area handbook series

Libya
a country study

Libya

a country study

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On the cover: Beduins approaching a Libyan oasis

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Foreword

This volume is one in a continuing series of books now being prepared by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress under the Country Studies—Area Handbook Program. The last page of this book lists the other published studies.

Most books in the series deal with a particular foreign country, describing and analyzing its political, economic, social, and national security systems and institutions, and examining the interrelationships of those systems and the ways they are shaped by cultural factors. Each study is written by a multidisciplinary team of social scientists. The authors seek to provide a basic understanding of the observed society, striving for a dynamic rather than a static portrayal. Particular attention is devoted to the people who make up the society, their origins, dominant beliefs and values, their common interests and the issues on which they are divided, the nature and extent of their involvement with national institutions, and their attitudes toward each other and toward their social system and political order.

The books represent the analysis of the authors and should not be construed as an expression of an official United States government position, policy, or decision. The authors have sought to adhere to accepted standards of scholarly objectivity. Corrections, additions, and suggestions for changes from readers will be welcomed for use in future editions.

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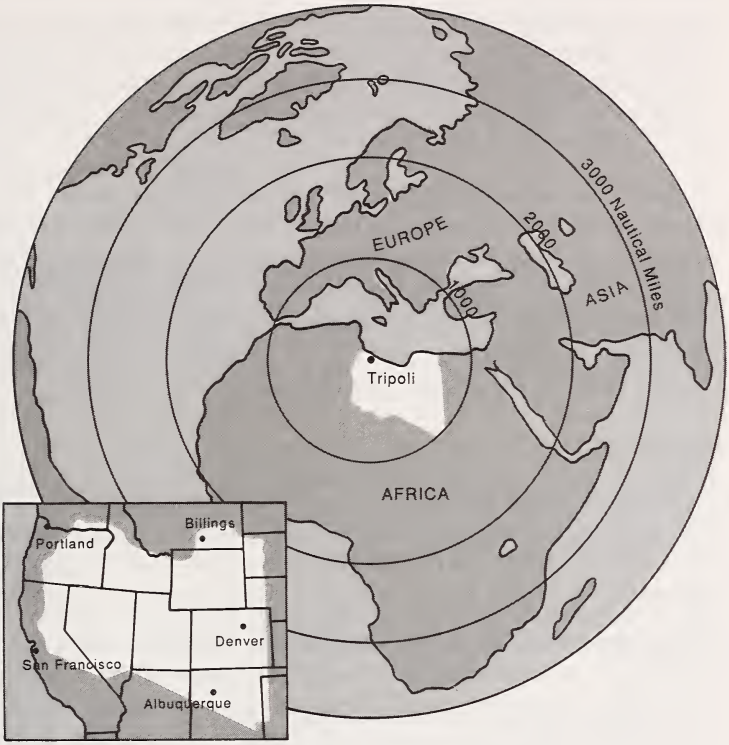
Preface

Like its predecessor, this study is an attempt to treat in a concise and objective manner the dominant social, political, economic, and military aspects of contemporary Libyan society. Sources of information included scholarly journals and monographs, official reports of governments and international organizations, foreign and domestic newspapers, and numerous periodicals. Relatively up-to-date statistical data in the economic and social fields were unavailable, even from the United Nations and the World Bank. Chapter bibliographies appear at the the end of the book; brief comments on some of the more valuable sources suggested as possible further reading appear at the end of each chapter. Measurements are given in the metric system; a conversion table is provided to assist those readers who are unfamiliar with metric measurements (see table 1, Appendix). A glossary is also included.

The transliteration of Arabic words and phrases follows a modified version of the system adopted by the United States Board on Geographic Names and the Permanent Committee on Geographic Names for British Official Use, known as the BGN/PCGN system. The modification is a significant one, however, in that diacritical markings and hyphens have been omitted. Moreover, some geographical locations, such as the cities of Benghazi, Tobruk, and Tripoli, are so well known by those conventional names that their formal names—Banghazi, Tubruq, and Tarabulus—are not used.

Country Profile


3000 Nautical Miles
2000
1000
EUROPE
ASIA
AFRICA
Tripoli
Billings
Portland
Denver
San Francisco
Albuquerque

Country

Formal Name: Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Short Form: Libya.

Term for Nationals: Libyans.

Capital: Tripoli.

Geography

Size: About 1,760,000 square kilometers (excluding Aouzou Strip claimed by Chad) consisting mainly of desert. Land boundaries 4,345 kilometers long and coastline 1,770 kilometers long. Twelve-nautical-mile maritime claim, including disputed Gulf of Sidra.

Topography: Main contrast between narrow enclaves of fertile lowlands along Mediterranean coast and vast expanse of arid, rocky plains and sand seas to south. Coastal lowlands separated from one another by predesert zone and backed by plateaus with steep, north-facing scarps; country's only true mountains, Tibesti Massif, rise in southern desert. Country has several saline lakes but no perennial watercourses. Less than 5 percent of territory economically useful.

Climate: Dominant climate influences Mediterranean Sea and Sahara Desert. In coastal lowlands, where 80 percent of population lives, climate Mediterranean, with warm summers and mild winters. Climate in desert interior characterized by very hot summers and extreme diurnal temperature ranges. Precipitation ranges from light to negligible; less than 2 percent of country receives enough rainfall for settled agriculture.

Society

Population: Approximately 3.63 million inhabitants according to 1984 census, including at least 260,000 aliens. Indigenous population was increasing at one of world's highest annual growth rates, estimated variously at between 3.4 percent and 4.5 percent.

Languages and Ethnic Groups: Official language Arabic. Government policy discourages use of other languages, but English used extensively—even by government for some purposes—and ranks as a second language. Italian and French also spoken, and small minorities speak Berber dialects. Arabic-speaking Sunni Muslims of mixed Arab and Berber ancestry make up well over 90 percent of indigenous population. Most of remainder Berbers, Tuareg, and black Africans, and small but long-settled Greek and Maltese communities. Expatriates, imported under government contract to meet labor shortages, largely citizens of other Muslim countries; many technical and professional positions filled by East and West Europeans. Altogether, representatives of more than 100 nationalities live in Libya.

Health: Number of medical doctors and dentists reportedly increased sevenfold between 1970 and 1985, producing in case of doctors ratio of 1 per 673 citizens. In 1985, about one-third of doctors Libyan natives, remainder expatriate foreigners. Number of hospital beds tripled in same time period. Among major health hazards endemic in country in 1970s were typhoid and paratyphoid, infectious hepatitis, leishmaniasis, rabies, meningitis, schistosomiasis, venereal diseases, and principal childhood ailments. Progress included eradication of malaria and significant gains against trachoma, tuberculosis, and leprosy. In 1985 infant mortality rate was 84 per 1,000. Life expectancy for men 56 years, for women 59 years.

Literacy: In early 1980s, estimates of total literacy between 50 and 60 percent, about 70 percent for men and 35 percent for women, but gap narrowing because of increased female school attendance.

Religion: Islam official religion; nearly entire population adheres to Sunni branch of Islam.

Economy

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): In 1986 GDP estimated at $US20 billion, $6,260 per capita. Petroleum contributed almost 40 percent; public services and administration 12 percent; construction 11 percent; transportation and communications 5 percent; manufacturing 5 percent; and agriculture 4 percent.

Petroleum: In early 1980s, estimated proven reserves were 32 billion barrels, of which 7 billion barrels in offshore areas. In 1986 production averaged slightly over 1 million barrels per day, and in 1987 declining. In 1986, Libya world's fifteenth largest producer of petroleum.

Foreign Trade: In 1986 exports primarily petroleum worth US$5 billion, matched by imports primarily of manufactures and foodstuffs worth US$5 billion.

Currency: Libyan dinar; in mid-1987 LD1 equaled US$3.16.

Fiscal Year: Same as calendar year (see Glossary).

Transportation and Communications

Railroads: None.

Roads: Over 23,000 kilometers of paved roads in 1985.

Ports: In 1986 Tobruk, Tripoli, Benghazi, and Qasr Ahmad, near Misratah, major ports. Five major oil export terminals As Sidra, Burayqah, Ras al Unuf, Marsa al Hariqah, and Az Zuwaytinah; future sixth terminal planned at Zuwarah in western Libya.

Airfields: Three international airports at Tripoli (Al Aziziyah airport), Benghazi (Benina airport), and Sabha. Number of other smaller airfields with permanent-surface runways. National carrier Libyan Arab Airlines (LAA).

Communications: Telecommunications system greatly improved in late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1985 average of 1 telephone per

100 persons. Also in 1985, completion of high-capacity cable system and submarine cable linking northern coastal strip with many parts of south.

Government and Politics

Form: *Jamahiriya* (newly coined Arabic word, roughly translated as "state of the masses," "people's power," or "people's authority"). In late 1987, de facto head of state and government and commander in chief of armed forces was Colonel Muammar al Qadhafi, who led 1969 Revolution against Sanusi monarchy. Application of his innovative and revolutionary Arab-socialist philosophy to Libyan nation has resulted in fundamental changes in political representation, property ownership, legal system, and commercial transactions.

Executive and Legislature: General People's Congress (GPC), both an executive and legislative body that convenes several times annually, primary formal instrument of government; membership of more than 1,000 delegates drawn from subnational-level people's committees, people's congresses, and revolutionary committees. Leadership of GPC vested in General Secretariat headed by secretary general, official chief of state. Cabinet functions performed by national-level General People's Committee.

Subnational Governmental Divisions: After governorates abolished in 1975, Libya divided into between seven and ten military districts (number varies with frequent reorganizations). Each military district divided into several municipalities, subdivided into villages or urban wards.

Legal System: Since 1969 Revolution, sharia (Islamic law) has replaced other jurisprudence. Regular court system adjudicates personal, criminal, civil, and commercial law. People's courts, revolutionary courts, and military courts handle political transgressions and threats against state.

Political Parties: Political parties banned; mass organization accomplished primarily through Arab Socialist Union (ASU), which includes geographically and functionally based membership.

Foreign Relations: Libya under Qadhafi a staunch proponent of pan-Arab unity, both in theory and in practice. Libyan regional policy included an intractable opposition to Israel and support of Palestinian cause. In 1980s Qadhafi made bid for worldwide recognition and Third World leadership by espousing normative philosophy known as Third Universal Theory, which rejects both communist and capitalist models of government and calls instead for nonalignment, ''people's power,'' and ''new economic order'' based on more equitable division of wealth between developed and underdeveloped countries. In accordance with this ideology, Libya has pursued activist and aggressive foreign policy, which includes alleged support and sponsorship of numerous terrorist and guerrilla movements throughout world. Member of United Nations (UN) and most of its specialized agencies, League of Arab States (Arab League), Organization of African Unity (OAU), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC).

National Security

Armed Forces: In 1986 military manpower estimated at over 90,000; components were army (over 70,000), air force (10,000), and navy (6,500). Compulsory Military Service Statute of 1978 made all eligible males between ages of seventeen and thirty-five subject to draft commitment of three years of active service in army or four years in air force or navy. A 1984 statute mandated compulsory military training for all Libyans coming of age, whether male or female, to achieve total mobilization of population in event of national emergency. Law strengthened People's Militia (formerly known as Popular Resistance Force) into 45,000-person paramilitary force. All forces were under control of Qadhafi in his role as commander in chief of military establishment.

Police: Civil force, under Secretariat of Interior, known after 1985 as People's Security Force (formerly known as Police at the Service of the People and the Revolution). Total number of personnel not available 1987.

Major Tactical Military Units: In 1987 army composed of twenty armored battalions, thirty mechanized infantry battalions, ten artillery battalions, two special forces groups comprising ten paratroop battalions, and eight air defense battalions. Air force organized into one medium bomber squadron, three fighter-interceptor squadrons, five forward ground attack squadrons, one counterinsurgency squadron, nine helicopter squadrons, and three air defense brigades. Although navy configured to carry out essentially coast guard role, inventory included six Soviet-built submarines.

Major Equipment Suppliers: Between 1980 and 1985, Soviet Union leading supplier of military equipment to Libya (US$4.6 billion) followed by Czechoslovakia (US$875 million), Italy (US$850 million), France (US$725 million), and People's Republic of China (US$320 million). In early 1987, however, Soviet deliveries reportedly curtailed or cut off. Policy of refusing to ship arms to Libya was agreed to in Tokyo Declaration on International Terrorism signed in 1986 by United States, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), Britain, Italy, France, and Japan. In 1987, Libya turning to peripheral suppliers such as Greece, Brazil, and Yugoslavia.

Military Costs: According to Libyan figures, 1984 defense budget was LD340 million, which constituted 23.6 percent of total budget. In 1985, defense expenditures omitted from budget. According to United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), Libyan cumulative arms purchases between 1981 and 1985 estimated at US$10.5 billion, with 1984 military spending estimated at US$5.1 billion.

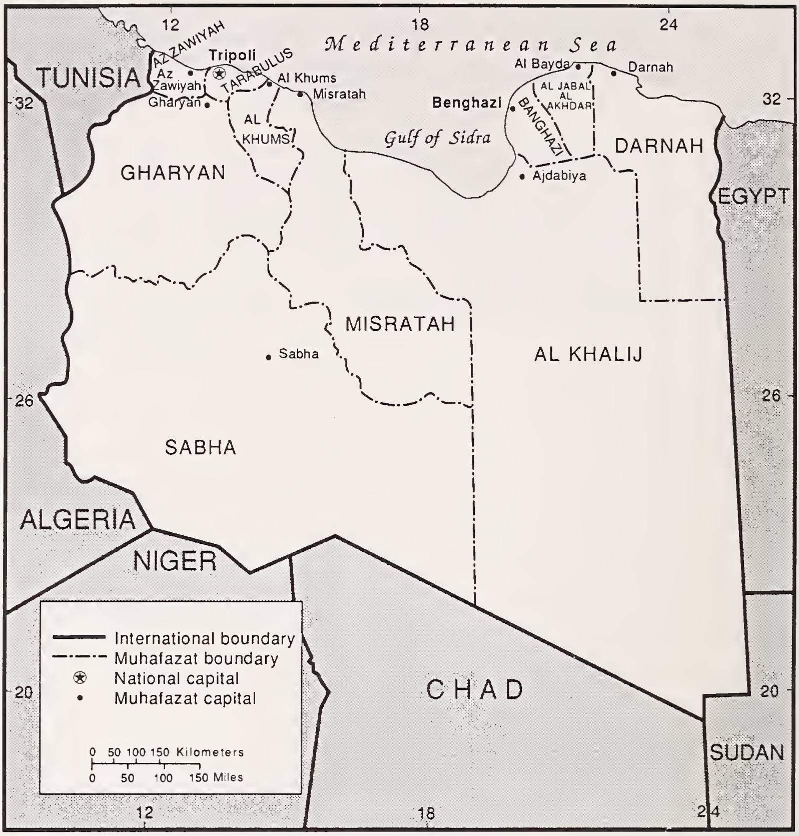

12
18
24
Mediterranean Sea
AZ ZAWIYAH
Tripoli
TARABULUS
Az Zawiyah
Al Khums
Misratah
Gharyan
AL KHUMS
Al Bayda
Darnah
AL JABAL AL AKHDAR
Benghazi
BANGHAZI
Gulf of Sidra
Ajdabiya
DARNAH
TUNISIA
32
GHARYAN
EGYPT
MISRATAH
Sabha
AL KHALIJ
26
SABHA
ALGERIA
NIGER
CHAD
International boundary
Muhafazat boundary
National capital
Muhafazat capital
0 50 100 150 Kilometers
0 50 100 150 Miles
20
SUDAN
12
18
24

Figure 1. Administrative Divisions (as of 1975)

Introduction

LIBYA'S INTERNATIONAL PROMINENCE in the mid- and late 1980s was disproportionate to its geographic size or population. The domestic and international activities of its revolutionary leader Muammar al Qadhafi, combined with the financial and economic power resulting from Libya's discovery and exploitation of its significant petroleum resources, were primarily responsible for propelling Libya onto the world stage. By the 1980s, Qadhafi's grip on power was so strong that press commentaries and academic reports routinely used his name and that of his government interchangeably.

Until the Libyan Revolution in 1969, few Westerners had any knowledge of Libya beyond an awareness of it as the site of desert campaigns in World War II, such as Al Alamein, and the ruins of ancient Cyrene and Tripoli. Early Libyan history was influenced by numerous foreign conquerors, including the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Romans, and, most significantly, the Arabs, who established Islam in the late seventh and early eighth centuries. The Arab conquest of North Africa left a lasting mark on the Berber tribes that inhabited the area. North African Islam under various caliphates took on a distinctive form that incorporated indigenous religious practices, such as the veneration of holy men (see Religious Life, ch. 2).

Under Ottoman Turkish rule in the nineteenth century, the Sanusi Islamic religious order became a powerful force with political overtones, as the Sanusi lodges helped weld the rival beduin tribes of Cyrenaica. In the twentieth century, when Italy sought to conquer Cyrenaica and adjoining Tripolitania, the Sanusi movement constituted the major source of opposition to colonial rule. More advanced Italian weaponry prevailed, however, and Italy gained control of the area following World War I, setting up a new administrative system joining the two regions, together with the southern region of Fezzan (see Italian Rule and Arab Resistance, ch. 1).

The Italians improved the infrastructure of the area, creating roads, railroads, port facilities, and irrigation projects, but did little to train the inhabitants in administrative, technical, or agricultural skills. During World War II, a number of Cyrenaicans determined that the best route for gaining independence would be to support the Allied side; accordingly, they fought with the British in the desert war. This action, coupled with Italy's defeat, led to a brief period of British administration of the former Italian-controlled area after the war. Thereafter, under United Nations auspices, King Idris of the Sanusi family proclaimed the United Kingdom of Libya in 1951.

The new country faced severe economic problems as well as political difficulties resulting from its lack of national cohesion. Economically, Libya was handicapped by its largely desert terrain and its sparse and unskilled population. To gain a major source of revenue as well as of military assistance, King Idris granted base rights to Britain and the United States in 1953 and 1954, respectively. The discovery of oil in commercial quantities by Esso (later Exxon) in 1959 brought about a substantial increase in national income as well as growing Western influence. Meanwhile, in 1963, King Idris sought to change Libya's unwieldy federal system by creating a unitary state. The latter move encountered obstacles because the three provinces of Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan had little in common, and the majority of Libyans did not identify with the monarchy or have nationalist feelings.

Both the discovery of oil and the increase in Western influence proved to be divisive elements for the Libyan state. Revenues from the oil industry benefited relatively few in Libyan society and led to greater stratification between the small wealthy group and the large poor one. Furthermore, King Idris's pro-Western constitutional monarchy had minimal associations with the Arab states. These two factors contributed to a rising dissatisfaction with the monarchy. The discontent ultimately led to the seizure of power by the Free Officers Movement in 1969 while King Idris was abroad for medical treatment.

The movement established a Revolutionary Command Council of twelve members, which formed a new government. Among the members was Qadhafi, who served both as prime minister and defense minister. Qadhafi was strongly influenced by the revolutionary ideas of Egyptian leader Gamal Abdul Nasser and persuaded his officer colleagues to adopt a program that reflected a number of Nasser's concepts.

The new government proclaimed as its watchwords ''Freedom, Socialism, and Unity.'' Freedom was to be achieved through a program that had a populist framework to allow maximum direct citizen participation at the bottom, through ''people's committees,'' whereas the structure was controlled at the top by handpicked military officers. Socialism was pursued through various domestic programs designed to develop Libya's infrastructure and promote industrialization. Unity entailed Libya's announced intent to pursue an Arab and Islamic policy as well as attempts by Qadhafi at various times to achieve union with several Arab states. In line with its intended populist and socialist character, in 1977 the official name of the country was changed to ''the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.''

Qadhafi coined the term *jamahiriya* to mean ''state of the masses,'' his interpretation of freedom. In theory, the power of the masses was to be exercised by the popular committees established at various levels and in different segments of the population—in localities, government ministries, businesses, and universities. In practice, elections to such committees and the exercise of authority were ''guided'' by the General People's Committee, which replaced the Council of Ministers (see The General People's Congress, ch. 4). Although technically appointed by the General People's Congress at its annual meeting, the General People's Committee was in effect selected by Qadhafi himself. Thus, the power to implement or initiate measures was strictly limited, and popular participation in government declined during the 1980s, leading Qadhafi to advocate the creation of a new political party to energize the socialist system.

To develop this political structure in the early period and to allow himself more time to serve as theoretician for the new Libyan experiment in revolutionary socialism, Qadhafi resigned in 1974 from any official government post, while remaining de facto head of state. In this capacity Qadhafi was referred to as ''the leader,'' and he produced three slim parts of *The Green Book*, setting forth his program and its justification. *The Green Book* assumed a position for the Libyans comparable to that of the ''little red book'' of Chairman Mao Zedong for the Chinese.

Qadhafi's pursuit of socialism as set out in *The Green Book* entailed the development of Libya's infrastructure in transportation and communications, utilities, and basic services (see Role of the Government, ch. 3). To accomplish this development, revenues and manpower were necessary. Substantial domestic revenues resulted from oil production in the years following the Revolution and transformed Libya from a leading have-not state into a major oil exporter. Because of Libya's severe shortage of manpower, particularly skilled labor, thousands of foreign workers were required. These workers came mainly from other North African and from sub-Saharan states. When oil revenues began to decline in the early 1980s, and in view of the internal security threat the laborers represented, Qadhafi terminated the services of thousands of them in the 1982–83 period, exacerbating Libya's relations with neighboring states.

Another part of Qadhafi's socialist scheme was the establishment of industries and the improvement of agriculture through irrigation projects. A keystone of the latter was the Great Man-Made River project, underway in 1987, to bring water from oases in the south and southeast to the cities on the Mediterranean. The total estimated cost for the first two stages of the 1,900 kilometer-long pipeline was US$5 billion.

The third element of Libya's program was support for Arab unity. In pursuit of this goal, Qadhafi capitalized on opportunities for union with various Arab states. At different times, such unification attempts included unions with Egypt, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and Morocco. These efforts were designed to strengthen Qadhafi's personal leadership role in as well as Libya's position in African and Middle Eastern politics, and to act as a counterbalance to neighboring states perceived as hostile. For example, when Egypt was viewed as a threat, Qadhafi initiated a 1984 union with Morocco, the only one of his unions that as of early 1988 had achieved a semblance of implementation (1984–86).

Qadhafi also saw himself both as a leader of the Third World and as a key instrument in furthering the spread of Islam, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. To these ends he sought unsuccessfully several times in the early 1980s to be elected chairman of the Organization for African Unity and proposed a Sahelian empire to include Libya and other African states whose populations contained significant percentages of Muslims. Qadhafi used Libya's oil revenues both to spread Islam and to extend Libyan influence in developing countries, especially in Africa, seeing this two-pronged campaign as a means of countering colonialism and Western influences (see Foreign Relations, ch. 4). This policy resulted from Qadhafi's advocacy in *The Green Book* of a stance that supported "neither East nor West," indicating that Libya rejected both communism, with its atheistic ideology, and Western capitalism, with its association with colonialism and "imperialism." This stance led to a strong opposition to the Western powers, particularly the United States, because of the latter's identification with Israel.

Qadhafi's stand against colonialism led him to support dissident or revolutionary movements, particularly Muslim ones, that were fighting against established regimes viewed as reactionary, e.g., the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Moro National Liberation Front in the Philippines. In so doing, he provided weapons, funds, and training as deemed appropriate. Qadhafi has also been charged with training and equipping terrorist groups of various kinds, including Palestinians and the Irish Republican Army, who have launched attacks against Westerners, including

Americans (see International Terrorism and Support for Insurgent Groups, ch. 5). In retaliation for such incidents, specifically the bombing of a Berlin club in which Americans were killed or wounded and in which Libya was implicated, the United States launched air strikes in April 1986 against targets in several Libyan cities. This retaliation appeared to have served as a deterrent to Libyan terrorist activity in that as of early 1988 Libyan-sponsored terrorist incidents had decreased markedly.

