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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D. C. 20505

## DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

7 November 1986

"Collective Struggle:" Libya's Emerging Strategy  
Toward the United States [redacted]

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## Summary

Six months after the US airstrikes, Colonel Mu'ammur Qadhafi has resumed his policy of seeking aggressively to project his influence abroad and undermine US interests. His strategy is focused on a diplomatic effort to break Libya's isolation in the Middle East and Europe and a renewed program of political action, subversion, and terrorism. We believe the US raids in April 1986 have given greater urgency to this strategy. [redacted]

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A central feature of Qadhafi's strategy is an attempt to enlist radical groups worldwide in a "collective struggle" against US interests:

- The use of British bases in the airstrikes last spring has heightened longstanding Libyan interest in joining up with West European groups opposed to the US military presence in Europe. Qadhafi is pursuing cooperation with Communist groups as well as pacifist elements in Spain, France and the United Kingdom.
- The attack on Qadhafi's residence in Tripoli almost certainly has strengthened his determination to find surrogates to confront Washington with violent attacks. Available evidence indicates Libyan efforts to enhance ties with radical groups they believe are more

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willing to engage in violent activity/ [redacted]

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[redacted] Qadhafi's most dangerous links, however, continue to be his relationship with radical Palestinians such as the Abu Nidal Organization.

-- Tripoli also is stepping up its efforts to subvert pro-Western regimes, particularly in Africa. The Libyan effort seems directed primarily against South Africa, although moderate regimes in West Africa--such as Ivory Coast or Togo--are also at risk. [redacted]

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Qadhafi's intentions to use terrorism against the United States clearly exceed his capabilities. Libyan money will not dictate the agenda of many of the important groups, and most radicals in contact with Tripoli are on the fringe of local society and have little influence. At the same time, Qadhafi may be able to identify some committed groups--including Palestinian radicals and European leftists--willing to support Tripoli during another crisis with Washington by attacking US interests or organizing anti-US demonstrations. [redacted]

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Tripoli's Diplomatic Offensive

[redacted] after the US airstrikes on 15 April the Libyan regime was stung by the lack of support from the Arab League, Western Europe, or its many client groups in the Third World. Tripoli was especially eager to shore up its poor relations with the Arab states. [redacted]

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[redacted] Libya has continued to press for unity agreements with Algeria and Sudan, tried to ingratiate itself with Khartoum with aid offers, and put itself forward in June as a mediator for the chronic dispute between the two Yemens. Other signs of Libyan "moderation" include renewed interest in thawing relations with Tunisia, and Tripoli's refusal to bow to Syrian pressure to break diplomatic ties with Morocco after King Hassan met with Israeli Prime Minister Peres. [redacted]

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Tripoli has gained little through its diplomatic efforts. Libyan restraint failed to prevent Hassan's abrogation of the Libya-Morocco union, and Qadhafi's mediation between the two Yemens resolved nothing. Moreover, Qadhafi's unity proposal has fallen on deaf ears in Sudan. In Western Europe, Libyan relations have measurably improved only with Italy, which recently ratified a cultural agreement and agreed to an exchange of prisoners. According to our Embassy in Rome, even this progress may have been arrested by Qadhafi's public denigration of Italy in a speech on 7 October. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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Nevertheless, two developments have the potential to ease Libya's isolation:

- One development is the apparent Libyan willingness to pay outstanding financial claims arising from the August 1985 expulsion of Tunisian workers. Settling these claims would remove a key obstacle to a restoration of relations with Tunis.
- The other is the recent spate of stories in the Western press alleging a US disinformation campaign against Libya.

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Recently the Libyans again called in the EC ambassadors in Tripoli and urged their governments to reassess their policy toward Libya in light of the "false" US accusations.

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Political Action in Europe: Courting the Left

The use of British bases in the US airstrikes in April heightened the longstanding Libyan interest in opposing US military bases and facilities in Europe. As early as last January Qadhafi announced his intentions to align Libya with the "Greens Movement" and other representatives of the "masses" who would work to remove the US armed forces from Europe. We believe that since the US airstrikes the pace of Libyan contacts with such elements has quickened.

