tunisia, and the Indian subcontinent. The remoteness of the area, the harsh living conditions, and the hot climate make it unattractive for Libyans.

Grain grew, and the Libyan government boasted of self-sufficiency. Greening of the desert naturally excites people and politicians in arid areas, and glamorous projects boost prestige. But the government neglected to mention the price. Indeed, Kufra has been likened to "shooting pigeons with rockets." The cost of transporting a ton of grain from the project site to urban centers on the coast surpassed the cost of importing a ton of grain. When taking into consideration the initial investment plus depreciation and the cost of technology, labor, parts, and so on, which were escalating until 1980, we find that the cost of one ton of Libyan wheat was over 20 times the cost of the world-market wheat price of \$241 (1983 price, U.S. dollars).⁵² It would have been cheaper to paint the whole country green. As early as 1973, Ruth First, after inspecting the project, made a profound and prophetic statement: "Like the oil industry, Kufra will be a slice of technology inserted into a backward economy and, like oil, run by foreigners. Those who make policy believe that cost is no object and that the country must break dependence on food imports at all costs. But this dependence is being exchanged for a new dependence on the West's advanced technology. In the Libyan desert, oil is being traded for agriculture on a scale that only oil revenues could afford."⁵³

What First did not know was that, due to a miscalculation, a sharp drop in the level of the aquifer forced the government to curtail the project and shift production to a similar scheme requiring an area twice as large near Sarir, some two hundred miles to the north of Kufra. The project was given to a Libyan state-owned company that, following the practices of other such companies in Libya, subcontracted the management and work to foreigners. Neither of the projects could be sustained, and both were reduced and finally abandoned in the mid-1980s.

Most of those who have written about agricultural development in Libya regard it as a classic example of dismal failure in agricultural planning and management. There were countless millions of nonrenewable dollars squandered on experiments in a country that could little afford to experiment. These ventures not only proved to be failures but may have caused irrevocable damage to a basic resource—water—that is extremely sensitive to misuse. Much of the blame belongs to a leadership that was surrounded, in the words of J. A. Allan, by "sycophantic officials whose continued influence depended on making the news about the progress in the development schemes fit the goals articulated by the leadership."⁵⁴

The revolutionary regime inherited abused land in a wealthy nation. Squandering money on prestigious but impractical agricultural projects only hastened the decay of a decaying country. Benjamin Higgins, the economist appointed by the United Nations to plan the country's economic and social de-

velopment in the early 1950s, wrote: "Some observers have contended that Libya is an overdeveloped country in the sense of being exhausted; the present problems of drought, soil erosion and drifting sands are the product of past errors of over-cutting, over-grazing, over-irrigation and over-tilling, followed by abandonment. If this view is correct, the problem in Libya is one of arresting decay and replacing it with progress, rather than one of launching economic development where no development has taken place in the past."⁵⁵

The first serious attempt at understanding Libya's agricultural problems came twenty years after the discovery of oil. Forced by economic reality to reassess agricultural policies, officials discovered that Higgins's 1953 report still held true in 1993. Libya was the poorest country in the world not because it did not have wealth but because it did not have the means to make wealth. In short, created wealth is more reliable than extracted wealth. Thus, even with so much capital, the country remains poor today because it does not have the means of regenerating that capital. Unless the present cash flow is fully utilized to generate wealth, the country will soon fall back into the cycle of decay that existed prior to the discovery of oil.

Foremost among Libya's problems has been the lack of water. Agriculture failed due to water shortages and the over-saturation of capital. The purveyors of white elephants appear to have convinced policymakers that, rather than spending money in the low-yielding desert, the government should reclaim the traditional farming areas. Perhaps after a few decades, land reclamation on the fringes of these farming areas could expand the productive areas, thus expanding the fruitful and shrinking the unfruitful lands. That was the thinking behind the decision to build the "Great Man-made River"—or the "Eighth Wonder of the World," as the Libyan government likes to call it—that will be composed of a network of steel and concrete underground pipes, twelve feet in diameter and will cover a total distance of some 4,000 kilometers.⁵⁶ The first stage in the project was completed in 1993, and work has already begun on the second stage. General Qaddafi has boasted on more than one occasion that when the project is completed, these giant steel and concrete pipes will carry water over thousands of miles from desert aquifers to the coast. Policymakers hope that the "river" will give Libya a century's supply of water for agricultural, industrial, and domestic use.

On paper, the \$27-billion project appears to be expensive but worthwhile. But whether the project is just another white elephant built for prestige or a serious project based on sound expert advice, only time and \$27 billion will tell. Unfortunately in the past, expert advice has been either ignored or colored to suit Qaddafi's ideology, reflecting the Libyan leader's latent suspicion of and dislike for the educated civilian cadre. Ruth First has written:

There have been experts on long-term secondment to ministries who have tried to evaluate the advice of consultants and to impress on the government over-arching concepts of long-term development. But they are told that the analysis of expert advice and projection of planning falls into the realm of policy-making. So the experts are herded off to their calculating machines and their blue-prints and the council of ministers, but effectively the RCC once again takes over. In this body there is neither conceptualization of the development process nor the technical expertise to measure one set of proposals against another. If experts have no power of decision, neither do the trained planners of the ministries. In any case long-term planning needs to be undertaken consistently and at the working level, and not in fits and starts to suit the exigencies of the day.⁵⁷

Even before it was tendered to two American companies and a South Korean one for construction, management, and supervision, the Great Man-made River had become the focal point of the country's agricultural development, as the Kufra Project had been before it. Libyan policymakers hope to transport daily, upon the completion of the irrigation system, up to 8 million cubic meters of fresh water to cities and agricultural projects on the coast. As for the \$27 billion cost, the government argues that this amount is far less in the long run than the cost of constructing and maintaining sea desalination plants with the same output.

To date, attempts at making the country agriculturally self-sufficient have been far from total successes. Food is grown in the country at a cost prohibitive to most nations. In addition to natural limitations and inefficient local management, Libya has not been able to sever its dependence on foreign expertise, labor, equipment, and products. These "small details" can be ignored as long as oil revenues keep flowing. But no one has answered the following question: what will the country do when, in the coming decade, capital constraints are felt and the government can no longer subsidize on this scale? The answer is certainly not economic but, rather, ideological. The present leadership has adopted import substitution, at all costs, as a means to self-sufficiency and has, furthermore, viewed existing development problems as challenges that must be overcome. Given the country's present meager resources, the challenge of making the desert bloom is like that of a stonecutter attacking a mountain with a hammer. Libya must give up its present capital-intensive food production and remember that trade has always been its lifeline. In order not to sever this lifeline the country must, in the words of Stace Birks and Clive Sinclair, "face up to the realities and responsibilities of being a partner in a complex and interdependent world."⁵⁸

This of course does not mean that the country must cease to grow food or develop advanced methods of growing it. It does mean, however, that Libya must balance its agricultural needs with its agricultural abilities. It might be far more efficient to be able to produce thirty percent of the country's food locally without placing too much strain on land, water, labor, and capital, than to produce seventy percent by stretching the country's land and water resources to the limit. Capital could be saved and invested elsewhere to provide a steady flow of income during periods of slow agricultural production. Such a practice would be particularly sound today, when Libya still has surplus income to invest.

Industry

Industry in the Jamahiriya today faces a set of completely different obstacles than those faced by agriculture. Prior to 1969, industry did not occupy an important place in the minds of Libyan policymakers. The initial substantial allocations show that they have toyed with investment in industry. However, the lack of trained Libyans must have persuaded government officials of the futility of such an endeavor. Besides investment in the oil industry, many of the industrial undertakings were deliberately left to private investment, which was initially very slow in responding to the challenge.

The revolutionary government was committed to developing Libya into an "industrial giant" as advanced as the United States and Japan. As with agriculture, the country's abundant oil capital enabled the government to purchase every conceivable industrial plant it sought on the world's markets. The relatively young and inexperienced policymakers fell victim more than once to the sophisticated pitches of high-powered international salesmen of capital-intensive projects.

By analyzing the present utility of those industrial plants, one can readily see that the money was wasted. With all their experience, international capitalists are certainly no more scrupulous about squandering Libyan wealth than the Libyan government. As late as 1972, Libya had no more than 150 in-plant trainees to man the multibillion-dollar industrial complexes on order.⁵⁹ The Libya of 1975 was like the Libya of the mid-1960s in terms of labor. The universities and schools had by then graduated a relatively large number of students, who took over some of the administrative and technical positions in the country. However, they were too few to fill all the posts in important developmental agencies which needed organizational and training infrastructures. Libya needed experts in government and in the field to profit from industrialization. The bulk of the population was illiterate and thus unqualified. Libya has a large and growing gap between the top of the economic scale, with its edu-

cated elite, and the bottom, with its reservoir of uneducated and untrained masses. That void is now filled by expatriate labor from all parts of the globe.

Viewed superficially, the huge number of projects constructed suggests tremendous strides in development. Below the surface is harsh reality. Countries pursuing import substitution usually attempt to make use of domestic labor and expertise, and in some cases domestic entrepreneurs. Unlike those countries Libya has not built a single factory. All factories were bought abroad at enormous cost, and most were accompanied by their own foreign work force. Foreigners, middlemen, and companies generate capital, not Libyans. Companies from Europe and Asia, not Libya, build roads, hospitals, hotels, and other construction projects. While oil revenues make a lucky few rich, Libyans remain impoverished. Central and western Libya have, for "security reasons," been chosen as the locations for industrial development.⁶⁰ In Marsa Brega and Ras Lanouf, a number of petrochemical plants are being expanded for greater output. Marsa Brega is considered the center of the petrochemical industry and already boasts plants that produce ammonia, urea, methanol, liquid natural gas (ethane, methane, and so forth), and natural gas liquids (naphtha). In Ras Lanouf a similar complex has been constructed, including a large oil refinery to complement the one in Zawia, west of Tripoli. By the end of 1985, the country's refining capability was 122 million barrels of oil annually, an increase of over 100 percent from the 1980 figure of 51 million.⁶¹

A soft international oil market and two consecutive embargoes imposed on Libya's oil industry by the United States in 1986 and the United Nations in 1992 have forced a cut in the country's refining capability. More importantly, these setbacks have accelerated the decline in the country's oil output, a decline that began in 1973 (see table 4.1 below). Libya's leaders also attempted without success to develop non-oil-based industries, by financing huge projects such as the massive steel mill in Misurata. General Qaddafi promised that by the end of 1993, its output would reach 2.4 million metric tons per year, only to discover in 1994 that the mill was consuming more money than it was producing steel and would have to shut down. All of Libya's iron ore is still imported because the alleged deposits in southern Libya proved to be a figment of some bureaucrat's imagination. The railroad project that was to have been built by an Indian company and would have made the deposits of iron ore in southern Libya more accessible was halted long ago.

Two other plants of the same magnitude are the aluminum smelter constructed at the city of Five Points and the Rabta chemical plant for the production of pharmaceuticals and other chemicals. A host of smaller assembly plants producing consumer goods have been in production since the mid-1970s, including food processing plants and electronics manufacturers. Tractor and truck assembly plants have recently started production.

Table 4.1. Evolution of Libya's crude oil production (1,000 barrels per day), 1961-1993

Year	Daily avg.	Cumulative	% change in daily avg.
1961	18.2	6,643	
1962	182.3	73,182	
1963	441.8	234,439	142.3
1964	862.4	550,078	95.2
1965	1,218.8	994,940	41.3
1966	1,501.1	1,542,841	23.2
1967	1,740.5	2,178,124	15.9
1968	2,602.1	3,130,492	49.5
1969	3,109.1	4,265,314	19.5
1970	3,318.0	5,476,384	6.7
1971	2,760.8	6,484,076	-16.8
1972	2,239.4	7,303,696	-18.9
1973	2,174.9	8,097,535	-2.9
1974	1,521.3	8,652,809	-30.1
1975	1,479.8	9,192,936	-2.7
1976	1,932.6	9,900,269	30.6
1977	2,063.4	10,653,397	6.8
1978	1,982.5	11,377,014	-3.9
1979	2,091.7	12,140,485	5.5
1980	1,830.0	12,810,267	-12.5
1981	1,217.8	13,254,764	-33.5
1982	1,136.0	13,669,404	-6.7
1983	1,104.9	14,072,677	-2.7
1984	984.6	14,433,040	-10.9
1985	1,023.7	14,806,698	4.0
1986	1,308.0	15,284,118	27.8
1987	972.5	15,639,082	-25.6
1988	1,029.8	16,015,995	5.9
1989	1,150.2		
1990	1,375.6		
1991	1,470.3		
1992	1,433.2		
1993	1,378.6		

Sources: OAPEC Bulletin, *Petroleum Intelligence Weekly*, OPEC Annual Statistical Bulletin (1961-84); OPEC Annual Statistical Bulletin, *Monthly Energy Review* (1985-88); *Monthly Energy Review*, *Middle East Economic Digest* (1989-93).

On paper, projects completed, under construction, and planned, look impressive. However, if foreign workers leave Libya, none of these impressive plants will operate for long. Thus far, only the oil industry has remained outside the edicts of ideological constraint and is therefore unscathed by what Birks and Sinclair call the "muddle which pervades the Libyan modern sector." The oil industry is by no coincidence the most well-run and profitable segment of the modern sector. Birks and Sinclair sum up Libya's dilemma: "In the short-term, Libya can afford to pay the price for her present experiment in socialism, namely economic inefficiency, but there may also be less obvious but very costly elements, such as the atrophying of economic motivation of her indigenous work force. In many respects, Libya's human resources are more crucial to her long-term development than a large and artificially created non-oil element in the GDP."⁶²

CONCLUSION

In the past decade Libya has attempted to shift its economy from that of an export enclave to that of an import substitution. Its economic development is, however, "on a short fuse." Since the discovery of oil, the country has been able to "buy" itself out of its mistakes. Oil money made it quite unnecessary for the government to depend economically on the population. The Libyan oil regimes were able to afford the luxury of indulging in fanciful visions.

In the search for self-sufficiency, Libya's fundamental resources such as water, soil, and oil have been abused and wasted senselessly. The country is overflowing with industrial complexes, yet there are shortages of every type of commodity. Industry depends on foreign labor. The Libyan labor force has not only been squeezed out of the developmental process but, as a result of deliberate government policies, has also become addicted to government hand-outs. It is no longer simply a question of development or underdevelopment but one of survival or expiration. As Birks and Sinclair go on to say, "Libya is more likely to collapse economically after the cessation of oil reserves than any other oil-endowed state in the Arab world. Hence the urgency for a re-assessment of development strategy in Libya."⁶³

Sadly, no assessment of Libya's development strategy has been undertaken by the Libyan leadership. If anything, the Libyan economy is in a more precarious predicament than it was five years ago. General Qaddafi has accomplished a rare feat: in record time he has bankrupted a rich oil-producing country with a very small population. Libya's money was squandered on self-aggrandizement, white elephants, antiquated and rusting military equipment, military adventures, international terrorism, and schemes that rarely benefited

Table 4.2. Libya's reserves, 1970–90 (millions of dollars)

Year	Total reserves	Months of imports
1970	1,590.1	30.3
1973	2,126.7	7.8
1975	2,194.9	—
1980	13,227.9	29.2
1985	6,042.3	17.5
1986	6,107.3	16.4
1987	6,016.8	13.6
1988	4,491.1	9.1
1989	4,498.2	9.4
1990	6,018.4	—

Sources: IMF Balance of Payment Tapes; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics* (1993); *World Development Report* (1975, 1980, 1985, 1990).

the country. For the past ten years, Libya's growth rates have declined, deficits have increased,⁶⁴ and reserves have declined (see table 4.2 below). Perhaps ashamed, the Libyan government no longer provides international institutions with development figures or government expenditures, which it claims fall within the realm of national security.

Five

Qaddafi's State

POLITICS

When he was young and lacking political experience, Qaddafi was content to emulate the Egyptian form of government under his mentor, Nasser. He failed, though, to recognize that one country's policies and form of government cannot be arbitrarily imposed on another country with a different history, a different population, and a different set of beliefs. Nasser's system might have been successful in Egypt, but there was no guarantee of its success in Libya. The Arab Socialist Union (ASU), Nasser's parliament, was powerless in Egypt because of Nasser's own overwhelming charisma and popular appeal, as well as his ability to consolidate political and economic power in his own hands. General Qaddafi perhaps expected the Libyan version of Egypt's parliament to be powerless in Libya but soon discovered after the establishment of the Libyan Arab Socialist Union (LASU) in 1970 that legislative institutions, however primitive, can grow in power if opportunity permits.

This was quite apparent in 1972. Popularly elected delegates to the Libyan parliament, the LASU, demanded, debated, and passed laws guaranteeing rights and security for Libya's inhabitants. The parliamentary body also questioned the government, which was controlled by military members of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), and held it responsible for the implementation of policies. Delegates to the LASU were initially very successful in starting the country on the path to popular democracy, Libyan style.¹ The parliament attracted Libyan scholars and professionals from all disciplines who saw it as a vehicle for beneficial change and a forum in which the government could be interrogated and held accountable. The slogan of the era was "Freedom, Socialism, and Unity." Many members hoped to further democracy, distribute Libya's enormous wealth among its tiny population, and eventually join other Arab governments in some sort of Arab Union.

That was not what Qaddafi wanted. The revolution had moved in a direction that would have ultimately left him with little control. Lisa Anderson

maintains that "as early as 1973, Qadhdhafi and his colleagues felt that the Libyan population had not exhibited the fervor for revolutionary change they had anticipated."² Perhaps most damaging to General Qaddafi as head of the government and the state was the constant policy interrogation he had to undergo in the LASU. Much like Libya's previous leaders, he disliked intellectuals questioning him or exposing his inadequacies.³ Theoretically, all Libyans had to be card-carrying members of the LASU. General Qaddafi, however, retained the power of veto on membership and did use it frequently to deny membership to many, including some civilian members of his own appointed government.⁴

The LASU experience taught Qaddafi that the game of democracy has its own rules, which included free speech and participation for every citizen. The fact that, in Anderson's words, he "announced a campaign against, among others, the bourgeoisie and bureaucrats" indicated that he did not like playing that game.⁵ He rationalized imposing his own nondemocratic game by pointing out that democracy was only democratic to the majority; since democracy cannot be achieved for the whole, it should be denied to the whole.⁶ At first, Qaddafi did not know what political system he wanted, but the LASU gave him an operational model of what he did not want. He chose instead a system that avoided the state.⁷ The ultimate result of rule through people's committees was chaos. Hence ended the first and last democratic experiment during the rule of General Qaddafi. The Libyan strongman is unlikely to submit to the will of the people in the future. His policies have demonstrated a firm belief in holding power until death, a belief shared by the majority of past and present Arab leaders.

Qaddafi realized that a direct attack on the LASU would cost him the limited support he had won in his few years in power. More worrisome were divisions that could occur in the RCC if he should try to dilute the powers of the other eleven members. His colleagues held important positions in the LASU and were looking to build their own independent power bases. He needed to lay groundwork before launching his second coup, to rid himself of the LASU and troublesome coconspirators in the RCC.

In preparation, he adopted the classic British colonial divide-and-conquer policy. By exacerbating the existing divisions in Libyan society, Qaddafi soon created chaos. Initially he used the few supporters he had acquired, along with members of his tribe, to spearhead the change. In a well-planned and well-executed move, Qaddafi's supporters took over the leadership of public and private organizations. Workers were encouraged to take over the factories, private firms with more than ten employees were nationalized, and workers were encouraged to form people's committees and to run them. Private property was nationalized, and renters were told not to pay rent to landlords. Even the

armed forces fell into disarray when soldiers were encouraged to disobey officers. It did not take long for the chaos to develop a momentum of its own. The society was truly divided: son against father, employee against employer, landlord against renter, merchant against buyer, student against teacher, woman against man, poor against rich, police against army, Arab nationalist against isolationist, Nasserist against Ba'hist.⁸ Qaddafi had succeeded in turning Libyan society against itself in a destructive frenzy. Into that unstable environment he unleashed his "solution to the problems of mankind," the Third International Theory. In the Zwara (now renamed Five Points City) speech, he made it clear that only those who adopted the new ideology would be safe from harassment and injury and could enjoy the benefits of his revolution.⁹ Many were forced by economic conditions to adopt it. Some of the new recruits advocated change but lacked the capacity to reflect on the implications of the new system. Others were opportunists blinded by hatred and jealousy, with little or no moral conviction.

The Zwara speech inaugurated the Libyan leader's version of "popular democracy." Central to the concept was the formation of people's committees at every level of Libyan society. These committees, in turn, sent delegates to the General People's Congress (GPC), which replaced the LASU as the only legislative body in the country. The GPC was empowered by Qaddafi to select the executive branch of government, including ministers, prime ministers, and heads of state.

General Qaddafi was not merely interested in replacing the LASU with the GPC. He was intent upon shaking the traditional foundations of Libyan society, eliminating every form of opposition, and instituting a system that guaranteed the future survival of his regime, even though formal institutions such as the GPC were unable to accomplish Qaddafi's goals alone. Hence emerged a need for a parallel informal structure accountable only to Qaddafi. In 1977 the Libyan leader declared "the authority of the people," which established Libya as a *jamahiriya*—a term for which there is no exact translation but which refers to a "state of the masses" where Libyans were supposed to rule themselves without state institutions.¹⁰ Overseeing in the *jamahiriya* was entrusted to the newly created revolutionary committees.

Judging by the numerous arrests as well as civilian and military executions in 1977,¹¹ it did not occur to the multitudes who had joined the people's committees in 1974 that their newly acquired power was ephemeral. Three years after the Zwara speech, their roles as leaders ended as abruptly as they had begun. The real power was vested by General Qaddafi in the informal structure, the newly created revolutionary committees developed by him to oversee the people's committees. Leaders of these committees were primarily selected from Qaddafi's tribe. Until 1994 the leadership of these committees con-

tinued to be in the hands of his kinsmen along with few individuals from loyal tribes (see figure A.1).

Revolutionary committee members on the other hand were initially selected from the pool of respondents to General Qaddafi's speech. However, continued membership in that exclusive organization was contingent not only upon one's memorizing Qaddafi's speeches and emulating him in every manner but also upon one's creating and inciting "revolutionary" disruption in certain assigned areas. As is the case in all such movements, some of these committee members were true believers, but others were opportunistic and corrupt. Their loyalty to General Qaddafi earned them material benefits denied to other segments of society. It permitted them to travel abroad and live in the best hotels in the world at Libyan government expense, to dabble in business when possible, to take commissions on government-imported products, and to accomplish other endeavors. Other benefits included the appropriation of private homes after forcibly removing the owners and the acquisition of large, long-term, interest-free loans from government banks. Some were able to arrange for full scholarships to universities in the United States and Europe. While abroad, they manned Libya's embassies after converting them to people's bureaus, hounded and persecuted other Libyans who had fled the country fearing for their lives, compiled death lists, and took out contracts on Qaddafi's opponents overseas.

Perhaps the most important function of the revolutionary committees today is to insulate Qaddafi from an officious bureaucracy and from other members of the RCC. More than once, they have given Qaddafi the moral and physical support to overcome coup attempts by dissident members of the RCC and by Libyan exiles. Members of the revolutionary committees oversee and mobilize but do not hold official positions; the members of people's committees do. Each revolutionary member represents Qaddafi; therefore, decisions made by the committees are nonnegotiable and irrevocable and, in many instances, unquestionable.¹²

These seemingly omnipotent committees are not invulnerable to the manipulation of General Qaddafi, the person who created them and who knows their weaknesses. He understands the allure of power and, therefore, purges them periodically to prevent committee members from developing their own individual followings.¹³ The purges usually begin when revolutionary committee members acquire enough wealth and influence. When they materially have a great deal to lose by opposing the regime, Qaddafi moves against them benignly. They are usually posted abroad in people's bureaus (embassies), banks, and other regional and international Libyan government interests across the globe. At home, the vacancies are filled either by emerging members of Qaddafi's tribe or other candidates from Libya's impoverished population.

One such purge took place on September 1, 1994, when Qaddafi ordered the establishment of 250 cleansing committees, which he entrusted with verifying what Libyans own. Libyans must now periodically give to a cleansing committee in their area of residence a full account of their material wealth and their means of acquiring it. Amputation of the hands is the punishment for those individuals that do not declare their wealth and are caught by the authorities.¹⁴

In September 1993, while celebrating the twenty-fourth anniversary of his coup, General Qaddafi declared he was no longer satisfied with Libya's political structure. Apparently fascinated by the 1871 Paris commune, he decided to establish a commune system in 1993 Libya. He envisaged dividing the country into 1,500 autonomous, self-run, self-regulating communes. The cleansing committees were to be the final building blocks for integrating the commune system into the political structure.

This type of policy fits the pattern of deliberate destabilization employed by Qaddafi for almost a quarter of a century. It is extremely difficult to know why the General does what he does, because only few individuals in his inner circle are privy to his thought process. However, these sudden periodic changes in the political structure are proving to be his primary technique for diffusing domestic pressures on the regime. New laws, regulations, and committees have in the past been very successful in diverting public attention to personal matters and away from the regime's actions.

The economic hardship during the past fifteen years of Qaddafi's rule forced more than one delegate to the GPC to question the wisdom of policies that deprived Libyans of their basic freedoms and thrust their economy into an endless depression.¹⁵ Recently, for the first time, many members of the GPC publicly expressed their frustration. Some members blamed the regime for the international ostracism of Libya and the pariah status imposed on the country by the Security Council of the United Nations. The mere fact that delegates began to ask questions told General Qaddafi that a point of equilibrium—a flaw in his system that must be avoided at all costs—had been reached. The people and the political structure had adapted to the new rules and regulations. Opponents of the regime began to focus on the sources of instability, namely General Qaddafi and his revolutionary committees, and plan for their elimination.¹⁶ Sensing danger, the government issued a new set of edicts and established new ephemeral institutions in an effort to diffuse the threat by creating further instability.

General Qaddafi's regime is capable of inflicting tremendous psychological pain without physical force. Even though it frequently resorts to raw physical terror, the regime has always preferred psychological pressure. A society can get used to physical violence in any form including torture and death, but no

society can withstand the psychological trauma of continuously living on the edge of uncertainty. Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of Qaddafi's character is his affinity for social experimentation. He has always maintained that his system is an experiment in social engineering, and thus experimentation is part and parcel of the whole package.

The General is not insane, and the attempts that many have made to use psychological models of analysis to prove he is are not only short-sighted but neglect the sub-systemic factors that shape Libyan politics and society.¹⁷

Most world leaders employ a certain degree of temporal plagiarism in trying to revive past glories of their societies, but very few do this as intensively as Qaddafi does. In recent history, Libya's political destiny moved from the court of the Ottoman Sultan in Istanbul, to the court of King Victor Emmanuel in Rome (1912), to the court of the Fascist Mussolini (1922), to the court of the United Nations in New York (1948). In contrast to all the others, the United Nations attempted to establish a democratic system with democratic institutions in the newly established Kingdom of Libya, but the system failed. In the UN scheme, too much power was embedded in the monarch at the expense of popular democratic institutions. Hence, whoever controlled the monarch controlled the country, and Qaddafi proved that in 1969.

Qaddafi claims to be seeking a global utopian society. In the abstract, any political theory can appear workable. Thus the *leader*, as he likes to call himself, could theoretically combine elements of Islam, Marxism, Nasserism, and African socialism with his own thought, and still have a theory. Indeed a magnificent theory can be devised because on a temporal level, most contradiction can be rationalized. However, when applied to a society bound not only by time but also by space, the theory falls apart, and chaos in most cases ensues.