Qadhafi's avowed anticommunist stance was pragmatic, however. Although he refused to grant bases to the Soviet Union, he viewed the latter as an excellent source of sophisticated weaponry. He also relied upon the countries of Eastern Europe for military and technical advisers and especially for assistance in the field of internal security. He used severe measures, however, in suppressing domestic communism.

The major source of support for Qadhafi's domestic and foreign programs has always been the army. Recognizing this, Qadhafi took pains to see that military salaries and perquisites were generous and that the armed forces were equipped with the latest military arms and technology. His purchases of weaponry, particularly from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, were of such magnitude that Libya was unable to deploy all its equipment (see Foreign Military Assistance, ch. 5). Qadhafi also took precautions against potential coups directed at him that might originate in the military by using East European security personnel to protect himself and by frequently rotating individuals in key military positions.

In 1988 Qadhafi had had one of the longest tenures of office of any African leader. But, in the course of his rule, opposition elements within and outside Libya had increased. Internal opposition resulted partly from Qadhafi's socialist measures, which had confiscated property belonging to wealthy citizens, partly from his increasingly authoritarian style of rule, such as his imperious suppression of opposition among university students, and partly from Qadhafi's military ventures abroad. In the mid- and latter 1980s, Qadhafi's campaign against internal opposition elements had become increasingly harsh, leading to the assassination of various individuals in exile abroad as well as actual or potential dissidents within Libya. Qadhafi's involvement in the ongoing war with Chad and his support of rebel forces in Sudan also contributed to reported rising discontent within the army.

In the realm of external opposition, Qadhafi's relations with the moderate Arab states, such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Persian Gulf states, were strained at best. He was also frequently at odds with his North African neighbors, whom he had antagonized by supporting opposition elements or by direct military action. Despite these sources of domestic and foreign opposition, foreign observers doubted that Qadhafi would be ousted from his pivotal position in the Libyan Jamahiriya, short of a successful military coup.

February 3, 1988 Helen Chapin Metz

Chapter 1. Historical Setting

An arch from Leptis Magna, built by the Romans in the early third century A.D.

UNTIL LIBYA ACHIEVED independence in 1951, its history was essentially that of tribes, regions, and cities, and of the empires of which it was a part. Derived from the name by which a single Berber tribe was known to the ancient Egyptians, the name *Libya* was subsequently applied by the Greeks to most of North Africa and the term *Libyan* to all of its Berber inhabitants. Although ancient in origin, these names were not used to designate the specific territory of modern Libya and its people until the twentieth century, nor indeed was the whole area formed into a coherent political unit until then. Hence, despite the long and distinct histories of its regions, modern Libya must be viewed as a new country still developing national consciousness and institutions.

Geography was the principal determinant in the separate historical development of Libya's three traditional regions—Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and Fezzan. Cut off from each other by formidable deserts, each retained its separate identity into the 1960s. At the heart of Tripolitania was its metropolis, Tripoli, for centuries a terminal for caravans plying the Saharan trade routes and a port sheltering pirates and slave traders. Tripolitania's cultural ties were with the Maghrib (see Glossary), of which it was a part geographically and culturally and with which it shared a common history. Tripolitanians developed their political consciousness in reaction to foreign domination, and it was from Tripolitania that the strongest impulses came for the unification of modern Libya.

In contrast to Tripolitania, Cyrenaica historically was oriented toward Egypt and the Mashriq (see Glossary). With the exception of some of its coastal towns, Cyrenaica was left relatively untouched by the political influence of the regimes that claimed it but were unable to assert their authority in the hinterland. An element of internal unity was brought to the region's tribal society in the nineteenth century by a Muslim religious order, the Sanusi, and many Cyrenaicans demonstrated a determination to retain their regional autonomy even after Libyan independence and unification.

Fezzan was less involved with either the Maghrib or the Mashriq. Its nomads traditionally looked for leadership to tribal dynasties that controlled the oases astride the desert trade routes. Throughout its history, Fezzan maintained close relations with sub-Saharan Africa as well as with the coast.

The most significant milestones in Libya's history were the introduction of Islam and the Arabization of the country in the Middle

Ages, and, within the last two generations, national independence, the discovery of petroleum, and the September 1969 Revolution that brought Muammar al Qadhafi to power. The era since 1969 has brought many important changes. The Qadhafi regime has made the first real attempt to unify Libya's diverse peoples and to create a distinct Libyan state and identity. It has created new political structures and made a determined effort at diversified economic development financed by oil revenues. The regime has also aspired to leadership in Arab and world affairs. As a consequence of these developments, Libyan society has been subjected to a significant degree of government direction and supervision, much of it at the behest of Qadhafi himself. Although the merits of the regime and its policies were much debated by Libyans and foreigners alike, there was no question that Libya in the 1980s was a significantly different country from the one it had been only two or three decades earlier.

Early History

Archaeological evidence indicates that from at least the eighth millennium B.C. Libya's coastal plain shared in a Neolithic culture, skilled in the domestication of cattle and cultivation of crops, that was common to the whole Mediterranean littoral. To the south, in what is now the Sahara Desert, nomadic hunters and herders roamed a vast, well-watered savanna that abounded in game and provided pastures for their stock. Their culture flourished until the region began to desiccate after 2000 B.C. Scattering before the encroaching desert and invading horsemen, the savanna people migrated into the Sudan (see Glossary) or were absorbed by the Berbers.

The origin of the Berbers is a mystery, the investigation of which has produced an abundance of educated speculation but no solution. Archaeological and linguistic evidence strongly suggests southwestern Asia as the point from which the ancestors of the Berbers may have begun their migration into North Africa early in the third millennium B.C. Over the succeeding centuries they extended their range from Egypt to the Niger Basin. Caucasians of predominantly Mediterranean stock, the Berbers present a broad range of physical types and speak a variety of mutually unintelligible dialects that belong to the Afro-Asiatic language family. They never developed a sense of nationhood and have historically identified themselves in terms of their tribe, clan, and family. Collectively, Berbers refer to themselves simply as *imazighan*, to which has been attributed the meaning ''free men.''

Inscriptions found in Egypt dating from the Old Kingdom (ca. 2700–2200 B.C.) are the earliest known recorded testimony of the

Berber migration and also the earliest written documentation of Libyan history. At least as early as this period, troublesome Berber tribes, one of which was identified in Egyptian records as the Levu (or ''Libyans''), were raiding eastward as far as the Nile Delta and attempting to settle there. During the Middle Kingdom (ca. 2200–1700 B.C.) the Egyptian pharaohs succeeded in imposing their overlordship on these eastern Berbers and exacted tribute from them. Many Berbers served in the army of the pharaohs, and some rose to positions of importance in the Egyptian state. One such Berber officer seized control of Egypt in about 950 B.C. and, as Shishonk I, ruled as pharaoh. His successors of the twenty-second and twenty-third dynasties—the so-called Libyan dynasties (ca. 945–730 B.C.)—are also believed to have been Berbers.

Tripolitania and the Phoenicians

Enterprising Phoenician traders were active throughout the Mediterranean area before the twelfth century B.C. The depots that they set up at safe harbors on the African coast to service, supply, and shelter their ships were the links in a maritime chain reaching from the Levant to Spain. Many North African cities and towns originated as Phoenician trading posts, where the merchants of Tyre (in present-day Lebanon) eventually developed commercial relations with the Berber tribes and made treaties with them to ensure their cooperation in the exploitation of raw materials. By the fifth century B.C., Carthage, the greatest of the overseas Phoenician colonies, had extended its hegemony across much of North Africa, where a distinctive civilization, known as Punic, came into being. Punic settlements on the Libyan coast included Oea (Tripoli), Labdah (later Leptis Magna), and Sabratah, in an area that came to be known collectively as Tripolis, or ''Three Cities'' (see fig. 2).

Governed by a mercantile oligarchy, Carthage and its dependencies cultivated good relations with the Berber tribes in the hinterland, but the city-state was essentially a maritime power whose expansion along the western Mediterranean coast drew it into a confrontation with Rome in the third century B.C. Defeated in the long Punic Wars (264–241 and 218–201 B.C.), Carthage was reduced by Rome to the status of a small and vulnerable African state at the mercy of the Berbers. Fear of a Carthaginian revival, however, led Rome to renew the war, and Carthage was destroyed in 146 B.C. Tripolitania was assigned to Rome's ally, the Berber king of Numidia. A century later, Julius Caesar deposed the reigning Numidian king, who had sided with Pompey (Roman general and statesman, rival of Julius Caesar) in the Roman civil wars, and annexed his extensive territory to Rome, organizing Tripolitania as a Roman province.

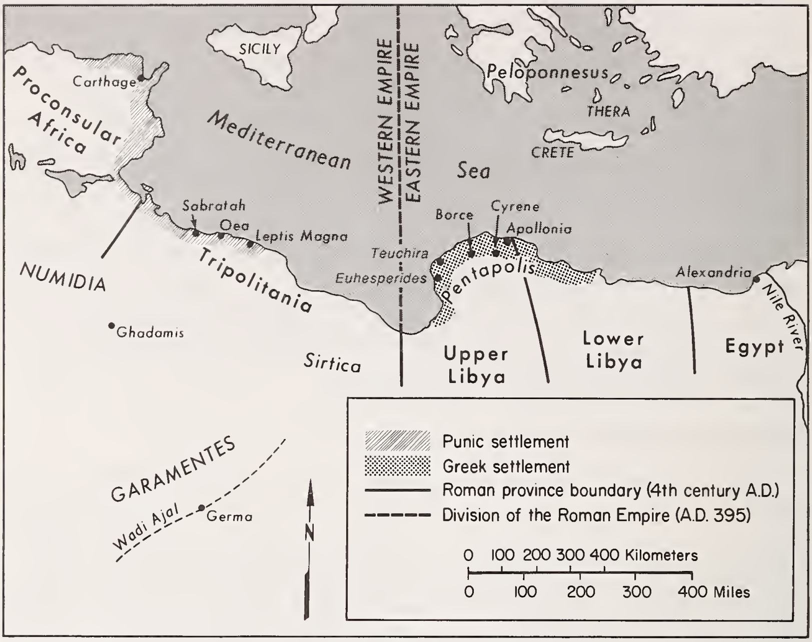

Proconsular Africa
Carthage
SICILY
Mediterranean
WESTERN EMPIRE
EASTERN EMPIRE
Peloponnesus
THERA
CRETE
Sea
Sabratah
Oea
Leptis Magna
Borce
Cyrene
Apollonia
Teuchira
Euhesperides
Pentapolis
Alexandria
Nile River
NUMIDIA
Tripolitania
Ghadamis
Sirtica
Upper Libya
Lower Libya
Egypt
GARAMENTES
Wadi Ajal
Germa
N
Punic settlement
Greek settlement
Roman province boundary (4th century A.D.)
Division of the Roman Empire (A.D. 395)
0 100 200 300 400 Kilometers
0 100 200 300 400 Miles

Figure 2. Libya in Antiquity

The influence of Punic civilization on North Africa remained deep-seated. The Berbers displayed a remarkable gift for cultural assimilation, readily synthesizing Punic cults with their folk religion. The Punic language was still spoken in the towns of Tripolitania and by Berber farmers in the coastal countryside in the late Roman period.

Cyrenaica and the Greeks

Like the Phoenicians, Minoan and Greek seafarers had for centuries probed the North African coast, which at the nearest point lay 300 kilometers from Crete, but systematic Greek settlement there began only in the seventh century B.C. during the great age of Hellenic overseas colonization. According to tradition, emigrants from the crowded island of Thera were commanded by the oracle at Delphi to seek a new home in North Africa, where in 631 B.C. they founded the city of Cyrene. The site to which Berber guides had led them was in a fertile highland region about twenty kilometers inland from the sea at a place where, according to the Berbers, a "hole in the heavens" would provide ample rainfall for the colony.

Within 200 years of Cyrene's founding, four more important Greek cities were established in the area: Barce (Al Marj); Euhesperides (later Berenice, present-day Benghazi); Teuchira (later Arsinoe, present-day Tukrah); and Apollonia (Susah), the port of Cyrene. Together with Cyrene, they were known as the Pentapolis (Five Cities). Often in competition, they found cooperation difficult even when confronted by common enemies. From Cyrene, the mother city and foremost of the five, derived the name of Cyrenaica for the whole region.

The Greeks of the Pentapolis resisted encroachments by the Egyptians from the east as well as by the Carthaginians from the west, but in 525 B.C. the army of Cambyses (son of Cyrus the Great, King of Persia), fresh from the conquest of Egypt, overran Cyrenaica, which for the next two centuries remained under Persian or Egyptian rule. Alexander the Great was greeted by the Greeks when he entered Cyrenaica in 331 B.C. When Alexander died in 323 B.C., his empire was divided among his Macedonian generals. Egypt, with Cyrene, went to Ptolemy, a general under Alexander who took over his African and Syrian possessions; the other Greek city-states of the Pentapolis retained their autonomy. However, the inability of the city-states to maintain stable governments led the Ptolemies to impose workable constitutions on them. Later, a federation of the Pentapolis was formed that was customarily ruled by a king drawn from the Ptolemaic royal house. Ptolemy Apion, the last Greek ruler, bequeathed Cyrenaica to Rome, which formally annexed the region in 74 B.C. and joined it to Crete as a Roman province.

The economic and cultural development of the Pentapolis was unaffected by the turmoil its political life generated. The region grew rich from grain, wine, wool, and stockbreeding and from silphium, an herb that grew only in Cyrenaica and was regarded as an aphrodisiac. Cyrene became one of the greatest intellectual and artistic centers of the Greek world, famous for its medical school, learned academies, and architecture, which included some of the finest examples of the Hellenistic style. The Cyrenaics, a school of thinkers who expounded a doctrine of moral cheerfulness that defined happiness as the sum of human pleasures, also made their home there and took inspiration from the city's pleasant climate.

Fezzan and the Garamentes

Throughout the period of Punic and Greek colonization of the coastal plain, the area known as Fezzan was dominated by the Garamentes, a tribal people who entered the region sometime before 1000 B.C. In the desert they established a powerful kingdom astride the trade route between the western Sudan and the Mediterranean coast. The Garamentes left numerous inscriptions in *tifinagh*, the ancient Berber form of writing still used by the Tuareg. Beyond these and the observations of Herodotus and other classical writers on their customs and dealings with the coastal settlements, little was known of this extraordinary and mysterious people until the advent of modern archaeological methods.

The Garamentes' political power was limited to a chain of oases about 400 kilometers long in the Wadi Ajal, but from their capital at Germa they controlled the desert caravan trade from Ghadamis south to the Niger River, eastward to Egypt, and west to Mauretania (see Glossary). The Carthaginians employed them as carriers of goods—gold and ivory purchased in exchange for salt—from the western Sudan to their depots on the Mediterranean coast. The Garamentes were also noted as horsebreeders and herders of long-horned cattle. They succeeded in irrigating portions of their arid lands for cultivation by using *foggares*, vast underground networks of stone-lined water channels. Their wealth and technical skill are also attested to by the remains of their towns, which were built of stone, and more than 50,000 of their pyramidal tombs. Rome sent several punitive expeditions against the Garamentes before concluding a lasting commercial and military alliance with them late in the first century A.D.

Libya and the Romans

For more than 400 years, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were prosperous Roman provinces and part of a cosmopolitan state whose citizens shared a common language, legal system, and Roman identity. Roman ruins like those of Leptis Magna, extant in present-day Libya, attest to the vitality of the region, where populous cities and even smaller towns enjoyed the amenities of urban life—the forum, markets, public entertainments, and baths—found in every corner of the Roman Empire. Merchants and artisans from many parts of the Roman world established themselves in North Africa, but the character of the cities of Tripolitania remained decidedly Punic and, in Cyrenaica, Greek. Tripolitania was a major exporter of olive oil, as well as being the entrepôt for the gold and slaves conveyed to the coast by the Garamentes, while Cyrenaica remained an important source of wines, drugs, and horses. The bulk of the population in the countryside consisted of Berber farmers, who in the west were thoroughly ''Punicized'' in language and customs.

Although the African provinces profited as much as any part of the empire from the imposition of the Pax Romana, the region was not without strife and threat of war. Only near the end of the first century A.D. did the army complete the pacification of the Sirtica, a desert refuge for the barbarian tribes that had impeded overland communications between Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. But for more than two centuries thereafter commerce flowed safely between markets and ports along a well-maintained road system and sea lanes policed by Roman forces who also guaranteed the security of settled areas against incursions by desert nomads. The vast territory was defended by one locally recruited legion (5,500 men) in Cyrenaica and the elements of another in Tripolitania, reinforced by tribal auxiliaries on the frontier. Although expeditions penetrated deep into Fezzan, in general Rome sought to control only those areas in the African provinces that were economically useful or could be garrisoned with the manpower available.

Under the Ptolemies, Cyrenaica had become the home of a large Jewish community, whose numbers were substantially increased by tens of thousands of Jews deported there after the failure of the rebellion against Roman rule in Palestine and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Some of the refugees made their way into the desert, where they became nomads and nurtured their fierce hatred of Rome. They converted to Judaism many of the Berbers with whom they mingled, and in some cases whole tribes were identified as Jewish. In 115 the Jews raised a major revolt in Cyrenaica that quickly spread through Egypt back to Palestine. The uprising was put down by 118, but only after Jewish insurgents had laid waste to Cyrenaica and sacked the city of Cyrene. Contemporary observers counted the loss of life during those years at more than 200,000, and at least a century was required to restore Cyrenaica to the order and prosperity that had meanwhile prevailed in Tripolitania.

As part of his reorganization of the empire in 300, the Emperor Diocletian separated the administration of Crete from Cyrenaica and in the latter formed the new provinces of Upper Libya and Lower Libya, using the term *Libya* for the first time as an administrative designation. With the definitive partition of the empire in 395, the Libyans were assigned to the eastern empire; Tripolitania was attached to the western empire.

By the beginning of the second century, Christianity had been introduced among the Jewish community, and it soon gained converts in the towns and among slaves. Rome's African provinces were thoroughly Christianized by the end of the fourth century, and inroads had been made as well among the Berber tribes in the hinterland. From an early date, however, the churches in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica developed distinct characteristics that reflected their differing cultural orientations. The former came under the jurisdiction of the Latin patriarch, the bishop of Rome, and the latter under that of the Coptic (Egyptian) patriarch of Alexandria. In both areas, religious dissent became a vehicle for social revolt at a time of political deterioration and economic depression.

Invited to North Africa by a rebellious Roman official, the Vandals, a Germanic tribe, crossed from Spain in 429. They seized power and, under their leader, Gaiseric, established a kingdom that made its capital at Carthage. Although the Roman Empire eventually recognized their overlordship in much of North Africa, including Tripolitania, the Vandals confined their rule to the most economically profitable areas. There they constituted an isolated warrior caste, concerned with collecting taxes and exploiting the land but leaving civil administration in Roman hands. From their African base they conquered Sardinia and Corsica and launched raids on Italy, sacking the city of Rome in 455. In time, however, the Vandals lost much of their warlike spirit, and their kingdom fell to the armies of Belisarius, the Byzantine general who in 533 began the reconquest of North Africa for the Roman Empire.

Effective Byzantine control in Tripolitania was restricted to the coast, and even there the newly walled towns, strongholds, fortified farms, and watchtowers called attention to its tenuous nature. The region's prosperity had shrunk under Vandal domination, and the old Roman political and social order, disrupted by the Vandals, could not be restored. In outlying areas neglected by the Vandals, the inhabitants had sought the protection of tribal chieftains and, having grown accustomed to their autonomy, resisted reassimilation into the imperial system. Cyrenaica, which had remained an outpost of the Byzantine Empire during the Vandal period, also took on the characteristics of an armed camp. Unpopular Byzantine governors imposed burdensome taxation to meet military costs, but towns and public services—including the water system—were left to decay. Byzantine rule in Africa did prolong the Roman ideal of imperial unity there for another century and a half, however, and prevented the ascendancy of the Berber nomads in the coastal region.

Islam and the Arabs

By the time of his death in A.D. 632, the Prophet Muhammad and his followers had brought most of the tribes and towns of the Arabian Peninsula under the banner of the new monotheistic religion of Islam (literally, ''submission''), which was conceived of as uniting the individual believer and society under the omnipotent will of Allah (God). Islamic rulers therefore exercised both temporal and religious authority. Adherents of Islam, called

A view of the ancient ruins at Germa in the Fezzan
Courtesy Keith Daber

Muslims ("those who submit" to the will of God), collectively formed the House of Islam (Dar al Islam).

Within a generation, Arab armies had carried Islam north and east from Arabia and westward into North Africa. In 642 Amr ibn al As, an Arab general under Caliph Umar I, conquered Cyrenaica, establishing his headquarters at Barce. Two years later, he moved into Tripolitania, where, by the end of the decade, the isolated Byzantine garrisons on the coast were overrun and Arab control of the region consolidated. Uqba ibn Nafi, an Arab general under the ruling caliph, invaded Fezzan in 663, forcing the capitulation of Germa. Stiff Berber resistance in Tripolitania had slowed the Arab advance to the west, however, and efforts at permanent conquest were resumed only when it became apparent that the Maghrib (see Glossary) could be opened up as a theater of operations in the Muslim campaign against the Byzantine Empire. In 670 the Arabs surged into the Roman province of Africa (transliterated *Ifriqiya* in Arabic; present-day Tunisia), where Uqba founded the city of Kairouan (present-day Al Qayrawan) as a military base for an assault on Byzantine-held Carthage. Twice the Berber tribes compelled them to retreat into Tripolitania, but each time the Arabs, employing recently converted Berber tribesmen recruited in Tripolitania, returned in greater force, and in 693 they took Carthage. The Arabs cautiously probed the western Maghrib and in 710 invaded Morocco, carrying their conquests to the Atlantic.

In 712 they mounted an invasion of Spain and in three years had subdued all but the mountainous regions in the extreme north. Muslim Spain (called Andalusia), the Maghrib (including Tripolitania), and Cyrenaica were systematically organized under the political and religious leadership of the Umayyad caliph of Damascus.

Arab rule in North Africa—as elsewhere in the Islamic world in the eighth century—had as its ideal the establishment of political and religious unity under a caliphate (the office of the Prophet's successor as supreme earthly leader of Islam) governed in accord with sharia (a legal system) administered by qadis (religious judges) to which all other considerations, including tribal loyalties, were subordinated. The sharia was based primarily on the Quran and the hadith (see Glossary) and derived in part from Arab tribal and market law.

Arab rule was easily imposed in the coastal farming areas and on the towns, which prospered again under Arab patronage. Townsmen valued the security that permitted them to practice their commerce and trade in peace, while the Punicized farmers recognized their affinity with the Semitic Arabs to whom they looked to protect their lands; in Cyrenaica, Monophysite adherents of the Coptic Church had welcomed the Muslim Arabs as liberators from Byzantine oppression. Communal and representative Berber tribal institutions, however, contrasted sharply and frequently clashed with the personal and authoritarian government that the Arabs had adopted under Byzantine influence. While the Arabs abhorred the tribal Berbers as barbarians, the Berbers in the hinterland often saw the Arabs only as an arrogant and brutal soldiery bent on collecting taxes.

The Arabs formed an urban elite in North Africa, where they had come as conquerors and missionaries, not as colonists. Their armies had traveled without women and married among the indigenous population, transmitting Arab culture and Islamic religion over a period of time to the townspeople and farmers. Although the nomadic tribes of the hinterland had stoutly resisted Arab political domination, they rapidly accepted Islam. Once established as Muslims, however, the Berbers, with their characteristic love of independence and impassioned religious temperament, shaped Islam in their own image, enthusiastically embracing schismatic Muslim sects—often traditional folk religion barely distinguished as Islam—as a way of breaking from Arab control.