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Libyan political action often takes the form of sponsorship of meetings of radical groups in Europe and Libya (See Appendix I). Conferences in Europe--such as the "Symposium for Peace in the Mediterranean" held on Malta last July and others scheduled for Cyprus in November and Athens in December--apparently are straightforward Libyan propaganda exercises aimed at condemning US policy in Europe, the Middle East, and toward Libya, and legitimizing Libyan support for terrorism under the guise of "national liberation" or revolutionary struggle.

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We know substantially less about what transpires when individual delegations of leftists visit Libya. Publicized visits, such as one by the Swedish "Great Peace March Organization," probably are to show that Libya is not isolated and that Qadhafi is a proponent of world peace. Unpublicized ones, such as the visits of "Green Party" groups from Spain and France, provide the Libyans opportunities to channel support to the groups and plan propaganda or protest activities against US

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interests.

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We believe Tripoli has two primary objectives in supporting West European radicals:

- Complicating US efforts to enlist West European support in isolating Libya by disassociating Tripoli from terrorism in the eyes of the European public.
- Strengthening groups such as the Greenham Common Peace Camp in the United Kingdom and the Greens who are putting pressure on European governments to restrict or remove US military forces in Western Europe.

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Tripoli almost certainly views its support of European leftists as raising the political costs to West European governments of allowing US forces based in Europe to be used against Libya. [Redacted]

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The Anti-Imperialist Conferences: Trying to Unite the Radicals

Compared to its contacts with leftist and pacifist groups in Europe, Tripoli's program of coordination with radical groups in the Third World has a much higher profile. Following the pattern of March 1986, the Libyan Anti-Imperialism Center organized in September four conferences bringing together a wide range of groups under Libyan leadership. These groups include the ruling parties of revolutionary states, guerrilla and terrorist organizations, leftwing parties and politicians, Islamic societies, and small local groups and individuals who the Libyans believe to be sympathetic to Libya. In all conferences the Libyans promoted "collective struggle" against "imperialism."

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The conferences publicly feature a good deal of breast-beating and emphasize common themes:

- Endorsement of Libyan policy, such as the claim to sovereignty over the Gulf of Sidra and condemnation of US "aggression."

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- The necessity for progressive forces to confront imperialism with an escalating "collective struggle."
- An emphasis on "practical action" and violence in confronting "imperialism." [Redacted]

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There was a special focus on Africa in all the conferences. The most important conference gathered "African" progressive forces (including black progressives from the Caribbean and the United States) to coordinate their struggle against US "imperialism" manifested by military bases in Africa, multinational corporations, and support for "reactionary regimes." The conference also urged:

- Resistance to the reestablishment of diplomatic relations with Israel.
- Opposition to French military intervention on the continent.
- Promoting armed struggle against South Africa. [Redacted]

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How Serious is Qadhafi?

In our view, Qadhafi's maneuvers are aimed at reminding his international audience that he remains determined to serve as the focus of resistance to US imperialism. In addition, Libyan public statements define the Palestinian conflict with Israel, the Libyan confrontation with the United States, and the black struggle against the policy of apartheid in South Africa, as struggles for "national liberation" that justify the use of violence--a transparent attempt to legitimize Libyan support for terrorism. [Redacted]

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One ominous indicator of Libyan intentions is the central role played by the Anti-Imperialism Center in organizing the September conferences. The Center long has arranged funding, training, and materiel support for various "liberation groups" around the world. Moreover, senior Anti-Imperialism Center officials, such as Musa Kusa and Abd al-Salam Ashur, are radical ideologues [Redacted]

