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Attached is a story filed by C.L. Sulzberger, which presumably will appear in tomorrow's NYTimes, on a somewhat mystical, tent-covered interview with Libyan President Qadhafi.

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44FOREIGN AFFAIRS: THE PROPHET IN HIS TENT4

4BY C.L. SULZBERGER4
4NYC, 1977 N.Y. Times News Service4

TRIPOLI, Libya - THE LAST TIME IT WAS RECEIVED IN A TENT BY A CHIEF OF STATE WAS 30 YEARS AGO WHEN KING ABDUL AZIZ IBN AL SAUDI, FOUNDER OF SAUDI ARABIA, WELCOMED HE IN WHAT WAS THEN KNOWN AS A "TENT CITY" OUTSIDE MECCA.

A SPECTACULAR ASSEMBLAGE OF STRUCTURES HAD BEEN ERECTED. THERE WERE THE RULER'S PRIVATE TENT; TENTS FOR PRINCES AND DIGNITARIES; A TENT FOR HIM; A ROYAL AUDIENCE TENT; SURROUNDED BY IBN SAUDI'S BODYGUARDS WITH THEIR GOLD-AND-SILVER FILIGREED WEAPONS; AND A DINING TENT WHERE A SIT-DOWN MEAL FOR 50 WAS SERVED TO THE SOVEREIGN AND HIS GUESTS.

THE TENT WHERE COL. MUHAMMAD EL-QADDAFI RECEIVED ME A FEW DAYS AGO AT MECCA AL KHADRAH, "THE GREEN HEARTH," A HAMLET NEAR TRIPOLI, WAS A SIMPLE SECOND-HAND ONE OF THE TYPE TO WHICH THE LIBYAN PRESIDENT WAS ACCUSTOMED DURING HIS WUNGLE CHILDHOOD.

ONE WALL LAY OPEN TO THE COOL NIGHT; WITHIN, A WORN GREEN CARPET STRETCHED ACROSS A PATCH OF SAND. BESIDE IT FLICKERED A CHARCOAL FIRE. A PAIR OF COLEMAN LAMPS BLAZED UPON THE PRESIDENT; TWO HIGH FUNCTIONARIES AND MYSELF AS HE SQUATTED ON THE CUSHIONED GROUND; TALKED AND DRANK TINY CUPS OF SWEET ARAB COFFEE.

QADDAFI RECLINED EASILY; A WELL BUILT MAN OF MEDIUM HEIGHT WITH SHAGGY HAIR; SWEETLY COMPLEXION; BLOODING EYES THAT

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DESPITE THE GLOWING WARMTH IT HAS COLLECTED

"THE BEST ATMOSPHERE FOR ME IS THIS," HE SAID. "TO BE IN A TENT; AWAY FROM CITY LIFE; WHERE THERE ARE NO NOISES OF MACHINES AND MODERN CONFUSION; ONLY BESIDE A CHARCOAL FIRE AND WITH THE EARTH DIRECTLY UNDERNEATH." HE LOVES HORSEBACK RIDING WHEN HE CAN FIND TIME.

THE 34-YEAR-OLD LIBYAN LEADER LIVES AND DREAMS POLITICS. HE SAYS: "THINKING REVOLUTION ALREADY FEATURED MY BOYHOOD. I ENTERED THE MILITARY ACADEMY SOLELY TO BECOME A REVOLUTIONARY; NOT TO BECOME A CAREER OFFICER. INDEED, MY PHILOSOPHY IS THAT THE TRADITIONAL MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT WILL DISAPPEAR EVERYWHERE; AS THE WORLD LEARNS TO FOLLOW THE 'THIRD UNIVERSAL THEORY.'"

THIS REFERS TO THE DOCTRINE HE PROMULGATES IN A SLENDER VOLUME CALLED "THE GREEN BOOK," OUTLINING HIS IDEA OF A NEW SOCIETY; NEITHER CAPITALISTIC NOR COMMUNISTIC. "THE THIRD WAY; WHICH I ADVOCATE; IS UNIVERSAL; NOT REGIONAL," HE INSISTS.

