

Africa Report by Douglas DeGroot

An embargo against Qaddafi?

The U.S. has begun to get tough on the Chad question. A great deal more could be done to halt Libya.

Although the government has retaken the last significant northern Chad town of Faya-Largeau on July 30 from Libyan-directed and -equipped rebel forces, Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi is still on a rampage. Faya-Largeau was subjected to four days of intensive bombing by Libyan fighter-bombers. As of August 4, Libyan planes were bombing two smaller towns in the region, according to the Chadian government.

Qaddafi-sponsored Chadian rebels, under the leadership of Goukouni Weddei, and mercenaries recruited from around Africa by Qaddafi launched a military offensive from Libya in late June. Faya-Largeau was the first town captured, after which several towns in eastern Chad were taken by Qaddafi's band before the Chad government began driving out the invaders.

Chad President Hissene Habre on Aug. 2 accused Libya of genocide of the civilian population of Faya-Largeau as a result of the Libyan bombings, and Foreign Minister Idriss Mis-kine reported that large parts of the town have been destroyed in the raids.

The United States is stepping up its role in Chad and other northeast African countries in the face of the threat Qaddafi is mounting in northeast Africa and the Middle East on the behalf of his Russian and Swiss controllers. The Reagan administration initially agreed to send \$10 million worth of military equipment, and later included hand-held shoulder-fired Redeye anti-aircraft missiles. Three American advisers arrived in Chad Aug. 4 to teach Chadian trainers how

to use the missiles. Two AWACS reconnaissance planes, which the Reagan administration announced would be able to monitor part of Libyan and Chad airspace, were sent to Egypt on the same day. At the same time, the U.S. aircraft carrier *Eisenhower* is in the Mediterranean off Libya's coast.

The United States is moving into a vacuum created in large part by French inaction. Chad was part of the former French colonial empire in Africa, and was allied with the French after independence. However, the French have been trying to placate Qaddafi, instead of neutralizing his extensive subversion efforts.

As I reported in the Aug. 2 issue of *EIR*, France wanted to reach an understanding with Qaddafi over Chad, making it possible for the economically strapped French to market arms and other manufactured goods to Libya. Some French circles are hoping for a state visit by Qaddafi later this year. Such a deal would lead to a de facto partition of Chad into zones of influence, with Qaddafi dominating the mineral-rich north, and France maintaining some influence in the south. The French were led to believe that by establishing a close alliance with southern Chad, they could protect their other allies—their former colonies in Africa. It was suggested that, in such a deal, Qaddafi may sacrifice his pawn, Goukouni, in return for recognition of Qaddafi's "manifest destiny" in North Africa.

During the first week of August, several French papers revealed that French passivity—sending only paltry arms to the Chad government—was

due to secret negotiations between Paris and Tripoli. The French press reported further that these negotiations were being handled by the French ambassador to Algeria, Guy Georgy, former ambassador to Libya and Iran, who has also dealt with relations between France and the Soviets with respect to Africa. In the deal being worked out by Georgy, according to the French press, France and Qaddafi would give only limited support to their respective allies in Chad, leaving them to kill each other off. This would indeed accomplish the goals of Qaddafi and his Nazi International/KGB backers. The Swiss takeover of French finances may have a lot to do with French behavior.

Hopefully, the U.S. commitment to help Chad will not be subverted by Kissinger forces in the United States, who would prefer to make the conflict another chip for negotiation with the Russians. This would fit with Kissinger's goal of reducing U.S. power, in this case, primarily in the Middle East. If Qaddafi is free to finish off nation-states in Africa while the Russians and Israel do the same in the Middle East, Egypt, the most important country in the region, would be isolated.

Arming Qaddafi's targets in Africa is not a long-term solution. It remains easy for Libya to acquire large amounts of sophisticated weaponry, which the Soviets and other producers are eager to supply.

The only sure way out is for Reagan to declare a complete embargo on Libya and force Western European nations to do likewise. Although the United States no longer purchases Libyan oil, two American companies, Oasis and Armand Hammer's Occidental, are still the biggest lifters of oil in Libya. An embargo would go a long way to take the wind out of Qaddafi's sails.