Over the past two decades, official and unofficial political institutions in Libya have undergone a number of name changes and little else. The real seat of power remains the same: General Qaddafi and a small inner circle made up of close associates and some newly emerging members of his tribe. Since a nation cannot survive, to say nothing of prosper, under such irrational and hybrid policies as some of these have been, the cost to Libya has been great. Well into the twenty-first century, Libya will continue to suffer from the chaotic malice of the past twenty-five years.

THE PRESIDENT'S MEN

During the past two decades coup attempts, instability, and popular discontent have forced General Qaddafi increasingly to rely on members of his own tribe, the Qathathfa, to guarantee his personal security and the security of his regime. The Qathathfa is rather a small tribe that was exiled from Cyrenaica to the barren Sirtica region during the nineteenth century. Poor and illiterate,

many of its members lived, until the revolution, a nomadic life herding livestock. The monarchy denied them membership in the prestigious Cyrenaica Defense Forces, which were reserved for individuals from loyal tribes of the Green Mountain of Cyrenaica. The Qathathfa, however, were able to join the armed forces and the police force, both of which were considered by the monarchy to be secondary organizations.

General Qaddafi promoted junior Qathathfa officers in the armed forces and entrusted them with sensitive military posts. He also encouraged and facilitated the transfer of his kinsmen from the police to the armed forces, where they were either kept their former ranks or were promoted and entrusted with important positions (see appendix).

Today there are a large number of Qathathfa junior officers headed by a core of colonels who are individually and jointly responsible for the preservation of the regime. Most prominent among them are Ahmad Qathaf al-Damm, Masoud Abdul-Hafith, Misbah Abdul-Hafith, Khalifa Ihneish, Omar Ishkal, Al-Barani Ishkal, Omran Atiatallah al-Qaddafi, Imhamad Mahmoud al-Qaddafi, Khamis Masoud al-Qaddafi, Saad Masoud al-Qathaf, Hassan al-Kabir al-Qaddafi, and Ali al-Kilbo. Periodically, General Qaddafi assigns them new responsibilities or changes their portfolios. Until April 1995 the central sector (Sirte) was under the command of Colonel Khalifa Ihneish, the southern sector (Sabha) under Colonel Masoud Abdul-Hafith, the Benghazi sector under Misbah Abdul-Hafith, and the Tobruk sector under Ahmad Qaddafi al-Damm.

A failed coup attempt in February 1995 prompted General Qaddafi to make changes that gave his cousins even more encompassing powers. Ahmad Qathaf al-Damm's territory was expanded to include all of the Cyrenaica. Khalifa Ihneish was appointed the commander of armaments and munitions, Massoud Abdul-Hafith was promoted to commanding officer of military security in Libya, and Al-Barani Ishkal was assigned to command domestic military security. Ali al-Kilbo, who was given the sensitive post of protecting Qaddafi's residence, was made the commanding officer of the Azazia barracks guard. Leadership of the revolutionary committees was given to Mohamad al-Majthoub al-Qaddafi, and information and propaganda was assigned to Colonel Sayed Qathaf al-Damm.

As is quite apparent, all of the assignments overlap to ensure that even members of Qaddafi's own tribe find the task of toppling him difficult. The Libyan leader learned the necessity of such a situation the hard way when, in the early 1980s, his cousin and confidant Hassan Ishkal—to whom he had entrusted not only domestic security and oil issues but the command of Libya's forces in Chad—attempted to overshadow him. Ishkal's strong personality and unwillingness to adhere to Qaddafi's orders brought him into direct conflict with the Libyan leader. He was killed in a firefight with General Qaddafi's

supporters. Rumors persist that the Libyan leader gave the order to end his cousin's life after capturing him alive.

Other important but less strategic posts were filled by individuals loyal to Qaddafi but not from the Qathathfa tribe. Most new recruits primarily come from the large Warfala tribe. The Qathathfa have blood ties to Warfala and hence until recently appeared to trust Warfala more than others did. The third side of this triangle of security was formed by Major Jaloud's Magharha tribe, from whose midst recruits were sometimes chosen. Their appointments, predominantly to junior positions in the hierarchy, went a long way toward consolidating alliances, guaranteeing security, and simultaneously giving the regime an aura of plurality. Ahmad Awn was appointed as chief of military operations, Al-Hadi Imberish chief of popular defense. Ahmad al-Mugasibi was given the post of secretary of general command, Abdul-Rahman al-Saeed became responsible for military administration, and Al-Mahdi al-Arbi was appointed as commander of border forces. The important position of commander of the air force went to Qaddafi's longtime ally (Ali) al-Rifi al-Sharif.

Until very recently it was assumed by Libyan experts that Major Abdul-Salam Jalloud was Qaddafi's right-hand man and second-in-command. But like all the other members of the Revolutionary Command Council, Major Jalloud has been marginalized and currently finds himself—along with the remaining members of the original RCC, Khweildi al-Humeidi, Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, and Mustapha al-Kharoubi—struggling for his political survival, if not his life.

Khweildi al-Humeidi's duties have been reduced to the occasional carrying of Qaddafi's messages to other Arab capitals. Abu Bakr Yunis Jaber continues to head the joint chiefs of staff, a ceremonial position lacking any real power. He is an honest, decent man of little intelligence but extremely loyal to General Qaddafi. Mustapha al-Kharoubi is currently the head of military intelligence. Jalloud, who belongs to the Magharha tribe, has been stripped of his power by the Libyan leader and replaced by Abdula al-Sanusi, another member of the Magharha tribe. While Jalloud brought a great deal of benefits to his tribe in the form of jobs, wealth, and opportunity, his family's standing within the Magharha tribe is inferior to that of Abdula al-Sanusi's family. Colonel Abdula al-Sanusi is married to Safia Farkash's sister. Safia Farkash is General Qaddafi's wife and the mother of his children. That marriage made Qaddafi's and al-Sanusi's children first cousins. The marriage also enabled Qaddafi to replace Jalloud with al-Sanusi without offending the Magharha tribe. Indeed, it linked in a round-about way the Magharha with the Qathathfa. Abdula al-Sanusi is currently Qaddafi's right-hand man and second-in-command. He is the *de facto* internal and external security chief and the Libyan leader's confidant. He is thought to be the mastermind behind the Lockerbie

affair and the kidnapping of the Libyan human-rights dissident Mansur Kikhia from Egypt in December of 1993.

Although the information is unsubstantiated, General Qaddafi is thought to be creating what is termed as the Permanent Command Committee for the Revolutionary Committees. Indications are that the new committee is made up of five members, three of whom are Ali Mansour al-Qaddafi (information), Ahmad Ibrahim al-Qaddafi (ideological consolidation), and Mohamad al-Majthoub al-Qaddafi (relations). The other two members are rumored to be Abdulsalam al-Zadmah (internal organization) and Abdula al-Sanusi (external affairs). Another emerging force that is making itself felt on the Libyan scene is Sayf al-Islam, the first-born son of Qaddafi's second wife, Safia Farkash. There is no doubt that Sayf al-Islam is being groomed, as are the first-borns of other Arab leaders, to assume a position of prominence in Libyan politics. How much prominence will ultimately depend on how much his father trusts him. It is extremely difficult to know who is assigned what in Libyan politics, where neither position nor title really matters. But one thing is certain: as far as General Qaddafi is concerned, blood is much, much thicker than water.

ECONOMICS

Libya's fragile economic system proved to be far more vulnerable to disorder than the political system. Qaddafi's regime has tried but has not been able to deliver on its many promises. The Libyan economy remains almost totally dependent on oil exports, and few serious attempts have been made to reduce that dependence. Less than twenty percent of the GDP is independent of oil and the oil sector.¹⁸ The economy continues to be that of an import-based, parasitic, rentier state, where domestic industrial production is insignificant. Most of the industrial plants bought by the central government after the revolution, at great cost to the Libyan taxpayer, remain inactive, for reasons ranging from poor maintenance and lack of spare parts to inefficient management and pilfering of industrial resources. Even the Misurata steel complex that Qaddafi touts as exemplifying the drive towards industrialization has proven itself to be a white elephant. Chronically unprofitable, the plant might have to shut down.¹⁹

Although it has survived, another project hobbled by the credit crunch is the Great Man-made River. Designed to bring underground water from deep in the desert to the parched coastal regions for agricultural use, the project has proven more expensive than even free-spending Libya can afford. Water from the project started flowing to the city of Benghazi on September 1, 1993, but there is still no guarantee that there will be enough water to make the project cost-efficient.²⁰ To illustrate the price of putting politics above economics, the

project will continue on schedule regardless of cost. Qaddafi has invested too much political capital in it.

Most Libyan cities have no renewable sources of fresh water. During the hot summer months, some cities receive fresh water once a week, others once a month. The water rations distributed to the inhabitants of the capital, Tripoli, for example, are salty, useless for washing and bad for the health. People cannot bathe regularly, a situation increasing the likelihood of disease. Most of Libya's hospitals, referred to by a *Wall Street Journal* journalist as "dirty death traps," constantly experience water shortages and have to rely on imported water for their daily needs. The same article reports that new eye hospital in Tripoli has had no water since it opened in 1990.²¹ In a country with over 2,000 kilometers of shoreline, few can comprehend why the government has not spent money on desalination plants and instead has spent billions of dollars on a dubious project that will not alleviate its misery any time soon. For the first time and at great risk to life and livelihood, many are beginning to openly question Qaddafi's motives.²²

Of all the Libyans, the Cyrenaicans, who inhabit eastern Libya, are perhaps the most cynical. They say that Qaddafi dreamt up the Great Man-made River as an excuse to take Cyrenaica's water and irrigate his extremely arid home district of Sirte, which has been outfitted with a brand new thirsty city paid for with Cyrenaica's oil. Gossip and a little complaint can do no harm to a thriving and popular government, but they threaten any government perceived as tyrannical and cruel. In a country like Libya, where societal integration has not fully taken place and separatist tendencies lie dormant, dissatisfaction warns of separatist dangers ahead, with devastating consequences to all the inhabitants of Libya and the region.

The only sector spared chaos is agriculture, due largely to the regime's hands-off policy. Belatedly realizing the failure of his former agricultural policy, Qaddafi decided to end government involvement in the failed Kufra and other projects of the 1970s. Fearing tribal rivalry and intertribal bloodbaths over land ownership, he left that issue in limbo, merely stating that "land belongs to God and anyone plowing it should benefit from its fruits." He left land in the hands of its original owners without actually having to give it back to them. As the regime began in 1978 to nationalize private property and industry as well as other aspects of commercial life, farming became the only area unregulated by government. Yet even this relative agricultural freedom and the heavy governmental subsidies that accompanied it were not enough to spur agricultural production. Farmers did produce, but there was no market for their products. They had to sell to government agencies at fixed prices. It was not long before farmers discovered that it was more profitable to live off

the subsidy than to produce. The result showed in the growth rate of agriculture, which plummeted from approximately twelve percent annually from 1965 to 1978, to less than four percent annually from 1978 to 1988 (table 5.1).²³

Agriculture was not alone. During the same period, industry sharply declined, from an annual growth rate of 2.5 percent to an annual growth rate of 11 percent, and manufacturing from a rate of 15 percent to less than eight percent. The service sector, once one of the most vibrant in developing countries, experienced the sharpest decline in annual growth, from 18 percent to negative five percent.²⁴

Libyans call the years from 1978 to 1988 the "dark decade" because of the political repression and the extreme economic hardship.²⁵ It was a decade of shortages, when Libyans were forced to make do with less of everything. Particularly harsh were the years from 1983 to 1988, when the per capita real gross domestic product declined by 41.9 percent. World Bank statistics show an annual decline of three percent in Libya's growth rate since 1969.²⁶ Rarely in the world's economic history has a country with Libya's liquid surpluses demonstrated such a decline in growth and standard of living in such a short period of time (table 5.2).

Only the revolutionary committees and their leadership experienced no shortages. Goods were imported for them through special warehouses catering to their needs while the average citizen had to wait in long lines for commodities that were seldom available. Italian firms erected huge government-financed department stores throughout the country, at great cost. After the first few months of operation, the towering structures came to symbolize the First of September Revolution and its ideology: they were huge and attractive but hollow within. Some were burned to hide embezzlement; the rest still remain empty.

Shortages of all commodities and goods continued. The revolutionary elite got whatever they wanted; the rest of the people continued to fend for themselves. Particularly troubling was the shortage of medical supplies. Often doctors could not operate on critically ill patients for the lack of vital items such as sutures.

Since General Qaddafi assumed power in 1969, approximately \$50 billion of foreign exchange earnings cannot be accounted for.²⁷ The regime has never been known for its frankness, and the disappearance of Libya's wealth remains a mystery.²⁸ In all probability much of the missing funds were directed towards Libya's newly created military industrial complex for the development of nonconventional weapons.

For the past decade, Libya has actively been seeking to upgrade its nonconventional military capability. In addition to the highly publicized Rabta chemical plant, major secret projects for the production of chemical and bio-

Table 5.1. Annual average growth rates of total and per capita agricultural and food production, 1961–91 (percentages)

Year	Agricultural production		Food production	
	Total	Per capita	Total	Per capita
1961–1970	7.5	3.4	7.4	3.4
1970–1980	6.8	2.4	6.9	2.4
1980–1991	4.6	0.5	4.6	0.5
1987–1988	3.1	-0.6	3.1	-0.5
1988–1989	5.6	1.9	5.6	1.9
1989–1990	4.6	0.9	4.6	1.0
1990–1991	4.6	0.9	4.6	0.9

Sources: IMF Balance of Payment Tapes; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics* (1993); *World Development Report* (1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1993).

logical weapons are underway. With technology provided by the German firm Imhausen, research and development of biological weapons are currently being undertaken in the little known town of Taminhint, northwest of the city of Sabha in south-central Libya. Taminhint is also the site of the OTRAG Project.²⁹ OTRAG, a private German firm, was involved in long-range missile technology development during the 1980s. Under intense American and German pressure the firm withdrew from Libya in 1988. Since then, General Qaddafi has been able to reactivate the project with the help of teams of German scientists and computer experts.

China and North Korea have also been actively assisting Libya's missile development. The Chinese, in particular, have received a first installment of two billion American dollars in 1990 to coproduce with Libya an accurate missile capable of striking targets over 1,500 kilometers in range.³⁰ The China Project is located in the city of Sabha, where another chemical plant is currently being built. North Korea, on the other hand, has been instrumental in upgrading Libya's old Soviet-made Scud missiles to carry larger warheads and travel longer distances.³¹ A third project code-named Al-Fateh is located in Waddan, 500 kilometers southeast of Tripoli. The city of Waddan has emerged as the newest site for ballistic missile research and development, as well as the location of a proposed chemical-producing plant.

Such ambitious projects consume a great deal of capital, but the popular belief is that what has not been spent on military hardware and foreign adventures, or on white elephants and regime glorification, has been appropriated for personal use by General Qaddafi and his close supporters.³² Caught in

Table 5.2. Annual average growth rates of total and per capita real GDP at market prices, 1960–96 (percentages)

Year	Real product		Inflation rate
	Total	Per capita	
1960–90	4.3	0.0	—
1960–70	24.8	20.0	—
1970–80	3.2	-1.1	—
1980–90	-4.4	-8.1	—
1970–75	-5.6	-9.5	—
1975–80	9.0	4.3	—
1977–86	-2.6	—	10.9
1983–84	-3.7	-7.6	—
1984–85	-8.8	-12.4	—
1985–86	-8.7	-12.2	—
1986–87	-3.2	-6.8	—
1987–88	-23.6	—	4.4
1988–89	-10.2	—	3.1
1989–90	7.2	—	1.3
1990–91	7.0	—	8.6
1991–92	2.9	—	11.7
1992–93	-2.9	—	15.0
1993–94	-4.7	—	20.0
1994–95	-3.0	—	30.0
1994–96	-8.2	—	76.4

Sources: IMF Balance of Payment Tapes; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics* (1993); author's calculations.

a web of insecurity, the regime has found itself isolated with few domestic, regional, and international friends.

Most damaging to the Libyan economy is the thriving black market. As individuals, Libyans are no longer permitted to import goods and thus have to rely on a variety of illicit sources. The main source is government-owned shops where enterprising individuals buy goods and electronics at subsidized prices and sell them for what the market can bear. Another source is smugglers—foreign workers who purchase cheap products overseas and sell them in Libya, in Libyan dinars, charging the black-market U.S. dollar-dinar exchange rate. Foreign nationals with work permits can exchange ninety percent of their

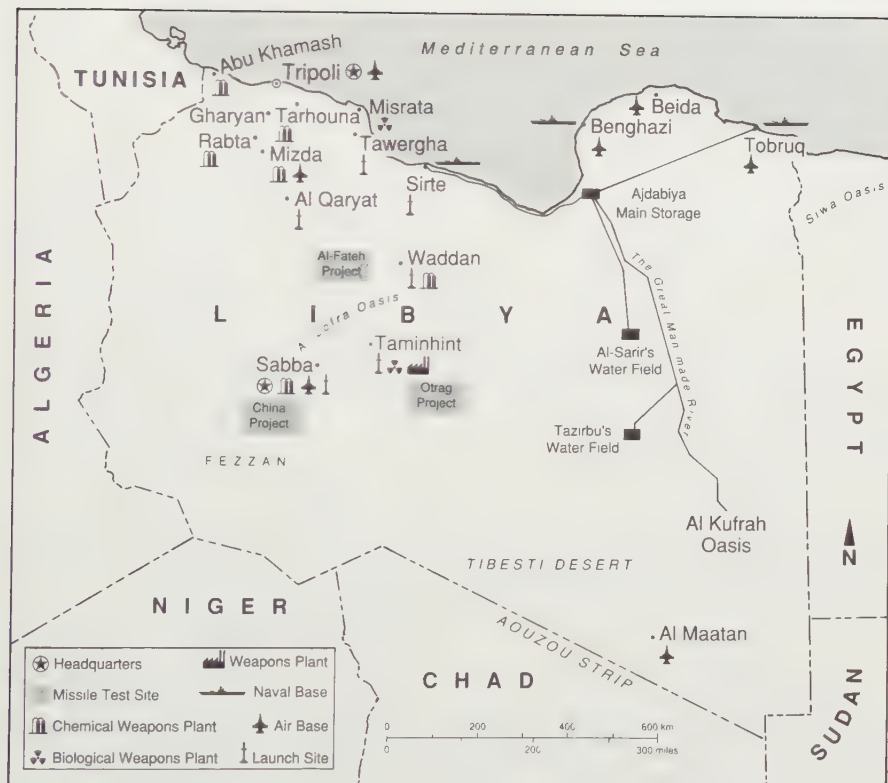


Figure 5.1. Libya

Table 5.3. Balance of payments summaries I: 1970-90 (millions of dollars)

Year	Export of goods	Import of goods	Balance of trade	Total services debt	Total services credit	Private transfers (net)	Balance
1970	2,397	-674	1,723	-964	139	-140	758
1973	3,528	-2,011	1,517	-1,237	216	-273	223
1975	6,418	-4,424	1,994	-1,553	375	-260	556
1980	21,919	-10,368	11,551	-3,650	1,446	-1,089	8,258
1984	11,028	-8,464	2,564	-3,420	720	-1,240	-1,376
1985	10,353	-5,754	4,599	-2,314	526	-859	1,952
1986	5,814	-4,434	1,380	-1,638	629	-490	-119
1987	5,828	-5,391	437	-1,801	845	-470	-989
1988	5,644	-5,753	-109	-2,071	889	-496	-1,787
1989	7,283	-6,517	766	-1,871	566	-472	-1,011
1990	11,362	-7,582	3,780	-1,880	784	-446	2,238

Sources: IMF Balance of Payment Tapes; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics* (1993); *World Development Report* (1975, 1980, 1985, 1990).

Libyan currency earnings at the official rate.³³ The net result is a minimum of 800 percent profit in the exchange alone. Those without work permits usually buy subsidized products to sell in their countries of origin. Over 50 percent of Libya's labor force is foreigners, many with black-market incomes dwarfing their official wages. The country is inundated with foreigners and their dependents whose sole purpose is to sell on the black market. The lure of such huge profits has encouraged a few select revolutionary committees to indulge in the black market. With fortunes to be made overnight, these select members are becoming a major source of hard currency in the Libyan market.³⁴

Shaken by international isolation, declining oil prices, capital flight, and a crumbling economy (see tables 5.3 and 5.4), General Qaddafi, fearing a popular uprising, decided in 1992 to permit people to open small businesses to supplement their incomes.³⁵ The change in policy was too little too late, however, because economic deterioration had already set in. Libya had become the most expensive country in the world to live in, and no one felt that fact more than the Libyans themselves. Economic conditions remain bad, and the underground economy continues to gain strength. Even though many Libyans have reestablished small businesses, they are still unable to import products. The shoddy products that fill their stores have to be bought from governmental agencies, which import them either from neighboring countries in the name of Arab solidarity or from the former Eastern bloc. Russian and Polish industries need hard currency and are willing to reduce prices to create markets. The quality of many of these goods is so dismal that many Libyans have returned to the underground economy where European, American, and quality Asian goods can be found. In 1993 many of the government purchasing agencies began importing limited quantities of consumer goods from Libya's former trading partners, Italy, Germany, and France.

Libya has emerged as a transit area for Eastern European products. Poor Egyptians, Tunisians, Sudanese, and Chadians, unable to buy expensive Western products in their countries, depend on these subsidized goods to make ends meet. In Cairo and Alexandria, for example, there emerged in 1991 Libyan *souks* (markets) where inexpensive, subsidized, duty-free products imported for the Libyan market by the Libyan government are sold. These thriving souks have been very helpful to the cash-strapped Egyptian government, and as long as Libya continues the indirect subsidy, the Egyptian government is unlikely to shut them down.

On the western front, Tunisians are also profiting from Libya's economic mismanagement. Annually, Libya buys millions of dollars worth of Tunisian foodstuffs and other products. Yet very little is ever sold in Libya. Tunisians and enterprising Libyans buy many of the subsidized commodities in Libya

Table 5.4. Balance of payments summaries II: 1970-90 (millions of dollars)

Year	Govt. transfers (net)	Total long-term capital	Direct investment	Short-term capital (net)	Errors and omissions	Overall balance	Changes in reserves
1970	-113	139	139	13	-100	697	-697
1973	-156	-510	-147	485	-1022	-980	980
1975	-164	-1524	-614	305	-1070	-1897	1897
1980	-46	-1372	-1089	-331	-104	6405	-6430
1984	-81	180	-17	651	-1096	-1722	1722
1985	-45	91	119	693	-328	2363	-2363
1986	-36	-238	-177	-192	798	213	-213
1987	-56	-2784	-98	2657	172	-1000	1000
1988	-37	-430	98	593	270	-1391	1391
1989	-16	88	125	1102	130	293	-293
1990	-35	-507	159	-500	-37	1159	-1159

Sources: IMF Balance of Payment Tapes; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics* (1993); World Development Report (1975, 1980, 1985, 1990).

Table 5.5. Tentative terms and trade estimates for Libya, 1970–90

Year	Imports			Exports			
	Value	Unit value	Quantum	Value	Unit value	Quantum	Purchasing power of exports
1970	11	5	212	8	31	27	35
1973	18	10	175	27	44	61	42
1975	31	33	95	52	61	86	51
1979	73	59	124	78	89	88	83
1981	66	111	59	124	94	132	70
1982	64	99	64	106	91	117	70
1983	56	86	65	110	89	124	63
1984	51	84	60	92	87	106	59
1985	56	83	68	61	87	70	65
1986	35	41	87	62	96	65	37
1987	40	54	74	70	102	68	39
1988	30	46	66	87	110	79	28
1989	31	55	56	75	112	67	27
1990	36	71	50	83	120	69	30

Sources: IMF Balance of Payment Tapes; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics* (1993).

and re-export them back across an unguarded Tunisian border where they are sold at a lower cost than the same product is sold in Tunis.

One of the pillars of Islam is charity, on which Muslims are mandated to spend a certain percentage of their income. Yet while it is not considered wrong to support neighboring economies, charity still begins at home. Libya's official economy is crumbling, and the prices of goods on the black market are fast rising beyond the reach of even the well-to-do. Many Libyans today are finding themselves unable to make ends meet. Prices increase daily, and terms of trade deteriorate (see table 5.5) as Libyan currency weakens against the United States dollar, which serves as the exchange medium.

SOCIETY

In the future, Libyans may forgive Qaddafi's quixotic management of the economy. They might even forget his brutality. But it is doubtful they will forgive him for the damage he has inflicted on the Libyan character. Unlike some leaders in less-developed countries who assume power for the sole purpose of enriching themselves, Qaddafi has other aims. No longer satisfied with merely modifying the Libyan political and economic system, he has been intent upon remolding the Libyan character. By constantly agitating Libyan society the regime has succeeded in creating an atmosphere of the unusual, in which people commit acts that under normal circumstances they would not contemplate. General Qaddafi does not order people to commit immoral acts, but he has provided them with the opportunity to do so by contesting the traditional and religious norms that have served as a basis for self-censorship. Furthermore the absence of civil laws and courts for the preservation of human rights have enabled many to make use of the opportunity. To those few, "revolutionary right" has become a *carte blanche* for immoral behavior, including taking over a neighbor's home or business. It has emerged as a password for upward mobility in a structurally perverted tribal society.

Yet while General Qaddafi is partially responsible for the state of chaos, the larger responsibility must fall upon the shoulders of Libya's citizens. In the chaos there has been opportunity for old tribal conflict and personal grudges to resurface and become active—a situation coinciding perfectly with the regime's divide-and-conquer plan. It was in the regime's interest to have business interests embroiled in conflict with employees, landlords with tenants, students with teachers. The regime saw in squabbles the opportunity for greater division, extending beyond the perimeter of the relationship. For example, a student angry at a teacher for a bad grade need not contest the grade by existing rules. Armed with "revolutionary right," a disgruntled student can occupy the teacher's home and live in it or send a relative to live there. There are

no institutions or laws to prevent such lawlessness from redefining relationships.

In Orwellian fashion, "Big Brother" General Qaddafi consolidated his hold on every aspect of life. According to Lisa Anderson, General Qaddafi's "continued interference in the details of government" is a primary reason for a number of failed coup attempts against the regime.³⁶ Living under such circumstances the majority of Libyans became passive. They no longer produced. They went to work but did nothing except drink coffee and read books and newspapers. Some went to work only to hang spare jackets up conspicuously before going off to visit friends, wait in lines for scarce consumer goods, or see to other personal affairs. Many people held two jobs, a morning job and an afternoon job, usually in agriculture, where they could grow food for their own consumption and earn extra income in the underground economy.

Huge government-built shopping complexes now permeate the country. Most are half-empty, the employees nowhere to be found. A citizen wanting a simple document such as a birth certificate can wait more than a week to find an application processing clerk. Any issue requiring government approval or involvement takes years to resolve. Libyans have ceased to work for the public good because they have lost faith in the concept. All public projects continue to be mostly staffed by foreigners.

The government imports foreign labor because well-paid foreigners tend to be docile and because Libyans do not want to work. Whenever the government needs a political demonstration, which is quite often, revolutionary committees organize foreign workers and chaperon them from one location to another. As members of the armed forces and/or militia service, all Libyans above the age of eighteen and under the age of fifty-six have to comply when ordered to be at a certain place at a certain time. Obviously, valuable production time is wasted. Less apparent is the impact of this waste on education—students have for the past decade attended school for less than six months annually. Their school year was usually interrupted by government-ordered demonstrations or military service beginning daily at midday. The average school day is now less than four hours. To make matters worse, the regime has proposed the closing of all elementary schools and the shifting of elementary education to the home. Such a proposal in a country where illiteracy among women exceeds fifty percent is educational suicide.