One such sect, the Kharijites (seceders; literally, "those who emerge from impropriety") surfaced in North Africa in the mid-eighth century, proclaiming its belief that any suitable Muslim candidate could be elected caliph without regard to his race, station, or descent from the Prophet. The attack on the Arab monopoly of the religious leadership of Islam was explicit in Kharijite doctrine, and Berbers across the Maghrib rose in revolt in the name of religion against Arab domination. The rise of the Kharijites coincided with a period of turmoil in the Arab world during which the Abbasid dynasty overthrew the Umayyads and relocated the caliphate in Baghdad. In the wake of the revolt, Kharijite sectarians established a number of theocratic tribal kingdoms, most of which had short and troubled histories. One such kingdom, however, founded by the Bani Khattab, succeeded in putting down roots in remote Fezzan, where the capital, Zawilah, developed into an important oasis trading center.

After the Arab conquest, North Africa was governed by a succession of amirs (commanders) who were subordinate to the caliph in Damascus and, after 750, in Baghdad. In 800 the Abbasid caliph Harun ar Rashid appointed as amir Ibrahim ibn Aghlab, who established a hereditary dynasty at Kairouan that ruled Ifriqiya and Tripolitania as an autonomous state that was subject to the caliph's spiritual jurisdiction and that nominally recognized him as its political suzerain. The Aghlabid amirs repaired the neglected Roman irrigation system, rebuilding the region's prosperity and restoring the vitality of its cities and towns with the agricultural surplus that was produced. At the top of the political and social hierarchy were the bureaucracy, the military caste, and an Arab urban elite that included merchants, scholars, and government officials who had come to Kairouan, Tunis, and Tripoli from many parts of the Islamic world. Members of the large Jewish communities that also resided in those cities held office under the amirs and engaged in commerce and the crafts. Converts to Islam often retained the positions of authority held traditionally by their families or class in Roman Africa, but a dwindling, Latin-speaking, Christian community lingered on in the towns until the eleventh century. The Aghlabids contested control of the central Mediterranean with the Byzantine Empire and, after conquering Sicily, played an active role in the internal politics of Italy.

Fatimids

By the seventh century, a conflict had developed between supporters of rival claimants to the caliphate that would split Islam into two branches—the orthodox Sunni and the Shia—which continued thereafter as the basic division among Muslims. The Shias (from *Shiat Ali*, or Party of Ali) supported the claims of the direct descendants of Ali, the fourth caliph and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, whereas the Sunnis favored that of Ali's rival, the leader of a collateral branch of Muhammad's tribe, and the principle of election of the fittest from the ranks of the *shurfa* (see Glossary). The Shias had their greatest appeal among non-Arab Muslims, who, like the Berbers, were scorned by the aristocratic desert Arabs.

In the last decade of the ninth century, missionaries of the Ismaili sect of Shia Islam converted the Kutama Berbers of the Kabylie region to the militant brand of Shia Islam and led them on a crusade against the Sunni Aghlabids. Kairouan fell in 909, and the next year the Kutama installed the Ismaili grandmaster from Syria, Ubaidalla Said, as imam (see Glossary) of their movement and ruler over the territory they had conquered, which included Tripolitania. Recognized by his Berber followers as the Mahdi (''the divinely guided one''—see Glossary), the imam founded the Shia dynasty of the Fatimids, named for Fatima, daughter of Muhammad and wife of Ali, from whom the imam claimed descent.

Merchants of the coastal towns were the backbone of the Fatimid state that was founded by religious enthusiasts and imposed by Berber tribesmen. The slow but steady economic revival of Europe created a demand for goods from the East for which Fatimid ports in North Africa and Sicily were ideal distribution centers. Tripoli thrived on the trade in slaves and gold brought from the Sudan and on the sale of wool, leather, and salt shipped from its docks to Italy in exchange for wood and iron goods.

For many years the Fatimids threatened Morocco with invasion, but they eventually turned their armies eastward, where in the name of religion the Berbers took their revenge on the Arabs. By 969 the Fatimids had completed the conquest of Egypt and moved their capital to the new city that they founded at Cairo, where they established a Shia caliphate to rival that of the Sunni caliph at Baghdad. They left the Maghrib to their Berber vassals, the Zirids, but the Shia regime had already begun to crumble in Tripolitania as factions struggled indecisively for regional supremacy. The Zirids neglected the economy, except to pillage it for their personal gain. Agricultural production declined, and farmers and herdsmen became brigands. Shifting patterns of trade gradually depressed the once-thriving commerce of the towns. In an effort to hold the support of the urban Arabs, in 1049 the Zirid amir defiantly rejected the Shia creed, broke with the Fatimids, and initiated a Berber return to Sunni orthodoxy.

Hilalians

In Cairo the Fatimid caliph reacted by inviting the Bani Hilal and Bani Salim, beduin tribes from Arabia known collectively as the Hilalians, to migrate to the Maghrib and punish his rebellious vassals, the Zirids. The Arab nomads spread across the region, in the words of the historian Ibn Khaldun, like a "swarm of locusts," impoverishing it, destroying towns, and dramatically altering the face and culture of the countryside.

The Hilalian impact on Cyrenaica and Tripolitania was devastating in both economic and demographic terms. Tripoli was sacked, and what little remained of urban life in once-great cities like Cyrene was snuffed out, leaving only ruins. Over a long period of time, Arabs displaced Berbers (many of whom joined the Hilalians) from their traditional lands and converted farmland to pasturage. Land was neglected, and the steppe was allowed to intrude into the coastal plain.

The number of Hilalians who moved westward out of Egypt has been estimated as high as 200,000 families. The Bani Salim seem to have stopped in Libya, while the Bani Hilal continued across the Maghrib until they reached the Atlantic coast of Morocco and completed the Arabization of the region, imposing their social organization, values, and language on it. The process was particularly thorough in Cyrenaica, which is said to be more Arab than any place in the Arab world except for the interior of Arabia.

The Norman rulers of southern Italy took advantage of the Zirids' distress in North Africa to invade Sicily in 1060 and bring it back under Christian control. By 1150 the Normans held a string of ports and fortresses along the coast between Tunis and Tripoli, but their interests in North Africa were commercial rather than political, and no effort was made to extend the conquest inland.

Hafsids

The eleventh and twelfth centuries witnessed the rise in Morocco of two rival Berber tribal dynasties—the Almoravids and the Almohads, both founded by religious reformers—that dominated the Maghrib and Muslim Spain for more than two hundred years. The founder of the Almohad (literally, "one who proclaims" the oneness of God) movement was a member of the Sunni ulama (see Glossary), Ibn Tumart (d. 1130), who preached a doctrine of moral regeneration through reaffirmation of monotheism. As judge and political leader as well as spiritual director, Ibn Tumart gave the Almohads a hierarchical and theocratic centralized government, respecting but transcending the old tribal structure. His successor, the sultan Abdal Mumin (reigned 1130–63), subdued Morocco, extended the Muslim frontier in Spain, and by 1160 had swept eastward across the Maghrib and forced the withdrawal of the Normans from their strongholds in Ifriqiya and Tripolitania, which were added to the Almohad empire.

Mumin proclaimed an Almohad caliphate at Cordova, giving the sultan supreme religious as well as political authority within his domains, but theology gradually gave way to dynastic politics as the motivating force behind the movement. The Almohads had succeeded in unifying the Maghrib but, as its empire grew and the Almohad power base shifted to Spain, the dynasty became more remote from the Berber tribes that had launched it. By 1270 the Almohads in Morocco had succumbed to tribal warfare and in Spain to the steady advance of the Kingdom of Castile.

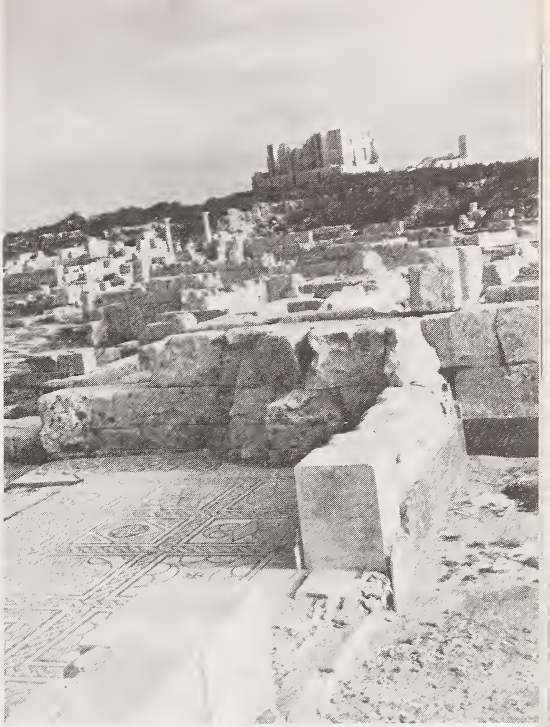
At the eastern end of the Almohad empire, the sultan left an autonomous viceroy whose office became hereditary in the line of Muhammad ibn Abu Hafs (reigned 1207–21), a descendant of one of Ibn Tumart's companions. With the demise of the Almohad dynasty in Morocco, the Hafsids adopted the titles of caliph and sultan and considered themselves the Almohads' legitimate successors, keeping alive the memory of Ibn Tumart and the ideal of Maghribi unity from their capital in Tunis.

The Hafsids' political support and their realm's economy were rooted in coastal towns like Tripoli, while the hinterland was given up to the tribes that had made their nominal submission to the sultan. The Hafsids encouraged trade with Europe and forged close links with Aragon and the Italian maritime states. Despite these commercial ties, Hafsid relations with the European powers eventually deteriorated when the latter intrigued in the dynasty's increasingly troubled and complex internal politics. Theocratic republics, tribal states, and coastal enclaves seized by pirate captains defied the sultan's authority, and in 1460 Tripoli was declared an independent city-state by its merchant oligarchy.

During the Hafsid era, spanning more than 300 years, however, the Maghrib and Muslim Spain had shared a common higher culture—called Moorish—that transcended the rise and fall of dynasties in creating new and unique forms of art, literature, and architecture. Its influence spread from Spain as far as Tripolitania, where Hafsid patronage had encouraged a flowering Arab creativity and scholarship.

Medieval Cyrenaica and Fezzan

Cyrenaica lay outside the orbit of the Maghribi dynasties, its orientation on Egypt. From the time when Saladin displaced the Fatimids in 1171 until the Ottoman occupation in 1517, Egypt was ruled by a succession of Mamluk (caste of "slave-soldiers," in Egypt often Kurds, Circassians, or Turks) dynasties that claimed suzerainty over Cyrenaica but exercised little more than nominal political control there. The beduin tribes of Baraqah, as Cyrenaica was



Part of an excavated Roman city at Sabratah, near Tripoli
Courtesy United Nations

known to the Arabs, willingly accepted no authority other than that of their own chieftains. In the fifteenth century, merchants from Tripoli revived the markets in some towns, but Cyrenaica's main source of income was from the pilgrims and caravans traveling between the Maghrib and Egypt, who purchased protection from the beduins.

Turbulent chieftains of the Bani Khattab dominated Fezzan. Their importance, like that of the Garamentes, derived from their control of the oases on the trade route over which caravans carried gold, ivory, and slaves from the western Sudan to markets on the Mediterranean. In the thirteenth century the king of Bornu, a Muslim state in the Lake Chad Basin, invaded Fezzan from the south and established a client regime that for a time commanded the trade route. Fezzan was always a target for adventurers, one of whom, the Moroccan Muhammad al Fazi, displaced the last of the Bani Khattab early in the sixteenth century and founded a line at Marzuq that remained as undisputed rulers of the region under Ottoman suzerainty.

Ottoman Regency

Throughout the sixteenth century, Hapsburg Spain and the Ottoman Turks were pitted in a struggle for supremacy in the Mediterranean. Spanish forces had already occupied a number of other North African ports when in 1510 they captured Tripoli, destroyed the city, and constructed a fortified naval base from the rubble. Tripoli was of only marginal importance to Spain, however, and in 1524 the king-emperor Charles V entrusted its defense to the Knights of St. John of Malta.

Piracy, which for both Christians and Muslims was a dimension of the conflict between the opposing powers, lured adventurers from around the Mediterranean to the Maghribi coastal towns and islands. Among them was Khair ad Din, called Barbarossa, who in 1510 seized Algiers on the pretext of defending it from the Spaniards. Barbarossa subsequently recognized the suzerainty of the Ottoman sultan over the territory that he controlled and was in turn appointed the sultan's regent in the Maghrib. Using Algiers as their base, Barbarossa and his successors consolidated Ottoman authority in the central Maghrib, extended it to Tunisia and Tripolitania, and threatened Morocco. In 1551 the knights were driven out of Tripoli by the Turkish admiral, Sinan Pasha. In the next year Draughut Pasha, a Turkish pirate captain named governor by the sultan, restored order in the coastal towns and undertook the pacification of the Arab nomads in Tripolitania, although he admitted the difficulty of subduing a people ''who carry their cities with them.'' Only in the 1580s did the rulers of Fezzan give their allegiance to the sultan, but the Turks refrained from trying to exercise any influence there. Ottoman authority was also absent in Cyrenaica, although a bey (commander) was stationed at Benghazi late in the next century to act as agent of the government in Tripoli.

Pashas and Deys

The Ottoman Maghrib was formally divided into three regencies—at Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. After 1565 authority as regent in Tripoli was vested in a pasha (see Glossary) appointed by the sultan. The regency was provided a corps of janissaries (see Glossary), recruited from Turkish peasants who were committed to a lifetime of military service. The corps was organized into companies, each commanded by a junior officer with the rank of dey (literally, ''maternal uncle''). It formed a self-governing military guild, subject to its own laws, whose interests were protected by the Divan, a council of senior officers that also advised the pasha. In time the pasha's role was reduced to that of ceremonial head of state and figurehead representative of Ottoman suzerainty, as real power came to rest with the army.

Mutinies and coups were frequent, and generally the janissaries were loyal to whoever paid and fed them most regularly. In 1611 the deys staged a successful coup, forcing the pasha to appoint their leader, Suleiman Safar, as head of government—in which capacity he and his successors continued to bear the title *dey*. At various times the dey was also pasha-regent. His succession to office occurred generally amid intrigue and violence. The regency that he governed was autonomous in internal affairs and, although dependent on the sultan for fresh recruits to the corps of janissaries, his government was left to pursue a virtually independent foreign policy as well.

Tripoli, which had 30,000 inhabitants at the end of the seventeenth century, was the only city of any size in the regency. The bulk of its residents were Moors, as city-dwelling Arabs were known. Several hundred Turks and renegades formed a governing elite apart from the rest of the population. A larger component was the *khouloughlis* (literally, "sons of servants"), offspring of Turkish soldiers and Arab women who traditionally held high administrative posts and provided officers for the *spahis*, the provincial cavalry units that augmented the corps of janissaries. They identified themselves with local interests and were, in contrast to the Turks, respected by the Arabs. Regarded as a distinct caste, the *khouloughlis* lived in their *menshia*, a lush oasis located just outside the walls of the city. Jews and *moriscos*, descendants of Muslims expelled from Spain in the sixteenth century, were active as merchants and craftsmen, some of the *moriscos* also achieving notoriety as pirates. A small community of European traders clustered around the compounds of the foreign consuls, whose principal task was to sue for the release of captives brought to Tripoli by the corsairs. European slaves and larger numbers of enslaved blacks transported from the Sudan were a ubiquitous feature of the life of the city.

Karamanlis

Lacking direction from the Porte (Ottoman government), Tripoli lapsed into a period of military anarchy during which coup followed coup and few deys survived in office more than a year. In 1711 Ahmad Karamanli, a popular *khouloughli* cavalry officer, seized Tripoli and then purchased his confirmation by the sultan as pasha-regent with property confiscated from Turkish officials he had massacred during the coup. Although he continued to recognize nominal Ottoman suzerainty, Ahmad (reigned 1711–45) created an independent hereditary monarchy in Tripoli with a government that was essentially Arab in its composition. Intelligent and resourceful as well as ruthless, he increased his revenues from piracy, pursued an active foreign policy with European powers, used a loyal military establishment to win the allegiance of the tribes, and extended his authority into Cyrenaica.

The Karamanli regime, however, declined under Ahmad's successors. Then in 1793, a Turkish officer, Ali Benghul, overthrew the Karamanlis and restored Tripoli to Ottoman rule. With the aid of the bey of Tunis, Yusuf ibn Ali Karamanli (reigned 1795–1832) returned to Tripoli and installed himself as pasha. A throwback to the founder of the dynasty, he tamed the tribes and defied both the Porte and British naval power to assist Napoleon Bonaparte during his Egyptian campaign in 1799.

The effectiveness of Tripoli's corsairs had long since deteriorated, but their reputation alone was enough to prompt European maritime states to pay the tribute extorted by the pasha to ensure safe passage of their shipping through Tripolitanian waters. American merchant ships, no longer covered by British protection, were seized by Barbary pirates in the years after United States independence, and American crews were enslaved. In 1799 the United States agreed to pay Yusuf US$18,000 a year in return for a promise that Tripoli-based corsairs would not molest American ships. Similar agreements were made at the time with the rulers of Morocco, Algiers, and Tunis.

In the years immediately after the Napoleonic wars, which ended in 1815, the European powers forced an end to piracy and the payment of tribute in the Barbary states. Deprived of the basis of its economy, Tripoli was unable to pay for basic imports or to service its foreign debt. When France and Britain pressed for payment of debts on behalf of Tripoli's creditors, the Divan authorized extraordinary taxes to provide the needed revenue. The imposition of the taxes provoked an outcry in the towns and among the tribes that quickly degenerated into civil war. With the allegiance of the country split among rival claimants to the throne, Yusuf abdicated in favor of his son, Ali II (reigned 1832–35). In response to Ali's appeal for assistance and out of fear of the European takeover in Tripoli, the Ottoman Sultan Muhammad II sent Turkish troops, ostensibly to put down the numerous rebellions against the pasha and to restore order. But Ali was packed aboard a Turkish warship, which carried him into exile, while the sultan's troops reinstated Ottoman rule in Tripoli.

The Ottoman Revival

The administrative system imposed by the Turks was typical of that found elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire. Tripolitania, as all three historic regions were collectively designated, became a Turkish *vilayet* (province) under a *wali* (governor general) appointed by the sultan. The province was composed of four *sanjaks* (subprovinces), each administered by a *mutasarrif* (lieutenant governor) responsible to the governor general. These subprovinces were each divided into about fifteen districts.

Executive officers from the governor general downward were Turks. The *mutasarrif* was in some cases assisted by an advisory council and, at the lower levels, Turkish officials relied on aid and counsel from the tribal shaykhs. Administrative districts below the subprovincial level corresponded to the tribal areas that remained the focus of the Arabs' identification.

Although the system was logical and appeared efficient on paper, it was never consistently applied throughout the country. The Turks encountered strong local opposition through the 1850s and showed little interest in implementing Ottoman control over Fezzan and the interior of Cyrenaica. In 1879 Cyrenaica was separated from Tripolitania, its *mutasarrif* reporting thereafter directly to Constantinople (present-day Istanbul). After the 1908 reform of the Ottoman government, both were entitled to send representatives to the Turkish parliament.

In an effort to provide the country with a tax base, the Turks attempted unsuccessfully to stimulate agriculture. However, in general, nineteenth-century Ottoman rule was characterized by corruption, revolt, and repression. The region was a backwater province in a decaying empire that had been dubbed the "sick man of Europe."

The Sanusi Order

Outside the towns, the ulama might often be replaced as the spiritual guides of the people by wandering holy men known as marabouts (see Glossary), mystics and seers whose tradition antedated Islam. Called "men of the soil," the marabouts of popular Islam were incorporated into intensely local cults of saints. They had traditionally acted as arbiters in tribal disputes and, whenever the authority of government waned in a particular locale, the people turned to the marabouts for political leadership as well as for spiritual guidance. Islam had thus taken shape as a coexisting blend of the scrupulous intellectualism of the ulama and the sometimes frenzied emotionalism of the masses.

The founder of the Sanusi religious order, Muhammad ibn Ali as Sanusi (1787–1859), possessed both the popular appeal of a marabout and the prestige of a religious scholar. Early in his spiritual formation, he had come under the influence of the Sufis, a school of mystics who had inspired an Islamic revival in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and incorporated their asceticism into his own religious practices. Born near Oran in Algeria, he had traveled widely, studying and teaching at some of the outstanding

Islamic centers of learning of his day, and his reputation as a scholar and holy man had spread throughout North Africa. In 1830 he was honored as the Grand Sanusi (as Sanusi al Kabir) by the tribes and towns of Tripolitania and Fezzan while passing through on his way to Mecca.

Disturbed by division and dissension within Islam, he believed that only a return to the purity of early Islam and its insistence on austerity in faith and morals could restore the religion to its rightful glory. On the basis of his perception of the state and needs of Islam, the Grand Sanusi organized a religious order, founding its first lodge (*zawiya*; pl., *zawaayaa*—see Glossary) near Mecca in 1837. Disagreement with the Turkish authorities, however, forced his return to North Africa. He had originally intended to return to Algeria, but the expansion of the French occupation there determined that he settle in Cyrenaica, where the loose hold exercised by Turkish authorities permitted an atmosphere more congenial to his teaching. The tribesmen of the interior were particularly receptive to his ideas, and in 1843 he founded the first Cyrenaican lodge at Al Bayda.

The Grand Sanusi did not tolerate fanaticism. He forbade the use of stimulants as well as the practice of voluntary poverty. Lodge members were to eat and dress within the limits of religious law and, instead of depending on alms, were required to earn their living through work. No aids to contemplation, such as the processions, gyrations, and mutilations employed by Sufi dervishes, were permitted. The Grand Sanusi accepted neither the wholly intuitive ways described by the Sufi mystics nor the rationality of the orthodox ulama; rather, he attempted to adapt from both. The beduins had shown no interest in the ecstatic practices of the Sufis that were gaining adherents in the towns, but they were attracted in great numbers to the Sanusis. The relative austerity of the Sanusi message was especially suited to the character of the Cyrenaican beduins, whose way of life had not changed markedly in the centuries since the Arabs had first accepted the Prophet's teachings.

The leaders of the Sanusi movement encouraged the beduins to render to the Grand Sanusi a reverence that verged on veneration of him as a saint, an act forbidden in orthodox Islam. In fact, the tribesmen regarded him as a marabout and, indeed, this was the indispensable basis of their attachment to him. In no other way could an outsider like Muhammad ibn Ali have won their allegiance. The Sanusi order ultimately permitted its leaders to transform their *baraka* (see Glossary) as holy men into a potent political force capable of holding together a national movement.

To the single lodge founded at Al Bayda in 1843 was eventually added a network of lodges throughout Cyrenaica that bound together the tribal system of the region. The lodge filled an important place in the lives of the tribesmen. Besides its obvious function as a religious center and conduit of *baraka* to the tribe, it was also a school, caravansary, social and commercial center, court of law, and haven for the poor. It provided a place of high culture and safety in the desert wilderness.

Before his death in 1859, the Grand Sanusi established the order's center at Al Jaghbub, which lay at the intersection of the pilgrimage route to Mecca and the main trade route between the Sudan and the coast. There he founded a respected Islamic school, as well as a training center for lodge shaykhs. He hoped by this move to facilitate expanded Sanusi missionary activities in the Sahel and in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Grand Sanusi's son, Muhammad, succeeded him as the order's leader. Because of his forceful personality and his outstanding organizational talents, Muhammad brought the order to the peak of its influence and was recognized as the Mahdi. In 1895 the Mahdi moved the order's headquarters 650 kilometers south from Al Jaghbub to the oasis of Al Kufrah. There he could better supervise missionary activities that were threatened by the advance of French colonialism in the Sudan, which he viewed in religious terms as Christian intervention into Muslim territory. Although the order had never used force in its missionary activities, the Mahdi proclaimed a holy war (jihad—see Glossary) to resist French inroads and brought the Sanusis into confrontation for the first time with a European power. When the Mahdi died in 1902, he left 146 lodges in Africa and Arabia and had brought virtually all the beduins of Cyrenaica under the order's influence. Under the aegis of the order, the tribes of Cyrenaica owed loyalty to a single leader, despite their otherwise extremely divisive rivalries and feuds. Thus a loose umbrella organization forged these otherwise disparate elements into a common unit bound by sentiment and loyalty.

