

acquired control of a development company that plans to turn the Italian island of Pantelleria into a tourist paradise.

Cloak and dagger stumped

The US intentions towards Libya were most frankly stated by Secretary of State George Schultz during one of his staff meetings: «We have to put Qaddafi in a box and close the lid.» Despite the US intelligence community's having advised caution, the Reagan Administration has chosen an aggressive policy. Many a CIA plan has been formulated, trimmed to size and discretely 'leaked' to the press. Whether or not this was intentional, the US did hope that it would scare Libya into buckling under pressure. At the same time, this signalled to the western European states that the US meant business. Instead of denying these 'leaks', one US official said that these plans would go ahead anyway: «We went ahead with the world's most open covert operation against Nicaragua.» The US has for many months studied and prepared military plans that were said to be 'defensive' and of a 'precautionary nature'. Another official source said that the CIA had analyzed military options and did a detailed study of military targets that could be hit in Libya. A further development came in January 1986, when military advisers sifted through a Defense Department contingency list of bombing targets in Libya, ranging from government facilities to anti-aircraft sites. Pentagon officials termed the activity «prudent planning in case the president should ask us to do something.»

On January 8th, the State Department released several papers which were actually highly classified intelligence reports cut down to size. One of these was entitled «Chronology of Libyan Support for Terrorism, 1980-85.» It listed a total of 58 incidents; the US was only mentioned in two of these. The chronology lists 56 incidents in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, that in almost every case were directed against Libyan dissidents or anti-Qaddafi plotters. The report also stressed Libya's support for revolutionary movements in Latin America,

the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and the Philippines.

Another major CIA analysis classified 'secret' was a Special National Intelligence Estimate of March 1985, titled «Libya's Qaddafi: The Challenge to the United States and Western Interests.» This title reflects exactly the US fear of Libya's growing influence. Libya is supporting those very forces which western imperialism is spending millions to have crushed by its reactionary allies, especially in the Middle East and Africa. All reports, however, result in the same conclusion: «Essentially Qaddafi is not controllable.» This reflects the collective opinion of US intelligence agencies that diplomatic pressure and economic sanctions would have little or no impact. Reflecting this is a statement by Reagan in reference to the new economic sanctions of February 1986: «If these steps do not end Qaddafi's terrorism, I promise you that further steps will be taken» - thereby leaving the door open to the military option. Others were more skeptical, seeing no use in economic measures or even the military option. The retired Rear Admiral of the US Sixth Fleet, Eugene Caroll, in an interview with *The Guardian*, February 5th, acknowledged that «...Qaddafi isn't going to cry 'uncle' and I can't see what favorable outcome can come» from US military resolve to intimidate him.

Nevertheless, despite reservations on the part of CIA officials and calls for restraint from Europe, the US increased its aerial and electronic surveillance of Libya. The Sixth Fleet was alerted. US Navy pilots on the Coral Sea aircraft carrier stood by in Sigonella, Sicily. Britain's crack Special Air Services (SAS) regiment was alerted at Hereford, England, and France's quick reaction forces readied at bases in south France. Crete was transformed into a US base. Thousands of US troops arrived at Haifa port in occupied Palestine, aboard an aircraft carrier, a guided missile cruiser and a destroyer, while trigger-happy Zionist like Peres expressed eagerness to hit Libya. 'Israel', however, is still suffering from the aftermath of its intervention in Lebanon. The Zionist leaders cannot take lightly Qaddafi's warnings; they are not in a position to strike Libya as they did the PLO headquarters in Tunis. This is especially true due to the sticky situation that arose after the Zionists forced a Libyan executive jet to land in 'Israel'. (Although Israeli officials claimed not to take Qaddafi seriously, the Israeli Transport Ministry announced that an order had been issued to all airlines arriving or leaving 'Israel', to change their flight paths over the Mediterranean.)

Despite Reagan's ridiculous name-calling game, CIA estimates continue to refer to Qaddafi as «a judicious political calculator» who is «not living up to his madman image.» In any case, estimates do converge on one point: that Qaddafi is a threat to US and Western interests. CIA activities have concentrated on cutting Qaddafi down to size, indeed doing away with him totally, if they could, by either breeding pro-western substitutes for him, employing neighboring states against him, and/or cutting off his connections with Europe.

The US and Europe

The US has pursued an unsuccessful campaign of sanctions against Libya since 1981. Past efforts have been thwarted by the major European industrial powers' reluctance to give up economic ties which include access to Libya's crude oil, not to mention the billions of dollars worth of debts that Libya would be relieved from paying if Europe embarked on a drastic embargo. The largest purchasers of Libyan oil are Italy, West Germany, Spain, France and Turkey - all NATO members. Italy, Greece, France, West Germany, Britain and Japan