To many Libyans seeking stability, the logical solution is a return to the sanctity and safety of the tribe. The result appears in the elections to people's committees. A large number of candidates run and are elected along tribal affiliation, and bloody battles between tribes have taken place over land or political posts. Paradoxically even General Qaddafi, while denouncing tribal-

ism, has enhanced the standing of his own tribe, surrounded himself with its members, and appointed them to key positions in the country.³⁷ Libya still exhibits some characteristics of traditional society even though it has evolved beyond a traditional tribal structure. However, in the absence of democratic political institutions such a tribal undercurrent can in the long run prove to be detrimental to the process of modernity.

Again, it might be easy to blame Qaddafi; it is only fair to say that Libyans also share the blame for this state of affairs. Their passivity in the face of adversity, their unwillingness to work hard, and their dependence on the government for handouts has left them vulnerable to the minutest changes in the political and economic milieus. Moreover their unwillingness to sacrifice for rights and liberty provides ample opportunities to present and future regimes to survive and to dominate every aspect of their lives.

THE STATE OF THE MASSES

While the political system established by General Qaddafi continues to metamorphose, it remains one of the most restrictive of such systems. Political participation outside the narrow limits established by the regime is a capital offense.³⁸ The media are tightly controlled, and free speech is nonexistent. Government intervention devoid of the rule of law pervades all aspects of life. All laws were suspended in 1974, and the ensuing political structure could only operate in an environment without laws.

When laws were suspended, all individual rights vanished, including the right of individuals to adjudication. The regime did not abolish the courts, for that would appear too undemocratic. It did, however, deprive the courts of the only thing that makes them function: a set of criminal, commercial, and civil laws.³⁹ The exception was all the revolutionary dicta on coercion for use by Qaddafi's vanguard, the revolutionary committees. Yet even these dicta could not be used by the regular court system. The volume containing them was written as a concise guide for the use of revolutionary committees to mete out punishment to anyone suspected of counterrevolutionary activity.

Televised trials in the late 1970s and in the 1980s left another sour taste of revolutionary justice. Revolutionary committees, cloaked with the garment of revolutionary legitimacy acted as judges, jurors, and executioners. To the amazement and horror of the television audience, a number of young men were summarily hanged after hasty trials in which they were denied right to counsel.⁴⁰ To the majority of Libyans, public hangings were both barbaric and non-Islamic. Older Libyans compared the hangings to those committed by Italy's Fascists under Mussolini. The hangings, however, did achieve their purpose of increasing the level of fear and insecurity, and hence instability. People learned to expect collective punishment.⁴¹

The only protective laws enforced in Libya are those protecting the rights of non-Libyans. Foreigners get paid on schedule, whereas Libyan government employees sometimes are forced to endure four or five months without pay. A foreigner can sue the Libyan government, but a Libyan cannot. A foreigner can engage in trade and move freely with the government's blessing, but a Libyan cannot. When General Qaddafi officially changed Libya to a *Jamahiriya* (state of the masses), he invited all Arabs to acquire the "Arab citizenship," settle in Libya, and benefit from the Libyan welfare state. Libyans were told to emigrate to Egypt, Sudan, or Chad, because there was nothing for them in Libya.⁴² Qaddafi offered each family of Libyan emigrants an annual \$30,000 stipend.⁴³

Much of General Qaddafi's thought and politics is a product of a different era and thus appears senseless from a twentieth-century perspective. For example, the policy of authenticity adopted over the past quarter of a century served to rid Libyan traditions and the Arabic language of "external contamination."⁴⁴ All public and private signs, as well as travel documents, were Arabicized. Foreign nationals wishing to enter Libya had to translate their passports into Arabic to accommodate an Arabic visa. Public sector employees were encouraged to wear traditional Libyan dress or military fatigues. Those within the media were required to wear traditional clothes, and it was mandated that newborns take authentic Arab names. Even the Gregorian calendar has been replaced with a new solar calendar that begins with the migration of the Prophet Mohamad in 622. The names of the Gregorian months have also been replaced with names invented by General Qaddafi. The traditional Lunar Islamic calendar used by all Muslim countries has also been changed to begin with the death of the Prophet rather than his migration. Hence, the simple task of determining the day and date has become confusing because Libya neither follows the standard lunar Islamic calendar nor the global solar calendar. Every year a new set of rules and regulations telling Libyans what to wear, eat, say, and read is enacted by the regime. The country has become one of the most restrictive in the world.

CONCLUSION

To appreciate the full scope of Libya's predicament one must experience General Qaddafi's rule firsthand, by living in Libya—and only for a short period of time. Books and scholarly journal articles provide only part of the picture of what Libyan society is currently undergoing.

In this chapter I attempt to provide the reader with a true, unbiased representation of events in the Libyan polity. But because fact and fiction sometimes blur in Libyan politics, I might be accused of exaggeration and even polemicizing. The domestic policies of the Libyan regime have often bordered

on fiction. A case in point is a 1977 edict whereby the Libyan leader suggested that in order to achieve self-sufficiency every Libyan family had to raise chickens in the home. The cages and birds were imported and, for an obligatory fee of fifty-seven Libyan dinars (\$150 at the 1977 exchange rate), were distributed by the government to Libyans. To many city dwellers in small apartments, raising chickens in their kitchens was a difficult if not an impossible affair. The result was that many ate the birds and found other uses for the cages.

The point of this example is not to ridicule General Qaddafi but merely to demonstrate that the decision-making process in Libya has always been haphazard and rarely follows any given theory or ideology. General Qaddafi's declaration that Libya must achieve food self-sufficiency was justification enough for his aids to institute that controversial plan of raising chickens in the home. The Libyan leader found the idea novel enough to encourage its implementation. On another occasion the General commented on the high cost of new automobiles. Soon after, the government agency entrusted with importing and selling cars to the public began to import only used cars and ironically sold them at new car prices. The policy was reversed only after a great number of people complained. He remarked about the proliferation of Western musical instruments in the country. The result was the gathering and burning of musical instruments. While driving through an area in the suburbs of the city Benghazi, he wondered whether the area would be suitable for agriculture. Within a month all residential buildings in that area were demolished. As odd as it may appear, many of the policies impacting Libyan society are initiated and implemented in this same fashion.

The General has initiated other policies that have specific and clear objectives. Reconfiguring the Islamic calendar is one example, and replacing the Western names of the months of the Gregorian calendar with Libyan names is another. On the whole Qaddafi is rarely precise about the type of policy he desires and prefers to see the potential policy implemented before he intervenes and modifies it. Even *The Green Book* is general enough to permit different interpretation and experimentation by the revolutionary committees. Ultimately, however, all policies need the blessing of General Qaddafi.

It is imperative to emphasize here is that General Qaddafi, his ideology, and his rule are unique. What makes them even more singular is that the three operate simultaneously yet independently of each other. All are constantly changing, sometimes in different directions. General Qaddafi has the upper hand and permits the other two to be experimented with according to limits that he alone determines. Therefore, attempts to classify him, his ideology, or the Libyan polity according to some existing theory of personality or development will ultimately lead to wrong conclusions. Qaddafi must be judged on his own merit and on his own accomplishments.

Six

Foreign Affairs

As strange and incoherent as Libyan foreign policy might appear to be today, certain popular attitudes that were present during the monarchy became even more pronounced after 1969: a bitter resentment against the establishment of the State of Israel, a strong support for Arab causes and unity, a fervent attachment to Islam, and a degree of xenophobia. These inclinations, manifested in a "revolutionary" mold in 1973 when Qaddafi unleashed his Third International Theory for "the salvation of mankind," were soon replaced in 1978 by a new set of sentiments that emphasized the glorification of General Qaddafi and his revolution at the expense of all else, including Libya's national interest as well as its future political and economic well-being.

GEOGRAPHY AND BUSINESS

Today oil is the source of General Qaddafi's power and a major basis for Libya's intercourse with other nations. However, the real source of Libya's wealth has been its geography, and long after oil is depleted, geography will continue to play an important role. History has demonstrated the importance of Libya's location over the centuries—a location that the Qaddafi regime has chosen not to take advantage of during the past fifteen years.

Two thousand kilometers of southern shores on the Mediterranean made Libya a valuable strategic property at the end of World War II. By arrangement with the British, the United States established and used two bases on the outskirts of the main cities of Tripoli and Benghazi during the North African campaign. After the war, the U.S. returned the second of these bases to Britain but kept the first. Under the "collective trusteeship" plan proposed by the United States,¹ Libya would come under the jurisdiction of the United Nations for a period of ten years, after which the country would be granted independence. The U.S.S.R. and France opposed that proposal. The French feared the impact Libyan independence might have on Francophonic Africa. The Soviet Union's foreign minister Molotov coveted the western part of Libya as the long-sought-after Russian warm-water port on the Mediterranean. De-

spite the Soviet foreign minister's assurances that "the Soviet system would not be introduced into the territory, apart from the democratic order that is desired by the people,"² neither Britain nor the United States trusted the Soviet Union.

As a result of such an opposition Molotov modified the Soviet position and, during the Paris Conference of April 1946, proposed the division of Italy's colonies into four equal units, each to be jointly administered by Italy and one of the big powers. Tripolitania, according to Molotov, was to be administered by Italy and the U.S.S.R.³ That plan was also rejected by the other powers, who then referred the problem to the United Nations in accordance with article 3 of annex 11 of the Treaty of Peace with Italy.⁴

Soviet intentions became clear on the eve of the postwar Italian elections. In an attempt to boost the Italian Communist Party's fortunes, the U.S.S.R. declared that it favored entrusting Italy with trusteeship over all its former colonies. That kind of action only reinforced in the minds of U.S. policymakers the need to maintain some sort of presence in that area. Mellaha Airfield (renamed Wheelus Air Force Base), on which the U.S. had spent \$100 million, served that purpose.⁵ Moreover, the Soviet attitude made an agreement with the United States more palatable to Libyan policymakers when contrasted with the prospect of coming under the Italian yoke again.

While the Libyan problem was being debated in the United Nations, the United States and Britain were able to sign separate notes with the pre-independence Libyan government. A few months after independence these notes became treaties and formally allowed the stationing of U.S. and British troops in western and eastern Libya, respectively. By throwing its lot in with the West, Libya was able to use the Allies' power, influence, and pressure successfully to prevent any "intrusion of the Soviet camel's nose into the Libyan tent."⁶ However, Libyan policymakers had no intention of being drawn into the cold war. Quite early in their relations with the United States, they made it clear that the idea of a Libyan contribution to the collective defense of the "Free World" was "sentimental" at best. To the average Libyan, defense against French or British "aggression" was much more comprehensible than defense against Soviet imperialism, which was scarcely understood and seldom mentioned.

Soviet-Libyan relations were established in 1955. The Soviets offered "generous" aid to the poverty-stricken country,⁷ but Libyan policymakers refused it for two reasons. On the one hand, accepting aid from the Soviets at that time might have antagonized the United States, the largest contributor of foreign aid to the Libyan treasury. On the other hand, their refusal stemmed from a deep psychological and religious hatred of communism. The term *communist* has in the past been and continues to be equated with the term *kaafir*

(pl. *kufaar*) or "nonbeliever." Traditional dealings with *kufaar* have been limited to two choices—converting them or using the sword on them.⁸ Thus to the Muslim mind in general and to the Libyan mind in particular, any political affiliation can be tolerated, except communism. Christians and Jews for example are considered to be *ahl-al-kitab*, or "people of the book," and are therefore allowed to maintain their laws and autonomy within Muslim society.⁹ But relations with the Soviets were insignificant until 1969 when Muammar al-Qaddafi came to power.

The Libyan monarchy owed a great deal to the United States and Britain during the first decade of its existence. It was totally dependent on these two powers for economic and military aid. For reasons serving their individual interests, both powers pushed for Libyan independence even though the fragmented country had none of the basic ingredients that constitute a viable nation-state. The most important factor that drew both powers to the barren war-torn area was the country's strategic location. Luckily for Libya the issue of its independence coincided with the emergence of the cold war. The Truman administration, having enunciated the Doctrine of Containment, was willing to go to any length to deny the Soviets North Africa. Giving Libya independence and providing for its security by stationing bases there and providing for some of its welfare was seen by U.S. policymakers of the time as a bargain and a worthwhile investment in the security of the United States.

For its part, the Libyan leadership was more interested in keeping the fragmented country together and providing for the survival of an impoverished, malnourished, and uneducated population. Leasing bases to Britain and the United States was viewed as a business venture necessitated by the prevailing economic and political conditions. There was, however, opposition to the bases by some Libyans who feared that their existence would embroil the country in the East-West conflict at the expense of its relationships with other Arab states, particularly its eastern neighbor, revolutionary Egypt. Nonetheless Libya's stark economic reality and the promise of security and a better life as well as money and aid in various forms pushed the government of Mustafa Ben-Halim to sign the leases.¹⁰

Wheelus Air Base, near Tripoli, emerged as the largest U.S. base outside the continental United States. It not only served as a strategic staging area for American forces but also became an important training center for U.S. and NATO pilots. Libya's sparse population and year-round sunshine provided the best alternative to a congested European airspace and a physically remote United States. Domestically the air base had a profound impact on Tripoli's economy in that the infusion of money into the city by base employees and general purchases brought about an economic reconstruction in the city's economy. The base was also effective as a propaganda machine through which televi-

sion, American music, and newspapers were introduced. However, the most important by-product of the base was the American oil multinationals. In conjunction with their British and Dutch counterparts, these American multinationals established a profitable relationship with Libya that continues until today, unimpeded by Qaddafi's political rhetoric and economic restructuring.

THE POWER OF OIL

The Middle East had, by the end of the 1950s, emerged as the primary source that powered the post-World War II European economic boom. Unfortunately, it also emerged as a major crisis area. The 1952–53 Iranian crisis, the 1956 Suez Crisis, and the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict focused world attention on the region. Multinationals did not mind the crises as long as the situation did not impede the flow of oil; however, when frequent interruptions ensued, the oil giants began to search for alternate energy sites. Libya proved to be the most logical choice for exploration. Removed, but not too far, from crisis locations, Libya was close to Europe and had a small population with a stable pro-Western monarchy, and most importantly, it was a place where the physical presence of Western forces could provide for the security and interests of Western firms operating there.

The discovery of oil soon followed, and by 1961 the country had emerged as one of the largest oil producers in the Middle East.¹¹ This newfound wealth freed the poor country for the first time in its history from reliance on hand-outs and from dependence on the military-tied subsidies of the foreign powers, including the United States. More important was that this wealth created in a very short time a new merchant class that closely allied itself with the American multinationals and indirectly with Western interests in and outside the country. The political and economic influence exerted by this new segment of society made it extremely difficult for the monarchy to end its military ties to the United States and Western Europe. The economic argument that the government had until then employed to keep the bases had been very effective in countering criticism from within and without, but with wealth steadily accumulating, cracks began to develop in the government's argument. However, none of the criticism was more damaging than that launched by Nasser of Egypt, who accused the monarchy of making Libya a foothold for imperialism. Ultimately Nasser dislodged American and British influence and replaced it with an Egyptian seed that germinated in the person of General Qaddafi. The country continued to serve as a major source for European energy needs even after the revolution (table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Destination of Libya's oil, 1984-91 (1,000 barrels per day)

Destination	1984	1985	1984	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
North America	3.8	5.1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Canada	3.8	5.1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Latin America	8.0	7.0	5.0	—	—	—	—	—
Eastern Europe	51.1	55.0	175.0	52.0	50.0	28.0	85.0	50.0
Western Europe	826.7	787.3	850.0	745.0	825.0	836.0	994.0	1,130.0
Austria	7.5	7.8	30.0	31.6	32.0	20.0	28.6	10.0
Belgium	30.6	1.0	34.7	47.9	28.9	25.0	22.8	37.3
France	120.7	68.9	46.4	35.6	66.4	46.0	57.7	77.6
West Germany	115.5	110.0	95.0	128.5	202.0	217.0	232.1	247.7
Italy	258.0	284.9	297.4	271.3	311.5	366.0	489.2	521.5
Netherlands	56.8	60.1	35.0	15.6	7.2	12.0	6.5	9.1
Spain	77.0	80.4	133.0	76.8	80.8	79.0	107.5	109.7
Switzerland	17.8	15.0	14.0	31.1	26.9	9.0	22.8	38.0
United Kingdom	9.3	9.2	6.0	1.4	—	—	4.7	—
Middle East	17.2	15.0	16.0	6.0	8.0	4.0	—	—
Africa	1.2	6.2	6.0	4.0	4.0	2.0	5.0	20.0
Asia	21.6	19.0	15.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	6.0	20.0
OECD	830.5	792.4	850.0	745.0	825.0	824.0	970.0	1,080.0
Total	929.6	894.6	1,067.0	810.0	890.0	872.0	1,090.0	1,220.0

Sources: OAPEC Bulletin (1989<n>92); OECD quarterly oil and gas statistics (1993); OPEC Annual Statistics Bulletin (1993).

THE IMPACT OF PERSONALITY

In addition to geography and oil, Libya's foreign policy was impacted by Qaddafi's temperamental personality. Initially his intense attraction to Egypt and to Nasserist thought influenced much of his global and regional perceptions. Even his relations with the United States and the Soviet Union were influenced by his intercourse with Egypt. Since 1978, General Qaddafi had been forced by the policies of President Sadat and, more recently, President Mubarak to relinquish the Egyptian option. However, Egypt's influence on Qaddafi could still be discerned in Libya's foreign policy.¹² In one sense Egypt had a stabilizing effect on Qaddafi and provided his foreign policy with a degree of predictability. Based on how Egypt acted, Qaddafi acted. His reaction depended on what type of policy emanated from Cairo, what effect it would have on Arab Nationalism, and whether it conformed to what he perceived to be Nasserist thought. He saw himself as the ultimate authority on Nasserism.

Since 1978, Libya's foreign policy has been in disarray. Most analysts find the Libyan regime's foreign policy difficult to fathom because it appears to lack logical and lucid frameworks with which to identify mechanisms and priorities in Libyan foreign-policy formulation. General Qaddafi has never enunciated any major foreign policy doctrines, nor has he identified any salient foreign policy goals. Libyan foreign policy has been fashioned along incremental lines. However, even this incremental decision-making process does not fully explain why the policy is in such disarray.

Some policymakers pursue incremental decision-making models to limit the complexity and uncertainty of long-range policy planning and making. The absence or vagueness of general goals obliges the adoption of benign and limited policies aimed at bringing about short-term marginal consequences and limited learning. This process of "muddling through," while useful for short-range objectives, has had long-term disastrous consequences for Libya.

In many instances Libyan foreign policy has been opportunistic. Decisions have been made incrementally, but many of the decisions were neither limited nor benign. On the contrary, many of the foreign-policy decisions made by General Qaddafi have been quite radical. On more than one occasion, opportunistic decisions have succeeded in shifting the center of gravity of Libyan foreign policy altogether. That discrepancy can best be explained by the existence of two foreign policy-making bodies, each employing an incremental approach to achieve different goals. The first is the foreign ministry, the official foreign policy-making branch of government. For many small countries the foreign ministry serves as the liaison between the internal and the external and is thus bound by the rules and regulations of the international community. Libya's foreign ministry also finds itself in that position. However, it also

finds itself in the unenviable position of trying to improvise ways to reconcile what General Qaddafi wants and does with what Libya's national interest happens to be and with what the international political and economic order permits. The Libyan leader frequently changes his mind, and hence the foreign ministry has had to adopt an incremental decision-making approach to accommodate many of the changes.

The second organ is the unofficial instrument for foreign policy formulation, revolutionary committees. Like Qaddafi, these committees have little respect for the international order and even less for international law and diplomacy. Even Libya's national interest does not rank high on their agenda. "revolutionary right" as defined by General Qaddafi serves as their guideline, and they make and execute foreign policy without consulting the foreign ministry. Indeed these committees manifest Qaddafi's ego in foreign policy formulation and serve as a barometer to indicate any changes in Qaddafi's interpretation of revolutionary right.

Thus Libya's foreign policy manifests a certain degree of dualism reflecting General Qaddafi's need for order and chaos in the same policy. It also reflects the prevalent dualism in Libya's interaction with other countries: officially with individual foreign governments to reflect perceived Libyan national interest, and unofficially with certain sectors of the host societies to reflect the preponderance of Qaddafi's personality. Since 1978 the two have rarely coincided.

QADDAFI AND THE SUB-SAHARA

Few areas in the world have been as vulnerable to political, economic, and societal manipulation as sub-Saharan Africa. Traditionally, trade and Islam have bound North Africa, including Libya, with the rest of the African continent. However, Europe's intrusion into the area during the age of colonialism, spearheaded by France and Britain, severed many of the economic and political links between the Arab and Berber north and the black South. Spiritually, the Christian church with all its branches and denominations soon followed to confront and eradicate Islam from all areas in which it had taken root. Qaddafi discovered his African links soon after coming to power, and since that discovery, the cornerstone of his sub-Saharan policy has been by and large an attempt to halt and reverse all three "colonial and imperial" trends.¹³

To counter missionaries operating in predominantly Muslim African countries, Qaddafi established in 1970 the Islamic Call Society (*Jamiyet ad-Dawa al-Islamiya*). The creation of the society coincided with Qaddafi's Islamic phase and was intended to continue the missionary work of the Sanussiyya movement he had overthrown a year earlier. Its primary task was not to convert Africans to Islam but to reinforce Islamic principles in existing Muslim com-

munities actively targeted by well-financed French and American Christian missionaries.¹⁴ In the early years of his rule General Qaddafi believed the struggle to be a *jihad*: a physical, sociological, political, religious as well as an ideological struggle to preserve the Muslim community (*Ummah*) from attempts to inflict harm upon it by non-Muslims.

Qaddafi was initially very successful in mobilizing Africa's dispossessed Muslim community. He provided funds for housing projects, mosques, and schools to teach Islam and Arabic, as well as scholarships for African students to study at Libyan schools and universities. Few Libyans objected to funds spent on Islamic projects in Africa, because much like other Muslims around the globe, Libyans had to struggle very hard to preserve their religious identity in the face of unending assaults by the church in a variety of forms. The memory of the massacre of Muslims during the Crusades in Palestine and the Inquisition in Spain, which continues to be vivid in the minds of many Muslims, was reinforced by the brutality of British, French, and Italian colonialism. Much of Islam's modern political literature, rightly or wrongly, perceives colonialism as another form of Christian hegemony over the Islamic *Ummah*. The French in Algeria, Tunisia, and other parts of Francophonic Africa, and the Italians in Libya, Somalia, and Eritrea went to great lengths to convert Muslims to Christianity at great cost to Muslim property and life. The French in particular, according to Qaddafi, owe the greatest debt. Muslims from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Chad, Senegal, and other parts of Francophonic Africa made up the bulk of the Free French Forces that joined the United States in liberating France from the Germans. Muslims from the Indian subcontinent also were part of the British army that fought the Germans in Europe and the Japanese in Asia during the Second World War. Qaddafi has always used these symbols to mobilize young African and Asian Muslims.

During the first few years of his revolution, there was nothing to indicate that General Qaddafi was not sincere in his call for racial, social, and economic equality among the Muslims of Africa. He cleverly used the existing hostility against perceived European political and economic exploitation of African resources, and British and Western inaction against the policy of apartheid in South Africa and Rhodesia (later Zimbabwe), to mobilize Africa's youth against the status quo. Qaddafi's early success in the sub-Sahara was initially limited to countries with large Muslim populations. Libyan aid flowed freely, and Libyan-African joint stock companies were established to complement the increase in Libyan-financed investment banks.¹⁵ By 1986 approximately one-third of Libya's foreign investment went into international investment banks and joint stock ventures operating in all sub-Saharan Africa. There are no exact figures on how much of Libya's money was spent in the form of aid to sub-Saharan Africa. Ronald Bruce St. John has estimated that at least \$500 million

Table 6.2. Total Libyan financial flows to developing countries and multilateral agencies, 1973–89 (millions of dollars)

Year	Concessional	Non-concessional	Total
1973	218.3	195.6	413.9
1975	267.5	166.2	433.7
1980	382.0	-504.5	-122.5
1983	80.2	—	80.2
1984	64.3	—	64.3
1985	130.2	12.6	142.8
1986	9.3	—	9.3
1987	56.6	—	56.6
1988	17.4	—	17.4
1989	174.6	14.2	188.8

Sources: IMF Balance of Payment Tapes; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics* (1993); *World Development Report* (1975, 1980, 1985, 1990).

were spent from 1973 to 1980 by Libya in sub-Saharan Africa in the form of foreign aid.¹⁶ Over half of that sum went to Zaire and Uganda.¹⁷ The remainder went to more than twenty sub-Saharan countries. Libyan aid, while not amounting to much (see table 6.2 below), was very successful in dislodging Israeli influence in much of the African continent from 1973 to 1980. Since 1980, a decline in oil prices and the blatant mismanagement of the Libyan economy forced the Libyan regime to drastically cut all official development assistance (ODA).

Africa's large Muslim community and its dire need for development funds insured the early success of Qaddafi's cultural and economic thrust in the region. His emphasis on Islam and his willingness to spend a small amount of Libya's vast petrodollar reserves on foreign aid expanded Libya's sphere of influence far beyond the traditional "Libyan Hinterland" developed by the Sanussiyya religious movement during the nineteenth century.¹⁸ Emboldened by that limited success, Qaddafi saw little reason why African society, with little effort, could not be molded along the same lines of development employed in Libya.

Qaddafi initiated the policy of chaos in Libya with the Zwara Five Point Speech in 1973. Inaugurating the first cultural revolution, the Libyan leader abolished all laws and, having created disorder, was thus able to inject his own brand of local idiosyncratic ideologies in Libyan society. The operational suc-

cess and ease with which the policy was instituted in Libya convinced the General of the merit of its replication in Africa, where the political, cultural, and economic climate was ripe for its implementation. The obvious fragmentation of the modern African state, created and nourished by European colonialism, did not go unnoticed by Qaddafi. Indeed he depended on the existing fragmentation, which proved ideal for amplifying his politics of chaos. In his African policy Qaddafi has rarely initiated instability, but he has always preferred to take advantage of existing cleavages and divisions.

With the exception of Chad, Libya's involvement in the sub-Sahara remained passive and was limited to economic and cultural interaction. A change took place in 1977 when Qaddafi dispatched Libyan troops to Uganda to shore up the regime of the Ugandan dictator, Idi Amin. The mutation of that passive policy coincided with the publication of *The Green Book*, the establishment of the jamahiriya in Libya, and finally the inauguration of the second cultural revolution. With Libya firmly under his control, Qaddafi took a closer look at new opportunities in Africa and found the turmoil in Uganda well suited for a new adventure.

The other African adventure undertaken by General Qaddafi was in Libya's southern neighbor, Chad. In 1973, Qaddafi occupied the Aouzou Strip, a disputed area between the two countries, but he did not launch a full-scale invasion of Chad until 1980 when Libyan troops moved south and occupied the Chadian capital of Njamena at the request of the Transitional National Unity Government (GUNT). Libya's entanglements in both Uganda (1977–78) and Chad (1980–87) led to disastrous defeats for Libya, with more than 5,000 Libyans dead and millions of dollars in military hardware lost.¹⁹ However, even those losses have not stymied the Libyan leader's desire for influence in Africa. Indeed, his activity until 1987 was on the increase in many regions of the continent.²⁰ Only recently, and as a result of the decline in Libya's income, has the degree of Qaddafi's intervention somewhat declined.

