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AL-QADHDHAFI INTERVIEW ON NORTH AFRICA POLICY, TERRORISM

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[Interview with Mu'mmar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of Libya, with Randa Takiedine; date and place not given]

[Text] The Libyan colonel wants to form one country out of the Western Sahara and the Canary Islands, which he considers to be part of the same geographic region, where Spain has no rights. These are the comments he made to Middle East expert Randa Takiedine, which are being published exclusively by CAMBIO 16.

[Question] Now that the Uxda treaty has been broken--it united Libya and Morocco in 1984 and was renounced by King Hussan in 1986--do you plan to actively support the Polisario Front once again?

[Answer] Our position is clear: We do not want for Polisario an independent state which gathers together only a few thousand inhabitants. In fact, we are supporting the Polisario as a revolutionary movement in the Arab Maghreb; this is being done independently of the relations we have with Morocco. What is important to me is to see the birth in the region of a force capable of destroying artificial monarchic feudalism and U.S. power.

In this regard, I think it will be necessary for the Polisario and the Nationalist Party of the Canary Islands to set up a unified political party. In passing, I should like to say that this is the first time I have made such a proposal. In effect, the Western Sahara and the Canary Islands are part of the same geographic region. They should combine their efforts to defeat Spanish imperialism and merge into a single, real state.

[Question] Does Algeria support this suggestion?

[Answer] It will be necessary for it to do so.

[Question] Would the new state be linked with Morocco?

[Answer] No, it would be an independent state. After all, the inhabitants of the Canary Islands are immigrants who came from the Sahara, and we should not forget that Spain has no right to these islands.

[Question] It is said that when you signed the Uxda unification treaty with King Hassan you promised to halt all aid to the Polisario.

[Answer] No, I never renounced the idea of a referendum by the Saharan people. I even stated in front of the Arab-African Union the right of that people to self-determination. As regards the Uxda treaty, I expressed some doubts about its duration. How could it be possible for a reactionary and feudal sovereign to create a durable union with Libya? The contradictions between our two systems are too great. What is more, I told King Hassan: "The United States and Israel will not permit you to operate in that manner with me." He replied that he was the sole master of his decisions. Now it is clear that was not true. They ordered him to end this union, and he broke his commitments to Libya.

[Question] Was King Hassan right in receiving Shimon Peres in Morocco?

[Answer] By receiving Shimon Peres, the King wanted to please the Americans and Israelis. This visit proves that my analysis is correct: Hassan is applying the policy dictated to him by Washington. I see in this event a defeat and a betrayal which will lead to his ruin.

[Question] When the United States bombed your country in April 1986, it justified its action by accusing you of actively supporting terrorism in the world. What have you got to say about this subject?

[Answer] Washington is carrying out a disinformation campaign to deceive the American people and world public opinion. In reality, the purpose of the attack was to strike a blow at the Arab nation as a whole to force it to abandon the struggle for the liberation of Palestine. Essentially what was involved was an effort to bring about the annihilation of the man who is leading this fight. The United States believes that by ridding itself of me it will put an end to the Arab revolution. It is profoundly mistaken, and its attack has produced an effect just the opposite of what it expected: The attack did nothing more than increase the anger of the Middle East; the Arab revolutionary movements are determined to show themselves to be even more intransigent.

[Question] You did not answer my question. Are there terrorist training camps in Libya? To prove your good faith, would you accept having an international investigating commission sent to your country?

[Answer] If there is to be an investigation, it should first start in the United States, Great Britain, and the other Western countries. We are sure that is where they will find terrorist training camps which are operating against Libya, Syria, Algeria, and all the progressive Arab countries. We have proof of their existence; on the other hand, those who accuse us have no proof. We have even arrested terrorists who were working against us. That is why we know with exactitude that the Americans and British are organizing subversive operations in Syria. Hundreds of innocent persons have been killed in those countries because of acts of violence committed by terrorists trained in the Federal Republic of Germany and Great Britain.

{Question] Iran and Syria, which are very hostile to the United States, have not suffered any direct attacks. In your opinion, to what may we attribute this relative American moderation with respect to those countries? Why hit Tripoli and not Tehran or Damascus?

[Answer] With their attack, the Americans have experienced a serious military defeat, and they do not wish to repeat that failure. If they had been successful in Libya, they would not have hesitated in attacking Syria or Iran next. In any event, they have announced that in the future they will resort to other methods, particularly bombings. That is a method they have already used against me. In a recent publication, did not the former chief of French intelligence reveal that an effort had been made to assassinate me?

[Question] What do you think about the recent wave of bombings in Paris which have been attributed to the Abdallah family?