Upon the Mahdi's death he was succeeded by Ahmad ash Sharif, who governed the order as regent for his young cousin, Muhammad Idris as Sanusi (later King Idris of Libya). Ahmad's campaign against French forces was a failure and brought on the destruction of many Sanusi missions in West Africa.

Italian Colonialism

Italy, which became a unified state only in 1860, was a late starter in the race for colonies. For the Italians, the marginal Turkish provinces in Libya seemed to offer an obvious compensation for their humiliating acquiescence to the establishment of a French protectorate in Tunisia, a country coveted by Italy as a potential colony. Italy intensified its long-standing commercial interests in Libya and, in a series of diplomatic maneuvers, won from the major powers their recognition of an Italian sphere of influence there. It was assumed in European capitals that Italy would sooner or later seize the opportunity to take political and military action in Libya as well.

In September 1911 Italy engineered a crisis with Turkey charging that the Turks had committed a ''hostile act'' by arming Arab tribesmen in Libya. When Turkey refused to respond to an ultimatum calling for Italian military occupation to protect Italian interests in the region, Italy declared war. After a preliminary naval bombardment, Italian troops landed and captured Tripoli on October 3, encountering only slight resistance. Italian forces also occupied Tobruk, Al Khums, Darnah, and Benghazi.

In the ensuing months, the Italian expeditionary force, numbering 35,000, barely penetrated beyond its several beachheads. The 5,000 Turkish troops defending the provinces at the time of the invasion withdrew inland a few kilometers, where officers such as Enver Pasha and Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) organized the Arab tribes in a resistance to the Italians that took on the aspects of a holy war. But with war threatening in the Balkans, Turkey was compelled to sue for peace with Italy. In accordance with the treaty signed at Lausanne in October 1912, the sultan issued a decree granting independence to Tripolitania and Cyrenaica while Italy simultaneously announced its formal annexation of those territories. The sultan, in his role as caliph (leader of Islam), was to retain his religious jurisdiction there and was permitted to appoint the qadi of Tripoli, who supervised the sharia courts. But the Italians were unable to appreciate that no distinction was made between civil and religious jurisdiction in Islamic law. Thus, through the courts, the Turks kept open a channel of influence over their former subjects and subverted Italian authority. Peace with Turkey meant for Italy the beginning of a twenty-year colonial war in Libya.

Italian Rule and Arab Resistance

For many Arabs, Turkey's surrender in Libya was a betrayal of Muslim interests to the infidels. The 1912 Treaty of Lausanne was meaningless to the beduin tribesmen who continued their war against the Italians, in some areas with the aid of Turkish troops left behind in the withdrawal. Fighting in Cyrenaica was conducted by Sanusi units under Ahmad ash Sharif, whose followers in Fezzan and southern Tripolitania prevented Italian consolidation in those areas as well. Lacking the unity imposed by the Sanusis, resistance in northern Tripolitania was isolated, and tribal rivalries made it less effective. Urban nationalists in Tripoli theorized about the possibility of establishing a Tripolitanian republic, perhaps associated with Italy, while Suleiman Baruni, a Berber and a former member of the Turkish parliament, proclaimed an independent but short-lived Berber state in the Gharyan region. For the beduins, however, unencumbered by any sense of nationhood, the purpose of the struggle against the colonial power was defending Islam and the free life they had always enjoyed in their tribal territory.

In 1914 the Sanusis counterattacked in Fezzan, quickly wiping out recent Italian gains there, and in April 1915 they inflicted heavy casualties on an Italian column at Qasr Bu Hadi in the Sirtica. Captured rifles, artillery, and munitions fueled a subsequent Sanusi strike into Tripolitania, but the success of the campaign was compromised by the traditional hostility that existed between the beduins and the nationalists.

When Italy joined the Allied Powers in 1915, the first Italo-Sanusi war (1914–17) in Cyrenaica became part of the world war. Germany and Turkey sent arms and advisers to Ahmad, who aligned the Sanusis with the Central Powers with the objective of tying down Italian and British troops in North Africa. In 1916, however, Turkish officers led the Sanusis on a campaign into Egypt, where they were routed by British forces. Ahmad gave up Sanusi political and military leadership to Idris and fled to Turkey aboard a German submarine. The pro-British Idris opened negotiations with the Allies on behalf of Cyrenaica in 1917. The result was, in effect, a truce rather than a conclusive peace treaty, for neither the Italians nor the Sanusis fully surrendered their claims and control in the region. Britain and Italy recognized Idris as amir of interior Cyrenaica, with the condition that Sanusi attacks on coastal towns and into Egypt cease. Further consideration of Cyrenaica's status was deferred until after the war.

Although the victorious Allied Powers accepted Italy's sovereignty in Libya, Italian forces there at the end of World War I were still confined to the coastal enclaves, sometimes under conditions of siege. A campaign was initiated to consolidate and expand Italian-held territory in 1919, but the colonial policy pursued by the Italian government was moderate and accommodating. Steps were taken toward granting limited political rights to the people in occupied areas. The provinces of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania were treated as separate colonies, and Fezzan was organized as a military territory. The Fundamental Law approved by the Italian parliament in 1919 provided for provincial parliaments and for local advisory councils appointed by the Italian governors and district executives in the occupied areas.

The different settlements that Italy made in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, however, did illustrate graphically the dissimilarities in the situations of the two provinces as they were perceived by Italian authorities. In 1920 an accord was reached between Italy and the Sanusi leaders that confirmed Idris as amir of Cyrenaica and recognized his virtual independence in an immense area in the interior that encompassed all the principal oases. Italy provided a subsidy to the amir's government, and Sanusi shaykhs, holding seats in the Cyrenaican parliament, participated in the government of the entire province. Idris was also allowed to retain the Sanusi army, although its units were to be stationed in "mixed camps" with Italian forces. By this arrangement, the Italian government officially accepted Idris as both secular and religious leader of the Cyrenaican tribes, but in effect it did not extend his political power beyond what he already exercised as head of the Sanusi order.

Clearly, the Rome government had not formulated a coherent policy toward a country that had not been conquered and whose people were dubious about the benefits of Italian rule. But because the Italians never faced a credible, united opposition in Tripolitania, they were not under comparable pressure there to yield the concessions they had made in Cyrenaica. Tripolitania lacked the leadership and organizational structure that Idris and the Sanusi order gave to Cyrenaica. The most prominent Tripolitanian nationalist was Ramadan as Suwaythi, who had by turns cooperated with the Italians, supported the Sanusis, and eventually fought against them both. His rival, Baruni, who had acted during the war as Ottoman "governor" in Tripolitania with German backing, was mistrusted by the Arab nationalists. Tribal rivalries were intense, and the aims of the beduin shaykhs and the nationalists were fundamentally different, the latter being concerned with forming a centralized republic while the former were interested primarily in creating tribal states.

A prominent pan-Arab nationalist, the Egyptian Abdar Rahman Azzam, persuaded Suwaythi and Baruni to cooperate in demanding Italian recognition of an independent republic that was called into being at Misratah in 1919. Talks with the Italians broke down when the Misratah republic's governing body, the so-called Reform Committee, claimed jurisdiction over Libya rather than over Tripolitania only. In 1920 delegates from both occupied and unoccupied zones convened the National Congress at Aziza. Claiming to represent the "Tripolitanian Nation," they called for the withdrawal of the Italian forces. No nationalist movement, however, was able to rally the country behind it.

Even delegates to the National Congress had been sharply divided on the degree of cooperation with Italy they would allow. Rival delegations beat a path to Rome with their petitions for recognition. Meanwhile, Count Giuseppe Volpi, a vigorous and determined governor, gave decisive direction to Italian policy in Tripolitania with his advocacy of military pacification rather than negotiation. The nationalists lost their most effective leaders when Baruni defected to the Italians as a result of hostility between Arabs and Berbers, which Volpi successfully exploited, and Suwaythi was killed by his political rivals.

In this situation, the Tripolitanian nationalists met with the Sanusis at Surt early in 1922 and offered to accept Idris as amir of Tripolitania. Idris had never sought any title other than the one he held in Cyrenaica, and he was not anxious to extend either his political influence or his religious leadership to northern Tripolitania, where neither he nor the Sanusi order was widely popular. He had always refused aid to Tripolitanian nationalists and under the circumstances considered their offer to have been made for reasons of expediency, that is, because there was no alternative candidate for leadership apparent at the time. Idris' acceptance, as the nationalists understood, would draw sharp Italian disapproval and be the signal for the resumption of open warfare. War with Italy, in any event, appeared likely sooner or later. For several months, Idris pondered the nationalist appeal. For whatever reason—perhaps to further the cause of total independence or perhaps out of a sense of religious obligation to resist the infidel—Idris accepted the amirate of all Libya in November and then, to avoid capture by the Italians, fled to Egypt, where he continued to guide the Sanusi order.

The Second Italo-Sanusi War

Italian colonial policy was abruptly altered with the accession to power of Mussolini's fascist government in October 1922. Mussolini, the one-time critic of colonialism, wholeheartedly endorsed Volpi's policy of military pacification and, although accurate intelligence was lacking in Rome, he fully supported the decisions made in the field by army commanders. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne between the Allied Powers—including Italy—and Atatürk's new government in Turkey made final the dismemberment of the old Ottoman Empire and provided conclusive international sanction for Italy's annexation of Libya.

The second Italo-Sanusi war commenced early in 1923 with the Italian occupation of Sanusi territory in the Benghazi area. Resistance in Cyrenaica was fierce from the outset, but northern

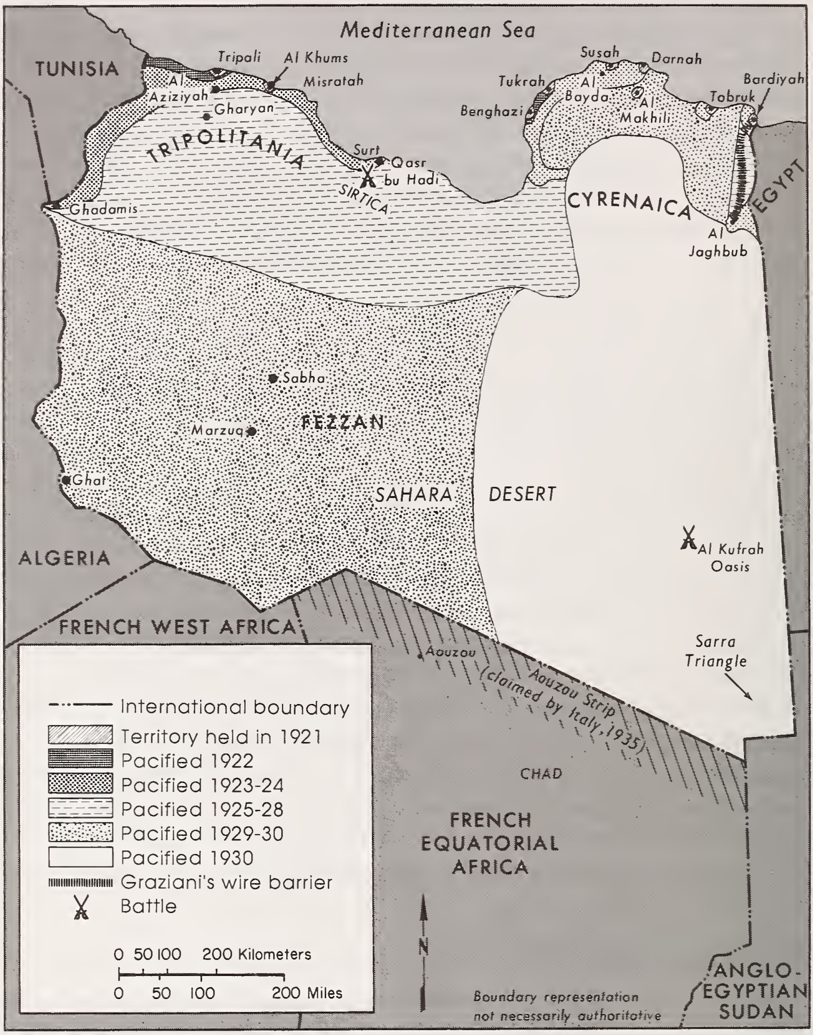

Mediterranean Sea
TUNISIA
Tripoli
Al Khums
Misratah
Al Aziziyah
Gharyan
TRIPOLITANIA
Surt
Qasr bu Hadi
SIRTICA
Ghadamis
Susah
Darnah
Tukrah
Al Bayda
Al Makhili
Benghazi
Bardiyah
Tobruk
CYRENAICA
EGYPT
Al Jaghbub
Sabha
Marzuq
FEZZAN
Ghat
SAHARA DESERT
Al Kufrah Oasis
ALGERIA
FRENCH WEST AFRICA
Aouzou
Aouzou Strip (claimed by Italy, 1935)
Sarra Triangle
CHAD
FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA
ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN
N
Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative
International boundary
Territory held in 1921
Pacified 1922
Pacified 1923-24
Pacified 1925-28
Pacified 1929-30
Pacified 1930
Graziani's wire barrier
Battle
0 50 100 200 Kilometers
0 50 100 200 Miles

Figure 3. The Italian Conquest of Libya, 1921–31

Tripolitania was subdued in 1923, and its southern region and Fezzan were gradually pacified over the next several years. During the whole period, however, the principal Italian theater of operations was Cyrenaica (see fig. 3).

In Idris' absence a hardy but aging shaykh, Umar al Mukhtar, had overall command of Sanusi fighting forces in Cyrenaica, never numbering more than a few thousand organized in tribal units.

Mukhtar, a veteran of many campaigns, was a master of desert guerrilla tactics. Leading small, mobile bands, he attacked outposts, ambushed troop columns, cut lines of supply and communication, and then faded into the familiar terrain. Italian forces, under Rudolfo Graziani's command after 1929, were largely composed of Eritreans. Unable to fight a decisive battle with the Sanusis, Graziani imposed an exhausting war of attrition, conducting unremitting search-and-destroy missions with armored columns and air support against the oases and tribal camps that sheltered Mukhtar's men. Troops herded beduins into concentration camps, blocked wells, and slaughtered livestock. In 1930 Graziani directed construction of a barbed-wire barrier 9 meters wide and 1.5 meters high stretching 320 kilometers from the coast south along the Egyptian frontier to cut Mukhtar off from his sanctuaries and sources of supply across the border. The area around the barrier, constantly patrolled by armor and aircraft, was designated a free-fire zone. The Italians' superior manpower and technology began to take their toll on the Libyans, but Mukhtar fought on with his steadily dwindling numbers in a shrinking theater of operations, more from habit than from conviction that the Italians could be dislodged from Cyrenaica.

Al Kufrah, the last Sanusi stronghold, fell in 1931, and in September of that year Mukhtar was captured. After a summary court-martial, he was hanged before a crowd of 20,000 Arabs assembled to witness the event. With the death of Mukhtar, Sanusi resistance collapsed, and the Italian pacification of Libya was completed. Even in defeat, Mukhtar remained a symbol of Arab defiance to colonial domination, and he was revered as a national hero.

The Fourth Shore

Once pacification had been accomplished, fascist Italy endeavored to convert Libya into an Italian province to be referred to popularly as Italy's Fourth Shore. In 1934 Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were divided into four provinces—Tripoli, Misratah, Benghazi, and Darnah—which were formally linked as a single colony known as Libya, thus officially resurrecting the name that Diocletian had applied nearly 1,500 years earlier. Fezzan, designated as South Tripolitania, remained a military territory. A governor general, called the first consul after 1937, was in overall direction of the colony, assisted by the General Consultative Council, on which Arabs were represented. Traditional tribal councils, formerly sanctioned by the Italian administration, were abolished, and all local officials were thereafter appointed by the governor general. Administrative posts at all levels were held by Italians.

An accord with Britain and Egypt obtained the transfer of a corner of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, known as the Sarra Triangle, to Italian control in 1934. The next year, a French-Italian agreement was negotiated that relocated the 1,000-kilometer border between Libya and Chad southward about 100 kilometers across the Aouzou Strip (see Glossary), but this territorial concession to Italy was never ratified by the French legislature. In 1939 Libya was incorporated into metropolitan Italy.

During the 1930s, impressive strides were made in improving the country's economic and transportation infrastructure. Italy invested capital and technology in public works projects, extension and modernization of cities, highway and railroad construction, expanded port facilities, and irrigation, but these measures were introduced to benefit the Italian-controlled modern sector of the economy. Italian development policy after World War I had called for capital-intensive ''economic colonization'' intended to promote the maximum exploitation of the resources available. One of the initial Italian objectives in Libya, however, had been the relief of overpopulation and unemployment in Italy through emigration to the undeveloped colony. With security established, systematic ''demographic colonization'' was encouraged by Mussolini's government. A project initiated by Libya's governor, Italo Balbo, brought the first 20,000 settlers—the *ventimilli*—to Libya in a single convoy in October 1938. More settlers followed in 1939, and by 1940 there were approximately 110,000 Italians in Libya, constituting about 12 percent of the total population. Plans envisioned an Italian colony of 500,000 settlers by the 1960s. Libya's best land was allocated to the settlers to be brought under productive cultivation, primarily in olive groves. Settlement was directed by a state corporation, the Libyan Colonization Society, which undertook land reclamation and the building of model villages and offered a grubstake and credit facilities to the settlers it had sponsored.

The Italians made modern medical care available for the first time in Libya, improved sanitary conditions in the towns, and undertook to replenish the herds and flocks that had been depleted during the war. But, although Mussolini liked to refer to the Libyans as ''Muslim Italians,'' little more was accomplished that directly improved the living standards of the Arab population. Beduin life was disrupted as tribal grazing lands—considered underutilized by European standards but potentially fertile if reclaimed—were purchased or confiscated for distribution to Italian settlers. Complete neglect of education for Arabs prevented the development of professional and technical training, creating a shortage of skilled workers, technicians, and administrators that had not been alleviated in the late 1980s. Sanusi leaders were harried out of the country, lodges broken up, and the order suppressed, although not extinguished.

World War II and Independence

As Europe prepared for war, Libyan nationalists at home and in exile perceived that the best chance for liberation from colonial domination lay in Italy's defeat in a larger conflict. Such an opportunity seemed to arise when Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935, but Mussolini's defiance of the League of Nations and the feeble reaction of Britain and France dashed Libyan hopes for the time being. Planning for liberation resumed, however, with the outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939. Libyan political leaders met in Alexandria, Egypt, in October to resolve past differences in the interest of future unity. Idris was accepted as leader of the nationalist cause by Tripolitanians as well as Cyrenaicans, with the proviso that he designate an advisory committee with representatives from both regions to assist him. Differences between the two groups were too deep and long held, however, for the committee to work well.

When Italy entered the war on the side of Germany on June 10, 1940, the Cyrenaican leaders, who for some months had been in contact with British military officers in Egypt, immediately declared their support for the Allies. In Tripolitania, where Italian control was strongest, some opinion initially opposed cooperation with Britain on the ground that if the Allies lost—which seemed highly possible in 1940—retribution would be severe. But the Cyrenaicans, with their long history of resistance to the Italians, were anxious to resume the conflict and reminded the timid Tripolitanians that conditions in the country could be no worse than they already were. Idris pointed out that it would be of little use to expect the British to support Libyan independence after the war if Libyans had not cooperated actively with them during the war.

Idris presided over a meeting of Libyan leaders hastily summoned to Cairo in August 1940, at which formal arrangements for cooperation with British military authorities were initiated. Delegates to the conference expressed full confidence in Idris in a resolution and granted him extensive powers to negotiate with the British for Libya's independence. The resolution stated further that Libyan participation with British forces should be "under the banner of the Sanusi Amirate" and that a "provisional Sanusi government" should be established.

Although a number of Tripolitanian representatives agreed to participate, the resolution was essentially a Cyrenaican measure adopted over the objections of the Tripolitanian nationalists. The

Tripolitanians, suspicious of the ties between Idris and the British, held that a definite statement endorsing Libyan independence should have been obtained from Britain before Idris committed Libya to full-scale military cooperation. Also, although the Tripolitanians were reluctantly willing to accept Idris as their political chief, they rejected any religious connection with the Sanusi order. Hence they objected to the use of the term *Sanusi* throughout the resolution in place of *Libya* or even *Cyrenaica*. These two areas of objection—the extent of the commitment to Britain and the role of the Sanusi order in an independent, united Libya—constituted the main elements of internal political dissension during the war and early postwar years.

British officials maintained that major postwar agreements or guarantees could not be undertaken while the war was still in progress. Although he endeavored from time to time to secure a more favorable British commitment, Idris generally accepted this position and counseled his followers to have patience. Clearly, many of them were not enthusiastic about Libyan unity and would have been satisfied with the promise of a Sanusi government in Cyrenaica. After the August 1940 resolution, five Libyan battalions were organized by the British, recruited largely from Cyrenaican veterans of the Italo-Sanusi wars. The Libyan Arab Force, better known as the Sanusi Army, served with distinction under British command through the campaigns of the desert war that ended in the liberation of Cyrenaica.

In a speech in the House of Commons in January 1942, British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden acknowledged and welcomed ''the contribution which Sayid Idris as Sanusi and his followers have made and are making'' to the Allied war effort. He added that the British government was determined that the Sanusis in Cyrenaica should ''in no circumstances again fall under Italian domination.'' No further commitment was made, and this statement, which made no mention of an independent Libya, remained the official British position during the war.

The Desert War

North Africa was a major theater of operations in World War II, and the war shifted three times across the face of Cyrenaica, a region described by one German general as a ''tactician's paradise and a quartermaster's hell'' because there were no natural defense positions between Al Agheila and Al Alamein to obstruct the tanks that fought fluid battles in the desert like warships at sea, and there was only one major highway on the coast along which to supply the quick-moving armies. The Italians invaded Egypt in September 1940, but the drive stalled at Sidi Barrani for want of logistical support. British Empire forces of the Army of the Nile, under General Archibald Wavell, counterattacked sharply in December, advancing as far as Tobruk by the end of the month. In February 1941, the Italian Tenth Army surrendered, netting Wavell 150,000 prisoners and leaving all of Cyrenaica in British hands. At no time during the campaign did Wavell have more than two full divisions at his disposal against as many as ten Italian divisions.

In March and April, Axis forces, stiffened by the arrival of the German Afrika Korps commanded by Lieutenant General Erwin Rommel, launched an offensive into Cyrenaica that cut off British troops at Tobruk. The battle seesawed back and forth in the desert as Rommel attempted to stabilize his lines along the Egyptian frontier before dealing with Tobruk in his rear, but in November British Eighth Army commander General Claude Auchinleck caught him off balance with a thrust into Cyrenaica that succeeded in relieving Tobruk, where the garrison had held out for seven months behind its defense perimeter. Auchinleck's offensive failed in its second objective—cutting off Rommel from his line of retreat.

Rommel pulled back in good order to Al Agheila, where his troops refitted for a new offensive in January 1942 that was intended to take the Axis forces to the Suez Canal. Rommel's initial attack was devastating in its boldness and swiftness. Cyrenaica had been retaken by June; Tobruk fell in a day. Rommel drove into Egypt, but his offensive was halted at Al Alamein, 100 kilometers from Alexandria. The opposing armies settled down into a stalemate in the desert as British naval and air power interdicted German convoys and road transport, gradually starving Rommel of supplies and reinforcements.

Late in October the Eighth Army, under the command of General Bernard Montgomery, broke through the Axis lines at Al Alamein in a massive offensive that sent German and Italian forces into a headlong retreat. The liberation of Cyrenaica was completed for the second time in November. Tripoli fell to the British in January 1943, and by mid-February the last Axis troops had been driven from Libya.