The list of Libyan involvements in Africa is very long, but Libya's involvement in Liberia stands out as testimony to the recklessness of Libyan foreign policy-making.²¹ Few civil wars in Africa have been as brutal as the war in Liberia. Libya's military and financial support for the National Patriotic Front (NPF), which is headed by Charles Taylor, led to one of Africa's most bloody and destructive wars. Taylor's forces were armed, trained, and financed by Libya, and they continue to be supplied through Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso. President Blaise Compaore, a disciple and friend of Qaddafi, allowed Libyan advisors to train Taylor's forces in Burkina Faso in 1990.²² The Liberian conflict was so destabilizing to the region that Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Gambia formed a West African peacekeeping force and intervened in Liberia to put an end to the conflict. Taylor's troops confronted the peacekeepers and

ceased hostility only after the foreign ministers of the West African nations visited Tripoli in November of 1990 and convinced Qaddafi to help arrange for a peace summit in Mali during the same month.

Yet in spite of all this, Qaddafi's involvement in African affairs should come as no surprise. The African continent as a whole is perhaps the least economically developed of the planet's continents. Excluding the Republic of South Africa, the continent's per capita gross domestic product was, at the end of 1989, a mere \$583. This figure drops to \$479 if the four Arab countries of North Africa are excluded.²³ Today the picture is even gloomier for sub-Saharan Africa. Over the past four years an average 3 percent increase in population coupled with an average annual GNP decline of 1.4 percent has reduced the per capita income in the region to \$350.²⁴ However, the per capita income does not fully illustrate the degree of the region's calamity. People in sub-Saharan Africa suffer from all 109 categories of diseases classified by the World Health Organization (WHO). Based on WHO's *disability-adjusted life years* (DALYs) index, which measures the impact of disease on the quality of life, out of every 1,000 males in the region, over 600 are burdened with disease. The figure for females is 550 per thousand. Seventy-one percent of the sick are afflicted with communicable diseases.²⁵

All other socioeconomic indicators are not much better than those regarding the region's physical health. Indeed, the years of neglect and exploitation of so many of these countries by the colonial powers—and, since independence, by abusive and corrupt leaderships—have provided the ideal milieu for General Qaddafi to operate freely in the region. His adventures in Africa have in most cases been limited to those poor African countries with subsistence economies—countries that time and the rest of the world have forgotten. Not surprisingly, as long as the wealthy nations of the world continue to neglect Africa, General Qaddafi will ultimately win the war, even if he loses all the battles. A case in point is Chad, which after expelling Qaddafi, has in 1992 decided to invite him back. Qaddafi was the only global actor willing to invest in the poorest country in the world. Given a choice between economic survival or collapse, Chad's new leaders opted for survival even though that meant having to put up with Libya's idiosyncratic leader. The same argument is valid for Burkina Faso, Mali, Uganda, and several other impoverished African countries that have welcomed Qaddafi's involvement in their politics and economies.

THE POLITICS OF DISUNITY

Since the beginning of the twentieth century Arab, unity has been an unattainable goal for many Arab intellectuals and political movements. Like many Arab males of his generation, Qaddafi assimilated the concept of a Pan-Arabism

from the ideology of his mentor, President Nasser. Since coming to power in 1969, the Libyan leader instigated, formed, and entered into no less than six Arab unions. Yet in modern Arab history, no Arab leader has done more harm to the concept of Arab unity than General Qaddafi. All his attempts at unity with other Arab leaders proved to be disastrous and, in all instances, failed soon after their inception. General Qaddafi was so mesmerized by the concept of Arab unity that he failed to realize that for Arab unity to succeed, some sacrifices would have to be made, sacrifices that might include his relinquishing power to a larger governing superstructure. None of the Arab unions were unions of the people; rather they were unions of Arab regimes. Nasser learned the same lesson in 1961 after the dissolution of the United Arab Republic with Syria. Unfortunately he never passed that insight on to his disciple.

As far as General Qaddafi is concerned, Libya's relations with the other twenty Arab regimes rotate around the concept of unity and all the political and economic entanglements that accompany it. Over the past twenty years he has proven his willingness to go to any length to achieve that elusive goal. It mattered little to him that his attempts at unity were contradictory: a country with political parties cannot unite with a country that prohibits them; a monarchy will not unite with a military dictatorship. Qaddafi's goal has always been unity on Qaddafi's terms—a fact rejected by all Arab regimes. Besides that, one is able to extract two other main reasons to explain Qaddafi's failed attempts at unity with other Arabs, even though Pan-Arabism is very much alive among the Arab masses.

The first of these reasons is psychological and reflects an intrinsic contradiction in Qaddafi's concept of unity. The Libyan leader is not to blame, since like a good disciple, he took the ideals and frameworks handed down to him by Nasser and pursued the same policy. The problem can be found in Nasser's formulation of the concept of Arab unity. Nasser was first and foremost an Egyptian nationalist, and to him a united Arab entity in which Egypt would be dissolved was never an option. His "three circles" doctrine provided a pivotal role for Egypt.²⁶ Indeed Nasser envisioned all other Arab entities dissolving into Egypt since the Egypt of the 1950s was the most populous, most developed, most progressive, and most Arab of all Arab states. Hence Nasser's Pan-Arabism of the 1950s was in reality Egyptian nationalism in disguise. Nasser's attempt at unity with Syria in 1951 merely pitted Egyptian nationalism against Syrian nationalism, and in 1961 the ultimate result was failure. Failure also met Nasser in his adventures in the Yemens in the early 1960s. Nasser involved Egypt in Yemen, in the name of Arab solidarity, after the withdrawal of Britain from Aden. In the Yemeni Civil War, he was confronted by North Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Spearheading that opposition was King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, who was more of a Pan-Islamist than a Pan-Arabist.

Nasser himself became disillusioned with the concept and abandoned it until Qaddafi, in 1969, presented him with Libya on a platter—a gift he could not refuse.

Qaddafi's enchantment with Egypt is thus not coincidental. To him Egypt is the prize to be won and no Arab union would be complete without it. Indeed Qaddafi unconsciously epitomizes the Egyptian nationalist of the Nasserist era. A full analysis of Egypt's impact on Libyan foreign policy is discussed in a later chapter of this work, and it suffices here to say that because Nasser's ideology was local and idiosyncratic in nature, it died with its creator in 1970. Without Nasser's charisma and physical presence, the ideology could not support itself and was thus easily dismantled by Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat. Qaddafi has neither the charisma nor the intellectual abilities of Nasser and was unable to revive Pan-Arabism in Egypt, let alone in Libya.

The second reason for the failure of Qaddafi's attempts at Arab unity can be found in the nature of Arab politics. Since 1970, countries of the Arab world with the exception of Lebanon have been ruled by a kaleidoscope of nondemocratic regimes composed of absolute monarchies, absolute military dictators, and benign military rulers in civilian garb. Where political activity is permitted, it is narrowly defined and controlled. General Qaddafi was never able to legitimately or successfully penetrate the veil of security imposed on these societies by their rulers. All modern Arab rulers paid lip service to Arab unity, but no Arab regime favored it. Indeed there seems to be a tacit understanding among Arab regimes to talk about the concept but simultaneously to do everything possible to thwart its achievement. Arab unity would mean an end to their individual power and influence. The destruction of Lebanon is a prime example of that tacit understanding.

Lebanon and Arab Unity

Scholars studying the Middle East will continue to provide many reasons for the civil war in Lebanon (1975–90) and the destruction of the country. Few, however, will attribute it to a deliberate policy of destabilization by other Arab regimes. Before the civil war, Lebanon emerged as a sanctuary for the dispossessed intellectuals of the Arab world. Beirut, the capital, became a center of learning and ideas. In its coffee shops, the Ba'thist, the Nasserist, the communist, the fascist, the capitalist, and the Islamic Fundamentalist coexisted, mingled, argued, and learned from and taught each other. The profusion of academic institutions of higher learning as well as newspapers representing all ideologies provided Arab youths, for the first time in many centuries, with a rare opportunity to learn about what unites them—history, religion, economics, language, society, food, clothes, entertainment, and customs. All that activity took place in an atmosphere of relative freedom, far away from the

secret police of Arab rulers. During this period, opposition groups—organizations opposed to many of these regimes—began to emerge in Lebanon. Such groups from Syria, Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, Sudan—to name only a few—made their home in Lebanon and engaged in all activities denied them in their individual countries. Freedom in Lebanon provided Arab women, for the first time since the tenth century, with a unique opportunity to discover themselves and to taste many of the freedoms denied them by rigid patriarchal systems that kept them confined within four walls. In Lebanon they were able to drive, to move about unchaperoned, to go to theaters and cinemas, to wear clothes of their choice, and most important of all, to acquire a modern education that equipped them with the means to intellectually engage Arab men and governments on issues that concern women and their aspirations. In short, prior to 1975, Lebanon was a hotbed of political, ideological, social, and cultural activity that threatened the foundations of the Arab status quo.

None of the Arab regimes were willing to permit that renaissance to take place. If they could not control it, they had to destroy it. The destruction of Lebanon was not difficult. Its major strength, the absence of a strong government, also proved to be its Achilles heel. The Lebanese political system was based on a confessional balance. The influx of Palestinian refugees and the growth of Lebanon's Muslim minority since independence strained the system, leading ultimately to an outbreak of hostility between different religious groups. The resilient Lebanese have in the past contained these outbreaks and modified the system to absorb new realities. What was most baffling, however, was the Arab response. Almost instantly, different Arab regimes began supporting different factions. Syria supported the Syrian Ba'thists, Iraq the Iraqi Ba'thists, Libya the Nasserites and the Druze, Saudi Arabia the Christian Maronites and the Sunnis. Iran, which is non-Arab, also joined the fray after toppling the shah in 1979 and supported the Shi'ites. Israel, also non-Arab, found in the Lebanese Civil War an excellent opportunity to eradicate the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and thus lent its support to any group fighting the Palestinians. The destructive frenzy tore Lebanon apart and ended the beginning of what could have been a political, cultural, and social Arab revival.

Response to Rejection

It was only natural that Arab regimes would shun all of Qaddafi's bid for Arab leadership and unity. They all sought that leadership role and were infuriated when he responded to their rejection by using terrorism to destabilize them. After 1975, the more he was shunned, the more he resorted to violence in the Arab world. He hired assassins, trained dissidents, and used his military might

when possible to destabilize other Arab regimes. Perhaps no one felt the wrath of Qaddafi more than Libya's immediate neighbors. Libyan-supported terrorists blew up railway stations and government installations in Egypt. These events ultimately led to a border skirmish between the two countries in 1977. In the Sudan, Qaddafi sponsored at least two coup attempts against President Numeiri since 1975. Furthermore in 1983, a Libyan Tu-22A Blinder bombed the radio station at Omdurman.²⁷ The Libyan opposition used the radio station for anti-Qaddafi broadcasts. Qaddafi offered Numeiri a large amount of cash for the heads of his Libyan opponents, but Numeiri refused, further souring the relations between the two regimes. Sudanese nationals were recruited by Qaddafi for Libya's Islamic Legions, which were used by Qaddafi to create mischief in sub-Saharan Africa including Sudan. Yet perhaps the most contemptible of all of Qaddafi's acts in the Sudan has been his financial and military support for separatist movements in the south of the impoverished African country. Qaddafi's fanning of the fires of separatism has left Sudan, during the last decade, reeling from a civil war that has bankrupted its coffers, impoverished and decimated its population, destabilized its institutions, and brought to power in Khartoum a fanatical Islamic government bent upon turning the political system into a theocracy along the Iranian model.

Even peaceful Tunisia was not spared Qaddafi's wrath. The Djerba Treaty, which united Tunisia with Libya in 1974, was dissolved one month after its inception. In the treaty, Qaddafi offered the presidency to the aging Tunisian leader, Habib Bourguiba, but insisted on retaining the ministry of defense. Bourguiba, a shrewd politician in his own right, concluded that Qaddafi was not inaugurating a union but a coup d'état. Qaddafi, furious with Tunisia, expelled Tunisian workers from Libya and initiated a plan to destabilize the Tunisian government. In 1980, a group of dissident Tunisians, trained and financed by Libya, launched an attack on the city of Gafsa.²⁸ The attack, although thwarted by the Tunisian authorities with little loss to life and property, proved to be very much destabilizing to the Tunisian government. Qaddafi kept up the pressure through yet another raid by Tunisian dissidents in 1982 on the city of Kasserine. Ill-equipped to face Libya, Tunisia turned to the United States for military and financial support. President Reagan, already irked by Qaddafi and sympathetic to Tunisia's plight, increased U.S. aid to the Tunisian government and provided its armed forces with some American military defensive hardware. Qaddafi stopped the raids but began to harass European and American oil companies probing for oil on the Libyan-Tunisian border. He was suspected in 1984 of being behind the vandalizing of a Tunisian oil pipeline running parallel to the border.²⁹

In Algeria, Qaddafi supported Berber separatists and religious fundamentalists after the demise of the Hassi Messoud Accords, which had united Libya

and Algeria in 1973. The treaty between the two countries was a marriage of convenience that was never consummated.³⁰ The Algerians needed Qaddafi's financial and military support in their attempt to prevent neighboring Morocco from annexing the Western Sahara, which was to be vacated by Spain. Qaddafi's ego in turn needed another union as his relations with President Sadat of Egypt began to sour. He also needed to vent his frustration with Arab politics on the person he regarded as one of the most reactionary leaders in the Arab world—King Hassan of Morocco, whom he hated. In 1976, General Qaddafi joined with Algeria in throwing support behind the Polisario Front, which represented the approximately 60,000 inhabitants of the Western Sahara in their struggle for independence. King Hassan accepted Qaddafi's challenge and in 1979 offered Morocco as a base of operations for Libya's embryonic opposition movement.

Perhaps the oddest union that the Libyan leader has ever pursued was with the king of Morocco at Oujda in 1984.³¹ The marriage lasted less than two years, to be followed by the inevitable divorce. The Oujda Treaty between Morocco and Libya raised a few eyebrows in Washington and Paris—both of whom provided and still provide much of Morocco's foreign aid—but it was not surprising to most Arab leaders. While the treaty promised close economic and political cooperation between the two regimes, it was widely known that King Hassan needed to bring the war in the Western Sahara to an end, and he could not do that without Qaddafi's assistance. Qaddafi needed to shed the international pariah status and outmaneuver his external opposition. The sacrificial lambs of the accords were the Polisario, which Qaddafi promptly abandoned, and a few Libyan political refugees in Morocco, whom King Hassan promptly handed over to Qaddafi's henchmen. With both sides satisfied, the treaty came to an abrupt end.³²

Today a union with Qaddafi is a liability, and most Arab regimes want nothing to do with him. Indeed, within the past few years the countries of the Maghrib (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Mauritania) along with Libya have reached a number of economic and political accords within the Magharibi Union but have found it increasingly difficult to maintain close links with Libya. The Tunisian-Libyan and Algerian-Libyan borders have been closed to traffic on more than one occasion during the latter part of 1994 and the early part of 1995. The main reason for the closings was Libya's neighbors' unhappiness with Qaddafi's support for what they perceived to be radical Islamic factions in their societies. Algeria accused Qaddafi of financially supporting Abbasi Madani's Islamic Salvation Front, commonly known as the FIS, and Tunisia accused Qaddafi of Funding Rashid al-Ganushi's al-Nahda movement. Not wanting to escalate the issue but still desiring to show its displeasure, the Tunisian government closed its boarder and claimed that there was a plague in

Libya. Libya retaliated by also closing its border and claiming cholera in Tunisia. Algeria was less diplomatic and accused Libya of interfering in its internal affairs and violating the Magharibi Union Charter. Most worrisome to Qaddafi's Maghribi partners has been his insistence on including Egypt in the organization. General Qaddafi perhaps expects to increase his power in the Magharibi Union and, by recruiting Egypt, to form a block within the organization. Egypt's application was vetoed by Tunisia and Morocco, who have shown little love or respect for Egypt. Yet, in a characteristically Qaddafiesque manner, while the General was applying on Egypt's behalf for membership in the Magharibi Union, he was financially supporting the banned al-Jamaa al-Islamia, one of Egypt's most dangerous and radical Islamic groups. According to the Libyan opposition, a few Egyptian scholars, and Egyptian government officials, two Libyan revolutionary committee members were caught by Egyptian security with \$3 million destined for al-Jamaa al-Islamia. Usama al-Baz, President Mubarak's advisor, went to Libya on April 17, 1995, and confronted General Qaddafi with the information. According to the Egyptians the Libyan leader denied any knowledge and promised an investigation. The irony in all of this is that while supporting Islamic movements outside Libya, General Qaddafi has brutally suppressed all forms of Islamic expressions within Libya.

In the eastern Arab world, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) emerged. The GCC, composed of all the conservative Arab regimes of the Persian Gulf, has the primary function of protecting the participants from actors such as Qaddafi. Even Egypt has entered into negotiations with Syria, Jordan, and Yemen to coordinate economics and politics. Here again, Qaddafi was not invited to attend, even as an observer. The only two other countries he can approach for a union are Iraq and Sudan. Saddam Hussein has never forgiven Qaddafi for supporting non-Arab Iran against Arab Iraq in the Iran-Iraq War, and Sudan has never forgiven him for fanning the fires of separatism within its borders.

Since 1991 when the Libyan regime was implicated in the bombing of an American airliner over Lockerbie in Scotland, the United Nations demanded that Libya deliver two suspects, both Libyan agents, to be tried in either Scotland or the United States. Qaddafi refused and the Security Council of the United Nations placed an air travel and trade embargo on Libya. Since then, anyone wishing to leave or enter Libya must go through Egypt, Tunisia, or Malta. Qaddafi has been isolated internationally and regionally, with few friends to help him.

Seven

All Roads Lead to Cairo

THE EGYPTIAN FACTOR

Since the Prophet Mohamad, perhaps no man has wielded as much power in the Arab world as President Nasser of Egypt. Thanks to the transistor radio, the “Voice of the Arabs” was broadcast from Cairo and heard by almost everyone in the Middle East and North Africa. Nasser and, to a much lesser extent, the Syrian Ba’th were responsible for the shaping of individual Libyan thinking. Both were nationalists, calling for the revival of the Arab character, values, and independence. But most important of all, they called for Arab unity. All these aspirations were neither anti-West nor anti-East. However, the war with Israel in the Mashriq and with France in the Maghrib,¹ in addition to Europe’s colonial aspirations in the area, cast the West as the stumbling block, the force preventing the attainment of these aspirations.

The Egyptian leader so towered over the Arab world that his death must have relieved the majority of Arab leaders and politicians who had been eclipsed by his personality, his ability to draw victory from defeat, and his rare knack of eliciting mass support from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf. Qaddafi found himself to be one of many trying to fill the position of Arab leadership vacated by the late Egyptian president. To do that, he adopted Nasser’s actions, slogans, and old rhetoric vis-à-vis the adversaries of Nasserism.

General Qaddafi’s policies after 1970 and before 1974 were nationalist, anti-imperialist, and anticolonialist. His Islamic posture and financial support for Muslims around the globe spread his popularity to Muslim communities worldwide. He came to be identified as Nasser’s successor at a time when Nasser’s real successor was trying to shake the late president’s ghost off his back.² Qaddafi’s youth, vigor, and outspokenness—along with his thumbing his nose at the great powers in the name of Libya and higher values—pleased Libyans, Arabs, and even some non-Arabs.³

Egypt needed sophisticated Western military equipment to augment or replace its Soviet-made arsenal, and Libya was then in a position to acquire an

unlimited supply of Western arms and technology. That was demonstrated by the rapid purchase of French Mirage fighters, Crotal missiles and AMX-30 tanks in addition to British missiles, tanks, and armored personnel carriers. Other European countries, Italy in particular, provided an assortment of light armaments, after developing healthy trade relations with the new regime to the tune of nearly half of Libya's imports. However, on the first anniversary of the revolution, much of the equipment purchased had not been delivered. What had been delivered could not be used for lack of trained Libyans. The arms parade was conducted with Soviet-made weapons, on loan from Egypt and partially manned by Egyptian crews.⁴ Egyptian weapons continued to augment Libya's Western-made arms until 1974, when, as a result of the Sadat-Qaddafi rift, all Egyptian hardware, technicians and pilots were withdrawn.⁵ Libya was able to replace the Egyptian technicians and pilots with a contingent of Pakistani, French, Italian, Taiwanese, and Yugoslav instructors and pilots. However, the Libyan leaders appeared to have learned a lesson, proven earlier in Arab-Israeli wars: subsequent liberal arms purchases attested to Libya's determination not to become hostage to any arms supplier in times of crisis.⁶

The transience of the Sadat-Qaddafi honeymoon should have been no surprise to anyone, particularly Qaddafi. Their relationship represented extremes united by expediency. Prior to the October War, Sadat had no achievement to show Egypt and the Arab world. Overshadowed by Nasser's image, he was unable to gain the respect and loyalty of Nasser's supporters. Sadat looked to Qaddafi for help in gaining the Egyptian Nasserites' support. In allying himself with Qaddafi, he was able to subdue Nasser's followers in Egypt and lay claim to some of Libya's vast oil wealth.

Qaddafi, on the other hand, was more than pleased to enter into a union with Egypt, a union quite unlike the one he had had with Nasser. With Sadat, Qaddafi was not willing to assume the role of follower, as he did under Nasser. Rather, he wanted to assume the role of leadership bestowed upon him by his idol in a speech Nasser delivered in June 1970 to a Libyan crowd in Benghazi: "I shall be leaving you tomorrow. . . . I feel a new strength, a new blood in me. . . . I feel that the Arab people recognize themselves in you, and that they have rediscovered their determination. In leaving you, I say to you: My brother Muammar el-Gadafi is the representative of Arab nationalism, of the Arab revolution, and of Arab unity."

Sadat must have been aware of Qaddafi's aspirations, for he promised him a Libyan-Egyptian union to pacify him, but he never delivered it in any significant way. The Libyan leader needed a nation to lead, and Libya, with its small population of three million inhabitants, did not qualify. With a population approaching sixty million, Egypt could indeed serve as a nucleus for that nation.

Qaddafi perceived Sadat not only as an impediment to unity but also as a usurper of what Nasser had handed down to him. Qaddafi gave Libya to Nasser, then tried to "steal" Egypt from Sadat.

Although the October War of 1973 was a limited victory for Sadat, it was nonetheless a victory. It gave the Egyptians and the Arabs a sense of accomplishment that had been lost over the centuries and buried under consecutive defeats. By claiming a victory, Sadat showed what he could do. Even Nasser's twenty-year tenure had failed to achieve what Sadat had accomplished: a military feat against Israel. Emerging as man of the hour, Sadat for the first time stepped out from Nasser's shadow. What followed was a systematic process of dismantling Nasserism in Egypt.

Arab nationalism, an integral element of Nasserism, was relegated to a secondary position. The same fate met Arab socialism, which was replaced by a state-controlled version of *laissez-faire* within the new policy of *infitah*, or "openness." After adopting a capitalist mode of development, Egypt decreased its reliance on Soviet aid by replacing it with substantial aid from the United States, particularly after the Camp David Accord. Indeed, that agreement was the final stage in the dismantling of Nasserism in Egypt.

Until Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977, Libya did not cease its efforts to mend fences with Sadat. Despite the short border war that erupted between the two countries, Qaddafi's speeches and Libyan press releases sounded more conciliatory than hostile, with a great deal of emphasis on the "unfortunate nature of the conflict between Arab brothers." Further emphasis was placed on the need for unity to combat divisions within the Arab camp. In addition, Libyan authorities took no action against the quarter of a million Egyptians working and living in Libya. Events were later to prove, however, that Sadat had by then gone a long way in establishing ties with the Carter administration, which had promised him arms and aid in return for some form of direct negotiations with Israel.⁷

Sadat was toying with the idea of an international conference in Geneva. He decided against it, to keep the Russians out of the process. He instead opted for the dramatic visit to Israel that, in the words of Mohamed Heikal, "would take matters out of the hands of go-betweens and leave him the sole arbiter and individual focus of attention."⁸ Sadat made subsequent relations with the West hinge on Egypt's opposition to Soviet intrusion in the Middle East. The instrument of intrusion, in what he termed Europe's "soft underbelly," was, according to him, Libya. He argued that his neighbor's arsenal was a strategic reserve for the Soviet Union for use in a future African hot spot or in the event of a conflict with the Atlantic Alliance.⁹ There remains little doubt that Sadat was instrumental not only in driving a wedge between Libya and the

United States but also in portraying Qaddafi as a "mental case" doing the bidding of Moscow in Africa and the Third World.

The Libyan regime's jubilation in the aftermath of the assassination of Sadat appeared to be genuine. The assassination presented an opportunity for Egypt to extricate itself from the Camp David agreement, and from the isolation and forced reliance on Soviet support for Libya. More important, however, the assassination brought forward a new personality in Cairo, with whom the Soviets and Libyans must have felt they could communicate. Events proved the Soviets correct and the Libyans incorrect. A reputed \$5-billion offer by Libya in return for abrogating the Camp David Accord was rejected by Egypt's Husni Mubarak, who also showed no interest in Libya's attempts to open new channels of communication. Among these efforts at reconciliation were offers of a unilateral Libyan troop withdrawal from the border with Egypt which had been closed since 1976.

But Cairo continued to be the center of Libyan opposition to Qaddafi and, furthermore, became a leader with the United States in opposing Libya's "expansionist" policies in Africa.¹⁶ The regular joint U.S.-Egyptian military operations such as "Bright-star," along with the United States' attempts at "twitching Qaddafi's nose," further forced Libya to rely on the Soviets for military as well as psychological support. The Soviets provided that support through the symbolic naval maneuvers held, together with Libya, during November 1982, July 1983, and March 1984 in the Mediterranean.

Unlike his predecessor, Mubarak manifested a policy of benign neglect towards Libya. He made it clear to General Qaddafi that Egypt would not tolerate Libyan subversion beyond Libya's borders, particularly in Egypt and Sudan. Mubarak was too consumed with Egypt's overwhelming domestic problems to carry through with his threats. He instead chose secret diplomacy aimed at increasing Libya's isolation within the region. Also Mubarak's reestablishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union at an ambassadorial level in the latter half of 1984 increased his ability to influence Soviet actions in the Middle East and, consequently, to impact Libyan foreign policy.

Initially it appeared that Libya's isolation would force it to succumb to outside pressure; however, no one anticipated General Qaddafi's moves. In one stroke, he was able to bring Libya's war in Chad to an end, normalize relations with France, and most surprising of all, establish a union with conservative Morocco, a country whose monarch he once termed the "most vile and reactionary on earth." General Qaddafi thought he could use his relationship with Morocco as a means of reestablishing a relationship with the United States, but that turned out to be useless. The United States regarded the Qaddafi government a "renegade regime" and refused to have anything to do with it.

It is extremely difficult to diagnose any relationship in which the highly idiosyncratic personality of General Qaddafi has a part. However, his intense attraction to Cairo provides a barometer with which to measure his relations with the major powers.

NEGATIVE MAGNETISM

Libya's relations with the Soviet Union were distinctly cool during the monarchy and remained low-key, devoid of any mutual benefits to either country. The Soviets did not provide much aid because Libya rarely sought it from them. Furthermore, there was little that the monarchy could offer the U.S.S.R. That relationship changed somewhat after the Libyan revolution, but even then, the bilateral relationship in itself was neither interesting nor important. It was a relationship based on the export of weapons to Libya and the export of hard currency to the Soviet Union. What made the relationship interesting was Qaddafi's injection of Egypt and subsequently the United States into that bilateral relationship.