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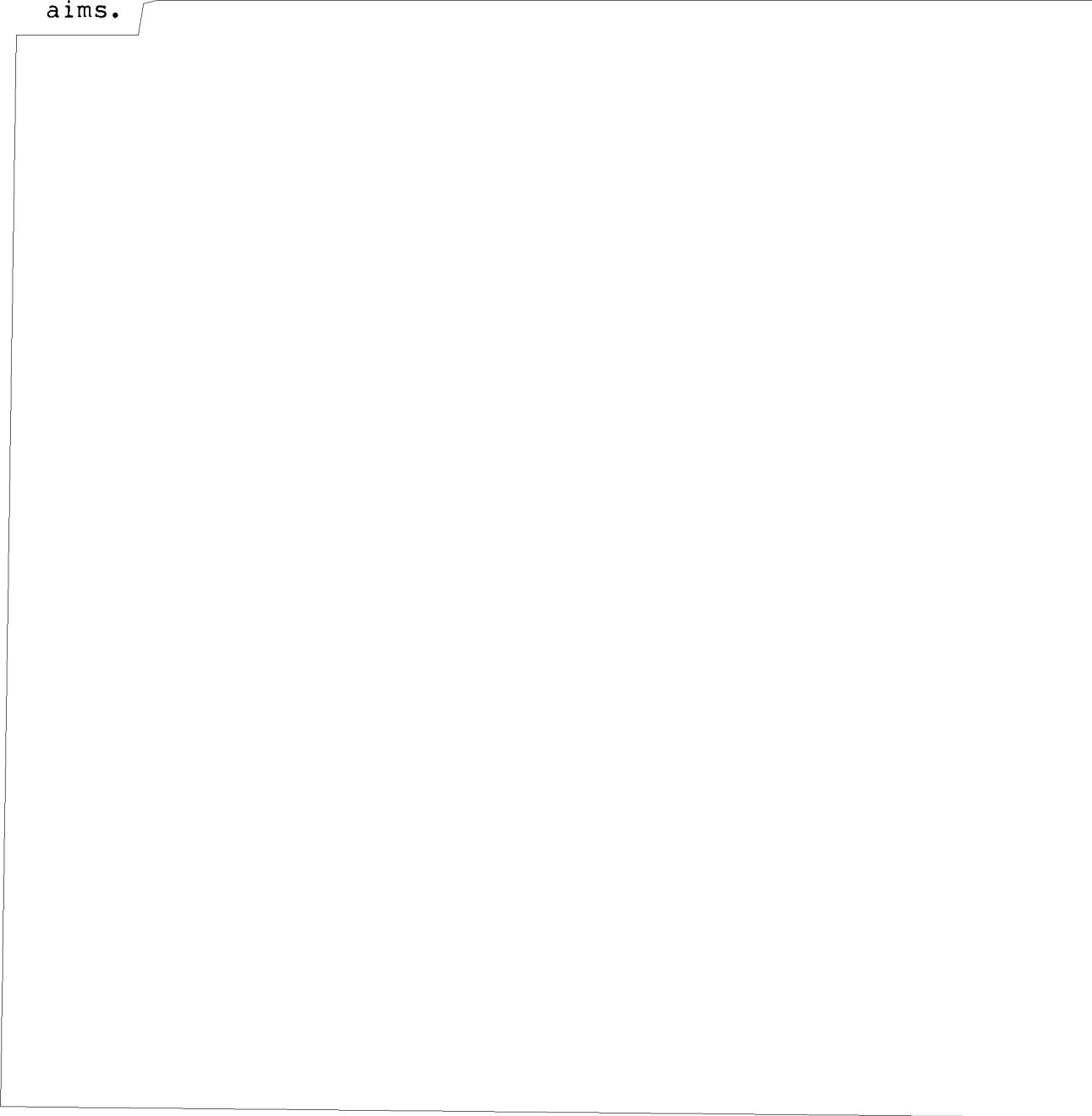
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The September conferences, and the resolutions that have emerged from them, are probably the fullest statement of Qadhafi's current intentions toward the United States. Moreover, available evidence indicates that Qadhafi is not confining himself to a policy of rhetoric alone; since the US airstrikes last spring he has been taking actions in support of his stated aims.

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In Latin America, the Libyans also have been trying to increase their support to indigenous insurgent and terrorist groups and to identify local surrogates willing to strike US targets on behalf of Libya.



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Strengthened Ties with Radical Arabs

Tripoli also continues to nurture its links to radical Middle Eastern--primarily Palestinian--groups. In our view the experience, sophistication, and motivation of the radical Palestinians, coupled with Libya's central interest in Middle Eastern issues, make the Libyan-Palestinian connection the most dangerous relationship the Libyans have developed; we believe the Palestinians are more likely than many of the other radicals to work with Libya to mount serious terrorist operations against US interests. 

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The Libyans apparently are encouraging the Palestinians to undertake operations against US interests

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#### Prospects for Libyan Success

Qadhafi almost certainly will fall short of his goal of confronting the United States with an effective, united front of radicals under Libyan tutelage. The disparate nature of the many groups he hopes to unite--marxists and conservative muslims, pacifists and terrorists, Latin Americans, Africans, and Asians--probably outweighs whatever common interest they have in undermining US interests, particularly in support of Libyan policy. In addition, most of the groups the Libyans are dealing with are small, fringe organizations with little support or serious capabilities; many of them come to Libya in hope of

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obtaining funding for their own parochial, often nonviolent programs.