Allied Administration

Separate British military governments were established in Cyrenaica and in Tripolitania and continued to function until Libya achieved independence. Each was divided into several districts governed by civil affairs officers who reported to brigadiers at senior headquarters in Benghazi and Tripoli. British authority was exercised under the Hague Convention, which conveyed legislative, administrative, and judicial power to an occupying country. It was essentially a caretaker operation, the initial objective simply being to maintain peace and order and facilitate the war effort. British military officers and government emphatically stressed the nonpolitical character of the occupation government.

The British administration began the training of a badly needed Libyan civil service. Italian administrators continued to be employed in Tripoli, however. The Italian legal code remained in effect for the duration of the war. In the lightly populated Fezzan region, a French military administration formed a counterpart to the British operation. With British approval, Free French forces moved north from Chad to take control of the territory in January 1943. French administration was directed by a staff stationed in Sabha, but it was largely exercised through Fezzan notables of the family of Sayf an Nasr. At the lower echelons, French troop commanders acted in both military and civil capacities according to customary French practice in the Algerian Sahara. In the west, Ghat was attached to the French military region of southern Algeria and Ghadamis to the French command of southern Tunisia—giving rise to Libyan nationalist fears that French intentions might include the ultimate detachment of Fezzan from Libya.

The United Nations and Libya

Disposition of Italian colonial holdings was a question that had to be considered before the peace treaty officially ending the war with Italy could be completed. Technically, Libya remained an Italian possession administered by Britain and France, but at the Potsdam Conference in 1945 the Allies—Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States—agreed that the Italian colonies seized during the war should not be returned to Italy. Further consideration of the question was delegated to the Allied Council of Foreign Ministers, which included a French representative; although all council members initially favored some form of trusteeship, no formula could be devised for disposing of Libya. The United States suggested a trusteeship for the whole country under control of the United Nations (UN), whose charter had become effective in October 1945, to prepare it for self-government. The Soviet Union proposed separate provincial trusteeships, claiming Tripolitania for itself and assigning Fezzan to France and Cyrenaica to Britain. France, seeing no end to the discussions, advocated the return of the territory to Italy. To break the impasse, Britain finally recommended immediate independence for Libya.

The peace treaty, in which Italy renounced all claims to its African possessions, was signed in February 1947 and became effective in September. The language of the treaty was vague on the subject of colonies, adding only that these territories should "remain in their present state until their future is decided." This indefinite proviso disappointed Libyan leaders, who had earlier been alarmed at Italian diplomatic agitation for return of the colonies. Libyans were apprehensive that Italian hegemony might return in some ostensibly nonpolitical guise if Italy were given responsibility for preparing the country for independence.

By mutual agreement the settlement of the Italian colonies was postponed for a year after the treaty became effective, during which time the Big Four (Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States) were to search for a solution. If none could be found, the question was to be put before the UN General Assembly. A four-power commission of investigation was appointed to ascertain what the Libyan people desired. Although the various regional parties split over the question of the future status of their respective provinces, the majority of Libyans favored independence. The commission, however, decided that the country was not ready for self-government. Other governments interested in the settlement of the problem, notably Italy and Egypt, were consulted. In all cases, conflicting interests prevented any solution, and in due course the Libyan question was placed on the agenda of the General Assembly.

Idris had returned to Libya to a tumultuous welcome in 1944, but he declined to take up residence there until satisfied that all constraints of foreign control not subject to his agreement had been removed. At British urging, he resumed permanent residence in Cyrenaica in 1947; in 1949, with British backing, he unilaterally proclaimed Cyrenaica an independent amirate.

In the meantime, Britain and Italy had placed the Bevin-Sforza plan (after Ernest Bevin and Carlo Sforza, foreign ministers of its respective sponsors) before the UN for its consideration. Under this plan, Libya would come under UN trusteeship, and responsibility for administration in Tripolitania would be delegated to Italy, in Cyrenaica to Britain, and in Fezzan to France. At the end of ten years, Libya would become independent. Over Libyan protests, the plan was adopted by the UN Political Committee in May 1949, only to fall short by one vote of the two-thirds majority required for adoption by the General Assembly. No further proposals were submitted, but protracted negotiations led to a compromise solution that was embodied in a UN resolution in November 1949. This resolution called for the establishment of a sovereign state including all three historic regions of Libya by January 1952. A UN commissioner and the so-called Council of Ten—composed of a representative from each of the three provinces, one for the Libyan minorities, and one each for Egypt, France, Italy, Pakistan, Britain, and the United States—were to guide Libya through the period of transition to independence and to assist a Libyan national assembly in drawing up a constitution. In the final analysis, indecision on the part of the major powers had precipitated the creation of an independent state and forced the union of provinces hitherto divided by geography and history.

The General Assembly named Adrian Pelt of the Netherlands as commissioner for Libya. Severe problems confronted him and his staff in preparing for independence an economically backward and politically inexperienced country, almost totally lacking in trained managerial and technical personnel, physicians, and teachers. Of Libya's approximately 1 million inhabitants, at least 90 percent were illiterate. Libya's biggest source of income was from scrap metal salvaged from the World War II battlefields. There were no known natural resources—even Libya's sand was inadequate for glassmaking—and it was obvious that the country would be dependent on foreign economic aid for an indefinite period. Pelt argued forcefully that Italian settlers should be encouraged to remain in Libya, first, because the land they worked was private property that could not be expropriated legally, and, second, because their presence represented a long-term investment that was essential to any further economic development in the country.

Historically, the administration of Libya had been united for only a few years—and those under Italian rule. Many groups vied for influence over the people but, although all parties desired independence, there was no consensus as to what form of government was to be established. The social basis of political organization varied from region to region. In Cyrenaica and Fezzan, the tribe was the chief focus of social identification, even in an urban context. Idris had wide appeal in the former as head of the Sanusi order, while in the latter the Sayf an Nasr clan commanded a following as paramount tribal chieftains. In Tripolitania, by contrast, loyalty that in a social context was reserved largely to the family and kinship group could be transferred more easily to a political party and its leader. Tripolitanians, following the lead of Bashir as Sadawi's National Congress Party, pressed for a republican form of government in a unitary state. Inasmuch as their region had a significantly larger population and a relatively more advanced economy than the other two, they expected that under a unitary political system political power would gravitate automatically to

Tripoli. Cyrenaicans, who had achieved a larger degree of cohesion under Sanusi leadership, feared the chaos they saw in Tripolitania and the threat of being swamped politically by the Tripolitanians in a unitary state. Guided by the National Front, endorsed by Idris initially to advocate unilateral independence for Cyrenaica, they backed formation of a federation with a weak central government that would permit local autonomy under Idris as amir. But even in Cyrenaica a cleavage existed between an older generation that thought instinctively in provincial terms and a younger generation—many of whom were influenced by their membership in the Umar al Mukhtar Club, a political action group first formed in 1942 with Idris' blessing but by 1947 tending toward republican and nationalist views—whose outlook reflected the rise of pan-Arab political nationalism, already a strong force in the Middle East and growing in Libya.

To implement the General Assembly's directive, Pelt approved the appointment of the Preparatory Committee of Twenty-One to determine the composition of a national constitutional convention. The committee included seven members from each province, nominated in Cyrenaica by Idris, in Fezzan by the Sayf an Nasr chieftains, and in Tripolitania by the grand mufti (chief religious judge) of Tripoli, who also acted as its chairman. Nationalists objected that the committee represented traditional regional interests and could not reflect the will of the Libyan people as the General Assembly had intended

The product of the committee's deliberations was the creation of the National Constituent Assembly, in which each of the three provinces was equally represented. Meeting for the first time in November 1950, the assembly approved a federal system of government with a monarchy, despite dissent from Tripolitanian delegates, and offered the throne to Idris. Committees of the assembly drafted a constitution, which was duly adopted in October 1951. Meanwhile, internal administrative authority had already been transferred by British and French administrations to the regional governments—and in Cyrenaica to the independent Sanusi amirate. On December 24, 1951, King Idris I proclaimed the independence of the United Kingdom of Libya as a sovereign state.

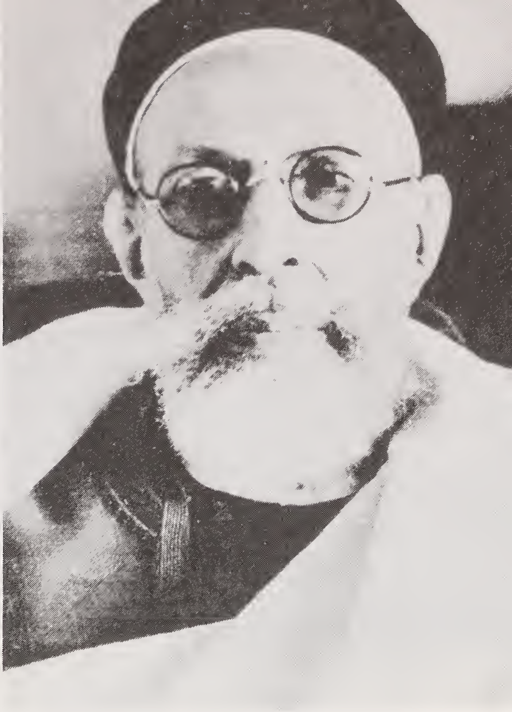
Independent Libya

Under the constitution of October 1951, the federal monarchy of Libya was headed by King Idris as chief of state, with succession to his designated heirs. Substantial political power resided with the king. The executive arm of the government consisted of a prime minister and Council of Ministers designated by the king but also responsible to the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of a bicameral legislature. The Senate, or upper house, consisted of eight representatives from each of the three provinces. Half of the senators were nominated by the king, who also had the right to veto legislation and to dissolve the lower house. Local autonomy in the provinces was exercised through provincial governments and legislatures. Benghazi and Tripoli served alternately as the national capital.

Several factors, rooted in Libya's history, affected the political development of the newly independent country. They reflected the differing political orientations of the provinces and the ambiguities inherent in Libya's monarchy. First, after the first general elections, which were held on February 19, 1952, political parties were abolished. The National Congress Party, which had campaigned against a federal form of government, was defeated throughout the country. The party was outlawed, and Sadawi was deported. Second, provincial ties continued to be more important than national ones, and the federal and provincial governments were constantly in dispute over their respective spheres of authority. A third problem derived from the lack of a direct heir to the throne. To remedy this situation, Idris in 1953 designated his sixty-year-old brother to succeed him. When the original heir apparent died, the king appointed his nephew, Prince Hasan ar Rida, his successor.

In its foreign policy, Libya maintained a pro-Western stance and was recognized as belonging to the conservative traditionalist bloc in the League of Arab States (Arab League), of which it became a member in 1953. The same year Libya concluded a twenty-year treaty of friendship and alliance with Britain under which the latter received military bases in exchange for financial and military assistance. The next year, Libya and the United States signed an agreement under which the United States also obtained military base rights, subject to renewal in 1970, in return for economic aid to Libya. The most important of the United States installations in Libya was Wheelus Air Base, near Tripoli, considered a strategically valuable installation in the 1950s and early 1960s. Reservations set aside in the desert were used by British and American military aircraft based in Europe as practice firing ranges. Libya forged close ties with France, Italy, Greece, and Turkey, and established full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1955, but declined a Soviet offer of economic aid.

As part of a broad assistance package, the UN Technical Assistance Board agreed to sponsor a technical aid program that emphasized the development of agriculture and education. Foreign powers, notably Britain and the United States, provided development



King Idris I, the first leader of independent Libya

aid. Steady economic improvement occurred, but the pace was slow, and Libya remained a poor and underdeveloped country heavily dependent on foreign aid.

This situation changed suddenly and dramatically in June 1959 when research prospectors from Esso (later renamed Exxon) confirmed the location of major petroleum deposits at Zaltan in Cyrenaica. Further discoveries followed, and commercial development was quickly initiated by concession holders who returned 50 percent of their profits to the Libyan government in taxes. In the petroleum market, Libya's advantages lay not only in the quantity but also in the high quality of its crude product. Libya's proximity and direct linkage to Europe by sea were further marketing advantages. The discovery and exploitation of petroleum turned the vast, sparsely populated, impoverished country into an independently wealthy nation with potential for extensive development and thus constituted a major turning point in Libyan history (see Hydrocarbons and Mining, ch. 3).

As development of petroleum resources progressed in the early 1960s, Libya launched its first Five-Year Plan, 1963–68. One negative result of the new wealth from petroleum, however, was a decline in agricultural production, largely through neglect. Internal Libyan politics continued to be stable, but the federal form of government had proven inefficient and cumbersome. In April 1963, Prime Minister Muhi ad Din Fakini secured adoption by parliament of a bill, endorsed by the king, that abolished the federal form of government, establishing in its place a unitary, monarchical state with a dominant central government. By legislation, the historical divisions of Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan were to be eliminated and the country divided into ten new provinces, each headed by an appointed governor. The legislature revised the constitution in 1963 to reflect the change from a federal to a unitary state.

In regional affairs, Libya enjoyed the advantage of not having aggravated boundary disputes with its neighbors. Libya was one of the thirty founding members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), established in 1963, and in November 1964 participated with Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia in forming a joint consultative committee aimed at economic cooperation among North African states. Although it supported Arab causes, including the Moroccan and Algerian independence movements, Libya took little active part in the Arab-Israeli dispute or the tumultuous inter-Arab politics of the 1950s and the early 1960s.

Nevertheless, the brand of Arab nationalism propounded by Egypt's Gamal Abdul Nasser exercised an increasing influence, particularly among the younger generation. In response to anti-Western agitation in 1964, Libya's essentially pro-Western government requested the evacuation of British and American bases before the dates specified in the treaties. Most British forces were in fact withdrawn in 1966, although the evacuation of foreign military installations, including Wheelus Air Base, was not completed until March 1970.

The June 1967 War between Israel and its Arab neighbors aroused a strong reaction in Libya, particularly in Tripoli and Benghazi, where dock and oil workers as well as students were involved in violent demonstrations. The United States and British embassies and oil company offices were damaged in rioting. Members of the small Jewish community were also attacked, prompting the emigration of almost all remaining Libyan Jews. The government restored order, but thereafter attempts to modernize the small and ineffective Libyan armed forces and to reform the grossly inefficient Libyan bureaucracy foundered upon conservative opposition to the nature and pace of the proposed reforms.

Although Libya was clearly on record as supporting Arab causes in general, the country did not play an important role in Arab politics. At the Arab summit conference held at Khartoum in September 1967, however, Libya, along with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, agreed to provide generous subsidies from oil revenues to aid Egypt, Syria, and Jordan, defeated in June by Israel. Also, Idris first broached the idea of taking collective action to increase the price

Wheelus Air Base, in the mid–1960s, before the United States turned over control to the Qadhafi regime
Courtesy United States Air Force

of oil on the world market. Libya, nonetheless, continued its close association with the West, while Idris' government steered an essentially conservative course at home.

After the forming of the Libyan state in 1963, Idris' government had tried—not very successfully—to promote a sense of Libyan nationalism built around the institution of the monarchy. But Idris himself was first and foremost a Cyrenaican, never at ease in Tripolitania. His political interests were essentially Cyrenaican, and he understood that whatever real power he had—and it was more considerable than what he derived from the constitution—lay in the loyalty he commanded as amir of Cyrenaica and head of the Sanusi order. Idris' pro-Western sympathies and identification with the conservative Arab bloc were especially resented by an increasingly politicized urban elite that favored nonalignment. Aware of the potential of their country's natural wealth, many Libyans had also become conscious that its benefits reached very few of the population. An ominous undercurrent of dissatisfaction with corruption and malfeasance in the bureaucracy began to appear as well, particularly among young officers of the armed forces who were influenced by Nasser's Arab nationalist ideology.

Alienated from the most populous part of the country, from the cities, and from a younger generation of Libyans, Idris spent more and more time at his palace in Darnah, near the British military base. In June 1969, the king left the country for rest and medical treatment in Greece and Turkey, leaving Crown Prince Hasan ar Rida as regent.

The September 1969 Coup

On September 1, 1969, in a daring coup d'état, a group of about seventy young army officers and enlisted men, mostly assigned to the Signal Corps, seized control of the government and in a stroke abolished the Libyan monarchy. The coup was launched at Benghazi, and within two hours the takeover was completed. Army units quickly rallied in support of the coup, and within a few days firmly established military control in Tripoli and elsewhere throughout the country. Popular reception of the coup, especially by younger people in the urban areas, was enthusiastic. Fears of resistance in Cyrenaica and Fezzan proved unfounded. No deaths or violent incidents related to the coup were reported.

The Free Officers Movement, which claimed credit for carrying out the coup, was headed by a twelve-member directorate that designated itself the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). This body constituted the Libyan government after the coup. In its initial proclamation on September 1, the RCC declared the country to be a free and sovereign state called the Libyan Arab Republic, which would proceed, with the help of God, ''in the path of freedom, unity, and social justice, guaranteeing the right of equality to its citizens, and opening before them the doors of honorable work.'' The rule of the Turks and Italians and the ''reactionary'' regime just overthrown were characterized as belonging to ''dark ages,'' from which the Libyan people were called to move forward as ''free brothers'' to a new age of prosperity, equality, and honor.

The RCC advised diplomatic representatives in Libya that the revolutionary changes had not been directed from outside the country, that existing treaties and agreements would remain in effect, and that foreign lives and property would be protected. Diplomatic recognition of the new regime came quickly from countries throughout the world. United States recognition was officially extended on September 6.

In view of the lack of internal resistance, it appeared that the chief danger to the new regime lay in the possibility of a reaction inspired by the absent King Idris or his designated heir, Hasan ar Rida, who had been taken into custody at the time of the coup along with other senior civil and military officials of the royal government.

Within days of the coup, however, Hasan publicly renounced all rights to the throne, stated his support for the new regime, and called on the people to accept it without violence. Idris, in an exchange of messages with the RCC through Egypt's President Nasser, dissociated himself from reported attempts to secure British intervention and disclaimed any intention of coming back to Libya. In return, he was assured by the RCC of the safety of his family still in the country. At his own request and with Nasser's approval, Idris took up residence once again in Egypt, where he had spent his first exile and where he remained until his death in 1983.

On September 7, 1969, the RCC announced that it had appointed a cabinet to conduct the government of the new republic. An American-educated technician, Mahmud Sulayman al Maghrabi, who had been imprisoned since 1967 for his political activities, was designated prime minister. He presided over the eight-member Council of Ministers, of whom six, like Maghrabi, were civilians and two—Adam Said Hawwaz and Musa Ahmad—were military officers. Neither of the officers was a member of the RCC. The Council of Ministers was instructed to ''implement the state's general policy as drawn up by the RCC,'' leaving no doubt where ultimate authority rested. The next day the RCC decided to promote Captain Muammar al Qadhafi to colonel and to appoint him commander in chief of the Libyan Armed Forces. Although RCC spokesmen declined until January 1970 to reveal any other names of RCC members, it was apparent from that date onward that the head of the RCC and new de facto head of state was the ascetic, deeply religious, twenty-seven-year-old Colonel Qadhafi.

Analysts were quick to point out the striking similarities between the Libyan military coup of 1969 and that in Egypt under Nasser in 1952, and it became clear that the Egyptian experience and the charismatic figure of Nasser had formed the model for the Free Officers Movement. As the RCC in the last months of 1969 moved vigorously to institute domestic reforms, it proclaimed neutrality in the confrontation between the superpowers and opposition to all forms of colonialism and ''imperialism.'' It also made clear Libya's dedication to Arab unity and to the support of the Palestinian cause against Israel. The RCC reaffirmed the country's identity as part of the ''Arab nation'' and its state religion as Islam. It abolished parliamentary institutions, all legislative functions being assumed by the RCC, and continued the prohibition against political parties, in effect since 1952. The new regime categorically rejected communism—in large part because it was atheistic—and officially espoused an Arab interpretation of socialism that integrated Islamic principles with social, economic, and political reform. Libya had shifted, virtually overnight, from the camp of conservative Arab traditionalist states to that of the radical nationalist states.

Qadhafi and the Revolutionary Command Council

Muammar al Qadhafi was born in a beduin tent in the desert near Surt in 1942. His family belongs to a small tribe of Arabized Berbers, the Qadhafa, who are stockherders with holdings in the Hun Oasis. As a boy, Qadhafi attended a Muslim elementary school, during which time the major events occurring in the Arab world—the Arab defeat in Palestine in 1948 and Nasser's rise to power in Egypt in 1952—profoundly influenced him. He finished his secondary school studies under a private tutor in Misratah, paying particular attention to the study of history.

Qadhafi formed the essential elements of his political philosophy and his world view as a schoolboy. His education was entirely Arabic and strongly Islamic, much of it under Egyptian teachers. From this education and his desert background, Qadhafi derived his devoutness and his austere, even puritanical, code of personal conduct and morals. Essentially an Arab populist, Qadhafi held family ties to be important and upheld the beduin code of egalitarian simplicity and personal honor, distrusting sophisticated, axiomatically corrupt, urban politicians. Qadhafi's ideology, fed by Radio Cairo during his formative years, was an ideology of renascent Arab nationalism on the Egyptian model, with Nasser as hero and the Egyptian revolution as a guide.

In Libya, as in a number of other Arab countries, admission to the military academy and a career as an army officer became available to members of the lower economic strata only after independence. A military career offered a new opportunity for higher education, for upward economic and social mobility, and was for many the only available means of political action and rapid change. For Qadhafi and many of his fellow officers, who were animated by Nasser's brand of Arab nationalism as well as by an intense hatred of Israel, a military career was a revolutionary vocation.

Qadhafi entered the Libyan military academy at Benghazi in 1961 and, along with most of his colleagues from the RCC, graduated in the 1965–66 period. After receiving his commission, he was selected for several months of further training at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, England. Qadhafi's association with the Free Officers Movement began during his days as a cadet. The frustration and shame felt by Libyan officers who stood by helplessly at the time of Israel's swift and humiliating defeat of Arab armies on three fronts in 1967 fueled their determination to contribute to Arab unity by overthrowing the Libyan monarchy.

At the onset of RCC rule, Qadhafi and his associates insisted that their government would not rest on individual leadership, but rather on collegial decision making. However, Qadhafi's ascetic but colorful personality, striking appearance, energy, and intense ideological style soon created an impression of Qadhafi as dictator and the balance of the RCC as little more than his rubber stamp. This impression was inaccurate and although some members were more pragmatic, less demonstrative, or less ascetic than Qadhafi, the RCC showed a high degree of uniformity in political and economic outlook and in dedication. Fellow RCC members were loyal to Qadhafi as group leader, observers believed, not because of bureaucratic subservience to his dictatorial power, but because they were in basic agreement with him and with the revolutionary Arab nationalist ideals that he articulated.

Although the RCC's principle of conducting executive operations through a predominantly civilian cabinet of technician-administrators remained strong, circumstances and pressures brought about modifications. The first major cabinet change occurred soon after the first challenge to the regime. In December 1969, Adam Said Hawwaz, the minister of defense, and Musa Ahmad, the minister of interior, were arrested and accused of planning a coup. In the new cabinet formed after the crisis, Qadhafi, retaining his post as chairman of the RCC, also became prime minister and defense minister. Major Abdel Salaam Jallud, generally regarded as second only to Qadhafi in the RCC, became deputy prime minister and minister of interior. This cabinet totaled thirteen members, of whom five were RCC officers. The regime was challenged a second time in July 1970 when Abdullah Abid as Sanusi, a distant cousin of former King Idris, and members of the Sayf an Nasr clan of Fezzan were accused of plotting to seize power for themselves. After the plot was foiled, a substantial cabinet change occurred, RCC officers for the first time forming a majority among new ministers.

From the start, RCC spokesmen had indicated a serious intent to bring the "defunct regime" to account. In 1971 and 1972 more than 200 former government officials—including 7 prime ministers and numerous cabinet ministers—as well as former King Idris and members of the royal family, were brought to trial on charges of treason and corruption. Many, who like Idris lived in exile, were tried in absentia. Although a large percentage of those charged were acquitted, sentences of up to fifteen years in prison and heavy fines were imposed on others. Five death sentences, all but one of them in absentia, were pronounced, among them, one against Idris. Fatima, the former queen, and Hasan ar Rida were sentenced to five and three years in prison, respectively.