The 1955 Egyptian-Czech arms deal and the Suez Canal crisis of 1956 led to a fundamental change in Arab perception of the Soviet Union. In effect, Nasser legitimized Arab relations with the Russians. His domestic laws nationalized Egyptian industry and redistributed agricultural lands, thereby creating a kind of Arab socialism quite distinct from African, Soviet, and Chinese socialism. Religious fundamentalists, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, opposed Nasser's policies, but the fierce suppression of such groups through executions and imprisonment effectively ended all serious religious opposition to the Egyptian central government until 1970. This quiescence in turn allowed Nasser to move Egypt ideologically closer to Moscow. Algeria's independence in 1962 further brought the two together. As the main provider of Soviet weapons to the Algerian resistance movement, Nasser linked the movement and Moscow. Though there is little proof of Moscow's involvement in the Algerian War of Independence, the flood of Soviet teachers and military advisors arriving in Algeria within a year of independence places a shadow of doubt on the theory of noninvolvement.

Caught in the middle of two "progressive" regimes, the conservative Libyan monarchy of King Idris opted for closer relations with the West to counter Soviet intrusion in North Africa. Still, Libya was not immune from inter-Arab politics that manifested themselves frequently on the Libyan scene. When the United Arab Republic—formed in 1958 between Nasserite Egypt and Ba'thist Syria—broke up in 1961, Libya also inherited the divisions. The Nasserites in Libya overcame the Ba'thists by disbanding Ba'thist cells, imprisoning graduates from the Baghdad Academy, confiscating funds, and deporting non-Libyan Ba'thists.

Like many Libyan Nasserites of his generation, Qaddafi was shaped in his view of the Soviet Union by two conflicting forces. Having been brought up in an Islamic tradition and having studied in a Quranic school (*kuttab*), Qaddafi was inclined to regard the Soviets as the rest of the Libyan community did, as *kufaar* (nonbelievers). Yet from the nationalistic point of view, imprinted in Qaddafi by President Nasser, whose speeches Qaddafi memorized and constantly recited, the Soviet Union was a friend to the Arabs in their struggle with the Zionists and their supporters. The conflict between the antinationalistic element of his religion, which regarded the Soviets as enemies of Islam, and the nationalistic aspirations of his mentor, in which Russians were seen as a positive force, was resolved within Qaddafi in 1977 at the expense of both Islam and nationalism when he launched his *jamahiriya*, or the second cultural revolution. This was not clear. Does the revision express the intent?

Under Nasser, Qaddafi received his first training in dealing with the Soviets. His hostility towards the "non-believing Soviets" manifested itself in almost every speech he made, but Nasser took every occasion to remind the Libyan leader of Soviet friendship and Moscow's support of the Arab cause. Nasser fully knew that Qaddafi would not be able to establish a meaningful relationship with the Soviet Union so long as he harbored negative thoughts toward it. The Egyptian president knew that the twenty-seven-year-old Libyan leader needed more time to understand the Soviets and their policies and to learn to look on the Soviets favorably. Nasser therefore advised Qaddafi to keep his distance from the Soviets and not to antagonize the United States, as he himself had done earlier in his tenure. He also advised Qaddafi to diversify his purchases and shop elsewhere in Europe in order not to be dependent, like Egypt, on the Soviet Union for arms.¹¹ Nasser must have believed that a policy of balanced politics would give the Arabs the diversity they needed in weapons and an opportunity to enter markets thus far closed to them. Furthermore, that policy would enable the conservative segment of the Arab leadership to play an effective role in the Arab-Israeli conflict without altering their policies towards the Soviet Union. However, Nasser's untimely death in 1970 left a vacuum that changed much of these possibilities.

During the Sadat-Qaddafi honeymoon following Nasser's death, Libya's attitude towards the Soviets remained distinctly cool, erupting on frequent occasions in outright hostility. Yet amidst all changes in Egypt, Libya found itself the only country still clinging to ideas of the '50s and the '60s. The slogan "freedom, socialism and unity" no longer appealed to the majority of Arab leaders. It did, however, appeal to the aging Soviet leadership, who saw in it an opportunity similar to the one they had seen two decades earlier in Nasser's Egypt. Events were later to prove that the Soviets were correct in their assumptions, for after every major action that Egypt took in its rapprochement

with the United States, a Libyan high delegation visited the Soviet Union to conclude economic and military deals.¹²

However, before the first of these visits was made in 1974, the Libyan government attempted to obtain European-made weapons, only to find them either unavailable or limited in variety.¹³ The Europeans' change of heart was partly a response to the international image Libya had by then acquired: that of a destabilizing force in the region and in the Third World generally. Qaddafi's uncompromising views toward colonialism and imperialism, and his vehement hatred for Israel and its supporters, were a major obstacle to his acquiring arms from the West. Libya's links with "liberation movements," whose groups the U.S. regarded as agents of "international terrorism," was a further source of worry for the European arms suppliers. A final factor that dampened European and American enthusiasm for selling Libya arms was perhaps Qaddafi's belligerent response to conciliatory signals directed towards the West from Cairo. The West saw in Sadat's overtures an opportunity to bring about a fundamental change in the Arab-Israeli conflict. To support Sadat's opponent by providing him with arms would have stemmed Cairo's steadily deteriorating relations with Moscow and damaged the prospects of further improvement in the West's relationship with Cairo.

Despite Qaddafi's antipathy towards communism, Libya had no choice but to approach the Soviets for military hardware. Major Jalloud's May 1974 trip to Moscow led to a multibillion-dollar arms deal that provided Libya, by December of the same year, with surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) to replace those withdrawn by Egypt, supersonic bombers (Tu-22A Blinders), helicopters, and advanced all-weather fighters (MiG-23 Floggers).¹⁴ The Soviets also hurriedly provided T-54/55 and T-62 tanks, in addition to antitank missiles and armored troop carriers. In short, with Egypt tilting toward the United States, the Soviet Union provided Libya the chance to right the balance with the purchase of most types of conventional weapons its factories produced.

Egypt meanwhile enhanced its overtures to the West by widening its rift with the Soviets and with Libya. Sadat offered Soviet aircraft technology for the Chinese to emulate and for the Americans to evaluate. He also requested from Britain and China replacements for Soviet aircraft engines until weapons ordered from the United States and Western Europe were received. A planned visit to Cairo by Brezhnev in 1975 was replaced by Kosygin's visit to Libya, where he signed a number of economic agreements. The old bridges between Moscow and Cairo had indeed crumbled; any future relationship would have different premises. In dealing with Libya the Soviets appear to have found an opportunity to recoup some of the prestige gone with the loss of Egypt, and a rare chance to earn hard cash rather than the traditional Third World

sugar, rice, cotton, and other commodities received in payment for their weapons.

The relationship between Libya and the Soviets after the first arms deal was, according to Libyan and Soviet press releases, friendly, frank, and profitable to both sides. However, it was clear that the Libyan leader's views toward the Soviets had not changed. Indeed, his ideology equated communism with slavery. Qaddafi maintained and continues to maintain that all political parties enslave the individual, but of all parties, as he made clear in *The Green Book*, communist parties are the most enslaving. This particular point was a constant source of conflict between Soviet and Libyan news agencies. As late as December 1980, a Moscow broadcast condemned Libya's official government daily newspaper, *Az-Zuhf al-Akhdar*, for publishing an anonymous article giving a hostile account of the Soviet system.¹⁵ The Soviet home service broadcast said that the paper had "alleged that in the U.S.S.R. the state had become a dictatorship which had reduced Soviet citizens to the position of actual slaves."¹⁶ However, Libya's need for arms and Sadat's gravitation toward the United States forced Libya to edge toward the Soviet Union. Libya was an isolated oil-rich country, belligerent to its neighbors yet unable to defend itself. The brief border skirmish between Libya and Egypt in 1976 proved that point.¹⁷

General Qaddafi was, during the first few years of his tenure, a thorn in the side of the Soviets. His opposition to Soviet allies worldwide pleased the Nixon administration, which regarded Qaddafi as a certified patriot and, as demonstrated by his policies, definitely an anticommunist.¹⁸ General Qaddafi's support for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and other Palestinian groups was viewed by the U.S. government as natural, albeit troublesome. Furthermore, American policymakers saw his actions against the Soviets as far outweighing his actions against Israel. The General's support for Pakistan in the 1971 Indian-Pakistani War included the denunciation of the U.S.S.R. and the transfer to Pakistan of a squadron of U.S.-made Northrop F-5As bought by Libya before the revolution. Under normal circumstances the transfer of U.S.-made weapons to a third party without the prior approval of the U.S. government would have provoked some sort of U.S. response. However, in that case nothing was heard from Washington because any repudiation of the U.S.S.R. was read by Washington as a warming toward the West. Qaddafi intercepted a British airliner carrying two key Sudanese Communist coup leaders and forced it to land in Libya. He then handed them over to President Ja'far al-Numayri in Khartoum to be hanged, further proof of Qaddafi's anti-communist stance.

The British plane would have been forced to land regardless of the ideo-

logical affiliation of the Sudanese coup leaders. At that time Libya, Sudan, and Egypt had agreed on a merger, and the General was not willing to allow a change in the Sudanese government. Such a change could have dealt a setback to Arab aspirations for a union.

Judging by Soviet broadcasts, Qaddafi irritated the Soviets even though his actions did not emanate from a pro-West position. Appearances did not reflect reality, and regardless of Soviet suspicions, there was no unnegotiated understanding between Qaddafi and the West. While Libyan and American goals may have coincided during that period, their motivations differed greatly. Qaddafi's actions stemmed from religious convictions. To him it mattered little that Pakistan was supported by the United States and India by the Soviet Union. Had the support roles been reversed, Qaddafi would have condemned the United States instead. As it was, Pakistan happened to be a Muslim state, and it is the duty of a Muslim to aid other Muslims against non-Muslims. This was further demonstrated in 1974 when Libya transferred another squadron of F-5As to Turkey in its dispute with Greece over Cyprus.

Quite early in their relationship, the Soviets were well aware of the Libyan leader's Islamic orientation. A 1970 incident that Qaddafi termed "intellectual terrorism" provides an excellent example of Qaddafi's lack of knowledge about the Soviets and Communism. Qaddafi decided to send a Libyan delegation, headed by the former foreign minister Ali Abdulsalm Treki, to the Soviet Islamic Republics to "elicit" their support for the Moro National Liberation Front in its fight against the government of President Marcos of the Philippines. The Libyan leader believed that he could bypass Moscow altogether. He was wrong. Due to a "bureaucratic" mix-up, Soviet entry visas were denied to all members of the delegation, save two senior members who were flown to Moscow. In Moscow, the "leaders" of the Soviet Islamic Republics in question were brought before the two delegates to receive Qaddafi's letters.¹⁹

Relations between the Soviets and Libya hinged, until Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, on Qaddafi's vacillation between the nationalistic and the religious aspects of his psychological makeup. For their part, the Soviets attempted to keep their criticism of General Qaddafi low-key. They were irritated by Qaddafi's Third International Theory, which not only resembled Mao's philosophy²⁰ but was also presented by Qaddafi as an alternative to Soviet ideology.

The year 1978 was a turning point in Soviet-Libyan relations. It was the year General Qaddafi resolved his nationalist-religious conflict. Both Islam and nationalism had inhibited the spread of his Third International Theory, particularly in Africa, a region that consumed much of Libya's money and Qaddafi's time. So he relegated both to secondary positions in his theory. Islamic principles became valid only if they conformed to the Third Interna-

tional Theory. All the *Hadiths* were rejected, and the Islamic lunar calendar was changed.²¹

In that "second cultural revolution," one of the Libyan leader's slogans was the "minimum of food and the maximum of weapons." Since 1978 Libya has been a Spartan society where every male above the age of eighteen and under the age of fifty-six is required to be a full-time member of the armed forces and/or militia. All other activities in the "state of the masses" are secondary. The country's regular armed forces increased from twenty-two thousand in 1975 to thirty-five in 1978, to fifty-five in 1980, to eighty-five in 1983, to an estimated hundred thousand at the present time.²² Today General Qaddafi can muster an army reserve of over half a million people.

It is not surprising that since 1976, Libya has spent over \$28 billion on arms. Of that figure, \$20 billion went to the Soviets.²³ The Soviets were instrumental in that military buildup, which, on paper at least, is staggering. The country has in excess of 550 modern fighters, equivalent to the French and West German air forces combined; an army with over 2,500 main battle tanks; and an assortment of highly sophisticated and capable systems. These systems can engage high-speed targets at altitudes up to 100,000 feet. Libya also boasts a rapidly expanding navy, "the largest and one of the most modern in North Africa and the Middle East" with a missile attack-boat fleet and submarines.²⁴

These Russian arms sales have more than made up for the insignificant volume of trade in nonmilitary goods. According to a number of Western Soviet observers, Libya was afforded a special place in the "Socialist Commonwealth." Leaving Soviet and Libyan propaganda aside, Libya's relationship with other members of the socialist bloc was insignificant. There were many visits to Libya by Bulgarian, East German, Czech, Hungarian, and Polish officials. But only those visits by East German leaders produced any meaningful basis for solid relations. Nonmilitary trade between Libya and the "Socialist Commonwealth" did not amount to ten percent of Libya's trade with Italy, Germany, or even South Korea.²⁵ Little resulted from the many economic and friendship agreements between Libya and the "Socialist Commonwealth." Big projects that required much technical know-how, such as Libya's Great Man-made River, were not awarded to the Soviet bloc. Oddly enough, that project—which required the building of an irrigation system from desert aquifers to the coast, covering a distance of 4,000 kilometers—was in many ways similar to the Soviet-European gas line. And yet Libyan policymakers opted for American and South Korean companies to undertake the \$27 billion project.

The Middle East has in the past been the destination of the largest share of Soviet-made weapons sold to the Third World.²⁶ Not much was known before

the demise of the Soviet Union about the effect of weapons exports on the Soviet economy. A 1971 report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) maintained that "the economic gains which the Soviet Union made by supplying weapons to developing countries were negligible."²⁷ After 1971, Soviet arms sales to the Third World, particularly to the Middle East, were so huge that they undoubtedly had substantial importance in the Soviet balance of payments.

Unlike other Soviet arms customers who made purchases either on a credit or barter basis, Libya paid for many of its arms purchases from Moscow in hard cash. The Soviets insisted on "prompt and full Libyan adherence to military sales contracts which called for cash on delivery."²⁸ By paying in cash, Libya was able to maintain its independence and dispose of its weapons in any manner it saw fit. Libya also bought Soviet weapons for other countries worldwide. Among those countries were Argentina, Nicaragua, and a number of African nations such as Ethiopia and Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta). One of Libya's biggest purchases since 1982 was for the Syrian army after its fight with Israel in Lebanon. Libya, according to General Qaddafi, replaced Syria's losses of 100 fighter aircraft and over 300 tanks.

With an ally who spent so lavishly on arms for himself and his friends, it seemed quite natural for the Soviets to befriend the Libyan leader and afford his country "a very special place in the 'Socialist Commonwealth.'"²⁹ Of the Soviets' many faults, stupidity was not one of them. Libya was the only Third World country profitable to the Soviets, and judging by their arms sales, they recouped their losses well in advance, just in case the bilateral relationship turned sour as it did with Egypt and other countries the Soviets were forced to leave. Their inability to influence Libya's actions was a constant source of worry to Soviet policymakers. Perhaps more worrisome were General Qaddafi's threats to Egypt's leaders about applying to join the Warsaw Pact should Egypt join NATO. The Soviets did not know how to deal with an ally that was not under their direct control. With Libya in the Warsaw Pact, a Libyan-initiated incident could drag the pact into an undesirable conflict.

Since the first batch of Soviet advisors, numbering about two thousand, came to Libya in 1974, friction between them and the Libyan armed forces developed.³⁰ In addition to the unfamiliar Soviet culture, their language was a continuous source of friction. The insignificant number of Libyans who spoke Russian forced a dependency on translators, who were in most cases also foreigners. Russian, unlike French or English, was not taught in Libyan schools.³¹

In addition to domestic problems in Soviet-Libyan relations, very difficult regional problems existed. First among these was Soviet support of Iraq against Iran, which Libya supported. General Qaddafi accused the Soviets of "duplicity" for their support of Iraq's Saddam Hussein, whom the Libyan leader ac-

cused of being Syria's enemy and a "stooge" to the Arab "reactionary" forces of the Arab/Persian Gulf. In contrast, the Khomeini regime had endeared itself to the General when it toppled the shah, opposed the United States in Lebanon, and supported Syria against Israel. After 1982, the rift widened further when the Soviets supported Yasser Arafat, the "head" of the PLO, against his Libyan and Syrian-backed opponents.

As in the case of Iraq, Qaddafi did not appear to comprehend, from an ideological viewpoint, the reasons behind Soviet support for Arafat. In his mind Arafat lost the support of all "progressive" Arabs when he converted the PLO from a resistance movement to a diplomatic organization, when he cowered and evacuated Beirut rather than fighting the advancing Israelis, and finally when he accepted the Fahd Peace Plan and later the Reagan Plan agreed to by the "new Pharaoh of Egypt." What was particularly irksome to Libya was the fact that Soviet and Egyptian policymakers saw eye to eye on the Palestinian issue, and both supported the same man, Arafat. It was quite obvious that regardless of what Qaddafi thought or did, the Soviets did not seem to be willing to change their minds; they continued to pursue policies in the area that served their national interest, even if such policies were at odds with Qaddafi's thinking. In 1986 the Soviets did not even warn him of the impending American attack on Tripoli, nor did they offer any support.³² At the time, Soviet politics and economics were undergoing fundamental changes under Gorbachev, and bilateral relations with Libya were insignificant when compared to relations with the West in general and the United States in particular.

The Gorbachev Era

Under Gorbachev, Moscow tried to distance itself from global "troublemakers," and that included Libya, yet its need for hard currency to fuel its economic restructuring prevented the Soviet Union from relinquishing arms sales to these regimes. However, Moscow did seek new trading partners in the Arab world, particularly among conservative Arab regimes. This was evident in its overtures to both Kuwait and Jordan, to whom it sold arms. As far as Libya was concerned, the straw that broke the camel's back was the re-exchange of ambassadors between Moscow and Cairo. In effect, the Soviet Union was telling the Libyan leaders that in matters concerning Soviet bilateral relations with Egypt, it was not willing to accept any linkages and was pursuing an independent policy. By reestablishing its links with Cairo the Soviet Union increased Libya's isolation and forced the Libyan leader to be more amenable to Moscow's demands for a Soviet presence on Libyan soil. At the very least the Soviets were hoping to get Libya to sign, like other Soviet allies, the regular Treaty of Friendship accord. General Qaddafi had proposed signing the accord after his April 1981 visit to Moscow, but he never did it. Since 1972,

when they were expelled from Egypt by Sadat and thus lost all their air support and naval facilities in the region, the Soviets desperately sought a replacement in Libya. Earlier they had been unsuccessful in their attempts with Qaddafi. Despite a number of visits to Libyan ports by Soviet naval task groups, there is little to indicate that a Soviet permanent presence would have been tolerated in Qaddafi's Libya as it had once been in Nasser's Egypt. The Soviet need for hard currency and Libya's cash payments robbed the U.S.S.R. of the important military and economic-aid lever they had once used with Nasser.

While close in terms of arms trade, Soviet-Libyan relations were distant in other matters. For example, the U.S.S.R. and Libya rarely agreed on conflicts worldwide. For although Qaddafi at times served Soviet foreign policy purposes, he did so without established channels of formal collaboration. He was primarily concerned with what he perceived to be his and Libya's national interest, and not with any long- or short-term Soviet foreign-policy objectives. Therefore his support of Nicaragua's Sandinistas (\$100 million), El Salvador, former Prime Minister Bishop of Grenada, and Argentina in the Americas, and Muslim insurgents throughout Africa and Asia, including Afghanistan, was certainly not Soviet-inspired. To the General, the struggle in all these conflicts was against neocolonialism and imperialism, which he believed the Soviets were also capable of practicing.

The Soviets, for their part, were aware of the Libyan leader's idiosyncrasies and were thus reluctant to tighten ties with him. They understood that there was very little they could do to rein the General's policies, so they made use of those that served their purposes. Of interest to them were those policies directed at undermining U.S. allies in the Third World. However, there was nothing to indicate their eagerness in seeing too many countries destabilized simultaneously.

After 1985 the Soviet Union under Gorbachev distanced itself from Libya and in the process transformed the existing bilateral political, economic, and cultural agreements into a simple arms-for-cash relationship. The Gorbachev regime did not support General Qaddafi in any tangible way during his conflict with the Reagan administration, nor did it support him in the Libya-Chad conflict. It was therefore not surprising that the Libyan regime was the first to recognize the Communist hard-liners in their 1991 attempt to displace Gorbachev. Although the coup failed, Gorbachev's political position was badly shaken, and he ultimately lost the Russian elections to Boris Yeltsin. General Qaddafi's hasty decision to recognize the putsch leaders led to a further cooling of Russian-Libyan relations that continues today.

The Soviets imported an average of 150,000 barrels of Libyan oil daily in 1985.³³ A limited quantity of Libyan oil is still delivered to the Ukraine in payment for some outstanding debts. However, Russia's Libyan oil imports

ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990. Currently, Libya owes Russia approximately \$3.7 billion for previous arms sales. Libya is not eager to pay off the debt because the outstanding balance is shielding General Qaddafi's regime from a tighter United Nations oil embargo. In April of 1994, cash-strapped Russia, fearing that Libya would be unable to pay its debts, threatened to veto a Security Council Lockerbie-related resolution that would have restricted the export of Libyan oil. Russia's intervention resulted in a diluted resolution that prohibited the export of oil-related equipment to Libya but placed no restrictions on Libyan oil sales.

Libya's greatest need for Russian assistance is in the military field. The huge Russian-made Libyan arsenal needs constant maintenance. Although two of Libya's six Foxtrot submarines have been serviced by the Ukraine, and Serbian technicians have maintained some of Libya's aging MiG fighters, a large segment of Libya's military hardware is currently unusable due to a lack of spare parts and poor servicing. Much of the repair work is done by Egyptians. Russia, along with other former socialist states, is unable, at least legally, to sell military hardware to Libya or to service the country's existing weapons systems. The embargo imposed on Libya by the United Nations in the aftermath of the Lockerbie affair has frozen the most important area in Libyan-Russian transactions. Therefore until either the embargo is lifted or a new area of interaction is developed, Libyan-Russian relations will remain frozen.

LIBYA AND THE UNITED STATES

Since independence, Libyan-U.S. relations have passed through three phases: Libyan dependence, 1951–69; incompatibility, 1969–80; and antagonism, 1980–present. Pre-oil Libya was in large part dependent on the United States for security and direct financial support. Libya was also dependent on the help provided it by international-aid institutions, to which the United States was a major contributor. In the years following independence, Libyan policymakers had few alternatives to towing the American line, permitting the stationing of American and British bases on Libyan soil, and maintaining a pro-Western posture.

The discovery of oil in commercial quantities provided Libya with an opportunity to readdress its weak political and economic position with the United States. But Libyan policymakers, rather than assert their country's sovereignty and renegotiate the existing military and economic agreements, opted for a closer relationship with the U.S. Fearful perhaps of covetous neighbors, Libyan policymakers signed multimillion-dollar arms deals with the United States and Britain for military hardware to include a network of surface-to-air missiles, tanks, fighter aircraft, and ships. However, more important than the mili-

tary connection were Libya's post-oil economic links with the United States. In addition to oil companies, many American firms found excellent business opportunities in the newly rich developing country. Indeed, when Qaddafi came to power in 1969, Libya was far more economically and militarily dependent on the United States than it had ever been before. U.S. companies provided technology, management skills, and goods and services, as well as machinery, foodstuffs, and other commodities.

Understanding the underlying factors beneath Libyan-American relations during the Qaddafi era is quite difficult because of their contradictory nature. While economically these relations did not change much from what they were during the monarchy, politically they were quite different. Bilateral economic relations between the two countries were in large part determined by mutual economic interests, yet political intercourse between the United States and Libya was shaped by factors external to that relationship. Libya did not rank high on the United States' political agenda. The Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations, while irked by Qaddafi's support for international fringe groups and anti-Israel policies, did not see that support as threatening to U.S. security. High on the U.S.'s security agenda were détente with the Soviet Union, the Vietnam War, arms control, and normalizing relations with the People's Republic of China. Even in the Middle East, Libya was not viewed by American foreign policymakers as a primary actor. Qaddafi had neither the means to attack Israel directly nor the ability to influence the decision-making processes in Arab countries confronting the Jewish state. In short, as far as American policymakers were concerned, Qaddafi was politically a nonactor and thus, while bothersome, he could still be ignored.

Qaddafi also detached (perhaps too much) economics from politics in his foreign policy. American companies played a dominant role in Libya's sole economic asset, oil. Thus the Libyan leader took economic relations with the United States for granted, never realizing that economics and politics can sometimes become inseparable. His foreign policy with the United States was confrontational and demonstrated a lack of concern for promoting political relations with the superpower. He supported terrorist as well as legitimate liberation movements around the globe, many of which were anti-American. Regionally Qaddafi attempted to mobilize Arab regimes through a variety of means, including coercion, to confront Israel and the United States. He purchased a huge arsenal from the East and West to use in his perceived struggle against the neocolonial and imperial aspirations of the United States and its allies. In short he sought to insulate the Islamic world in general, and the Arab world in particular, from Eastern and Western influences and politics, much as the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 insulated the Americas from Europe. Qaddafi grew up believing America to be the mortal enemy of the Arabs. He was sus-

tained by daily doses of fiery anti-American speeches from Nasser's media propagandist, Ahmad Saeed. Saeed broadcasted on the "Voice of the Arabs" from Cairo until Nasser's death. He was dismissed by Nasser's successor but found employment for a few years broadcasting his usual diatribe from the "Voice of the Large Arab World" in Tripoli. He was a Nasserist and thus resigned when he could no longer conform Nasserism to Qaddafism.

One can consider Qaddafi to be an illegitimate child of Nasser's revolution of July 23, 1952. Arab culture, while recognizing illegitimate children, does not equate them with legitimate children regarding inheritance. Arab history is full of flamboyant figures born out of wedlock who have sought through a variety of means to prove themselves far superior to their legitimate brothers, fathers, and even tribes. One such person was Antar ibn-Shadad, whose courage and verve have assumed mythical proportions in Arab literature. Qaddafi can indeed be seen in these terms.

In Qaddafi's own mind, Egypt belonged to him, yet he had no legitimate claim to it. The nation was usurped by Anwar Sadat after Nasser's death and handed over to the United States. Qaddafi must have felt that in being deprived of Egypt, he was being deprived of his inheritance. The United States, by seeking and accepting the role as Sadat's benefactor, appeared in Qaddafi's eyes to be a participant in the plot to deprive him of what was rightfully his. It is not coincidental that Qaddafi unleashed his domestic cultural revolutions and international campaigns of terror in the aftermath of two major events during the 1970s: the November 1973 Sadat-Kissinger agreement to end the Arab-Israeli war, and the 1978 Camp David Peace Accord. There were very few bilateral political issues over which the United States and Libya could disagree. The only disagreement between the two countries was over Egypt. Even Israel did not rank high on Libya's political agenda, and Qaddafi intensified his anti-Israel activities only after he lost Egypt. The loss of Egypt was a severe blow that left him disoriented, confused, and bitter until the second half of the 1980s, when President Mubarak opened Egypt's doors to him again.