[Answer] I have expressed my amazement at those incidents. I do not understand the reasons for that sudden violence in France. Is it linked with internal or external causes? What has France done to merit such a fate, I ask myself? On the other hand, it is not certain that those held responsible are really the guilty parties.

[Question] How do you explain the fact that the United States, which has a lot of enemies, has not been subjected to violence similar to that which has hit France?

[Answer] It is very simple: The United States protects itself by using Europe as a shield. That means, either Europe lacks clairvoyance or is defeated and impotent. In the next world war, it will be on the front line of the Soviet-American conflict: It will receive the first Soviet nuclear missile. In my opinion, a confrontation between Western Europe and the United States is inevitable, because Washington's obsessive fear of Communist military power will end up being taken for what it really is: A great lie and a betrayal whose objective is to push the old continent into a conflict with the USSR.

I am convinced that Western and Eastern Europe could live in peace and renounce their missiles if they were to repudiate the pernicious influence of Washington.

[Question] In October, Great Britain broke its diplomatic relations with Syria, which was accused of being involved in a terrorist plot that planned to blow up an El Al airplane in flight. The United States also recalled its ambassador to Syria, while France refused to take similar action. How do you interpret those different decisions?

[Answer] England is totally dependent upon the United States, unlike what is happening in France: Paris has proved its autonomy by refusing to permit the American bombers which were on their way to attack Libya to pass through its air space. It is clear that there is an alliance between the Atlantist Americans and British directed against the Arab nation, against Islam, against

Arab semitism. This is a racist policy. Could you explain to me why the bilateral problems between Great Britain and Syria are any concern of the United States? Why has the White House recalled its ambassador to Syria because of its solidarity with London? When Damascus reestablished relations with the United States, did it by any chance link this accord to its relations with Great Britain?

[Question] What is your opinion of Soviet policy in the Middle East?

[Answer] It is certainly more rational than that of Washington. However, the recent changes in the attitude of the Soviets toward the United States are not positive. Face-to-face with Gorbachev, who is like a dove with his proposals for peace and conciliation, Reagan's United States confirms his image as an eagle constantly threatening war and military escalation.

[Question] Has the USSR sent military experts to Libya?

[Answer] Of course, we have Soviet experts and weapons.

[Question] Why then did they not react when the United States attacked Libya?

[Answer] What could they do? In any case, they did not fail in their obligation. We continue to have faith in Soviet policy toward us.

[Question] Do you expect that there will be a reconciliation between Libya and Tunisia in the near future?

[Answer] I have never understood the reason for the break in relations. In the economic sector, our two countries are complementary; however, the problem is that our political systems are profoundly different. We are an authentic Jamahiriya (a state of the masses) and not an American suburb. We had to restrict ourselves to economic cooperation, since the political incompatibilities were foreseeable. Now, Tunisia has broken all its ties with Libya.

[Question] If the situation in Tunisia worsens, would you intervene?

[Answer] No. We would only intervene if the Tunisian people asked us to.

[Question] Every time you attempted to bring about unity in the Maghreb your efforts failed. How do you explain that?

[Answer] Doubtless we did not follow the proper path. What is more, I do not feel that all my efforts were in vain. At least I have the effect of generating a spirit of union in the Maghreb, which up until now has been isolated from the rest of the Arab world.

[Question] Is it true that many Palestinians are returning to Lebanon?

[Answer] Yes. The resistance must install itself there once again. This is clear-cut proof of the failure of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, whose purpose was to expel the Palestinians from the country.

[Question] Should the PLO be considered the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people?

[Answer] Arafat represents no one else but himself. The PLO continues to be a military vanguard; however, it fails to act like a liberation organization...

[Question] How is it possible for you, a champion of Arabism, to support a non-Arab country--Iran--against an Arab country--Iraq?

[Answer] What is important in this conflict is that a revolutionary force is confronting a nonrevolutionary force. Countries which are supporting Iraq against Iran, such as Jordan, Egypt, and the Gulf countries, are all reactionary countries. That said, I sincerely desire an end to the war.

[Question] What solution do you propose to end the Lebanese crisis?

[Answer] Any settlement should be effectuated within the framework of a republic in which Muslims and Christians live together in peace. I am opposed to slogans about an Islamic republic or the idea of cantons or small states. Those concepts terrify the Arab Christians and push them into alliances with the enemy. Those who preach to me about an Islamic republic are mercenaries who give Israel the justification to attack Lebanon.

[Question] What role does Libya propose to play in Chad?

[Answer] For Chad I wish peace and unity; however, under no pretext will I accept the installation of an enemy regime. We will not tolerate those who want to destabilize us. The French presence in Chad is imperialist and small. What France has to do is abandon its military bases throughout the African continent.

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