HIS VIEW SEEMS ESSENTIALLY TRIBAL. "THE GREEN BOOK" STATES: "ONE SELDOM FINDS PEOPLE WHO DO NOT BELONG TO A TRIBE; AND ALL PEOPLE BELONG TO A CERTAIN COURSE." HE IS AGAINST POLITICAL PARTIES - EITHER MULTI-OR-SINGLE-PARTY SYSTEMS - AND ARGUES: "PEOPLE'S CONGRESSES ARE THE ONLY MEANS TO ACHIEVE POPULAR DEMOCRACY."

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HE HAS JUST DECREED A START TO THE NEW SYSTEM AND CLAIMS: "THIS THIRD UNIVERSAL THEORY PROVIDES US WITH A REALISTIC EXPERIMENT IN DIRECT DEMOCRACY; THE PROBLEM OF DEMOCRACY IN THE WORLD IS FINALLY SOLVED... DEMOCRACY IS THE SUPERVISION OF THE PEOPLE BY THE PEOPLE." HE CONCLUDES: "REALISTICALLY; THE STRONG ALWAYS RULE."

SUCH IS THE CASE IN LIBYA. ALTHOUGH MANY OF HIS ORIGINAL CO-REVOLUTIONISTS HAVE FALLEN BY THE WAYSIDE, QADDAFI REMAINS BOSS. AND HIS REVOLUTION HAS UNQUESTIONABLY IMPROVED NATIONAL LIVING STANDARDS WITH MASSIVE NEW AND INEXPENSIVE HOUSING; CHEAP GASOLINE; RELATIVELY HIGH SALARIES; FREE SCHOOLS AND MEDICINE.

AN AUSTERE, ASCETIC MAN, QADDAFI HAS IMPOSED STRICT PROHIBITION AND NEITHER DRINKS NOR SMOKES HIMSELF. HE WORKS FEVERISHLY AND HAS LITTLE TIME FOR HIS TWO WIVES (PERMITTED BY ISLAM) AND FOUR SONS. ANOTHER WIFE WAS DIVORCED. AN OFFICIALLY ENDORSED BIOGRAPHY COMPARES HIM WITH THE PROPHET AND CALLS HIM "THE MESSENGER FROM THE DESERT."¹¹

THERE IS MUCH OF THE KORAN IN QADDAFI, NOT PERHAPS EXCLUDING THE ADMONITION: "IT IS BETTER TO PLEASE A GUEST THAN TO OFFEND HIM BY ALWAYS TELLING THE TRUTH."¹² ONE CAN NEVER FORGET, IN THIS AREA, ITS LONG AND TRADITIONAL ADDICTION TO BOTH DECEPTION AND WISHFUL THINKING. MOREOVER, IN ANALYZING THE PRESIDENT'S APPROACH TO EXTERNAL AFFAIRS - ESPECIALLY HIS SPONSORSHIP OF TERRORIST MOVEMENTS ABROAD - ONE SHOULD RECALL TALLEYRAND'S WITTICISM: "NONINTERVENTION IS THE SAME AS INTERVENTION."¹³

ONCE QADDAFI REPORTEDLY SAID: "EGYPT IS A COUNTRY WITHOUT A LEADER; I AM A LEADER WITHOUT A COUNTRY."¹⁴ LIBYA IS A RICH AND GEOGRAPHICALLY ENORMOUS GAZE BUT ITS POPULATION IS TINY AND ITS INFLUENCE RESTRICTED. YET ITS PRESIDENT HAS AUDACIOUS, WIDE-RANGING IDEAS TRANSCENDING THIS NATION AND, INDEED, THE ARAB WORLD.

PERHAPS HE IS OVERCONFIDENT AND UNDER-EDUCATED IN GLOBAL ATTITUDES; OR, PERHAPS, HE LACKS THE WISDOM TO RECOGNIZE THE FACT. NEVERTHELESS, HIS QUEST FOR NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT AND HIS TALENT FOR PERSONAL SURVIVAL HAVE ALREADY PROVEN TO BE REMARKABLE.

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