U.S. relations with Libya were also impacted by Egypt. Anwar Sadat was extremely tactful with the U.S. government and media, and by 1980 he had succeeded in solidifying American support. His successor, Husni Mubarak, a good military bureaucrat with neither Sadat's foresight nor Nasser's charisma, was smart enough to continue Sadat's profitable ties with the United States. Thanks to a policy laid down by Sadat, until 1991 the United States considered Egypt's allies in the Middle East to be America's allies, and Egypt's adversaries America's adversaries. The Gulf War and the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Accords changed America's relationship with a number of actors in the area, but Egypt continues to play an important role today. Sadat failed to drive a wedge between the Carter administration and Qaddafi but succeeded in sour-

ing Libyan-American relations during the Reagan administration and the subsequent Bush administration.

President Sadat might have been the catalyst but certainly not the cause of the troubles in the third phase of Libyan-American intercourse. If anyone is to blame, it is General Qaddafi. In terms of policy the Libyan leader went on an international rampage, supporting terrorists of all denominations with money and arms, as well as diplomatic facilities. Emboldened by his newly acquired petro-power and skyrocketing oil prices, he thought that he was capable of committing any act anywhere he wanted. With no discernible policies, Qaddafi lashed out at real and imaginary foes. His instruments of destruction in the Middle East were Palestinian radical factions, like that of Abu Nidal, which were opposed to the Camp David Accord and its signatories. Elsewhere Qaddafi employed international terrorists such as Carlos the Jackal. Even the United States was not immune from Qaddafi's mischief. He paid professional assassins to attack Libyan dissidents residing in America. Although most of his attempts were thwarted by the FBI, in 1981 one of his hired assassins did succeed in wounding Faisal Zegalai, a Libyan dissident studying at the University of Colorado at Boulder. John Tafoya, the would-be assassin, was caught and sentenced to only a few years in prison for lack of sufficient evidence against him.

The Reagan administration, unable to retaliate for a number of terrorist attacks on American citizens, installations, and interests, decided in 1981 to hold countries sponsoring terrorist acts responsible for them. Of the five countries the United States accused of supporting terrorism, Libya was the most vulnerable. More important to President Reagan, General Qaddafi epitomized Third World leaders who had no respect for American power and prowess in the post-Vietnam era. Qaddafi was to Reagan what Castro was to Kennedy and what Nasser was to Prime Minister Eden—an international pariah bent on exporting revolution and confronting American and British interests worldwide.

The Reagan administration confronted Qaddafi at every turn and in every part of the world. In 1983 during his eight-year tenure in the White House, Reagan ordered the United States Navy to antagonize Qaddafi and confront him in the Gulf of Sidra, which the General considers part of Libya's territorial waters. Foolishly Qaddafi took the bait, and after drawing an illusionary "line of death" across the gulf, he responded to the American challenge by sending a number of poorly defended navy frigates to enforce his claim. Three Libyan naval vessels with crews totaling 160 men were immediately destroyed by the far-superior American armada. Two years earlier the Qaddafi's air force had lost two Soviet-made airplanes to American navy jet fighters in a number of skirmishes over the Mediterranean. In 1989 the Libyan leader lost two more

fighters to the Americans. The most devastating blow to Libya came in 1986 when the Reagan administration blamed Qaddafi's agents of planting a bomb in a German nightclub frequented by American service personnel and, without any proof, chose to retaliate against Qaddafi by bombing the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi. In the attack, over 200 civilians died and many buildings were damaged or destroyed by stray bombs. Among the buildings "mistakenly" bombed were Qaddafi's home and the French Embassy.³⁴

France, along with other continental European countries refused to permit the American F-111 bombers to fly over French airspace on their way from Britain to their targets in Libya. The negative global response to the American attacks on Libya forced the Reagan administration to end military actions against General Qaddafi. By then, America appeared to a large number of governments more like a bully than a victim. Indeed, by bombing Libya's major cities, the United States neglected the concept of proportionality as outlined in international law. Proportionality was devised by international lawmakers to insure that the punishment fits the crime. The United States never proved Qaddafi's involvement in the nightclub bombing, and all indications pointed to Syrian and Iranian involvement instead.³⁵ Iran and Syria were also attacked by the U.S. military in the Persian Gulf and in Lebanon, respectively. Both had more accounts to settle with the United States than Libya did. Moreover, the Reagan administration did not lack worldwide enemies given the fact that it was involved in over fifty covert operations in the Third World.

To some extent Libyan-American relations during the Reagan administration were remarkably similar to American-Egyptian relations during the '50s and '60s. President Nasser was not very popular in Washington during the cold war because most American policymakers were realists with a globalist perspective; they saw world politics in the black-and-white terms mandated by the bipolar system. In such a system there was little room for Nasser's policy of nonalignment. Furthermore, Nasser's arms deal with the U.S.S.R., his adoption of socialism, the nationalization of the Suez Canal, and an anti-Israel posture placed Egypt, as far as American policymakers were concerned, within the socialist camp.

President Reagan was ultimately a cold war warrior who assumed power in the '80s rather than the '50s. His confrontation with Qaddafi, a carry-over of his antipathy to Nasserism, was not surprising; it was expected. To that, one must add the personal dislike the two men had for each other.

On the whole Libya's relations with the United States were dictated by the bipolar system. Qaddafi was the child of détente. His idiosyncrasies were tolerated by both poles because he was a wealthy marginal actor. The systemic structure provided the Libyan leader with a role to play in the global scheme of things. The United States did not strenuously oppose the diversion of some

of Libya's oil wealth for Soviet arms, which proved on more than one occasion to be technologically inferior to European and American arms. More important, Qaddafi's nationalism, along with his dislike of Communism and the Soviet political system, was a major source of disagreement between him and the Soviets.

Since 1980 Libya has been isolated by the United States. Consequently, Qaddafi has been confronted in Chad, in Granada, in Nicaragua, and in Vanuatu, as well as in other parts of the globe. The Reagan administration used Libya as a political numraire against which other Third World countries were measured.³⁶ The purpose was not to remove Qaddafi but to isolate Libya and use him as a measuring stick for "uncivilized" behavior. Eventually American policy towards Libya served as an outlet for American displeasure with global issues that had nothing to do with Libyan-American bilateral relations. For example, the United States opposed the 200-mile territorial water limit of countries other than Libya. Yet of all countries claiming that right, U.S. policymakers chose to contest Libya's claim in the Gulf of Sidra. U.S. reaction to the bombing of the German nightclub is another illustration of this policy. Unable to find the culprits, the United States chose to retaliate against Libyan targets even though the attack was reputedly committed by the Syrian-supported Abu Nidal faction of the Palestine Resistance Movement. Libya was not directly involved in the affair but was blamed for sheltering Palestinian rejectionist factions, including Abu Nidal himself.³⁷

The Libyan-U.S. confrontation during the Reagan administration should have come as no surprise to anyone, least of all to General Qaddafi. His claim to sovereignty sheltered him from the international structure only as long as his activities were confined to Libya. Outside Libya, the rules of the game changed dramatically. The international structure with its rules and regulations based on power-politics was unwilling to permit a minor actor to ruffle the system. It was only a matter of time before the hegemon, in that case the United States, intervened to readdress the balance.

Libyan-American relations during the Bush administration have also proven to be trend-setting in the formulation of international law. In 1991, the United States accused Libyan agents of planting bombs on board Pan American flight 103, which exploded in the air over Scotland. The American and British governments formulated and passed a Security Council resolution that imposed an embargo on Libya to include air travel, military supplies, and parts. Contrary to existing international law, the resolution also required Libya to deliver two Libyan suspects for trial in Britain or the United States. The suspects, Abdel-Baset al-Migrhi and Lameen Khalifa Fheima, are both members of the Jamahiriya Security Organization (JSO), one of Libya's intelligence services; circumstantial evidence does point to both, but there is no hard evi-

dence.³⁸ Libya does not have an extradition agreement with either Britain or the United States and thus refused to deliver the suspects, claiming the right to sovereignty. However, besides the incriminating evidence, perhaps the most important reason behind the refusal was Libya's fear that the United States would be resolute in finding the suspects guilty. That fear was reenforced by the U.S.'s rejection of a 1993 Libyan proposal to hold the trial on a neutral site such as Switzerland or Germany. Recent experience has conditioned the Libyan regime not to trust the American and British sense of justice. The government-controlled media in Libya are convinced that as far as the American and the British governments are concerned, the guilt of the two Libyans is a foregone conclusion. The trial, Qaddafi believes, will be a mere formality to legitimize further hostile action against him. According to the official media, a guilty verdict would enable the United States to pass resolutions in an "American bought and dominated" Security Council of an "ineffective" United Nations to force Libya to relinquish sovereignty on a number of issues.³⁹

One point of contention is Libya's Rabta chemical plant. For the past decade the U.S. government has been insisting that, contrary to the Libyan government's claim, the plant is not producing pharmaceuticals but chemical weapons. In a number of saber-rattling incidents, the United States demanded that the plant be opened for international inspections and that Libya's war-making capability be destroyed. Of immediate concern to most Libyans, however, is the United Nations' embargo—which is not preventing Qaddafi and his supporters from continuing to live a life of ease. It hurts the general population, who now have to make do with even less than the little they had before the embargo. Worse yet, the embargo has given General Qaddafi the excuse to enact more precarious economic and political policies.

Qaddafi's greatest foreign policy failure has proved to be in the Middle East. In his hour of need he found no Arab regime willing to help him settle his dispute with the Americans and the British, nor was there one such regime willing to circumvent the embargo.⁴⁰ Half-hearted attempts by the Arab League to settle Libya's dispute with the U.S. have not been very effective. Tunisia and Egypt, Libya's two current windows to the outside world, are profiting by Libya's misery and thus are unlikely to want it to end. As a result Libyans have become disillusioned with Arab unity. Indeed, even Qaddafi wrote an article in the government newspaper under the title "If This Is Your Arabism Then Go It Alone."⁴¹ Libya, he maintained, will be seeking ties with the United States and even Israel, because dealing with America and Israel is better than dealing with all the Arab states combined.⁴²

Libyan-U.S. bilateral trade was terminated in 1986 in the wake of the U.S. attack on Libya. President Reagan issued an executive order prohibiting American companies from trading with the Libyan regime. However, U.S. oil com-

panies continued their contacts with Libya's National Oil Company. The five companies involved—Continental Oil (Conoco), Marathon, Amerada Hess, Occidental Petroleum, and W. R. Grace—continued their operations due to a number of “giant loopholes” approved by the Reagan and Bush administrations. Both administrations argued that forcing U.S. companies to abandon their operations in Libya “would result in a substantial windfall for Libya.” The Bush administration, citing “U.S. interests,” kept the loopholes open well after the United Nations’ embargo went into effect. Today American companies continue to operate in Libya through subsidiaries, and some such as Boeing are already anticipating the lifting of the embargo to sign a multibillion-dollar deal with the Libyan government for new passenger carriers. In spite of the rhetoric and hostility, America’s policy towards Libya since 1986 has been inconsistent with a policy of punishing Libya for its support of terrorism. This fact can perhaps be attributed to America’s national interests and powerful lobbyists.⁴³

However, what cannot be easily explained are Libya’s actions. General Qaddafi disliked the Reagan but not the Bush administration, and his attempts at reconciliation through American oil companies seemed to be working. In view of the reconciliation attempts, why would he permit Libyan agents to blow up an American passenger plane and end that process? While General Qaddafi is quite capable of ordering the destruction of the airplane, there is one important fact that must not be overlooked: members of revolutionary committees must constantly undertake such acts if they are to remain in favor. Although highly unlikely, it is possible that the operation was undertaken by over-zealous revolutionary committee members trying to anticipate Qaddafi’s need for revenge over the bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi. This is not, of course, to exonerate the Qaddafi regime but merely to emphasize the fact that creating chaos is embedded in the structure of present-day Libyan society.

Eight

Epilogue

In one of his sermons to his followers Mohamad, the Prophet of Islam, once said *kama takunu yuwala alaikum* (you will be governed by what you are). It is not very difficult for any scholar with a some profound understanding of Libyans, their history, culture, and psychology to see that Mohamad's words do, in the case of Libya, hold true.

Since 1951 the Libyan state has been ruled by two regimes, neither of which has succeeded in ruling the Libyan people. Isolated and fiercely independent, Libya's inhabitants accepted the first of the two regimes because it appealed to their conservatism and because it lacked the power to intrude on their lives. The monarchy was tolerated because it lay claim to Islam, a religion that has had a magical hold on Libyans since it penetrated the African continent in the seventh century. The monarch's character exhibited much of the Libyan character: its shyness, its indecisiveness, its austerity. Idris displayed the prevalent conservatism of Libya's society with all its complexity. The political system that he adopted was not Libyan in origin, but it embodied a culmination of the experiences of no less than twenty-one countries. Its forgers in the United Nations hoped that a checkered constitution would provide a basis for the future development of an indigenous Libyan political system.

In many ways the monarchy fell victim to its own success. Eighteen years of constitutional rule taught a large number of Libyans the value of political participation and the virtues of self-government. The political system of the monarchy was not perfect and needed to evolve and overcome the tribal nature of the regime. King Idris's unwillingness to let the system develop beyond narrow parameters ultimately led to the demise of the system. He can, however, be credited with preserving much of what the United Nations had planted. During the monarchy, Libyans had semi-independent political institutions and laws that guaranteed a degree of political participation, individual freedoms, rights to property, and most important of all, a right to congregate and dissent. Many used of these rights to vote, demonstrate, write and pub-

lish in a vibrant local media, trade, and go about their daily lives in relative safety, free from harassment or arrest.

Economically, surpluses generated by the oil wealth enabled the regime to forgo the reliance on international handouts and unpopular domestic taxes. Consistent with its paternal nature, the regime provided for the well-being of the population. During the six years that preceded the revolution, Libyan society underwent a phenomenal economic change. Public spending was evident in a rapidly growing foreign-built infrastructure, with its universities, roads, hospitals, schools, airports, and public housing. By 1969, a large number of Libyan students were granted scholarships to study in American, European, and Egyptian universities. It was a period of unhindered economic growth.

It was only a matter of time before economic demands were translated into political ones. Economically, Libya in 1969 was vastly different from what it had been in 1964, yet politically, it had not changed since 1951. The traditional ruling circles remained the same, and all calls for political reform from the newly emerging middle class and intelligentsia were either rejected by the monarch or met with promises that were never fulfilled. For some, the political legitimacy of the monarchy eroded because it could not keep up with the process of modernization. Libya's youth, like all youths worldwide, needed to rebel and experiment with life but found the political system too confining and dominated by old men who saw no room for experimentation. By 1968 the popular slogan of some Libyan demonstrators was *Hukm Iblis wla Idris* (Lucifer's rule rather than Idris's). Yet in spite of the occasional unrest the popular sentiment favored evolution rather than revolution.

THE DEMISE OF THE STATE

The coup leaders that toppled the monarchy took over an existing state with political institutions, a young population, security forces, a new and expanding infrastructure, and a full treasury intact. The September coup was peaceful and devoid of any bloodshed. The traditional structure fell within a few hours of the arrest of its leaders. The coup leader, Muammar al-Qaddafi, was young and appealed to Libya's restless youth, who saw him as a potential candidate for expanding political participation and revamping the political and economic structure along more democratic lines.

General Qaddafi did represent a popular aspiration for change, yet very few in Libya could have anticipated the perpetual agitation he was to cause for the next quarter of a century. He unseated an unpopular but legitimate government that had until the coup succeeded in containing a tribally fragmented society. By hastily dismantling the political and economic system of the monarchy, General Qaddafi merely unleashed the forces of fragmentation. Furthermore his lack of legitimacy increased the pressure on his regime to resort

to coercion as a means of keeping these forces under control. Three years after the coup all traces of the previous political and economic structures had disappeared. These were replaced by experimental and ephemeral institutions developed by General Qaddafi to guarantee the survival of his regime and reshape Libyan society in his own image. General Qaddafi has, over the past twenty-five years, planned and constructed a stateless society that, when reduced to its simplest form, resembles a modern variation of the tribe. Libya resembles a large tribe where precedent and custom have been replaced by General Qaddafi's ideology. Ownership in the *jamahiriya* and in the tribe is collective ownership. Authority structure in General Qaddafi's stateless society, as in the tribe, is based on consensus and not elections. Trial and punishment is dispensed in the *jamahiriya* either by a revolutionary or a popular committee, while in the tribe by peers chosen by tribal elders. This is to suggest not that General Qaddafi's *jamahiriya* and the tribal system are identical but that there are indeed many similarities between the two systems. Moreover, General Qaddafi displays a lifestyle of modernity and tradition combined. He lives in a Bedouin tent erected in an army barrack. He wears French and Italian tailored suits under traditional Bedouin robes. When he travels overseas on official visits, he is sometimes accompanied by a she-camel to provide him with milk.

As odd as it might appear, General Qaddafi has proven that under certain conditions a tribal structure can indeed be reshaped to accommodate a modern society. How well the system can function without coercion and without his ideology to run it is an open-ended question that no one can presently answer. However, judging by the rising tide of domestic opposition, including three coup attempts during the past few years, it is highly unlikely that many Libyans given the freedom to choose will opt for General Qaddafi's stateless society. To many, the eighteen years of semi-democratic rule is still a fresh memory. Now middle-aged, Libyans born in the late '40s and early '50s still vividly remember the days when humans were respected in Libya. That knowledge can be now found in their children, who also see the contradictions in their domestic environment, public life, and future opportunities.

A FOREIGN POLICY LED ASTRAY

Libyan foreign policy has by and large been influenced by General Qaddafi's character and ideology and hence is subject to the same idiosyncrasies prevalent in the domestic policy-making arena. During the past two decades the national interest has often been relegated to a secondary position by the regime's foreign policy-making apparatus. This fact is particularly evident when a choice has to be made between the General's ideology and the country's interest. A case in point is Libya's relations with its neighbors. Since assuming

power, General Qaddafi has been relentless in his attempts to export the Third International Theory. Ultimately he plunged Libya into armed conflict with five of its six neighbors. The sixth, Niger—too weak, vulnerable, and poor to confront its belligerent northern neighbor—has opted for a policy of accommodation towards General Qaddafi's regime. Libya continues to occupy territory in northeastern Niger, adjacent to territory it occupies in northern Chad. Libyan forces were also at one time involved in preserving Idi Amin's regime in Uganda. Without exception, the setbacks and defeats which Libya experienced in all of these conflicts have resulted in loss of Libyan life, wealth, or prestige.

Within the Arab world Libya's foreign policy proved to be even more idiosyncratic than in Africa. Analysts were rarely able to discern General Qaddafi's friends from his foes. His fluid foreign policy enabled him simultaneously to characterize a regime as vile and reactionary and, as in the case of Morocco, to join the regime in a union. Another more telling example is perhaps General Qaddafi's reference to Sheik Zaid Ibn Sultan of the United Arab Emirates as a progressive revolutionary while having on an earlier occasion referred to all the regimes of the Arab peninsula as "pigs" and "stooges of the United States." His support of non-Arab Iran in the Iran-Iraq war at a time when he championed Arab unity is a further indication of a foreign policy highly influenced by idiosyncratic leadership values.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of this idiosyncratic foreign policy is the regime's covert and sometimes indiscriminate support for a host of legitimate and illegitimate political movements worldwide, including the ANC in South Africa, the Red Brigade in Germany, and the IRA in Britain. The ultimate result of that policy was Libya's ostracism by the Arab world and by Europe. Most countries have limited their relations with Libya to simple commercial activity. Those who import Libyan oil provide an opportunity to the Libyan regime to remedy the balance of trade by importing consumer products. The United States halted trade with Libya in 1980 and discouraged countries from permitting Libyan government investment in their markets. Since then, the U.S. government has prohibited all companies and banks with more than seven percent Libyan ownership from operating in the United States and engaging in business activities with U.S. companies. Italy's FIAT and the Arab-African Bank were two of the many businesses forced to sell their Libyan-owned shares at a great cost in order to operate in the world's market. The Reagan administration also prohibited third-party exports to Libya of commodities manufactured with American-made components.

Contrary to popular belief the former Soviet Union was not Libya's patron. Soviet leaders understood the regime of General Qaddafi. They knew they could not control him and hence made the most of the situation by limit-

ing their relationship with him to a purely commercial exchange. They provided him with weapons, and they received cash in return. When Qaddafi requested technical advisors, they provided him with technical advisors on a purely commercial basis. There has never been anything to indicate that General Qaddafi has ever sought Soviet help in his foreign adventures. The Soviets on their part were unwilling to engage in Libya's sideshow wars and never did.

Libya's foreign policy has been influenced by neither East nor West, by neither neighbors nor region, but by General Qaddafi's ideology, which constantly reflects the idiosyncratic nature of Libya's leadership. Perhaps the only influencing factor on General Qaddafi has been Egypt, but that influence ended with the death of his mentor, President Gamal Abdul-Nasser. Since then Qaddafi has sought to influence others rather than to be influenced by them. In most cases the only factor thwarting his aims has been strong leadership in the countries he targeted. Tunisia, under a weak Habib Bourguiba for example, was constantly coerced and intimidated by General Qaddafi. Zain al-Abiddin Ben Ali, a much stronger leader, deposed the aging Bourguiba and assumed the leadership of Tunisia. Since then General Qaddafi has pursued a cautious relationship with his North African neighbor.

Now with an insignificant foreign-investment return from the country's invested petrodollars, Libya continues to be in the forefront of those producers affected by any disturbance in the international oil market. During the past five years, Libya's inability to attract customers has forced it to rely on barter—a situation that has led to a shortage in Libya's hard currency reserves as well as the inability to finance food purchases. To make matters worse, the country's \$6-billion debt, incurred in the years prior to 1986, has increased dramatically during the past five years to more than \$10 billion. Much of that is owed to Russia, South Korea, Turkey, and Italy.

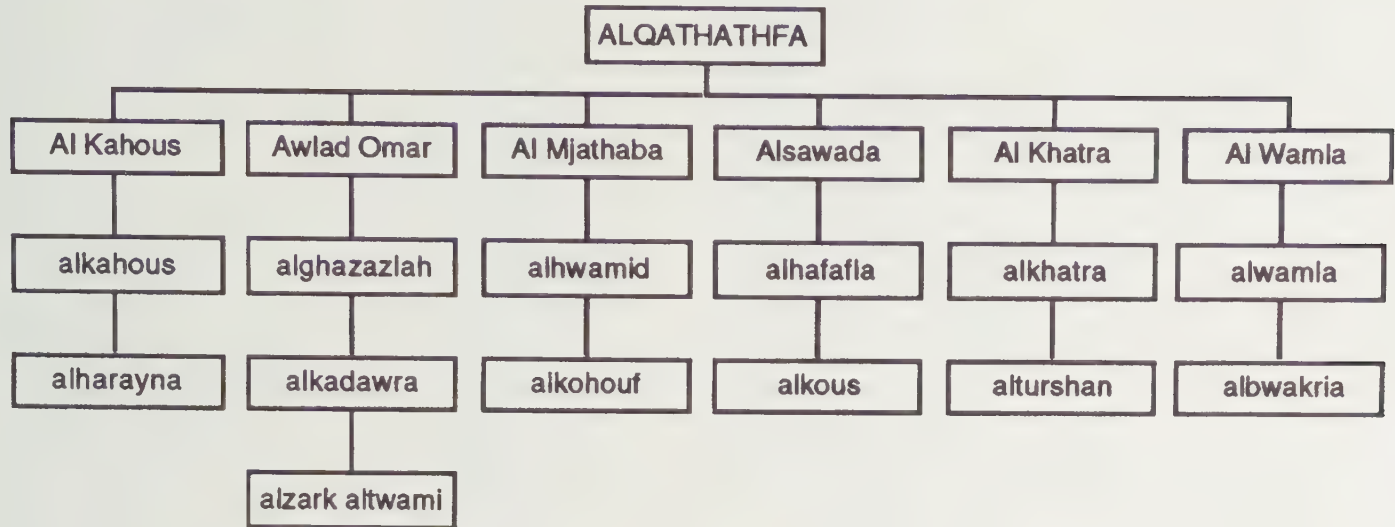
When Libya was a major oil exporter with an ample cash inflow, it could do what it wanted. General Qaddafi was able "to fly as high as his imagination could take him." It is possible but highly unlikely that the present cash shortage, which is expected to continue until the end of the decade, will ground Libya to reality. As the shadow of poverty, which the country has successfully eluded for the past three decades, reemerges, a more realistic foreign policy will not be a matter of choice; it will be a necessity. A foreign policy that reflects an understanding of the country's needs and capabilities, and one that serves Libya's long-term developmental schemes, will be required. Small countries in general and Libya in particular can least afford to "place all their eggs in one basket," nor can they afford to antagonize all the military or economic world powers. Indeed, their foreign policies must be less ideological and more pragmatic to be effective.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Development has always been very painful. Few societies in the world undergoing the development process do not experience political and economic dislocations. Even the advanced industrial societies have had their share of turmoil in the early stages of their development. Britain during Cromwell's revolution, France in the aftermath of 1789, and the America after the Civil War are but a few examples of societies whose basic fabric has been torn asunder from within. More recent examples of such events are the Russian revolutions of 1917 and 1991 as well as the Chinese revolution of 1949. None of these societies emerged from their domestic turmoil without a fundamental change in their political and economic structures.

Hence from this perspective, General Qaddafi's revolution is not abnormal. A certain degree of turmoil and change was to be expected. However, what is peculiar to the Libyan revolution is that more than a quarter of a century has passed and the revolution has not evolved beyond the revolutionary stage. Most developed societies have quickly learned from their revolutions and have thus gone on to de-emphasize ideology and emphasize those institutions that are capable of softening the impact of ideological changes within their cultures. General Qaddafi's ideology is still too ephemeral and underdeveloped. Furthermore, the absence of effective governmental democratic institutions have left Libyan society vulnerable to the sharp and painful adjustments that inevitably accompany the constant changes in the leadership's thinking. Most dangerous, perhaps, is the fact that the constant agitation has prevented Libyan society from learning the process of self-government. Whether General Qaddafi will acquire enough wisdom as he grows older to learn from the successes and the shortcomings of his system and to put in place firm democratic foundations for the inevitable post-Qaddafi era is a question that only General Qaddafi himself can answer.