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Of greater concern in our view, however, is that Qadhafi is increasing support to groups whose agendas coincide with his objective of undermining US and Western interests through violence or political agitation. The apparently growing Libyan cooperation with Latin American groups such as the AVC and Tupac Amarus may presage a redirection of Libyan support away from the generally nonviolent Anglophone Caribbean leftists and toward more active and violent groups on the South and possibly Central American mainland. In Africa, the South African ANC apparently has reversed its earlier refusal of Libyan aid, and Qadhafi is likely to use this to press the ANC to include US interests on ANC target lists.

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Libyan meetings with radical groups also may facilitate Tripoli's identification of elements willing to support Tripoli during a crisis with the US by mounting serious or symbolic terrorist attacks, or by organizing demonstrations.

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by institutionalizing the contacts, as the Libyans seem to have done with the Pan-Arab Command, the Libyans may be better able to allocate their resources for subversion and terrorism. They may achieve the sort of coordination on a narrow issue--such as operations in Lebanon or the radicalization of the Palestinian movement--that they cannot obtain on a global scale.

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The likelihood of Libyan success in courting radical and pacifist groups in Western Europe is unclear. Some of the groups, such as the Spanish "Crida" or PCE/ML groups are insignificant fringe organizations with little influence. Others, such as the Greens, may be of more importance. In our

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view the danger is that Qadhafi may exploit his relationship with these elements to influence their anti-US sentiments in ways that help support Libya, as he has tried to do with the Onde Verde radio station. Libyan cooperation with and funding of Soviet front or Communist party activities [redacted] are also of concern, because of the relative sophistication of these programs. [redacted]

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The growing Libyan cooperation with radical Palestinian groups--particularly Abu Nidal--is an especially worrisome development. The combining of Libyan resources with the sophisticated terrorist capabilities of groups like Abu Nidal may allow Qadhafi to pursue his policy of confrontation with Washington via effective surrogates and thereby minimize the risks to Libya of US retaliation. The Pan-Am hijacking in Karachi may be a case in point, and Qadhafi's willingness to play a role in such incidents may grow if he becomes convinced that only direct evidence of Libyan involvement will prompt US military action against him. [redacted]

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Libyan subversion in Africa also may increase as Tripoli seeks to compensate for its isolation in the Arab world and Western Europe by trying to play a larger role in Africa. Although the emphasis on Libyan activities appears to be support for South African insurgent groups, we believe Libyan influence in the South African conflict probably will remain marginal. Qadhafi may have better prospects for success in West Africa, where chronic economic and ethnic problems provide greater opportunities for Libyan meddling. [redacted]

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[redacted] In our view other countries at risk include Togo, Cameroon, Niger, and Zaire--countries with close ties to France or the United States, and, in the case of Cameroon and Zaire, diplomatic relations with Israel. [redacted]

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Libyan contacts with US groups also bear watching. Qadhafi often has threatened to mount terrorist attacks in the United States, and since the US raids last spring he may believe that he needs a capability to make good that threat. Available evidence suggests that Tripoli does not yet possess resources in the United States capable of mounting more than symbolic actions on Libya's behalf. [redacted]

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[redacted] Qadhafi probably would have to turn to other surrogates--perhaps Palestinians--if he wished to support a major terrorist attack in the US. [redacted]

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## Appendix 1

## Libyan-Organized Meetings with Radical Groups

Following is a chronology of known contacts with various leftist, pacifist and in a few instances rightwing groups since July 1986, when Tripoli began to emerge from the post-airstrike slump of late spring. The major conferences held in September are excluded from the chronology, but planned Libyan meetings are included. In most cases the meetings listed below involved officials of the Anti-Imperialism Center or Revolutionary Committees. [redacted]

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5-6 July 86 -- "Symposium for Peace in the Mediterranean"  
Ostensibly sponsored by Malta Peace Lab,  
in Valletta. Known participants included:

Lebanon

- A. Lebanese Popular Nasserist Organization (1)
- B. Lebanese Progressive Socialist Party (1)
- C. Lebanese Communist Party (1)