Meanwhile, Qadhafi and the RCC had disbanded the Sanusi order and officially downgraded its historical role in achieving Libya's independence. They attacked regional and tribal differences as obstructions in the path of social advancement and Arab unity, dismissing traditional leaders and drawing administrative boundaries across tribal groupings. A broad-based political party, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), was created in 1971 and modeled after Egypt's Arab Socialist Union. Its intent was to raise the political consciousness of Libyans and to aid the RCC in formulating public policy through debate in open forums. All other political parties were proscribed. Trade unions were incorporated into the ASU and strikes forbidden. The press, already subject to censorship, was officially conscripted in 1972 as an agent of the Revolution. Italians and what remained of the Jewish community were expelled from the country and their property confiscated.

After the September coup, United States forces proceeded deliberately with the planned withdrawal from Wheelus Air Base under the agreement made with the previous regime. The last of the American contingent turned the facility over to the Libyans on June 11, 1970, a date thereafter celebrated in Libya as a national holiday. As relations with the United States steadily deteriorated, Qadhafi forged close links with the Soviet Union and other East European countries, all the while maintaining Libya's stance as a nonaligned country and opposing the spread of communism in the Arab world. Libya's army—sharply increased from the 6,000-man pre-Revolutionary force that had been trained and equipped by the British—was armed with Soviet-built armor and missiles (see Foreign Military Assistance, ch. 5).

As months passed, Qadhafi, caught up in his apocalyptic visions of revolutionary pan-Arabism and Islam locked in mortal struggle with what he termed the encircling, demonic forces of reaction, imperialism, and Zionism, increasingly devoted attention to international rather than internal affairs. As a result, routine administrative tasks fell to Major Jallud, who in 1972 became prime minister in place of Qadhafi. Two years later Jallud assumed Qadhafi's remaining administrative and protocol duties to allow Qadhafi to devote his time to revolutionary theorizing. Qadhafi remained commander in chief of the armed forces and effective head of state. The foreign press speculated about an eclipse of his authority and personality within the RCC, but Qadhafi soon dispelled such theories by his measures to restructure Libyan society.

The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

The remaking of Libyan society that Qadhafi envisioned and to which he devoted his energies after the early 1970s formally began in 1973 with a so-called Cultural or Popular Revolution. The revolution was designed to combat bureaucratic inefficiency, lack of public interest and participation in the subnational governmental system, and problems of national political coordination. In an attempt to instill revolutionary fervor into his compatriots and to involve large numbers of them in political affairs, Qadhafi urged them to challenge traditional authority and to take over and run government organs themselves. The instrument for doing this was the ''people's committee.'' Within a few months, such committees were found all across Libya. They were functionally and geographically based and eventually became responsible for local and regional administration.

People's committees were established in such widely divergent organizations as universities, private business firms, government bureaucracies, and the broadcast media. Geographically based committees were formed at the governorate, municipal, and zone (lowest) levels. Seats on the people's committees at the zone level were filled by direct popular election; members so elected could then be selected for service at higher levels. By mid-1973 estimates of the number of people's committees ranged above 2,000.

In the scope of their administrative and regulatory tasks and the method of their members' selection, the people's committees embodied the concept of direct democracy that Qadhafi propounded in the first volume of *The Green Book*, which appeared in 1976. The same concept lay behind proposals to create a new political structure composed of ''people's congresses.'' The centerpiece of the new system was the General People's Congress (GPC—see Glossary), a national representative body intended to replace the RCC.

The new political order took shape in March 1977 when the GPC, at Qadhafi's behest, adopted the ''Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority'' and proclaimed the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The term *jamahiriya* is difficult to translate, but American scholar Lisa Anderson has suggested ''peopledom'' or ''state of the masses'' as a reasonable approximation of Qadhafi's concept that the people should govern themselves free of any constraints, especially those of the modern bureaucratic state. The GPC also adopted resolutions designating Qadhafi as its general secretary and creating the General Secretariat of the GPC, comprising the remaining members of the defunct RCC. It also appointed the General People's Committee, which replaced the

Council of Ministers, its members now called secretaries rather than ministers.

All legislative and executive authority was vested in the GPC. This body, however, delegated most of its important authority to its general secretary and General Secretariat and to the General People's Committee. Qadhafi, as general secretary of the GPC, remained the primary decision maker, just as he had been when chairman of the RCC. In turn, all adults had the right and duty to participate in the deliberations of their local Basic People's Congress (BPC), whose decisions were passed up to the GPC for consideration and implementation as national policy. The BPCs were in theory the repository of ultimate political authority and decision making, being the embodiment of what Qadhafi termed direct "people's power." The 1977 declaration and its accompanying resolutions amounted to a fundamental revision of the 1969 constitutional proclamation, especially with respect to the structure and organization of the government at both national and subnational levels.

Continuing to revamp Libya's political and administrative structure, Qadhafi introduced yet another element into the body politic. Beginning in 1977, "revolutionary committees" (see Glossary) were organized and assigned the task of "absolute revolutionary supervision of people's power"; that is, they were to guide the people's committees, raise the general level of political consciousness and devotion to revolutionary ideals, and guard against deviation and opposition in the BPCs. Filled with politically astute zealots, the ubiquitous revolutionary committees in 1979 assumed control of BPC elections. Although they were not official government organs, the revolutionary committees became another mainstay of the domestic political scene. As with the people's committees and other administrative innovations since the Revolution, the revolutionary committees fit the pattern of imposing a new element on the existing subnational system of government rather than eliminating or consolidating already existing structures. By the late 1970s, the result was an unnecessarily complex system of overlapping jurisdictions in which cooperation and coordination among different elements were compromised by ill-defined grants of authority and responsibility.

The changes in Libyan leadership since 1976 culminated in March 1979, when the GPC declared that the "vesting of power in the masses" and the "separation of the state from the revolution" were complete. Qadhafi relinquished his duties as general secretary of the GPC, being known thereafter as "the leader" or "Leader of the Revolution." He remained supreme commander of the armed forces. His replacement was Abdallah Ubaydi, who in effect had been prime minister since 1976. The RCC was formally dissolved and the government was again reorganized into people's committees. A new General People's Committee (cabinet) was selected, each of its "secretaries" becoming head of a specialized people's committee; the exceptions were the "secretariats" of petroleum, foreign affairs, and heavy industry, where there were no people's committees. A proposal was also made to establish a "people's army" by substituting a national militia, being formed in the late 1970s, for the national army. Although the idea surfaced again in early 1982, it did not appear to be close to implementation (see Conscription and the People's Militia, ch. 5).

Remaking of the economy was parallel with the attempt to remold political and social institutions. Until the late 1970s, Libya's economy was mixed, with a large role for private enterprise except in the fields of oil production and distribution, banking, and insurance. But according to volume two of Qadhafi's *The Green Book*, which appeared in 1978, private retail trade, rent, and wages were forms of "exploitation" that should be abolished. Instead, workers' self-management committees and profit participation partnerships were to function in public and private enterprises. A property law was passed that forbade ownership of more than one private dwelling, and Libyan workers took control of a large number of companies, turning them into state-run enterprises. Retail and wholesale trading operations were replaced by state-owned "people's supermarkets," where Libyans in theory could purchase whatever they needed at low prices (see Role of the Government, ch. 3). By 1981 the state had also restricted access to individual bank accounts to draw upon privately held funds for government projects.

While measures such as these undoubtedly benefited poorer Libyans, they created resentment and opposition among the newly dispossessed. The latter joined those already alienated, some of whom had begun to leave the country. By 1982 perhaps 50,000 to 100,000 Libyans had gone abroad; because many of the emigrants were among the enterprising and better educated Libyans, they represented a significant loss of managerial and technical expertise.

Some of the exiles formed active opposition groups. Although the groups were generally ineffective, Qadhafi nevertheless in early 1979 warned opposition leaders to return home immediately or face "liquidation." A wave of assassinations of prominent Libyan exiles, mostly in Western Europe, followed. Few opponents responded to the 1979 call to "repentance" or to a similar one issued in October 1982 in which Qadhafi once again threatened liquidation of the recalcitrant, the GPC having already declared their personal property forfeit.

Internal opposition came from elements of the middle class who opposed Qadhafi's economic reforms and from students and intellectuals who criticized his ideology. He also incurred the anger of the Islamic community for his unorthodox interpretations of the doctrine and traditions of Islam, his challenge to the authority of the religious establishment, and his contention that the ideas in *The Green Book* were compatible with and based upon Islam. Endowed Islamic properties (*habus*—see Glossary) were nationalized as part of Qadhafi's economic reforms, and he urged "the masses" to take over mosques.

The most serious challenges came from the armed forces, especially the officers' corps, and from the RCC. Perhaps the most important one occurred in 1975 when Minister of Planning and RCC member Major Umar Mihayshi and about thirty army officers attempted a coup after disagreements over politico-economic policies. The failure of the coup led to the flight of Mihayshi and part of the country's technocratic elite. In a move that signaled a new intolerance of dissent, the regime executed twenty-two of the accused army officers in 1977, the first such punishment in more than twenty years. Further executions of dissident army officers were reported in 1979, and in August 1980 several hundred people were allegedly killed in the wake of an unsuccessful army revolt centered in Tobruk.

Petroleum Politics

The economic base for Libya's Revolution has been its oil revenues. However, Libya's petroleum reserves were small compared with those of other major Arab petroleum-producing states. As a consequence, Libya was more ready to ration output in order to conserve its natural wealth and less responsive to moderating its price-rise demands than the other countries. Petroleum was seen both as a means of financing the economic and social development of a woefully underdeveloped country and as a political weapon to brandish in the Arab struggle against Israel.

The increase in production that followed the 1969 Revolution was accompanied by Libyan demands for higher petroleum prices, a greater share of revenues, and more control over the development of the country's petroleum industry (see Hydrocarbons and Mining, ch. 3). Foreign petroleum companies agreed to a price hike of more than three times the going rate (from US$0.90 to US$3.45 per barrel) early in 1971. In December the Libyan government suddenly nationalized the holdings of British Petroleum in

Libya and withdrew funds amounting to approximately US$550 million invested in British banks as a result of a foreign policy dispute. British Petroleum rejected as inadequate a Libyan offer of compensation, and the British treasury banned Libya from participation in the sterling area. In 1973 the Libyan government announced the nationalization of a controlling interest in all other petroleum companies operating in the country. This step gave Libya control of about 60 percent of its domestic oil production by early 1974, a figure that subsequently rose to 70 percent. Total nationalization was out of the question, given the need for foreign expertise and funds in oil exploration, production, and distribution.

Insisting on the continued use of petroleum as leverage against Israel and its supporters in the West, Libya strongly supported formation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1973, and Libyan militancy was partially responsible for OPEC measures to raise oil prices, impose embargoes, and gain control of production. As a consequence of such policies, Libya's oil production declined by half between 1970 and 1974, while revenues from oil exports more than quadrupled. Production continued to fall, bottoming out at an eleven-year low in 1975 at a time when the government was preparing to invest large amounts of petroleum revenues in other sectors of the economy. Thereafter, output stabilized at about 2 million barrels per day. Production and hence income declined yet again in the early 1980s because of the high price of Libyan crude and because recession in the industrialized world reduced demand for oil from all sources.

Libya's Five-Year Economic and Social Transformation Plan (1976–80), announced in 1975, was programmed to pump US$20 billion into the development of a broad range of economic activities that would continue to provide income after Libya's petroleum reserves had been exhausted. Agriculture was slated to receive the largest share of aid in an effort to make Libya self-sufficient in food and to help keep the rural population on the land (see Agriculture, ch. 3). Industry, of which there was little before the Revolution, also received a significant amount of funding in the first development plan as well as in the second, launched in 1981 (see Industry, ch. 3).

Libya continued to be plagued with a shortage of skilled labor, which had to be imported along with a broad range of consumer goods, both paid for with petroleum income. This same oil revenue, however, made possible a substantial improvement in the lives of virtually all Libyans. During the 1970s, the government succeeded in making major improvements in the general welfare of its citizens. By the 1980s Libyans enjoyed much improved housing and education, comprehensive social welfare services, and general standards of health that were among the highest in Africa (see Education; Health and Welfare, ch. 2).

Libya and Arab Unity

Qadhafi became the foremost exponent of Arab unity in the 1970s. Although all Arab governments endorsed the idea in principle, most observed that conditions were not right for putting it into practice or that unity would come only at the end of a long process of historical evolution. But Qadhafi rejected these views. As he conceived it, Arab unity was not an ideal but a realistic goal. He agreed that achieving Arab unity was a process that required sequential and intermediate stages of development, but the challenge he posed to other Arab leaders was that the process had to begin somewhere. Qadhafi expressed his determination to make a contribution to the process and offered Libya as the leavening agent (see Arab Relations, ch. 4).

Throughout 1970 Qadhafi consulted with Egyptian and Sudanese leaders about how to achieve some form of union. Nasser died in September 1970, but Egyptian participation in the unity talks continued under his successor, President Anwar as Sadat. It was the young Qadhafi, however, who moved to assume Nasser's mantle as the ideological leader of Arab nationalism.

At the request of Syria's new head of state, Lieutenant General Hafiz al Assad, the unity talks were expanded to include Syria. After further meetings, Qadhafi, Sadat, and Assad simultaneously announced in April 1971 the formation of a federation of Libya, Egypt, and Syria. The three heads of state signed a draft constitution in August that was overwhelmingly approved in referenda in all three countries. Sadat was named the first president of a council of heads of state that was to be the governing body for the Federation of Arab Republics (FAR), which came into existence on paper on January 1, 1972. Broad plans were drawn up to provide for a full-fledged merger affecting the legal systems, laws, employment, armed forces, and foreign policies of all three countries. Agreement on specific measures, however, eluded the FAR leaders, and the federation never progressed beyond making symbolic gestures of unity, such as the adoption of a common flag.

For Qadhafi, the FAR was a step on the road to achieving his ultimate goal: the comprehensive union of the ''Arab Nation.'' Although he remained the federation's most ardent backer, Qadhafi was never satisfied with the approach taken by his Egyptian and Syrian partners toward what he termed the ''battle plan'' for confrontation with Israel. Nonetheless, he initiated talks with Sadat on full political union between Egypt and Libya, which would merge the neighboring countries into a single state within the framework of the FAR.

At first glance, the proposed merger seemed like the mating of a whale with a minnow. Egypt's population was 34 million, Libya's under 2 million. But Libya's annual per capita income was fourteen times that of Egypt. Its fiscal reserves in 1972 were estimated at more than the equivalent of US$2.5 billion—at least ten times the amount held by Egypt.

Sadat pledged support for the project at the conclusion of a conference with Qadhafi in August 1972. Soon, however, real obstacles to the merger arose, including the serious personal disagreement that developed between the two leaders over a timetable for the union. Qadhafi called for immediate unification, the framing of a constitution to follow; Sadat insisted on step-by-step integration and thorough preparation of the instruments of union. During 1973 Qadhafi went so far as to offer to resign as Libyan head of state if his departure would placate Sadat, whose enthusiasm for the merger had waned conspicuously. Qadhafi also organized a "holy march" on Cairo by an estimated 30,000 Libyans to demonstrate Libyan support for the merger, but to no avail. The September 1, 1973, date that Sadat had set for final action to be taken on the merger passed without notice in Cairo, hardly a surprising development because many Egyptians as well as Libyans had come to oppose the project. Opposition stemmed from the historical antipathy between Egyptians and Libyans and such factors as the incompatibility of the two political systems, with Egypt being considerably more democratic than Libya as well as more secular in orientation.

Qadhafi envisioned the combination of Libya's wealth and Egypt's manpower and military capacity as the key element for the success of the Arab struggle against Israel. For example, to further this success, Libyan aircraft were secretly transferred to the Egyptian air force and subsequently saw action in the October 1973 War. It was that war with Israel, however, that proved to be the watershed in relations between the two Arab states. The joint Egyptian-Syrian operation came as a surprise to Qadhafi, who had been excluded from its planning by Sadat and Assad. The Libyan leader castigated his erstwhile FAR partners for wasting resources in fighting a war for limited objectives, and he was appalled by Sadat's agreement to a cease-fire after the successful Israeli counteroffensive. He accused the Egyptian leader of cowardice and of purposely sabotaging the federation. In response, Sadat revealed that he had intervened in 1973 to prevent a planned Libyan submarine attack on the S.S. *Queen Elizabeth II* while the British liner was carrying a Jewish tourist group in the Mediterranean. Thereafter, relations between the two leaders degenerated into a series of charges and countercharges that effectively ended any talk of merger.

In the mid-1970s, Qadhafi undertook a major armaments program paid for by the higher post-1973 oil revenues. He wished to play a major role in Middle East affairs based on military strength and increasing uneasiness with Sadat's policies. To acquire sophisticated weapons, Qadhafi turned to the Soviet Union, with which his relations grew closer as Sadat leaned more and more toward a peaceful solution of the Arab-Israeli problem. Mutual suspicion between Sadat and Qadhafi, plus Egyptian charges of Libyan subversion, led to a brief but sharp shooting war along their common frontier in July 1977. Egyptian forces advanced a short distance into Libya before Algerian mediation ended the fighting. The conflict occasioned the departure from Libya of thousands of Egyptians employed in the petroleum industry, agriculture, commerce, education, and the bureaucracy, causing disruption of Libyan economic activities and public services.

The major break between Egypt and Libya came over Sadat's journey to Jerusalem the following November and the conclusion of a separate peace with Israel in September 1978. Not only were diplomatic relations between Egypt and Libya broken, but Libya played a leading role in organizing the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front in December 1977. The front's members were Libya, Syria, Algeria, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen), and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), all of whom bitterly opposed Sadat's peace initiatives. Qadhafi favored the isolation of Egypt as punishment, because he adamantly rejected a peaceful solution with Israel. He subsequently toned down his more extreme rhetoric in the interest of forging unity among Arab states in opposing the policies of President Sadat and his successor, Husni Mubarak.

Qadhafi's quest for unity on his western border was similarly fruitless. A proposed union with Tunisia in 1974 was immediately repudiated by Habib Bourguiba, Tunisia's president. This incident, together with Tunisian accusations of Libyan subversion and a quarrel over demarcation of the continental shelf with its oil fields, thoroughly soured relations. Then in early 1980 a group of disgruntled Tunisians staged an abortive revolt at Gafsa in central Tunisia, disguised as a cross-border attack from Algeria. Bourguiba accused Qadhafi of engineering the incident and suspended diplomatic relations with Tripoli. Qadhafi denied involvement, but relations between Tripoli and Tunis remained at low ebb.

Having failed to achieve union with Egypt and Tunisia, Qadhafi turned once again to Syria. In September 1980, Assad agreed to yet another merger with Libya. This attempt at a unified state came at a time when both countries were diplomatically isolated. As part of the agreement, Libya undertook to pay a debt of US$1 billion that Syria owed the Soviet Union for weapons.

Ironically, this successful union with Syria confounded Qadhafi's pan-Arab ambitions. When war broke out between Iran and Iraq in September 1980, Libya and Syria were the only Arab states to give unqualified support to non-Arab Iran. At the same time, the war brought a break in Libya's relations with Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Yet another obstacle arose in December 1981 when Qadhafi had to contend with the first of two airline hijackings carried out by Lebanese Shias seeking information about their leader, Imam Musa Sadr, who had disappeared while on a visit to Libya in 1978. Both hijackings ended without release of or news about Musa Sadr, whose disappearance badly tarnished Libya's image among Shias in Lebanon, Iran, and elsewhere.

Libyan Ventures in Sub-Saharan Africa

Qadhafi's approach to sub-Saharan Africa revolved around several basic concerns: the attempt to increase Libyan influence in Muslim or partly Muslim states, promotion of Islamic unity, and support, often uncritical, for African liberation movements. One of Qadhafi's frequently stated goals was the creation of a Saharan Islamic state, but critics accused him of being more interested in empire than in fostering and promoting Islam. The aforementioned objectives governed his relations with African states, and nowhere more so than in neighboring Chad and Sudan.

Libya had been deeply involved in Chad since the early 1970s. Reasons for this involvement included tribal and religious affinities between northern Chad and southern Libya and a contested common border dating back to the colonial period. In 1973 Libya occupied the Aouzou Strip. The territory, which allegedly contains significant deposits of uranium and other minerals, gave the Libyans a solid foothold in Chad. From his Aouzou Strip base Qadhafi also gave moral and material aid to northern dissidents in the prolonged Chadian civil war. In the late 1970s, these dissidents were led by Goukouni Oueddei, the leader of the Tebu (see Peoples of Libya, ch. 2).

After failure in the 1970s of mediation efforts in which Libya was deeply involved, Qadhafi provided equipment and troops to Goukouni that enabled him to capture N'Djamena, Chad's capital, in December 1980. In January the two leaders called for a merger of their countries, but the outcry among a number of West African states and from France, the former Chadian colonial power, was so great that the proposal was dropped. Even within Goukouni's own forces, there was considerable opposition to Libya's presence and tactics. Under persistent international pressure, Libya's estimated 10,000 to 15,000 troops withdrew to the Aouzou Strip in November 1981. Opposition forces under Hissein Habré subsequently drove Goukouni back north, leaving Habré in control of N'Djamena, from which he pressed unsuccessfully for Libya's withdrawal from Aouzou.

During the 1970s, relations between Libya and Sudan went from bad to worse. At the beginning of the decade, Qadhafi aided Sudanese President Jaafar an Numayri against leftist plotters. But by the mid-1970s, relations had turned hostile after Numayri accused Libya of subversion and of responsibility for several coup attempts. Thereafter, Sudan belonged to the camp of Qadhafi's sworn opponents. In 1980 Numayri condemned the Libyan invasion of Chad, being especially fearful of Libyan meddling in Sudan's troubled border province of Darfur. In early 1981, Numayri called for Libya's expulsion from the Arab League and for a joint effort to overthrow or kill Qadhafi. A few months later, he ordered Libyan diplomats to leave Khartoum in the wake of a bombing of the Chadian embassy linked to Libyan instigation.

Libyan intervention in Uganda in the 1970s constituted a special case. There Qadhafi was interested less in unity than in bolstering a friendly Islamic regime against both internal and external opposition. Beginning in 1972, Qadhafi gave financial and military backing to Idi Amin Dada in return for Amin's disavowal of Uganda's previously close relationship with Israel. Thereafter, Qadhafi continued to back Amin, despite the wide condemnation of Amin's brutal rule. In late 1978 and early 1979, when combined Tanzanian-Ugandan forces drove Amin from power, Qadhafi unsuccessfully airlifted troops and supplies in Amin's defense, and he granted the Ugandan leader temporary asylum in Tripoli.

Relations with the United States and Western Europe

In the 1970s and early 1980s, Libya was widely suspected of financing international terrorist activities and political subversion around the world. Recruits from various national liberation movements reportedly received training in Libya, and Libyan financing of Palestinian activities against Israel was openly acknowledged. There were also allegations of Libyan assistance to such diverse groups as Lebanese leftists, the Irish Republican Army, Muslim rebels in the Philippines, and left-wing extremists in Europe and

Japan. Some observers thought support was more verbal than material. However, in 1981 the GPC declared Libyan support of national liberation movements a matter of principle, an act that lent credence to charges of support for terrorism.

Support for international terrorism was a major issue in Libya's relations with the United States and Western Europe. The United States, in particular, viewed Libya's diplomatic and material support for what Tripoli called "liberation movements" as aid and comfort to international terrorists. In general, after the early 1970s relations between the two countries went from bad to worse, even while the United States continued to import Libyan crude.