Appendix: Power Positions of the Qathathfa Tribe and Allies



NAME	RANK	DUTIES
AL-KAHOUS		
Mansour Daw	Major	Commander Presidential Guard 72nd Armored Battalion
Ali Abu Baker	Captain	Operations officer 72nd Armored Battalion
Ali Ibrahim al-Qaddafi	Captain	72nd Armored Battalion
Jamal al-Din Ali al-Mabrouk	Captain	Deterrent Battalion
Abdulah Mohammad Masoud	Lt. Colonel	Commander of the Deterrent Battalion
Bulbieda al-Ghanai	Captain	Mohammed abu-Miniar Battalion
Hamed Ali Ahmad	Captain	Mohammed abu-Miniar Battalion
Ghaith Hamid	Lt. Colonel	Assistant to Commander of Hawari Bu-Madian Battalion
Qathaf al-Dam Mahmoud Masoud	Lt. Colonel	9th Armored Battalion
Musa Abu-Suba	Captain	Assistant to Commander of 123 Battalion (Special Forces)
Shneib al-Firjani	Lt. Colonel	Assistant to Commander of Imhimad Magarief
Abdul Rahman Miftah	Captain	Presidential Guard
Al-Mabrouk Musa	Captain	Presidential Guard
Muhamad Abdul-Rahim al-Saadi	Captain	Presidential Guard
Al-Saadi Abdul-Rahim al-Saadi	Captain	Presidential Guard
Ali Abdul-Salam	Captain	Presidential Guard
Al-Saadi Abdul-Salam	Captain	Presidential Guard (Qaddafi's Nephew)
Bu Jarir Khamis	Captain	Presidential Guard
Mahmoud Abdul-Hamid al-Atraash	Captain	Jamahiriya Security (Qaddafi's Nephew)
Abu Jahl al-Hilbu	Captain	Jamahiriya Security (Qaddafi's Nephew)

NAME	RANK	DUTIES
Ahmad Qathaf al-Damm	Colonel	Commander of Security Battalion in Tobruk
Abdula al-Saklul	Lt. Colonel	Faris al-Sahra Security Battalion
Abdula Saeed	Captain	al-saadi security Battalion
Mansour Rheel	Captain	al-saadi security Battalion
Abdul Rahman Abdul-Rahim al-Atrash	Captain	Hussein al-Jueifi Battalion at Beida (Qaddafi's Nephew)
Abdul Qadir Saeed	Captain	Hussein al-Jueifi Battalion at Beida (Qaddafi's Nephew)
Ajaj Hamid	Captain	Body Guards (Qaddafi's Constant Companions)
Khamis Hamid	Captain	Body Guards (Qaddafi's Constant Companions)
Abdul Rahim al-Hilbu	Colonel	Military Intelligence
Qrain Saleh Qrain	Colonel	Commander of the Revolutionary Guard
Al-Hadi Abdul Salam	Qaddafi's nephew	Jamahiyyria Security (Qaddafi's Nephew)
Al-Hamali Abdul Hamid	Qaddafi's nephew	Jamahiyyria Security (Qaddafi's Nephew)
Jumah Zayed	Flight Colonel	Commander of Kurthabia Air Base
Sayed Qathaf al-Dam	Colonel	Director of the Information Agency
Ahmad Ibrahim Mansour	Ministry of Information	Minister of Information
Muhamad Abdul-Salam	Oil Drilling Co.	Director of oil exploration company
Ibrahim Abdul-Salam	Information Office	Information office
Uwaydat al-Majthub	Information Office	Information office
Masoud Khamis Abdu-Minyar	Construction	Transportation Company
Saleh Hamid	Construction	Construction Company

NAME	RANK	DUTIES
AL WAMLAT		
Khalifa Jamaa	Major	Deputy Commander 72nd Armored Battalion
Saeed Ghath	Captain	72nd Armored Battalion
Ali Abu-Bakr	Captain	72nd Armored Battalion
Mohamed al-Mahout	Major	72nd Armored Battalion
Al-Wafi Uwhaida	Captain	72nd Armored Battalion
Shahat Izbaida	Captain	al-Rigeibi Battalion (Souk al-Jumma)
Shalbani	Captain	123 Army Battalion
Omar al-Rugubi	Colonel	90th Artillery Battalion
Salem al-Wadani	Captain	Commander of 90th Battalion
Abdul Jalil al-Mahout	Captain	Deterrent Battalion
Mustapha al-Mahout	Captain	Presidential Guards
Rahil Jbail	Captain	Presidential Guards
Ali Nasr Ramadan	Captain	Presidential Guards
Ali abdul-salam Ikshaiba	Captain	Presidential Guards
Al-Amin al-Sakloul	Major	Presidential Guards
Ramadan Nasr	Lt. Colonel	Presidential Guards
Abdul Jalil Hamed	Lt. Colonel	Presidential Guards
Ali Issa	Captain	Jamahiriya Security
Abdul Jalil Nasr	Major	Jamahiriya Security
Dakhil Daw Ramadan	Colonel	Jamahiriya Security
Abdul-Rahim al-Faituri	Captain	Jamahiriya Security

NAME	RANK	DUTIES
Ghaith al-Taieb	Captain	Jamahiriya Security
Khalifa Groom	Colonel	Jamahiriya Security (Jufra)
Milad al-Sudani	Major	Jamahiriya Security (Jufra)
Dabnoon abdul-Nabi	Lt. Colonel	Central Security Committee and Commander of the Gulf District
Ali Tlak	Major	Agricultural Project (Sirt)
Hussein al-Rifi	Lt. Colonel	Burkina Faso
Rajab abu-Zaid	Colonel	Guard Inspector (Kufra)
Younis Rtaima	Major	Libyan Arab Airlines
Hnaish Nasr	Sergeant	Qaddafi's Former Driver
Zeed al-Zawam	Captain	Revolutionary Guard

AWLAD OMAR

Imhimad al-Zintani	Captain	72nd Guard Battalion
Muhamad Milad	Lt. Colonel	72nd Guard Battalion
Al-Zanati Mansour	Captain	72nd Guard Battalion
Daw al-Zanali	Lt. Colonel	Commander Assistant Abu-Miniar Battalion (Sirte)
Abdul-Salam Hwaidi	Captain	Commander Assistant Abu-Miniar Battalion (Sirte)
Naji Harir	Lt. Colonel	Naval Base (Khums)
Muhamad abdul-Rahim Abdula	Captain	Deterrence Battalion

NAME	RANK	DUTIES
Saeed Muhammad Uwaidat	Colonel	9th Brigade
Omar Uwaidat	Captain	Commander of 123 Battalion (Special Forces)
Adel Sharaf Omar al-Fakhri	Lt. Colonel	Deterrence Battalion (Tripoli)
Omar al-Mualif	Major	Commander of Imhimad Magarief Battalion
Alarabi Ishkal	Colonel	Presidential Guard
Muhammad al-Nadab	Captain	Presidential Guard
Shelwan Harir	Captain	Presidential Guard
Miftah Beled	Captain	Presidential Guard
Khamis al-Ghanay	Captain	Presidential Guard
Awad Misbah Hanaish	Captain	Presidential Guard (Khalifa Ihneish's nephew)
Abdula Sbaie	Captain	Jamahiriya Security
Muhammad abu-Shwaish	Major	Jamahiriya Security
Faraj abdul-Mawla	Captain	Jamahiriya Security
Abdul-Salam al-Nadab	Captain	Jamahiriya Security (Tobruk)
Al-Sidiq Shraiwe	Captain	Jamahiriya Security (Fufr)
Ali al-Kilbu	Major	Faris al-Sahra Battalion Commander
Hassan al-Kabir	Lt. Colonel	Al-Saadi Battalion Commander
Khalifa Ihneish	Colonel	Central Security Committee (Sirte)
Ahmad al-Kailani	Colonel	Military Intelligence (Sirte)
Ali al-Kailani	Major	Liaison Office (Security of Revolutionary Committees)
Imhimad Hwaidi	Lt. Colonel	Liaison Office Revolutionary Committees

NAME	RANK	DUTIES
Al-Zawam al-Sakloul	Major	Jamahiriya Security
Salem al-Nadab	Flight Colonel	Air Force (Kurthabia)
Zaid abdul Daiem al-Mudir	Fl. Major	Air Force (Special Squadron)
Omar Ukhwaidi	Fl. Major	Air Force (Kurthabia)
Abdul Kadir al-Zintani	Fl. Major	Air Force (Kurthabia)
Al-Zintani Khalifa al-Zintani	Fl. Major	Revolutionary Committee Secretary Peoples Congress
Omar Ishkal	Fl. Major	Revolutionary Committee Secretary Peoples Congress

AL KHATRA

Masoud abdul-Hafith	Colonel	Special Operations Room
Tahir Bubnaina	Captain	72nd Battalion
Muhamad Omar Beleed	Lt. Colonel	Deterrence Battalion Commander
Muhamad Bubnaina	Major	Financial Officer Deterrence Battalion
Swaisi abdul-Hafith	Captain	Presidential Guard
Shtaiwi Hassan	Captain	Presidential Guard
Mansour abdul-Hafith	Captain	Syria Liaison Office

AL MJATHABA

Muhamad al-Majthoub	Colonel	Liaison Officer Revolutionary Committees
Misbah abdul-Hafith Izbak	Major	Deputy Commander of Fatheel Bu-Omar Battalion

NAME	RANK	DUTIES
Naji Abdul-Hafith	Captain	Jamahiyya Security
IN-LAWS		
Al-Jarikh Farkash	Colonel	Hussein al-Juweifi Battalion Commanding Officer (Safia Farkash's uncle)
Busha'ria Farkash	?	Jamahiyya Security
Saleh Farkash	?	Jamahiyya Security
Muhamad Farkash	?	Jamahiyya Security
Khairi Abdul-Hamid Khalid	Colonel	Commander of Prisons to Military Police (Brother of Qaddafi's first wife).
REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES		
Omar Mohammed Ashqal	Q	Secretary People's Congress, Liaison Office
Azloud Ahmed Jaloud	M	Brother of Abdul Salam Jaloud
Mohammad A. Almajzoub	Q	Captain, Personal Liaison between Qaddafi and Revolutionary Committees
Ibrahim Aljady	W	Deputy Chair of Socialist & Progressive Organizations of the Mediterranean
Hoda Ben Amer	W	Member of Revolutionary Court. Close association with Qaddafi, Revolutionary Nun.

NAME	RANK	DUTIES
Mesbah al-Wirfally	W	Chief of the Revolutionary Committee. in Europe
Abdel Hady Abdel Salam	Q	Son of Qaddafi's Sister, (dubbed Crown Prince)
Alhamali Abdul Hamid	Q	Son of Qaddafi's Sister. R.C. in Sirte. Runs Agricultural Project
Mohammed Khalifa Ahnish	Q	Son of Khalifa Ahneish. R.C. in Tripoli
Jamal Ahnish	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli)
Omar Ahnish	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli)
Akreen Saleh Akreen	Q	People's Congress
Abdul Jalil Abo Menia	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli)
Abdullah Alamory	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli) Propagandist
Mossa Mesbah	W	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli)
Yunis Alama	W	Revolutionary Committee
Abdul Karim	Q	Revolutionary Committee Tripoli, Propagandist
Abdulrahman A. Abu Meniar	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli)
Aly Erhab	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli)
Zaidan Manna Alzerky	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli)
Amhammed M. Albahlil	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli)
Alfarjany Alharary	W	Revolutionary Committee (Tripoli and Spain)
Ibrahim Aly Mansour	Q	Leading member of Revolutionary Committee, Popular Committees in Sirte
Ibrahim Ams'eed	Q	Majthobi brother of Mohammed Ams'eed Almajthoub
Alhamali Ali Alhamali	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Sirte)
Mohammed Aly Alsakhloul	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Sirte)

NAME	RANK	DUTIES
Essza Mofatah Awidat	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Sirre)
Yunis Abdul Nabi	W	Revolutionary Committee (Sirre)
Abo Bakr Daboub	Q	Cousin of Hassan Fshkhal (dead), Sirre
Hussein Alrity	Q	Captain, Associated with ES served in Rome '86
Mohammed Alsakhloul	Q	Chief of Revolutionary Committee in Sabha
Mohammed Hussein Nasr	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Sabha)
Almorabet	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Sabha)
Mofatah Saad Aldelio	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Sabha)
Abirini	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Sabha)
Abdul Rahim Alferjani	Q	R. C. Sabha, Associated with IS
Almahdy M. Mansour	M	Revolutionary Committee (Sabha)
Abdullah Hassayer	Q	Liaison of the R.C. in Benghazi
Abdullah B. Alamory	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Benghazi)
Ahmed Saleh	Q	R. C. Benghazi, Dir. Wadi Alghazala Project
Idriss Muammar	W	Revolutionary Committee (Benghazi)
Hassan Ben Yunis	W	Prosecutor People's Court
Salwa Fathy Ben Amer	W	Revolutionary Nun (Benghazi)
Fa'za Mohammed ben Amer	W	R. N. Benghazi
Salem Ibrahim Ben Amer	W	Revolutionary Committee (Journalist)
Jamila Ben Amer	W	Revolutionary Nun
Sakina Ben Amer	W	Revolutionary Nun
Alsenussi Ibrahim Ben Amer	W	University Professor
Ahmed Ramadan	Q	Revolutionary Committee

NAME	RANK	DUTIES
Salem Abdul Rahman	Q	Revolutionary Committee
Mohammed Hemida Alkehssy	Q	Revolutionary Committee
Milad Abdul Salam	Q	Revolutionary Committee
Gaith Oydat	Q	Revolutionary Committee
Daw Sa'ad Moftah Aldelaw	Q	Revolutionary Committee
Salma Almosraty	Q	Revolutionary Nun
Aisha Abdullah	W	Revolutionary Nun
Yunis Mana	W	Revolutionary Committee
Khairia Sa'ad	W	Revolutionary Nun
Alorify Mass'oud	W	Revolutionary Committee
Abdul Hamid Massoud	W	Revolutionary Committee
Abdullah Othman	Q	Revolutionary Committee (Brika)
Najib Toliba	W	Revolutionary Committee (Alkhoms)
Hany A. Khalid	W	Revolutionary Committee
Mohammed Alfaleh	W	Revolutionary Committee
Abdulkader	W	Revolutionary Committee
Zain Mohammed Abu Aisha	W	Revolutionary Committee
Ahmed Qorjy	W	Revolutionary Committee
Sa'id Gaith	W	Revolutionary Committee
Abdul Jalil Abdul Dayem	M	Revolutionary Committee
Aisha Jaloud	M	Revolutionary Nun.

Note: Ranks and duties as of 1993. All are subject to change. Q = Qaddafi; W = Warfala; M = Magharha.

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE: THE POLITICS OF CONTRADICTION

1. Although Qaddafi is a major general who likes to be called "leader," for simplicity I shall refer to him as General Qaddafi, or "the General."

2. See chap. 3 below for a full analysis of the "Third International Theory."

3. The group of nations controlled by military power includes a number of African and Asian countries, as well as some Latin American countries, such as Paraguay and Ecuador. Both of these latter countries can be classified as "neotraditional," but power is shared by military juntas and large landowners. See Rouquie, "Military Revolution and National Independence in Latin America."

4. On the need to develop an ideology in less-developed countries, see Wriggins, *The Ruler's Imperative*, 129–45.

5. There are many examples, but perhaps the most interesting is the use of religion in Peru and Iran. Iran was attempting to establish an ideal Islamic state, in accordance with Khomeini's ideology, which was based on Islamic socialism. Peru, on the other hand, prior to President Fujimori, was ruled by a military junta which sought to devise a new left-oriented ideology that drew heavily on Latin American Catholic doctrines and traditions. See Stepan, *The State and Society*.

6. See Nyerere, "Ujamaa": *The Basis of African Socialism*, 304. Also see Nyerere, *Ujamaa—Essays on Socialism*.

7. See Nyerere, "Ujamaa": *The Basis of African Socialism*.

8. The real wielder of power in Burma since 1962 has been Ne Win, who exercised influence over his successor, U Nu, until he removed him. Ne Win continues to exercise influence over the military junta that came to power in 1990. During his thirty-one-year tenure, Ne Win has managed to inflict unbelievable havoc on Burma's economy and politics.

9. Lissak, "Military Roles in Modernization," 452–67. See also Pye, *Politics, Personality, and Nation Building* and "The Army in Burmese Politics," 231–53.

10. A spectacular example is South Korea, where the military regime has pursued a distributive economic policy within the framework of a market economy that allows substantial government intervention. However, unlike many military leaders, the South Korean officer corps has no explicit political ideology. Its incentives seem to be primarily a mix of nationalism, service, loyalty, power, and patronage. The country's vast growth in industrialization, urbanization, and education has taken place at the expense

of stable political parties, trade unions, and consensual political culture. The former military regime of President Park accorded broad, almost dictatorial powers to the presidency and provided no limits on the number of presidential terms. That policy was still in effect under the former president, Chun-Du Hwan. For more, see Almond and Powell, *Comparative Politics*, 378–81; Se-Jin Kim, *The Politics of Military Revolution*; Jonngwon A. Kim, *Divided Korea*; and C. I. Eugene Kim and Young Whan Kihl, *Party Politics and Elections in Korea*, part 1.

11. See Eisenstadt, *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neo-Patrimonialism*, chap. 4; and Roth, "Personal Rulership," 194. See also Mazrui, "Soldiers as Traditionalizers," 246.

12. Good examples are the oil kingdoms and sheikdoms of the Middle East. The control that the elites in these countries have exerted over a scarce and valuable resource has enabled them to attain an extraordinarily high rate of economic growth and to follow policies of rapid technical modernization that are often accompanied by distributive and mass welfare policies. They were able to do this without revolutionary changes in either ideology or political structure by combining traditional patrimonial patterns of rule with bureaucratic organization staffed by foreign experts and native, foreign-trained technicians. There is no doubt that, in the long run, conflict between surviving traditionalism and "technocratic-rational" tendencies will arise. However, in the short run and as long as there is the oil windfall to draw upon, the traditional elites will continue to be in a position to respond to popular demand and expectations and to co-opt the new technocratic elites into the ruling circles. Without the luxury of plentiful liquidity they will face the problem much sooner. See Bill and Leiden, *The Middle East*, chaps. 5 and 6.

13. A popular joke on the streets in Libya tells the story of an atheist who decided to renounce atheism after visiting Libya. When asked why he had had a change of heart, he responded that any society that undergoes such constant chaos and upheaval and still remains intact as a society must be controlled by a supernatural force.

14. A full analysis of *The Green Book* can be found in chapter 3 below.

15. On women in Libya see Marius K. and Mary-Jane Deeb, *Libya since the Revolution*, chap. 3.

CHAPTER TWO: THROUGH THE EYES OF HISTORY

1. Since independence, Libya has been through a number of name changes. The United Kingdom of Libya was followed by the Kingdom of Libya. That was changed by the revolution of 1969 to the Libyan Arab Republic, only to be replaced by the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in 1978 after the second cultural revolution. In the latest change, which occurred in 1986, the word "Great" was added, making the official name of the country the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya the Great. The term *Jamahiriya* is equivalent to "state of the masses."

2. See *World Development Report*, 1985. Libya's three main cities—Tripoli, Benghazi, and Zawia—grew vastly as a result of the urbanization that accompanied the discovery of oil. A detailed account of this process of migration can be found in Elkabir, *Migrants in Tripoli*.

3. See Rinehart, "Historical Setting."

4. See Rinehart, "Historical Setting," and First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 31–45.

5. 9–10. For a history of Leptis, see Al-Kib, *Sabratah Fi Falak al-Ta'rikh*.

6. Rinehart, "Historical Setting," 12.

7. For a historical analysis of the first Arab invasion of Libya, see Miftah, *Libya Mundhu al-Fath al-Arabi Hatta Intiqal al-Khilafah al-Fatimiyah ila Misr*.

8. Rinehart, "Historical setting," 9.

9. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 34.

10. Rinehart, "Historical Setting," 16.

11. A number of reasons have been given for the expulsion of these two tribes. However, the most plausible explanations are the overpopulation of Arabia on the one hand and the declining Arab influence in North Africa on the other. The Fatimids must have felt that relocating the Bani Hilal and Bani Sulaim would lessen the economic and environmental pressures on Arabia and simultaneously increase Arab influence in North Africa.

12. There are a number of conflicting views regarding the effect of the tribes' relocation. The most prominent among them were presented by Ibn Khaldun, who maintained that the second Arab invasion brought an end to large-scale farming and the process of urbanization. The conquering nomads, according to Ibn Khaldun, sacked cities and reduced them to grazing grounds for their sheep. The process of converting farmlands into pasturage not only brought an end to agricultural production but also enabled the steppe to intrude into the coastal plain. If that is true, then it is quite correct to state that the process to reverse the effects of events that took place during the eleventh century did not begin until the mid-twentieth century.

13. For more on the role of Tripoli see First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 3–35.

14. On the history of this period see Braudel, *The Mediterranean* 1:1–50.

15. See Dearden, *A Nest of Corsairs*.

16. See Rinehart, "Historical Setting," 34.

17. See Braudel, *The Mediterranean* 1:150.

18. Among the acts attributed to Ahmed al-Karamanli was the slaughter of the leaders of all the Janissary opposed to him in Tripolitania after inviting them to a banquet. For more on Ahmed al-Karamanli and his struggle for the throne see Dearden, *A Nest of Corsairs*, 27–41.

19. *A Nest of Corsairs*, 154.

20. *A Nest of Corsairs*, 152.

21. *A Nest of Corsairs*, 208.

22. Tripoli's economic survival was dependent on its commercial position, as a link between Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa and Europe on the one hand, and on credit from European financial institutions on the other. Tariffs or "piracy" was also important as a source of income, yet credit and commerce provided the main revenue. With the end of the Napoleonic wars in Europe and the subsequent emergence of the Pax Britannica and the economic expansion that accompanied it, trade moved away from the Mediterranean Basin. The final blow came when the West African trade routes became important for European trade. That negated Tripoli's position as a transit center and thus deprived it of an important source of income. With no trade income Tripoli

could not pay back its European creditors, let alone acquire new loans. These economic changes left Tripoli in the unenviable position of having to fight for its very survival in the face of increasingly impatient and belligerent creditors.

23. On the role of the Turks in Middle Eastern affairs, see Sydney Fisher, *The Middle East*.

24. On the effect of the Sanussiyya movement in the Sahara, see el-Horeir, "Social and Economic Transformation"; Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*; and Nachtigal, *Sahara und Sudan*.

25. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*, 98.

26. French attempts at securing southern Cyrenaica and Fezzan were thwarted a year earlier by Omar Mansour el-Kikhia (Omar Pasha Mansour in 1902), who at the age of twenty-one led a local contingent to reaffirm a Libyan-Ottoman sovereignty over Jalou and Kufra, two areas coveted by the French. Omar el-Kikhia's success in stemming French expansion endeared him to Sayyid al-Mahdi and Sayyid Ahmed al-Sharif. He also emerged as the confidant, friend, and advisor of Mohamad Idris, the son of Sayyid al-Mahdi, who in 1952 became Idris I of Libya. That forty-year friendship soured in 1957 when a personal disagreement between the two men over the king's choice of friends and their influence on public policy became an issue that Omar Pasha Mansour could not keep silent about. History was to prove Omar Mansour correct, because it was the excesses and greed of those people about whom he had warned the king that brought about the downfall of the monarchy in Libya and permitted the military junta to come to power.

27. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 47.

28. The term *Sayyid* means "master" in a religious sense. It was used in North Africa to refer to those believed to be direct descendants of the Prophet Mohamad. Throughout Islamic history, most Muslim rulers have attempted to link themselves in one way or another to the Prophet in their attempts to attain legitimacy.

29. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*, 155. The British, who were then Italy's ally, recognized Idris as merely a religious leader and not as a political force. And even that recognition was conditional on Idris's making peace with both Italy and Britain. Idris had hoped to make peace with the British and use them to dislodge Italy, something that the British refused to discuss. For more information, see Public Record Office, WO 106/1532, Intelligence Department, War Office, Cairo, October 11, 1913.

30. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 48.

31. Public Record Office, WO 106/1532, November 3, 1913; cited in First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 260 n. 5. Also see Anderson, *The State*, chap. 10.

32. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 48.

33. See Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, 51–52.

34. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 51.

35. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 52. For more on the resistance movement, see Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*.

36. In Rome, Mussolini was getting impatient with the war and the strains on the Italian economy. He was reputed to have said that lira for lira, it was costing the Italian government more to settle Italians in Libya than it would to put them up in Rome's famous Grand Hotel. For the full cost of the occupation see Segrè, *Fourth Shore*.

37. John L. Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, 35–36.
38. For a more elaborate explanation of these ambitions see Segrè, *Fourth Shore*.
39. Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, 48.
40. Segrè, *Fourth Shore*, 185.

CHAPTER THREE: STATE STRUCTURES AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

1. For more information on tribes and tribal relations in Libya see Behnke, *The Herders of Cyrenaica*. See also Fannish, *Al-Mujtama al-Libi wa-Mushkilatuh*. An interesting study of neopatriarchy in Arab society can be found in Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy*.
2. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture*, cited in el-Fathaly and Palmer, *Political Development*, 2.
3. On the strength and types of Libyan elites see Hasan, "The Genesis of the Political Leadership of Libya, 1952–1969."
4. On these forces in Libya see Naur, *Social and Organizational Change in Libya*. See also Fannish, *Al-Mujtama al-Libi wa-Mushkilatuh*.
5. For a full explanation of these schools of thought, see Khadduri, *Modern Libya*.
6. Since the late 1950s the communist movement in all the Arab world suffered a setback from which it has thus far not recovered.
7. Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 330.
8. *Modern Libya*, 333.
9. See Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*.
10. Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 334.
11. See Pelt, *Libyan Independence*.
12. For the composition of the advisory council, see Pelt, *Libyan Independence*, chap.
3. See also Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 141–50.
13. Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 141.
14. *Modern Libya*, 88.
15. Omar Pasha Mansour el-Kikhia, one of the founders of modern Libya, was asked why he accepted independence for Cyrenaica without Tripolitania and Fezzan. He replied: "A free man is in a much better position to help a slave become free than another slave can."
16. See Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 88.
17. Initially the leadership of the Nationalist Party advocated Libya's becoming an Egyptian protectorate.
18. On Libyan political parties see Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, chaps. 3 and 4; and Ismail Raghieb Khalidi, *Constitutional Development in Libya*.
19. Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 105.
20. *Modern Libya*, 106, 108.
21. *Modern Libya*, 169.
22. On the proposed government and the response of Idris to the delegation's plan see Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 90–91.
23. *Modern Libya*, 206.
24. The Omar al-Mukhtar Association—named after Omar al-Mukhtar, the most famous leader of the resistance against the Italian occupation forces—was composed of young Libyans, most of whom were educated abroad. It was a nationalist movement

that advocated Libyan independence, Arab unity, and a democratic form of government. The party's main strength lay in its opposition to the traditional leadership, which it accused of being too timid and too isolationist. The Omar al-Mukhtar Association was an extremely powerful organization in the province of Cyrenaica until its disbandment a few years after independence.

25. Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 206–7.

26. Sir William Blackstone, *English Constitutional Law and the Doctrine of the Perfection of Judgment*, cited in Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 190.

27. However, article 60 of Libya's constitution states that if these decrees are not submitted to it as soon as parliament convenes, or if they are submitted to it and are not approved by either of the chambers, they shall cease to have the force of law.

28. See Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 200.

29. Initially civil courts were established in rural areas, but due to confusion and opposition among the people, the government in 1958 reverted to using religious courts to settle those disputes.

30. Members of the Supreme Court could be removed only for reasons of health, loss of confidence, or loss of respect. See Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 201.

31. Due to the lack of qualified Libyans, the country had to rely on foreign professionals with experience. Among them were a number of Arab and non-Arab judges, including an American judge by the name of James J. Robinson. For more information see Villard, *Libya: The New Arab Kingdom*, 57, and Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 200.

32. The Cyrenaican Defense Forces (CDF) were the remnants of the Sanusi Liberation Forces that aided the Allies in the North African theater during World War II. On August 9, 1949, they were formally established as the defense forces of the newly independent Cyrenaica. Trained and equipped by the British, they emerged after the independence of all of Libya as the King's Army. Members of the CDF were chosen from major tribes in the Green Mountain area on the basis of loyalty to the crown. Although it was later equipped with the most sophisticated weapons that money could buy, the CDF faced a decline in the quality of its leadership and was easily overtaken by the regular armed forces in 1969.

33. See First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 155–85.

34. McCartney, *Friends in High Places*, 146–47.

35. *Friends in High Places*, 146; emphasis mine.

36. *Friends in High Places*, 150.

37. See Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 330. On the ideological influence of Egypt over Libya, see First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 83.

38. Al-Azhar University is considered to have the foremost authorities on Islamic religion and Sharia in the Muslim world.