Malta

- A. Malta Peace Lab
- B. Government of Malta--Foreign Minister Sceberras Trigona

Palestinians

- A. Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP-GC) (1)
- B. Popular Struggle Front(1)
- C. Fatah-The Awakening (Syrian-backed Fatah dissident group)(1)

Spain

- A. "Euskadi Regional Solidarity Committee" [redacted]
- B. Canary Islands Independence Movement
- C. Hispano-Libyan Friendship Association
- D. Committee for Solidarity with the Arab Cause
- E. Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Spain (PCE/ML)
- F. Catalan Independence Movement (CRIDA) [redacted]

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Syria

- A. Pan-Arab Command of the Ba'th Arab Socialist Party (1)

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[Redacted]

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UK

A. Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp.

[Redacted]

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15-20 September 86 -- Third General Conference for the Islamic Call held in Tripoli. Five hundred delegates from 80 countries attended. [Redacted]

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15-22 September 86 -- Libyan former Foreign Minister Ubaydi, secretary of the Libyan Arab Solidarity and Peace Committee visits USSR. Meets with head of Soviet Peace Defense Committee and Vice Chairman of Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee. Signed program of cooperation between Libyan Arab Solidarity and Peace Committee and Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee. [Redacted]

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22-23 September 86 -- Third meeting of the Political Secretariat of the Anti-Imperialism Center held in Tripoli. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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28 Sept-2 Oct 86 -- Delegation from Swedish "Great Peace March Organization" visits Libya, meets with Qadhafi, planning with Libyan "popular organizations" to hold "A Special Day for Peace in North Africa" [Redacted]

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29-30 September 86 -- Preparatory Committee for the Conference of Arab Friendship Societies in Europe meets in Tripoli. Includes delegations representing:

- A. Palestine
- B. French-Arab Solidarity Societies
- C. Greek-Arab Solidarity Societies
- D. Council of Friendship and Solidarity with the Peoples in Algeria
- E. Syrian Socialist Arab Ba'th Party
- F. Permanent Secretariat of the Arab People's Congress (2)
- G. International Secretariat for Solidarity with the Arab People and Their Central Cause: Palestine (2) [Redacted]

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29 September-3 October 86 -- General Education Conference, "the First World Gathering on Jamahiri Thought, the Thoughts of Mu'ammarr Qadhafi," held in Tripoli. [Redacted]

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14 October 86 -- Libya convenes meeting of the General Secretariat of the Pan Arab Command, in Tripoli. A number of Arab radicals attend. (See Appendix 6) [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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## Appendix 6

## Meetings of the General Secretariat of the Pan-Arab Command of Arab Revolutionary Forces

The Pan-Arab Command is an umbrella organization founded by Qadhafi in March 1985 for the purpose of uniting the various "revolutionary forces" in the Arab world and coordinating their activities. A second meeting of the Command was held in Tripoli in February 1986, which prompted the Israelis to unsuccessfully attempt to capture some of Palestinian participants by forcing a Libyan jet en route from the conference to Damascus to land in Israel. [redacted]

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The stated aims of the Pan-Arab Command include the destruction of Israel, the toppling of "reactionary" regimes, and the confrontation of US imperialism, specifically the "liquidation" of its military bases and the striking of its interests "wherever they might exist." Although there clearly is a great deal of propaganda and public relations surrounding the creation of this organization, we believe Qadhafi views it as a potential framework for uniting radical Arab groups, much as he viewed his union with Morocco as a framework for Arab unity at a state level. [redacted]

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The General Secretariat probably is a sort of steering committee for the command that allows Qadhafi to discuss in general terms the coordination of Libyan support to various radical Palestinian and other groups. We believe it unlikely, however, that Qadhafi would employ such a forum for the planning of specific terrorist acts, because of concern for operational security. The General Secretariat may have met twice since April 1986. The first meeting, in late August, was not publicized nor referred to as the "Pan-Arab Command." [redacted]

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[redacted] The second meeting, which was publicized, may not have been a success, however, as it failed to issue the usual "political statement" at the end of the conference. If in fact the participants failed to agree on a public communique, this suggests that Qadhafi's prestige with the radical Arabs may be diminished. Many of the groups also may be reluctant at this time to risk being branded as terrorists by publicly associating themselves with Libya's inflammatory rhetoric against the US.

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- 39- CTC/TAB
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- 49-53 - NESA/AI/M

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