Qadhafi opposed United States diplomatic initiatives and military presence in the Middle East. As a protest against Washington's policies in Iran, the United States embassy in Tripoli was stormed and burned in December 1979. In the late 1970s, Washington blocked delivery to Libya of equipment judged of potential military value and in May 1981 ordered Libyan diplomatic personnel to leave the United States to prevent assassination of anti-Qadhafi Libyan dissidents. The most serious incident occurred in August 1981 when United States jets shot down two Libyan jet fighters during naval maneuvers in the Gulf of Sidra (see Relations with the United States and Western Europe, ch. 4). That same month, Libya signed an economic and political agreement with Ethiopia and South Yemen, the so-called Tripartite Agreement, aimed at countering Western, and primarily American, interests in the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean. After a series of joint consultations, however, the pact became largely a dead letter.

Libya's income from oil came from sales to Western Europe as well as to the United States, and to ensure a steady supply of oil most European nations tried to remain on reasonable terms with their Libyan supplier. Some protests arose over the wave of political assassinations of Libyan exiles in Europe in 1980, but only Britain with its independent supply of oil took a strong stand on the issue. Qadhafi's call that same year for compensation from Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), and Italy for destruction of Libyan property in World War II brought no response, even when the Libyan leader threatened to seize property if adequate compensation were not negotiated.

By the early 1980s, Libya was a country embroiled in controversy. Libyan ventures in Chad and elsewhere in North Africa and the Middle East had earned a good deal of opprobrium for Qadhafi, who often pursued his goal of Arab and Islamic unity and extended Libyan influence at what seemed any price. Indeed, suspicion if not hostility were the usual response to Qadhafi's initiatives in the Arab and Western world.

Domestically, the government had attempted to ensure a more equitable distribution of wealth, a step that pleased many but by no means all of its citizens. A new political system with new institutions was also in place with the aim of involving as many citizens as possible in governing themselves. But overlapping jurisdictions and responsibilities had led to confusion, and there were questions as to the viability of the committee system of government. A sizable number of Libyans seemed uninterested in political participation, while others had gone into opposition, active or passive, at home and abroad. The country's oil revenues had been channeled into agricultural and industrial projects that the regime hoped would provide employment and lessen dependence upon imports and foreign labor. Even in these areas, the results were less promising than had been expected, and falling oil prices diminished the financial resources that could be devoted to continued economic and foreign policy initiatives.

The decline in oil revenues and consequent economic slowdown, the continued reliance upon non-Libyan expertise, and the generally unfavorable state of foreign relations and persistent dissidence in the military and society at large posed grave problems for the Qadhafi regime in the early 1980s.

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Two of the best English-language sources on Libya are John Wright's *Libya*, which covers Libyan history prior to the 1969 Revolution, and his *Libya: A Modern History*, devoted to the course of the Revolution during the 1970s. Jamil M. Abu-Nasr's detailed *A History of the Maghrib* views Libya in the larger context of regional history but carries the narrative only up to 1951. The various works of the archaeologist Richard G. Goodchild are of primary importance for the study of Libya in antiquity. Kathleen Freeman utilizes both fable and fact in her delightful and informative historical essay on Cyrene in *Greek City-States*. For a treatment of the late medieval period, see Robert Brunschvig's *La Berbérie orientale sous les Hafsides*. Much material of value for an understanding of the early Ottoman period in North Africa is found in Fernand Braudel's classic *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. Seton Dearden's *A Nest of Corsairs* is the well-documented but fast-moving story of the Karamanli dynasty. Few works on modern Libya compare in scholarly significance to Edward Evans-Pritchard's monograph *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*. Claudio G. Segrè's *Fourth Shore* studies the colonial period from an Italian vantage point and submits findings that call for a reassessment of the demographic colonization of Libya. Several of the essays in E. G. H. Joffe and K. S. McLachlan, *Social and Economic Development of Libya*, cover important aspects of Libya in the present century. Lisa Anderson examines the mistrust of the modern bureaucratic state that is so peculiarly Libyan and that characterizes Qadhafi's political philosophy in *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830–1980*. Richard B. Parker's *North Africa* offers an incisive overview of contemporary Libya that emphasizes Qadhafi's role in determining state policies. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 2. The Society and Its Environment

A young Berber woman

LIBYAN SOCIETY IN the late 1980s was in a state of transition from one set of structures and values to another. For nearly two decades the country's leader, Muammar al Qadhafi, had sought to transform Libya from an underdeveloped backwater into a modern socialist state compatible with the dictates of the Quran and the heritage of Islam. The regime's policies and goals often aroused controversy as the country moved away from the Libyan-Arab mold of the past in which heredity and patronage determined social distinction and toward the new egalitarian society that was the Qadhafi regime's ideal.

The changes the society was undergoing were made possible in large measure by petroleum wealth, which had converted the country from one of the world's poorest at the time of independence in 1951 to one of the most prosperous. By the 1980s, most Libyans enjoyed educational opportunities, health care, and housing that were among the best in Africa and the Middle East. Responsibility for the care of the old and the needy had been largely shifted from the extended family to a comprehensive system of social security. Education and medical care were free, and when necessary the state subsidized housing and other necessities. Life expectancy, perhaps the ultimate measure of living standards, had lengthened by ten years since 1960, and social mobility was much improved.

In 1984 the population reached 3.6 million and was growing at about 4 percent a year, one of the highest rates in the world. Unlike its neighbors, the Libyan government welcomed this rate of growth, which it hoped would eventually remedy the country's shortage of labor. The population was overwhelmingly concentrated along the Mediterranean coast, much of it around Benghazi and Tripoli. Villagers and rural tribe members continued to migrate to cities and towns, seeking better-paying jobs in industry or in the service sector of the modern economy. The number of jobs far exceeded the number of qualified Libyans; consequently, the population included at least 260,000 expatriate workers who were essential for the functioning of the economy.

Roughly one-half of the population was under the age of fifteen. The prospects for future employment and a fruitful life were such that Libyan youth for the most part were not the discontented lot found elsewhere in North Africa.

The status of women continued to undergo modification at the behest of the Revolution's leaders. Especially in urban areas, women in ever-greater numbers were entering schools and universities and finding employment in professions newly opened to them. Although tradition remained quite strong, the role of women was in the midst of what was for Libya a remarkable transformation.

In spite of the gains of the Revolution, however, Libyan society was deeply divided. Little sense of national unity, identity, or purpose had developed, and the old ethnic and geographic divisions among Cyrenaica, Fezzan, and Tripolitania were still very evident. Alienation from the Qadhafi regime and its policies was widespread, a sentiment reinforced by shortages of consumer goods and by persistent exhortations to participate in governing the country. Whole segments of the populace were so disaffected that they either did not participate or did so only minimally, retreating into apathy and private matters. Qadhafi's campaign to discredit Islamic authorities and creeds and to enlist young women in the armed forces similarly offended Libyan sensitivities.

Most foreign observers believed that the regime faced a difficult task in convincing the majority of Libyans of the need for further social change. In the 1980s, Libyan society remained profoundly conservative and resistant to the impulses for change that emanated from its leaders. The wisdom of current social policies was being questioned, and it was obvious that many Libyans were not enthusiastic about the course of action that the Revolutionary government had laid out.

Geography

Regions

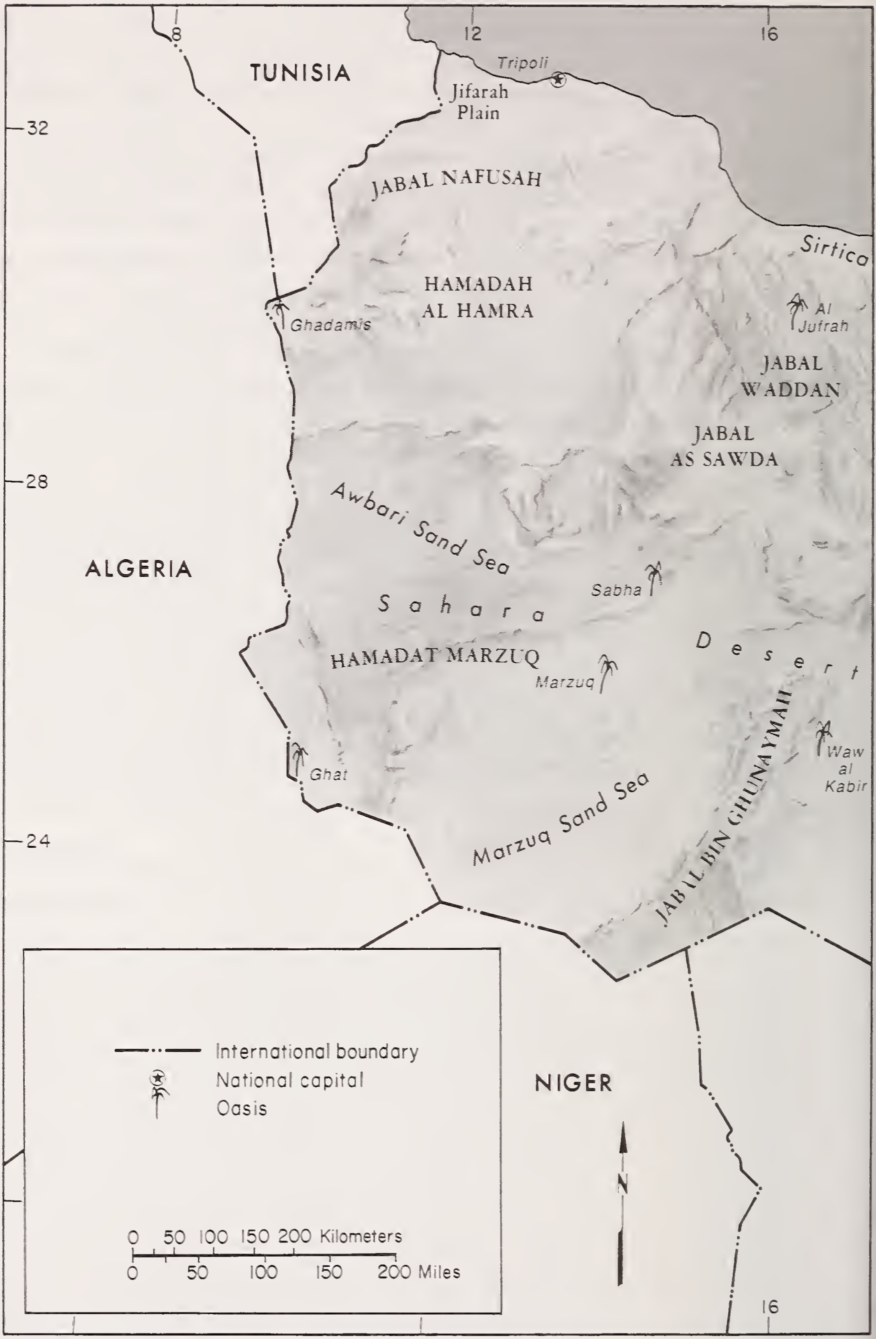
With an area of 1,760,000 square kilometers and a Mediterranean coastline of nearly 1,800 kilometers, Libya is fourth in size among the countries of Africa and fifteenth among the countries of the world. Although the oil discoveries of the 1960s have brought it immense petroleum wealth, at the time of its independence it was an extremely poor desert state whose only important physical asset appeared to be its strategic location at the midpoint of Africa's northern rim. It lay within easy reach of the major European nations and linked the Arab countries of North Africa with those of the Middle East, facts that throughout history had made its urban centers bustling crossroads rather than isolated backwaters without external social influences. Consequently, an immense social gap developed between the cities, cosmopolitan and peopled largely by foreigners, and the desert hinterland, where tribal chieftains ruled in isolation and where social change was minimal.

The Mediterranean coast and the Sahara Desert are the country's most prominent natural features (see fig. 4). There are several highlands but no true mountain ranges except in the largely empty southern desert near the Chadian border, where the Tibesti Massif rises to over 2,200 meters. A relatively narrow coastal strip and highland steppes immediately south of it are the most productive agricultural regions. Still farther south, a pastoral zone of sparse grassland gives way to the vast Sahara Desert, a barren wasteland of rocky plateaus and sand. It supports minimal human habitation, and agriculture is possible only in a few scattered oases.

Between the productive lowland agricultural zones lies the Gulf of Sidra, where along the coast a stretch of 500 kilometers of wasteland desert extends northward to the sea. This barren zone, known as the Sirtica, has great historical significance. To its west, the area known as Tripolitania has characteristics and a history similar to those of nearby Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. It is considered with these states to constitute a supranational region called the Maghrib (see Glossary). To the east, the area known historically as Cyrenaica has been closely associated with the Arab states of the Middle East. In this sense, the Sirtica marks the dividing point between the Maghrib and the Mashriq (see Glossary).

Along the shore of Tripolitania for more than 300 kilometers, coastal oases alternate with sandy areas and lagoons. Inland from these lies the Jifarah Plain, a triangular area of some 15,000 square kilometers. About 120 kilometers inland the plain terminates in an escarpment that rises to form the Jabal (mountain) Nafusah, a plateau with elevations of up to 1,000 meters.

In Cyrenaica there are fewer coastal oases, and the Marj Plain—the lowland area corresponding to the Jifarah Plain of Tripolitania—covers a much smaller area. The lowlands form a crescent about 210 kilometers long between Benghazi and Darnah and extend inland a maximum of 50 kilometers. Elsewhere along the Cyrenaican coast, the precipice of an arid plateau reaches to the sea. Behind the Marj Plain, the terrain rises abruptly to form Jabal al Akhdar (Green Mountain), so called because of its leafy cover of pine, juniper, cypress, and wild olive. It is a limestone plateau with maximum altitudes of about 900 meters. From Jabal al Akhdar, Cyrenaica extends southward across a barren grazing belt that gives way to the Sahara Desert, which extends still farther southwest across the Chad frontier. Unlike Cyrenaica, Tripolitania does not extend southward into the desert. The southwestern desert, known as Fezzan, was administered separately during both the Italian regime and the federal period of the Libyan monarchy. In 1969 the Revolutionary government officially changed the regional


8
12
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TUNISIA
Tripoli
Jifarah Plain
JABAL NAFUSAH
HAMADAH AL HAMRA
Ghadamis
Sirtica
Al Jufrah
JABAL WADDAN
JABAL AS SAWDA
ALGERIA
Awbari Sand Sea
Sahara
Sabha
HAMADAT MARZUQ
Marzuq
Desert
JABAL BIN GHUNAYMAH
Waw al Kabir
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International boundary
National capital
Oasis
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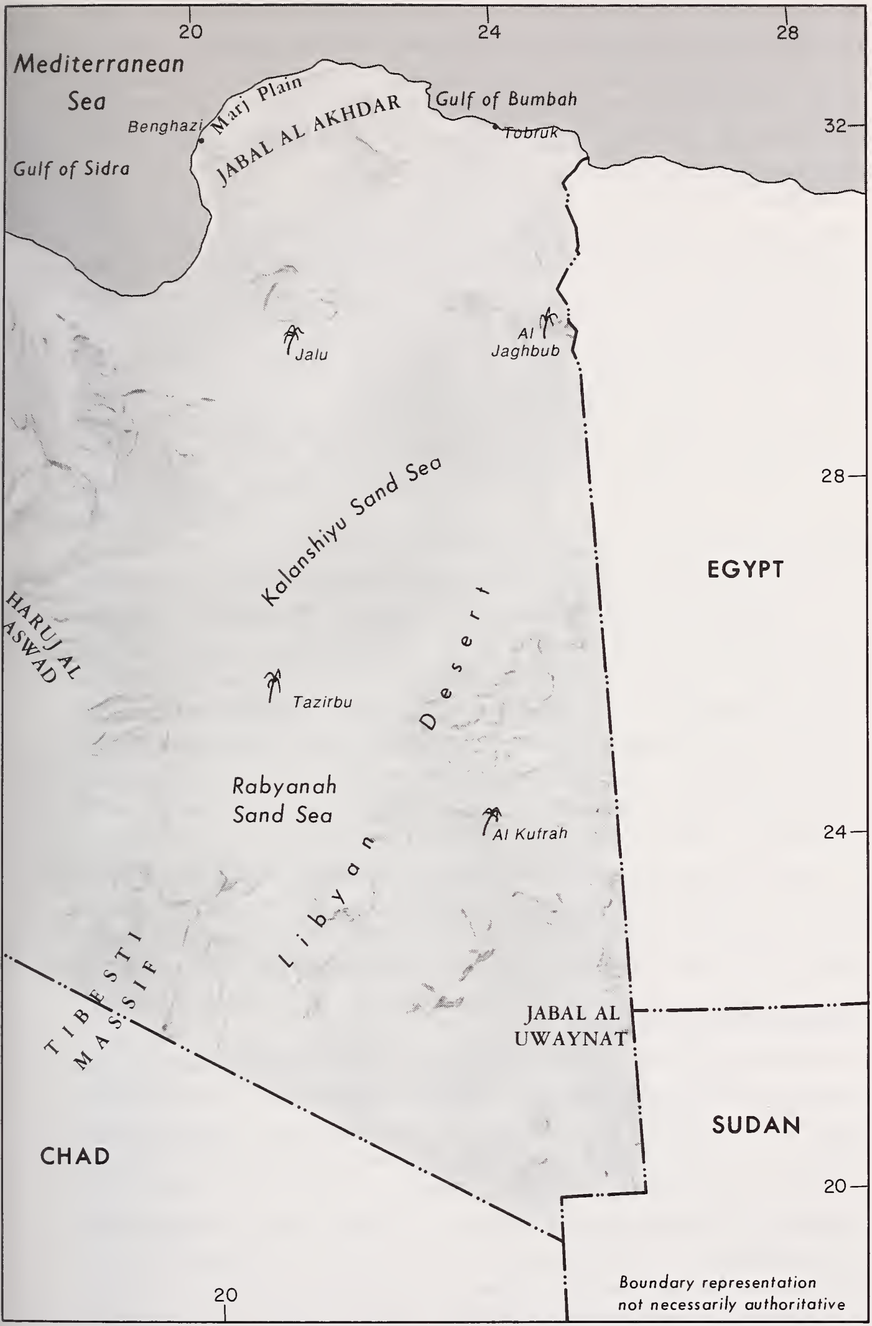
Figure 4. Physical Features


20
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Mediterranean Sea
Gulf of Sidra
Benghazi
Marj Plain
JABAL AL AKHDAR
Gulf of Bumbah
Tobruk
Jalu
Al Jaghbub
Kalanshiyu Sand Sea
HARUJ AL ASWAD
Tazirbu
Rabyanah Sand Sea
Libyan Desert
Al Kufrah
EGYPT
TIBESTI MASSIF
JABAL AL UWAYNAT
SUDAN
CHAD
Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

designation of Tripolitania to Western Libya, of Cyrenaica to Eastern Libya, and of Fezzan to Southern Libya; however, the old names were intimately associated with the history of the area, and during the 1970s they continued to be used frequently. Cyrenaica comprises 51 percent, Fezzan 33 percent, and Tripolitania 16 percent of the country's area.

Before Libya achieved independence, its name was seldom used other than as a somewhat imprecise geographical expression. The people preferred to be referred to as natives of one of the three constituent regions. The separateness of the regions is much more than simply geographical and political, for they have evolved largely as different socioeconomic entities—each with a culture, social structure, and values different from the others. Cyrenaica became Arabized at a somewhat earlier date than Tripolitania, and beduin tribes dominated it. The residual strain of the indigenous Berber inhabitants, however, still remains in Tripolitania. Fezzan has remained a kind of North African outback, its oases peopled largely by minority ethnic groups.

The border between Tripolitania and Tunisia is subject to countless crossings by legal and illegal migrants. No natural frontier marks the border, and the ethnic composition, language, value systems, and traditions of the two peoples are nearly identical. The Cyrenaica region is contiguous with Egypt, and here, too, the border is not naturally defined; illegal as well as legal crossings are frequent. In contrast, Fezzan's borders with Algeria, Niger, and Chad are seldom crossed because of the almost total emptiness of the desert countryside.

Other factors, too, such as the traditional forms of land tenure, have varied in the different regions. In the 1980s their degree of separateness was still sufficiently pronounced to represent a significant obstacle to efforts toward achieving a fully unified Libya.

Climate and Hydrology

Within Libya as many as five different climatic zones have been recognized, but the dominant climatic influences are Mediterranean and Saharan. In most of the coastal lowland, the climate is Mediterranean, with warm summers and mild winters. Rainfall is scanty, and the dry climate results in a year-round 98-percent visibility. The weather is cooler in the highlands, and frosts occur at maximum elevations. In the desert interior the climate has very hot summers and extreme diurnal temperature ranges.

Less than 2 percent of the national territory receives enough rainfall for settled agriculture, the heaviest precipitation occurring in the Jabal al Akhdar zone of Cyrenaica, where annual rainfall of

400 to 600 millimeters is recorded. All other areas of the country receive less than 400 millimeters, and in the Sahara 50 millimeters or less occurs. Rainfall is often erratic, and a pronounced drought may extend over two seasons. For example, epic floods in 1945 left Tripoli under water for several days, but two years later an unprecedentedly severe drought caused the loss of thousands of head of cattle.

Deficiency in rainfall is reflected in an absence of permanent rivers or streams, and the approximately twenty perennial lakes are brackish or salty. In the 1980s, these circumstances severely limited the country's agricultural potential as a basis for the sound and varied economy Qadhafi sought to establish. The allocation of limited water is considered of sufficient importance to warrant the existence of the Secretariat of Dams and Water Resources, and damaging a source of water can be penalized by a heavy fine or imprisonment.

The government has constructed a network of dams in wadis, dry watercourses that become torrents after heavy rains. These dams are used both as water reservoirs and for flood and erosion control. The wadis are heavily settled because soil in their bottoms is often suitable for agriculture, and the high water table in their vicinity makes them logical locations for digging wells. In many wadis, however, the water table is declining at an alarming rate, particularly in areas of intensive agriculture and near urban centers. The government has expressed concern over this problem and because of it has diverted water development projects, particularly around Tripoli, to localities where the demand on underground water resources is less intense. It has also undertaken extensive reforestation projects (see Fishing and Forestry, ch. 3).

There are also numerous springs, those best suited for future development occurring along the scarp faces of the Jabal Nafusah and the Jabal al Akhdar. The most talked-about of the water resources, however, are the great subterranean aquifers of the desert. The best known of these lies beneath Al Kufrah Oasis in southeastern Cyrenaica, but an aquifer with even greater reputed capacity is located near the oasis community of Sabha in the southwestern desert. In the late 1970s, wells were drilled at Al Kufrah and at Sabha as part of a major agricultural development effort. An even larger undertaking is the so-called Great Man-Made River, initiated in 1984 (see Land Use and Irrigation, ch. 3). It is intended to tap the tremendous aquifers of the Al Kufrah, Sarir, and Sabha oases and to carry the resulting water to the Mediterranean coast for use in irrigation and industrial projects.

Population

As of 1987, the most recent census was that taken in July 1984, but the only available data showed a provisional population figure of 3.637 million inhabitants—one of the smallest totals on the African continent. Of these, an estimated 1.950 million were men, and 1.687 million women. Having slightly more men than women in the population was characteristic of developing countries such as Libya where health practices and sanitation were fast improving but where female mortality relating to childbirth and favoritism toward male over female children caused a slight skewing of the population profile. In addition, underreporting of females is fairly common in many Muslim societies.

The 1984 population total was an increase from the 2.29 million reported in 1973 and 1.54 million in 1964. Included in the census were at least 260,000 expatriate workers, but the total number of foreigners in Libya in 1984 was unavailable. This uncertainty was in keeping with a general lack of reliable, current, social statistics for Libya in the 1980s, in marked contrast with the situation a decade earlier.

The population was exceptionally young and was growing at a rapid pace. Estimates placed those under the age of fifteen at up to half the total population. Based on results of the 1984 census, the United Nations (UN) placed the annual rate of increase for the 1980-84 period at an extremely high 4.5 percent, but the Central Bank of Libya placed the figure at 3.9 percent annually for nationals only. Official sources put the average annual growth rate for the 1970-86 period at 4 percent, a figure that agreed with World Bank (see Glossary) data; the bank projected that this rate would prevail until the year 2000, when Libya's population would total 6 million.