39. The majority of Libyans were neither educationally nor financially equipped to take part in these ventures. In addition, business was not considered to be a very honorable profession.

40. See John L. Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, 100–101.

41. After the revolution, members of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) stated in a number of television interviews that they had advanced the date of the coup in an effort to preempt another coup planned by a number of senior government offi-

cials including Omar al-Shalhi, the head of the king's diwan (advisory council). Al-Shalhi has always denied this charge. See First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 99–101.

42. See *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 99–105; and el-Fathaly and Palmer, *Political Development*, 38. On Qaddafi see Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, 119–31.

43. See el-Fathaly and Palmer, *Political Development*, 39.

44. *Political Development*, 40.

45. *Political Development*, 57.

46. Tribal lands were communally owned and managed by the sheiks. Thus by changing the administrative borders and decreeing that land not in use was to revert to state ownership, Qaddafi was able to whittle away much of these traditional leaders' power. Another method he used to decrease this influence was to place a ceiling on the quantity of subsidized fodder that individual farmers could purchase—a move that in turn placed a constraint on speculation and thus limited the commercial activity of the sheiks.

47. See Crozier, ed., *Libya's Foreign Policy Adventures*.

48. See Ansell and al-Arif, eds., *The Libyan Revolution*.

49. See First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 11–12, 265 n. 9.

50. Drew Middleton, "Israeli's vs. Arabs: Comparisons of the Weapons and Forces of Antagonists," *New York Times*, March 24, 1970, 3.

51. By April 1971, the Tripoli Agreement concluded with the oil companies had increased Libya's oil revenue by almost fifteen percent. For more details on this agreement and its consequences see Cooley, *Libyan Sandstorm*. For a more technical account see Waddams, *The Libyan Oil Industry*. Also see Library of Congress, *Chronology of the Libyan Oil Negotiations, 1970–1971*.

52. See Elmaihub, *The Role of the Public Sector in the Development Strategy*.

53. See First, "Libya: Class and State in an Oil Economy," 134.

54. For more on the relationship between the private and public sectors see First, "Libya: Class and State in an Oil Economy," 119–40.

55. First, "Libya: Class and State in an Oil Economy."

56. See the five-point program discussed later in this chapter.

57. See Libyan Government, Maslahat al-Ihsa' wa-al-Ta'dad, *Report on the Third Phase*.

58. On these new modernizers see el-Fathaly and Palmer, *Political Development*, chap. 5.

59. See el-Horeir, "Social and Economic Transformation," and also Hasan, *The Genesis of the Political Leadership of Libyan Elements*.

60. See the chart "Social Background of Libyan Revolutionary Elites" in el-Fathaly and Palmer, *Political Development*, 46–48.

61. *Political Development*, 52–54.

62. Qaddafi, cited in First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 137–38.

63. *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 138–39.

64. El-Fathaly and Palmer, *Political Development*, 118.

65. *Political Development*, 119.

66. *Political Development*, 119.

67. Local nationalist entrepreneurs tightly controlled by commercial law are indispensable for the development of any society. What is advocated here is not a return

to the post-oil parasitic businessman who depended on government contracts to skim off commissions without providing any meaningful service to the economy of the country but a businessman willing and able to provide services and industries that further development.

68. The first was led by Omar al-Maheshi and the second by Bashir Hawadi. Both attempts were violently crushed, and all the participants were executed—except for Hawadi and Maheshi, who still remain in prison. Maheshi was initially able to escape to Egypt, where he was given refuge by the late President Sadat. However, while in Morocco he was arrested and handed over, along with other Libyan dissidents, to the Libyan government as part of the Wajda agreement that unified both countries.

69. Al-Qaddafi, *The Green Book* 1.3–4.

70. El-Fathaly and Palmer, *Political Development*, 140–41.

71. *Political Development*.

72. Blenhot and Monastiri, "Libya: L'Evolution des Institutions Politiques."

73. Hinnebusch, "Libya: Personalistic Leadership."

74. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*,

75. Al-Qaddafi, *The Green Book* 1.10.

76. *The Green Book* 2.53.

77. *The Green Book* 2.53.

78. *The Green Book* 2.64.

79. *The Green Book* 2.64.

80. *The Green Book* 2.74.

81. *The Green Book* 2.80.

82. Libyan Government, *The Thesis of Qadhafi*, 3.

83. Libyan Government, *The Thesis of Qadhafi*, 17–18.

84. See Hajjar, "The Jamahiriya Experiment."

85. For a short survey of revolutionary committees see Palmer and el-fathaly, "Transformation of Mass Political Institutions in Revolutionary Libya: Structural Solutions to Behavioral Problems," 233–55.

86. Palmer and el-Fathaly, "Transformation of Mass Political Institutions in Revolutionary Libya: Structural Solutions to Behavioral Problems," 233–55.

CHAPTER FOUR: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND WEALTH DISTRIBUTION

1. Pelt, *Libyan Independence*, 31.

2. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *The Economic Development of Libya*.

3. See Allan, *Libya: The Experience of Oil*, 45–51; and John L. Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, 34–39.

4. See Pelt, *Libyan Independence*, 30.

5. International Bank, *The Economic Development of Libya*, 40.

6. Segrè, *Fourth Shore*. See also Segrè, *L'Italia in libia*.

7. Hayes, *A Political and Social History*, 622.

8. Benjamin Higgins, *Economic and Social Development*, 108.

9. See Ministry of National Economy, *Statistical Abstract*, 1958–1962, 16.

10. Some of these agencies were the Libyan Public Development and Stabilization

Agency (LPDSA), the Libyan American Technical Assistance Service (ATAS), the Libyan American Joint Services (LAJS), and the Libyan American Reconstruction Agency (LARCA).

11. Higgins, *Economic and Social Development*, 109.

12. *Economic and Social Development*, 164. See also First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 142.

13. See dispatches of U.S. embassies and consulates to the State Department in *Foreign Relations* 2:11, 25–27, 311, 421–25, 643; and 5:1313–67; see also 11:139–43, 155–57, 167–71, 539–98.

14. Dispatches in *Foreign Relations* 11:555.

15. Mahmoud Muntasser, cited in *Foreign Relations* 11:539–89.

16. See the table 6.2.

17. Under the federal system, each of the three provinces elected a legislative council composed of eight Nazirs holding agriculture, communication, education, finance, health, internal affairs, justice, and public works portfolios.

18. Cited in *Foreign Relations* 11:584.

19. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 143.

20. For a survey of Libya's negotiations with the oil companies, see Cooley, *Libyan Sandstorm*. A more technical survey can be found in Waddams, *The Libyan Oil Industry*.

21. *The Libyan Oil Industry*, 61.

22. See *The Libyan Oil Industry*, 57–72.

23. John L. Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, 80.

24. *Libya: A Modern History*, 84.

25. For an excellent study of water resources and climatic conditions in the country see Allan, *Libya: The Experience of Oil*.

26. Farley, *Planning for Development*, 178.

27. See Cooley, *Libyan Sandstorm*.

28. On the secret agreement between Libya and Britain, see First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 111. See also *Al-Ahram*, May 9, 1969.

29. Ali A. Attiga, "The Economic Impact of Oil on Libyan Agriculture," 9–18.

30. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 149–50. See also Mabro, "Labour Supplies and Labour Stability," 319–38.

31. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 150.

32. Secretariat of Planning, *Economic and Social Achievements in the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya*, 5.

33. Allan, *Libya: The Experience of Oil*, 143. See also Secretariat of Information, *Facts and Figures*, 1984.

34. For more on rural migration see First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 177–80. See also Allan, *Libya: The Experience of Oil*, chap. 5.

35. Mabro, *Labour Supplies and Labour Stability*.

36. Allan, MacLachlan, and Penrose, eds., *Libya: Agriculture and Economic Development*, 205; see also 1:149 and 3:70 n.

37. See Mabro, "Employment and Wage Rates," 162.

38. "Employment and Wage Rates," 162.

39. The Libyan-Italian agreement of October 1956 recognized Italian commercial rights and authorized spending \$3.7 million to complete Tripolitanian colonization schemes by 1960. More importantly, the agreement recognized the colonists' outright ownership of land they occupied regardless of how it had been acquired. From 1956 to 1964, the number of Italian families dwindled from 1,272 to 120. However, with the discovery of oil the number of resident Italians had shot up to 20,000 by 1969. Those who did not sell their lands were able to make use of subsidized farm equipment, seeds, fertilizers, and so on. Others in the foreign-resident community were able to acquire capital through the companies that they had established with Libyans, who were in most cases junior partners.

40. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *The Economic Development of Libya*, 109.

41. John L. Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, 100.

42. *Libya: A Modern History*, 101.

43. The original RCC included General Qaddafi, Abdulsalam Jalloud, Bashir Hawadi, Mukhtar al-Qarwi, Abdulmunim al-Huni, Mustapha al-Kharoubi, Khweildi al-Humeidi, Muhamad Najm, Awad Hamza, Abu Bakr Younis, Omar al-Mahayshi, and Mohamed al-Maqaryif. When the government of the Libyan Arab Republic was formed in January 1970, RCC members assumed the key positions.

44. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 181.

45. *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 184.

46. *Al-Zahaf Al-Akhdar* 255 (March 9, 1984): 11–12.

47. For a full analysis of rainfall in the country see Allan, *Libya: The Experience of Oil*, 27–45.

48. *Libya: The Experience of Oil*, 27–45.

49. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 162.

50. *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 167. On Armand Hammer's offer see Waddams, *The Libyan Oil Industry*, and Cooley, *Libyan Sandstorm*.

51. *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 169.

52. See Birks and Sinclair, "Libya: Problems," 214–75. See also Allan, *Libya: The Experience of Oil*.

53. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 170.

54. Allan, *Libya: The Experience of Oil*, 205.

55. Benjamin Higgins, *Economic and Social Development*, 6.

56. The "Great Man-made River" is the official name given to the irrigation project; the "Eighth Wonder of the World" is the political term used because it compares Libya's achievement to Egypt's Pyramids and the Aswan Dam.

57. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 159.

58. Birks and Sinclair, "Libya: Problems," 261–62.

59. First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 184.

60. Security is the reason usually given when the advice of experts has not been heeded.

61. Birks and Sinclair, "Libya: Problems," 264.

62. "Libya: Problems," 264–75.

63. "Libya: Problems," 273.

64. See World Bank, *World Development Report* (1985), 86–92.

CHAPTER FIVE: QADDAFI'S STATE

1. See First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*.

2. Anderson, *The State*, 263.

3. Before imposing his Third International Theory, Qaddafi thought he could convince people of its merits. Millions of dollars were spent propagandizing it, but nobody took it seriously. Indeed there was nothing profound in "women menstruate but men do not." His treatment of women in his book was not only simplistic but also contradictory. He discovered that fact the hard way when he was laughed off the podium by a conference of Egyptian women, many of whom were prominent scholars. At that 1972 meeting in Cairo, he tried to convince the women that because they menstruated, they were weak and hence should stay at home and care for the children. It seems that he never forgot the experience, for very soon afterward he mandated, contrary to *The Green Book*, that women join the armed forces and go out into the workplace. His ego demanded that he choose a team of bodyguards composed of women to accompany him. These came to be called the "Revolutionary Nuns." On Qaddafi's treatment of intellectuals and women, see Harris, *Libya: Qadhafi's Revolution*, 16–17.

4. In a conversation with me, Mansur Kikhia—Libya's foreign minister from 1970 to 1972 and Libya's ambassador to the United Nations from 1976 to 1980—confirmed that he was denied membership in the LASU.

5. Anderson, *The State*, 263.

6. Al-Qaddafi, *The Green Book* 1:4.

7. See Anderson, *The State*, chap. 12.

8. On events prior to 1974 see First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*; on the situation after that year see el-Khawas, *Qaddafi*.

9. For a full text of the speech see el-Khawas, *Qaddafi*.

10. See Anderson, *The State*, 267.

11. *The State*, 264. Also see Hinnebusch, "Libya: Personalistic Leadership."

12. For a review of Libya's political structures after the formation of the revolutionary committees, see Djaziri, "La Dynamique des Institutions."

13. The first institution to be "purified" was the Libyan University. Faculty were fired, and curricula were revamped along lines dictated by the regime. Students on the university revolutionary committee told faculty what not to teach. Indeed, no faculty member felt confident enough to fail a revolutionary committee member. Abdulsalam Jalloud, Qaddafi's former official second-in-command, stated in a speech that the criteria on which scholarships were granted were neither grades nor merit but revolutionary commitment. Not surprisingly, Jalloud is functionally illiterate. For more on Jalloud see Murphy, "Lockerbie Crisis Fuels Libyan Power Struggle," *Los Angeles Times*, June 23, 1992, A8; and el-Khawas, *Qaddafi*.

14. See "Qanoun al-tattheer" [The cleansing law].

15. See Murphy, "Lockerbie Crisis Fuels Libyan Power Struggle," *Los Angeles Times*, June 23, 1992, A8.

16. General Qaddafi's regime has faced at least five major takeover attempts—in 1970, 1971, 1975, 1980, and 1982—and four student uprisings—1975, 1976, 1977, and

1982. On these attempts see el-Khawas, *Qaddafi*. However, two more serious attempts to topple the regime came in 1984 when Libyan exiles attacked Qaddafi's headquarters, and in 1993 when army units attacked the towns of Misurata and Bani Walid to subdue an insurgency. See "Man yakif wara muhawalat al-inkilab al-akhirah fi Libia," 35–36.

17. The psychological argument is that Qaddafi is a deranged, bloodthirsty tyrant with delusions of grandeur. For more on this argument see Haley, *Qaddafi and the United States*. Also see Tripp, "La Libye et L'Afrique."

18. See "We Could Have Lived like Princes."

19. See "Gadhafi's Clipped Wing," *Wall Street Journal*, April 23, 1992.

20. See "Gadhafi's Clipped Wing." Houston-based Brown and Root Company was the architect and consultant for the Korean-built project. While South Korea's Daewoo has the lion's share, a few other Asian companies from India and Japan are also involved. See Isa, *Official Outline Plans for Utilizing the Great Man-Made River*, 46–49. Also see U.S. Government, National Technical Information Service, *Projected South-North Water Pipeline Discussed*, 26–35; and el-Khawas, *Qaddafi*, 74–75.

21. "Gadhafi's Clipped Wing."

22. See Lamis Adoni, "Libyan Criticism of Qaddafi: Power Rift or Policy Shift?" *Christian Science Monitor*, June 12, 1992.

23. The figures are calculated from data in the World Bank's *World Development Report*, 1978–90. See also United Nations, *Handbook of International Trade*.

24. World Bank, *World Development Report*, 1978–90.

25. See economic indicators in the *Handbook of International Trade*.

26. Tabulated from *Handbook of International Trade* (1992).

27. The figures presented in the August 1992 issue of *Middle East* are between \$35 and \$100 billion. After a careful comparison of the Libyan budgets over these years with Libya's oil income, one finds that the actual figure is a little over the \$50-billion mark. There has been no mention of where these funds were spent except on the few occasions when Qaddafi has volunteered the information or when some military-spending figures have accidentally been published (and then withdrawn) by the regime. In a 1991 speech to the GPC, Qaddafi informed them that over \$23 billion had been spent on military hardware.

28. It is a well-known fact in Libya that the regime pays Libyan state employees their monthly wages erratically, ranging from once every three months to once every five months. The government, citing financial hardship resulting from the United Nations embargo, has adopted this practice.

29. See National Front for the Salvation of Libya, *Libya under Gaddafi*, 166–77.

30. *Libya under Gaddafi*, 166–77.

31. See *Libya under Gaddafi*, and Spector and Smith, "North Korea," 9–12.

32. These individuals never experience shortages of anything. They are able to afford, at government expense, the best custom-built dwellings paved with Carrara marble, as well as jewelry, travel, and other amenities denied to the population as a whole. Libyans refer to them as dwellers in *hay-al-doular* (the dollar sector). One of the most influential people on the current Libyan scene is Ahmad Qathaf al-Damm, Qaddafi's cousin, trouble-shooter, and liaison between Egypt and Libya. When relations between Egypt and Libya soured during 1991, Egyptian newspapers published his hotel ex-

penses for the two previous years: they exceeded \$38 million. Eyewitnesses also confirmed that, in one instance, free-spending Ahmad held a birthday party for an Egyptian belly dancer and topped it off with a \$30,000 gift to the birthday girl. The Egyptian media wondered how that was done on a \$12,000 official annual salary. See “Lugs Qathaf al-Damm.” The same issue of *Ruṣ al-Yusuf* has an interesting exposé of Qathaf al-Damm’s relations with Faika al-Misrati, an Israeli intelligence officer of Libyan extraction.

33. The official rate is LD1 = US\$3.30. The black market rate as of November 1994 has been US\$1 = LD3.25+.

34. The second cultural revolution forced many skilled and educated Libyans into exile, further forcing the government to rely on imported labor. See Anderson, *The State*, 265.

35. See “Libya Clears Private Enterprise,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 4, 1992, A4.

36. Anderson, *The State*, 264.

37. For a brief list of Qaddafi’s relatives and their positions in the power structure, see Makhlouf, “Man hum ‘rijal al-khaimah’?” [Who are the “men of the tent”?]. Also see National Front for the Salvation of Libya, *Libya under Gaddafi*, 20–23.

38. The only officially sanctioned participation in politics is through the people’s congresses, an updated version of the people’s committees, created in 1974. Political party affiliation is, according to the regime, treasonous. Libyans are reminded daily by huge billboards carrying the slogan *man tahazab khan*, which translates into “Political party affiliation is treason.” See el-Khawas, *Qaddafi*, 49–60.

39. Commercial codes were some of the first to be impacted by the revolutionary changes. The nationalization of the private sector transformed the country overnight from a vibrant, highly competitive, free-market economy to a command economy complete with its black market and a top-heavy, corrupt, inefficient bureaucracy.

40. See Anderson, *The State*, 264. With little respect for law, it was only natural that Qaddafi would have even less respect for lawyers. Indeed, in his scheme of things there is neither room nor need for them. A defendant must present his or her case to a panel of judges made up of the district revolutionary committee. The committee itself has full authority to determine guilt and innocence.

41. The regime of General Qaddafi has always relied on collective punishment. At the advent of the smallest real or imaginary incident, armed revolutionary committees permeate the major cities from dusk to dawn, arresting and terrorizing at will. Banks can be closed, airline flights canceled, exit visas denied during that day or week, people who have been exempted from military service drafted. See el-Khawas, *Qaddafi*, 49–60.

42. See *Al-Majalla*, June 17, 1993, 17.

43. The *Los Angeles Times* reported \$10,000, but the true figure was LD10,000. The official exchange rate is LD1 = US\$3.3. (See “Libya Unveils Share-the-Wealth Plan,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 20, 1992, A13.) Initially Qaddafi made the offer to any Libyan willing to emigrate to Chad or Sudan, but soon withdrew it when too many people applied for the stipend. Libyans have come to call the incident the “Big Lie.”

44. See First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*.

CHAPTER SIX: FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1. See Pelt, *Libyan Independence*.
2. Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 114. See also *Libyan Independence*, 54–56.
3. See *Libyan Independence* and *Modern Libya*.
4. See Pelt, *Libyan Independence*, 67, 143, 159, 844.
5. See John L. Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, 49.
6. For a good insight into superpower rivalry in that area during that period, see Villard, *Libya: The New Arab Kingdom*, chap. 2.
7. No exact figure for the aid offered exists; however, it does appear quite likely that the word “generous” was used by Libyan policymakers to strengthen their hands in seeking additional Western economic aid. For more details, see Khadduri, *Modern Libya*, 262–63.
8. Islamic scholars have long argued over Islam’s position regarding the treatment of nonbelievers in God. The Quran states that “there is no compulsion in religion.”
9. *Ahl-al-kitab* can reside within Muslim society as long as they do not fight Islam. It is interesting to note that even non-Muslims very quickly adopt Muslim ways. Thus someone’s religion may be Christian or Jewish while his or her day-to-day behavior tends to be Islamic.
10. Foremost among the opponents of the American military bases was the head of the Libyan Senate, Omar Pasha Mansour, who argued that having both British and American bases in Libya would only rob the country of its sovereignty and freedom of action. That argument brought him into direct conflict with the king and with the king’s appointed prime minister, Mustafa Ben-Halim—Washington’s man in the Libyan government. The base deal did go through after Ben-Halim was compensated \$1 million for arranging the lease for the base; the money was paid through the U.S. government to Ben-Halim by American oil companies. See McCartney, *Friends in High Places*, 146–47.
11. On the strategy oil companies used to enter the Libyan market, see *Friends in High Places*, 143–51.
12. In analyzing Qaddafi’s politics in North Africa, François Burgat quite correctly asserts that “Libya’s heart belongs to the East and its reason to the Maghreb.” See Burgat, “Qadhafi’s Unitary Doctrine,” 21–22.
13. See Hunwick, “Black Africans in the Islamic World.”
14. For a full analysis of Islam’s role in Libyan foreign policy see Mattes, *Die Innere und Äussere Islamische Mission Libyens*. Also see Mary-Jane Deeb, “The Primacy of Libya’s National Interest,” 29–38.
15. See Mattes, “Libya’s Economic Relations.”
16. “Libya’s Economic Relations,” 102–3.
17. St. John, “The Libyan Debacle,” 128.
18. See el-Kikhia, “Chad: The Same Old Story.”
19. See Foltz, “Libya’s Military Power,” 61–68.
20. See St. John, “The Libyan Debacle,” 134–35. Also see Otayek, “La Libye Revolutionnaire au Sud du Sahara.”
21. For more on Qaddafi in Africa, see Ogunbadejo, “Qaddafi and Africa’s International Relations.”

22. See National Front for the Salvation of Libya, *Libya under Gaddafi*, 101.
23. Figures from United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Handbook of International Trade*, 432, and World Bank, *World Development Report* (1990), 159.
24. World Bank, *World Development Report* (1993), 199.
25. See *World Development Report* (1993), 26–29.
26. In Nasser's doctrine, Egypt was to be the link between the Arab, Islamic, and Third Worlds. That position is very similar to the role Britain had hoped to play after World War II as the link between Europe, the United States, and the British Commonwealth.
27. Mary-Jane Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*.
28. See Belaid, "L'Operation de Gafsa."
29. On this incident as well as other incidents against Tunisia, see Deeb, *Libya's Foreign Policy in North Africa*.
30. "Not Yet Algibya," *Economist*, 39–40.
31. See "Libya: Qaddafi's Morocco Binding," *Economist*. Also see Parker, "Appointment in Oujda."
32. See Henderson, "Oujda on the Rocks."

CHAPTER SEVEN: ALL ROADS LEAD TO CAIRO

1. *Mashriq*, which means "land of sunrise," refers to all Arab lands east of Libya. This is opposed to *Maghrib*, meaning "land of sunset," which refers to North Africa west of Libya.
2. On the vacuum resulting from Nasser's death, see Ajami, *The Arab Predicament*.
3. See Zartman, *Libya-Sudan-Chad Triangle*.
4. This is contrary to a report in the *Washington Post* of July 23, 1970, which said that Soviet arms were shipped to Libya from the Soviet Union.
5. See Jim Hoagland, "Cairo's Military Aid to Libya Curtailed," *Washington Post*, February 18, 1974.
6. Pajak maintains that Libya reached its point of saturation in arms as early as 1974 (see Pajak, "Soviet Arms to Libya").
7. See Heikal, *Autumn of Fury*.
8. *Autumn of Fury*,
9. *U.S. News and World Report*, April 10, 1978, 39–40.
10. See el-Kikhia, "Chad: The Same Old Story."
11. See First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution*, 265 n. 9.
12. Though little has been written on Libyan-Soviet relations, see Ramet, "Soviet-Libyan Relations under Qaddafi," and Anderson, "Qadhdhafi and the Kremlin."
13. See Pajak, "Soviet Arms to Libya."
14. Hempstone, "Libya: Another Naggng Headache for Sadat."
15. Thus far, all anonymous articles published in *Az-Zahf al-Akhdar* have been written either by General Qaddafi himself or by a close aide. It is also well known in Libya that these articles reflect the leadership's opinions. What is certain is that no anonymous article can be published today in Libya without the blessing of the leadership.

16. Radio Moscow in Arabic (December 18, 1980), translated in FBIS, *Daily Report* (USSR and the Third World), December 20, 1980.

17. See Foltz, "Libya's Military Power," 61–68.

18. See Cooley, *Libyan Sandstorm*.

19. See Bianco, *Gaddafi*.

20. See Freedman, *Soviet Policy*, 131.

21. The *Hadiths* are the Prophet's recorded words; the *Sunna* are his recorded actions. Muslims worldwide consider the Muslim year to have begun in A.D. 622, the year the Prophet Mohamad migrated from Mecca to Medina. General Qaddafi decided that the Muslim year should be changed to begin from the year the Prophet died, thirteen years later. For more on General Qaddafi's brand of Islam see Anderson, "Qaddafi's Islam."

22. See United States, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Is this correct, for the editor? *World Military Expenditures and Arms Trade*, 112, 117, 128.

23. There are no accurate figures, only estimates, regarding the Libyan-Soviet arms trade. For more information see *World Military Expenditures and Arms Trade*, 112, 117, 128. Also see U.S. Government, Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *The Libyan Problem*.

24. *The Libyan Problem*, 3.

25. See *World Development Report*, 1983.

26. See Hutchings, "Soviet Arms Exports," 378–89.

27. Cited in "Soviet Arms Exports," 378.

28. See U.S. Government, Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *The Libyan Problem*.

29. See Ramet, "Soviet-Libyan Relations under Qaddafi."

30. See Pajak, "Soviet Arms to Libya."

31. For a few months following the U.S. bombing of Tripoli in April 1986, the Libyan government suspended the teaching of English and French in public schools.

32. As is explained later in this chapter, the United States launched an air strike against Libya in retaliation for the bombing of a nightclub in Germany in which U.S. servicemen were injured.

33. See Lamb, "In Kaddafi's Libya, Luster of Revolution Fading Fast," *Los Angeles Times*, September 9, 1984, 24–25.

34. Symore M. Hersh maintains that the purpose of the raid was to kill the Libyan leader. See "Target Qaddafi."

35. See Hersh, "Target Qaddafi."

36. See statements by Zartman in U.S. Government, *Libya-Sudan-Chad Triangle*.

37. On U.S. attempts at provoking Libya see Foltz, "Libya's Military Power," 60–61.

38. On the suspects, positions, and power base, see National Front for the Salvation of Libya, *Libya under Gaddafi*, 19–23. For an American viewpoint of the role of the suspects in the bombing of Pan Am flight 103, see U.S. Government, Department of State, "Fact Sheet." See also U.S. Government, Department of State, "Resolution against Libya" for the text of the Security Council of the United Nations resolution imposing sanctions on Libya.

39. See “Al-Hadhr wa al-umam al-mutahida” [The sanctions and the United Nations].

40. See Murphy, “Libya Press Accuses Kadafi of Economic Ruin,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 11, 1992.

41. For more on Qaddafi’s speech, see “We Could Have Lived Like Princes,” *Middle East*. Qaddafi, in a surprise move, shocked the Arab World by sending a Libyan delegation to Israel in May 1993 for pilgrimage to Al-Aqsa Mosque. He did this at a time when the Palestinians were negotiating peace with the Israelis.

42. See “We Could Have Lived Like Princes,” *Middle East*.

43. See “Administration Despite Toughness on Libya, Yields to Oil Companies Seeking Business There,” *Wall Street Journal*, August 25, 1992, A16.

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