This high rate of population increase reflected an official policy of fostering rapid growth to meet labor needs and to fuel economic development. It was also well above comparable rates in other Maghribi states, which had instituted family planning programs to contain their burgeoning numbers. Libya had no such national program. On the contrary, the government offered incentives to encourage births and had improved health facilities to ensure infant survivability. Libyan population policy thus emphasized growth over restraint, large families over small ones, and an ever-expanding population—luxuries Libya felt it could afford, given the vastness of its wealth in petroleum and area.

According to UN estimates for the years 1980-85, life expectancy was fifty-six years for men and fifty-nine years for women, a gain of more than ten years for each sex since 1960. The crude birth rate was 46 per 1,000, down 7 percent since 1965, while the crude death rate was 11 per 1,000, a decline of 40 percent over 20 years. The infant mortality rate had similarly declined from 140 deaths per 1,000 in 1965 to 92 in 1985, still high by Western standards but not by those of North Africa.

The population was by no means distributed evenly across the country. About 65 percent resided in Tripolitania, 30 percent in Cyrenaica, and 5 percent in Fezzan, a breakdown that had not changed appreciably for at least 30 years. Within the two northern geographic regions, the population was overwhelmingly concentrated along the Mediterranean littoral. Along the coast, the density was estimated at more than fifty inhabitants per square kilometer, whereas it fell to less than one per square kilometer in the interior. The average for the country as a whole was usually placed at two.

In the 1980s, Libya was still predominantly a rural country, even though a large percentage of its people were concentrated in the cities and nearby intensively cultivated agricultural zones of the coastal plains. Under the impact of heavy and sustained country-to-town migration, the urban sector continued to grow rapidly, averaging 8 percent annually in the early 1980s. Reliable assessments held the country to be about 40 percent urban as compared with a 1964 figure of 27 percent. Some sources, such as the World Bank, placed the rate of urbanization at more than 60 percent, but this figure was probably based on 1973 census data that reflected a radical change in the definition of urban population rather than an unprecedented surge of rural inhabitants into cities and towns. In spite of sizable internal migration into urban centers, particularly Benghazi and Tripoli, Libya remained less urbanized than almost any other Arab country. The government was concerned about this continual drain from the countryside. Since the late 1970s, it had sponsored a number of farming schemes in the desert, designed in part to encourage rural families to remain on the land rather than to migrate to more densely populated areas.

In the early 1980s, the urban concentrations of Tripoli and Benghazi dominated the country. These two cities and the neighboring coastal regions contained more than 90 percent of Libya's population and nearly all of its urban centers, but they occupied less than 10 percent of the land area. Several factors accounted for their dominance, such as higher rates of fertility, declining death rates because of improved health and sanitation measures, and long-term internal migration.

As the capital of the country, Tripoli was the larger and more important of the two cities. Greater Tripoli was composed of six municipalities that stretched nearly 100 kilometers along the coast and about 50 inland. At the heart of this urban complex was the city of Tripoli, the 1984 population of which was 990,000 and which contained several distinct zones. The *medina* was the oldest quarter, many of its buildings dating to the Ottoman era (see Ottoman Regency, ch. 1). Here a traditionally structured Islamic society composed of artisans, religious scholars and leaders, shopkeepers, and merchants had survived into the mid-twentieth century. The manufacture of traditional handicrafts, such as carpets, leather goods, copper ware, and pottery, was centered in the *medina.*

The Italian city, constructed between 1911 and 1951 beyond the *medina*, was designed for commercial and administrative purposes. It featured wide avenues, piazzas, multistoried buildings, parks, and residential areas where Italian colonials once lived. The Libyan-built modern sector reflected the needs of government, the impact of large-scale internal migration, new industrialization, and oil income. Independence brought rapid rural-to-urban migration as a result of employment opportunities in construction, transportation, and municipal services, especially after the discovery of oil. This period also brought new government facilities, apartment buildings, and the first public housing projects as well as such industries as food-processing, textiles, and oil refining.

Metropolitan Tripoli sprawled in an arc around the harbor and *medina.* In addition to its political, commercial, and residential structures and functions, the city was a seat of learning and scholarship centered in religious seminaries, technical colleges, and a university (see Education, this ch.). Planners hoped to channel future growth east and west along the coast and to promote expansion of surrounding towns in an effort to reduce urban density and to preserve contiguous agricultural zones. They also envisaged revitalization of the *medina* as they strove to preserve the city's architectural and cultural heritage in the midst of twentieth-century urbanization.

As a consequence of its small population and work force, Libya has had to import a large number of foreign workers. Expatriate workers, most of them from nearby Arab countries, flowed into Libya after the discovery of oil. There were about 17,000 of them in 1964, but the total had risen to 64,000 by 1971 and to 223,000 in 1975, when foreign workers made up almost 33 percent of the labor force. The official number of foreign workers in Libya in 1980 was 280,000, but private researchers argued persuasively that the true number was more than 500,000 because of underreporting and illegal entry.

The most acute demand was for managerial and professional personnel. A large percentage of the expatriates were unskilled laborers, who were widely distributed throughout the economy. On paper, there was ample legislation to ensure that foreigners were given employment only where qualified Libyans could not be found. But the demand for labor of all kinds was such that the availability of aliens made it possible for Libyans to select the choice positions for themselves and leave the less desirable ones to foreigners.

In 1980 nonnationals were found mainly in construction work, where they numbered almost 130,000 or 46 percent of those employed in that industry, according to official statistics. Their numbers in such work were expected to decline after the mid-1980s, at the same time that ever-larger numbers of foreigners were expected to fill jobs in manufacturing, where they constituted more than 8 percent of the 1980 labor force. Significant numbers of expatriates were found in agriculture (8 percent) and education (10 percent) as well. Few were employed in the petroleum sector, however, only 3,000 or 1 percent of all foreign workers in 1980.

In 1983 there were more than 560,000 foreigners resident in Libya, about 18 percent of the total population, according to the Secretariat of Planning. By far the most numerous were Egyptians (174,000) and Tunisians (73,600); the largest Western groups were Italians (14,900) and British (10,700). During 1984, however, a large portion of the foreign work force departed as a result of restrictions on repatriation of earnings. In 1985, for reasons that appeared more political than economic, Libya expelled tens of thousands of workers, including 20,000 Egyptians, 32,000 Tunisians, and several thousand from Mali and Niger. This exodus continued the following year when some 25,000 Moroccans were forced to depart.

The number of resident foreigners thus declined drastically in the mid-1980s. The exact dimensions of the decline as well as its impact upon the country, however, remained unclear. Minimum estimates of the number of nonnationals still in Libya in 1987 ranged upward of 200,000, a reasonable figure given Libya's dependence upon imported labor for essential skills and services.

Ethnic Groups and Languages

Peoples of Libya

The present population of Libya is composed of several distinct groups. By far the majority identify themselves as Arabs. Arab invaders brought Arabic language and culture to Libya between the seventh to the eleventh centuries, but intermarriage with Berbers and other indigenous peoples over the centuries has produced so mixed a strain that few Libyans can substantiate claims to pure or even predominantly Arab ancestry. These Arabic-speaking Muslims of mixed Arab and Berber ancestry make up 90 percent of the country's population. Berbers, other indigenous minority peoples, and black Africans make up most of the remainder, although small scattered groups of Greeks, Muslim Cretans, Maltese, and Armenians make up long-established communities in urban areas.

Arabs

The successive waves of Arabs who arrived beginning in the seventh century imposed Islam and the Arabic language along with their political domination. Conversion to Islam was largely complete by 1300, but Arabic replaced the indigenous Berber dialects more slowly. Initially, many Berbers fled into the desert, resisting Islam and viewing it as a urban religion. In the eleventh century, however, tribes of the beduin Bani (see Glossary) Hilal and Bani Salim invaded first Cyrenaica and later Tripolitania and were generally effective in imposing their Islamic faith and nomadic way of life. This beduin influx disrupted existing settlements and living patterns; in many areas tribal life and organization were introduced or strengthened. A further influx of Arabic-speaking peoples occurred in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries as a result of the upheavals accompanying the fall to the Christians of the last Muslim kingdom in Spain.

It is estimated that the total number of Arabs who arrived in North Africa during the first two migrations did not exceed 700,000 and that in the twelfth-century population of 6 or 7 million they constituted less than 10 percent of the total. Arab blood later received some reinforcement from Spain, but throughout North Africa Berber background heavily outweighed Arab origin. Arabization of the Berbers advanced more rapidly and completely in Libya than elsewhere in the Maghrib and by the mid-twentieth century relatively few Berber speakers remained. By contrast, in Morocco and Algeria, and to a lesser extent in Tunisia, Berbers who had yet to become Arabized continued to form substantial ethnic minorities.

In the countryside traditional Arab life, including customary dress, was still predominant at the time of Libyan independence in 1951. The subsequent discovery of petroleum and the new wealth that resulted, the continuing urban migration, and the sometimes extreme social changes of the Revolutionary era, however, have made progressive inroads in traditional ways. For example, in the cities, already to some extent Europeanized at the time of the Revolution in 1969, men and some younger women frequently wore Western clothing, but older women still dressed in the customary manner.

Among the beduin tribes of the desert, seasonal shifts to new grazing lands in pursuit of rainfall and grass growth remained widespread. Some tribes were seminomadic, following their herds in summer but living in settled communities during the winter. Most of the rural population was sedentary, living in nuclear farm villages. But often the nomadic and the sedentary were mixed, some members of a clan or family residing in a village while younger members of the same group followed their flocks on a seasonal basis.

The distinction between individual tribes was at least as significant as the distinction between Arab and non-Arab. Tracing their descent to ascribed common ancestors, various tribal groups have formed kinship and quasi-political units bound by loyalties that override all others. Although tribal ties remained important in some areas, the Revolutionary government had taken various measures to discourage the nomadic way of life that was basic to tribal existence, and by the 1980s it appeared that tribal life was fast becoming a thing of the past.

Arab influence permeates the culture, among both the common people and the social, political, economic, and intellectual elite. The cultural impact of the Italian colonial regime was superficial, and Libya—unlike other North African countries, with their legacy of French cultural domination—suffered no conflict of cultural identity. As a rule, those few Libyans achieving higher education obtained it not in Europe but in neighboring Arab countries.

Berbers

Part of what was once the dominant ethnic group throughout North Africa, the Berbers of Libya today live principally in remote mountain areas or in desert localities where successive waves of Arab migration failed to reach or to which they retreated to escape the invaders (see fig. 5). In the 1980s Berbers, or native speakers of Berber dialects, constituted about 5 percent, or 135,000, of the total population, although a substantially larger proportion is bilingual in Arabic and Berber. Berber place-names are still common in some areas where Berber is no longer spoken. The language survives most notably in the Jabal Nafusah highlands of Tripolitania and in the Cyrenaican town of Awjilah. In the latter, the customs of seclusion and concealment of women have been largely responsible for the persistence of the Berber tongue. Because it is used largely in public life, most men have acquired Arabic, but it has become a functional language for only a handful of modernized young women.

By and large, cultural and linguistic, rather than physical, distinctions separate Berber from Arab. The touchstone of

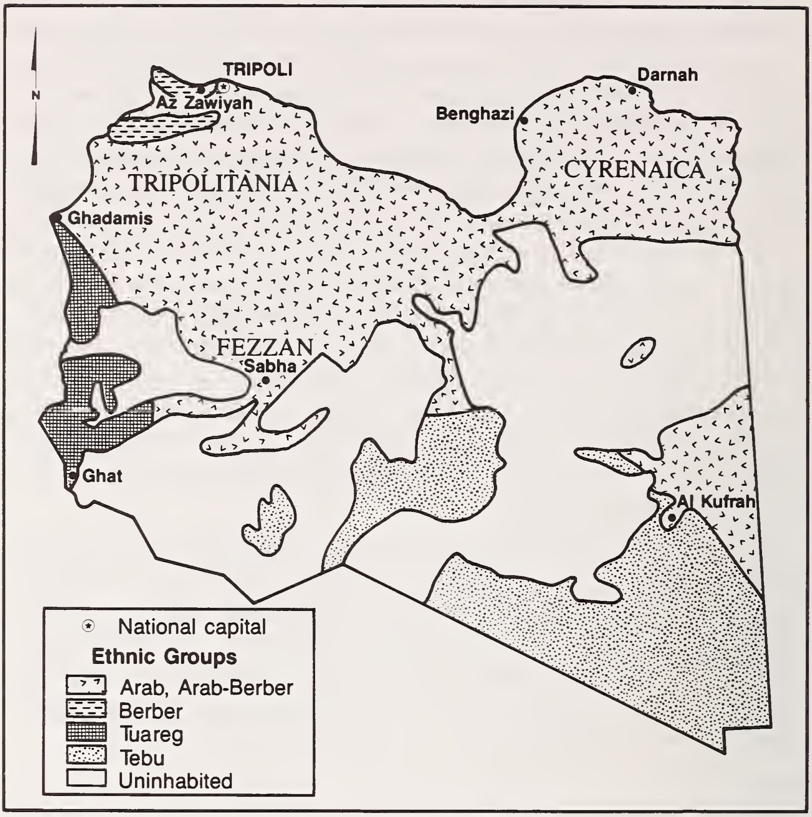

N
TRIPOLI
Az Zawiyah
TRIPOLITANIA
Ghadamis
FEZZAN
Sabha
Ghat
Benghazi
Darnah
CYRENAICA
Al Kufrah
National capital
Ethnic Groups
Arab, Arab-Berber
Berber
Tuareg
Tebu
Uninhabited

Figure 5. Ethnic Groups

Berberhood is the use of the Berber language. A continuum of related but not always mutually intelligible dialects, Berber is a member of the Afro-Asiatic language family. It is distantly related to Arabic, but unlike Arabic it has not developed a written form and as a consequence has no written literature.

Unlike the Arabs, who see themselves as a single nation, Berbers do not conceive of a united Berberdom and have no name for themselves as a people. The name *Berber* has been attributed to them by outsiders and is thought to derive from *barbari,* the term the ancient Romans applied to them. Berbers identify with their families, clans, and tribe. Only when dealing with outsiders do they identify with other groupings such as the Tuareg. Traditionally, Berbers recognized private property, and the poor often worked the lands of the rich. Otherwise, they were remarkably egalitarian.

A majority of the surviving Berbers belong to the Khariji sect of Islam, which emphasizes the equality of believers to a greater extent than does the Maliki rite of Sunni Islam, which is followed by the Arab population (see Religious Life, this ch.). A young Berber sometimes visits Tunisia or Algeria to find a Khariji bride when none is available in his own community.

Most of the remaining Berbers live in Tripolitania, and many Arabs of the region still show traces of their mixed Berber ancestry. Their dwellings are clustered in groups made up of related families; households consist of nuclear families, however, and the land is individually held. Berber enclaves also are scattered along the coast and in a few desert oases. The traditional Berber economy has struck a balance between farming and pastoralism, the majority of the village or tribe remaining in one place throughout the year while a minority accompanies the flock on its circuit of seasonal pastures.

Berbers and Arabs in Libya live together in general amicability, but quarrels between the two peoples occasionally erupted until recent times. A short-lived Berber state existed in Cyrenaica during 1911 and 1912. Elsewhere in the Maghrib during the 1980s, substantial Berber minorities continued to play important economic and political roles. In Libya their number was too small for them to enjoy corresponding distinction as a group. Berber leaders, however, were in the forefront of the independence movement in Tripolitania.

Tuareg

About 10,000 Tuareg nomads live scattered in the southwest desert, wandering in the general vicinity of the oasis towns of Ghat and Ghadamis. They claim close relationship with the much larger Tuareg population in neighboring Algeria and with other Tuareg elsewhere in the Sahara. Like other desert nomads, they formerly earned their livelihood by raiding sedentary settlements, conducting long-distance trading, and extracting protection fees from caravans and travelers. The ending of the caravan trade and pacification of the desert, however, have largely deprived this proud people of their livelihood and have reduced many to penury.

The Tuareg language, Tamasheq, is a Berber dialect, and the Tuareg adhere to a form of Sunni Islam that incorporates nonorthodox magical elements. Men—but not women—wear veils, and the blue dye used in the veils and clothing of nobles frequently transfers to the skin, causing the Tuareg to be known as "blue men." Marriage is monogynous, and Tuareg women enjoy high status; inheritance is through the female line, and as a general rule only women can read and write.

Black Africans

In southernmost Libya live about 2,600 Tebu, part of a larger grouping of around 215,000 Tebu in northern Chad, Niger, and Sudan. Their ethnic identity and cohesion are defined by language, not social organization or geography, although all Tebu share many cultural traits. Their language, Tebu, is a member of the Nilo-Saharan language family, not all dialects being mutually intelligible. The basic social unit is the nuclear family, organized into patrilineal clans. The Tebu economy is a combination of pastoralism, farming, and date cultivation. The Tebu are Muslim, their Islam being strongly molded by Sanusi proselytizing in the nineteenth century (see The Sanusis, this ch.). Neighboring peoples view them as tough, solitary, desert and mountain people.

A significant number of sub-Saharan Africans live in desert and coastal communities, mixed with Arabs and Berbers. Most of them are descended from former slaves—the last slave caravan is said to have reached Fezzan in 1929—but some immigrated to Tripoli during World War II. In recent years, waves of migrant workers from Mali, Niger, Sudan, and other Sahelian countries have arrived. A majority work as farmers or sharecroppers in Fezzan, but some have migrated to urban centers, where they are occupied in a variety of jobs considered menial by most Libyans.

Another distinct but numerically small group of blacks, the *harathin* (plowers, cultivators) have been in the Saharan oases for millennia. Their origins are obscure, but they appear to have been subservient to the Tuareg or other Libyan overlords for at least the last millennium. As with other blacks, their status has traditionally been quite low. In Libya as a whole, dark-skinned people are looked down upon, the degree of discrimination increasing with the darkness of the skin.

Other Peoples

Jewish colonies were firmly established in both Cyrenaica and Tripoli before the Christian era. The Jews lived amicably with the Muslims until increasing pressure for a Jewish homeland after World War II caused violent anti-Jewish reactions throughout the Arab world. During the late 1940s, most of the Jewish population departed, many to take up residence in the new state of Israel. Anti-Jewish violence erupted in Tripoli in 1967, and in 1970 the Revolutionary government confiscated most remaining Jewish property, subject to compensation in government bonds. In the 1970s fewer than 100 members remained of a Jewish community that had numbered 35,000 in 1948.

Tribal elders in a rural village engage in a traditional game
Courtesy United Nations

A residual Italian community of nearly 30,000 continued to live in Libya during the 1960s, a majority in Tripoli and most of the remainder on farms in the surrounding area. A 1960 law had discouraged foreign residents by prohibiting their acquisition of additional land, and immediately after the 1969 Revolution a number of new restrictions were imposed upon them. In 1970 the Revolutionary government issued a declaration that it would "restore to the Libyan people" the properties taken by Italians during the colonial period. Assurances of personal safety were given to foreigners, but nearly all of the Italians departed immediately, although some returned later.

The European community in Libya in 1986 amounted to 40,000 persons, a decline of more than half from the levels of 1984–85. Included in this figure were 100 to 300 Americans, most employed in the oil industry.

Languages of Libya

All but a small minority of the Libyan people are native Arabic-speakers and thus consider themselves to be Arabs. Arabic, a Semitic language, is the mother tongue of almost all peoples of North Africa and the Middle East. Three levels of the language are distinguishable: classical, the language of the Quran; modern standard, the form used in the present-day press; and the regional colloquial dialects. In Libya classical Arabic is used by religious leaders; modern standard Arabic appears in formal and written communication and sometimes in the schools. Many people learn Quranic quotations without being able to speak the classical language.

In classical Arabic, as in other Semitic scripts, the text is read from right to left, and only consonants are written. Vowel signs and other diacritical marks appear sometimes in printed texts as aids to pronunciation. Modern standard is grammatically simpler than classical and includes numerous words unknown to the Quran.

The spoken dialects of Tripolitania and Fezzan belong to the Maghribi group, used throughout the Maghrib. They are mutually intelligible but differ considerably from dialects in the Middle East. Dialects of Cyrenaica resemble those of Egypt and the Middle East. Urban dialects differ somewhat from those of the hinterland, and in the southern part of the country some Sudanese influence exists.

Arabs find great beauty and style in their language. It is a keystone of Arab nationalism and a symbol of Arab creativity. Libya has played a leading part in the campaign to make Arabic an official language in the forums of the UN and other international organizations. Yet although Arabic has a richness of sound and a variety of vocabulary that make it a tongue for poets, its syntactic complexity makes it one of the world's most complex written languages. Its intricate vocabulary also is not well suited as a medium for technical and scientific expression. Even modern standard Arabic contains little in the way of a technical vocabulary, in part because many Arabs are purists about their language and resist the intrusion of foreign words.

These deficiencies of Arabic, coupled with a tradition in Arab schools of learning by rote methods, have seriously interfered with scientific and technical advancement. In Libya, as well as in the other Maghribi countries where a similar problem exists, educators reluctantly recognize that preparation of suitable Arabic vocabulary additions, textbooks, and syllabi are still a generation or more away. In the meantime, scientific and technical subjects in the Libyan universities are in large part taught by foreigners employing foreign languages.

Under the colonial regime, Italian was the language of instruction in schools, but only a scattering of Muslim children attended these institutions. As a consequence, the Italian language did not take root in Libya to the extent that French did elsewhere in North Africa. Nevertheless, the strong wave of nationalism accompanying the 1969 Revolution found expression in a campaign designed to elevate the status of the Arabic language. An order was issued requiring that all street signs, shop window notices, signboards, and traffic tickets be written in Arabic. This element of Arabization reached its apogee in 1973, when a decree was passed requiring that passports of persons seeking to enter the country contain the regular personal information in Arabic, a requirement that was strictly enforced.

Despite the progress of Arabization during the 1970s, English occupied an increasingly important place as the second language of the country. It was taught from primary school onward, and in the universities numerous scientific, technical, and medical courses were conducted in English. A Tripoli shopkeeper or a hotel doorman was unlikely to speak the language, but business people were accustomed to corresponding in it. The government also issued at least some internal statistical documents and other publications in a bilingual English-Arabic format. In 1986 Qadhafi announced a policy of eliminating the teaching of English in favor of instruction in Russian at all levels. Whether this policy would actually be carried out remained to be seen in 1987, but it seemed safe to assume that English would remain in wide use for the immediate future if not longer.

Structure of Society

Well into the postindependence period, tradition and traditional values dominated social life. Established religious and tribal practices found expression in the policies and personal style of King Idris and his regime (see Independent Libya, ch. 1). The discovery of oil, however, released social forces that the traditional forms could not contain. In terms of both expectation and way of life, the old order was permanently disturbed.

The various pressures of the colonial period, independence, and the development of the oil industry did much to alter the bases of urban society and to dissolve the tribal and village social structure. In particular, as the cash economy spread into the countryside, rural people were lured out of their traditional groups and into the modern sector. Values, too, began to change under the impact of new prosperity and the arrival of large numbers of foreigners. Since 1969 the pace of change has greatly quickened. Yet, for all the new wealth from petroleum and despite relentless government-inspired efforts to remake Libyan society, the pace of social change was slow, and the country remained one of the most conservative in the Arab world.

Evolutionary Changes in a Traditional Society

To a great extent, the cities have been crucibles of social change in modern Libya. The Sanusi brotherhood drew its strength from the tribal system of the desert, and the cities were marginal (see The Sanusi Order, ch. 1). More recently, however, they have become centers of attraction, drawing people out of the tribal and village systems and to some extent dissolving the bonds that held these systems together. Before the arrival of the Europeans in the 1920s, urban centers had been organized around specific areas referred to as quarters. A city was composed of several quarters, each consisting of a number of families who had lived in that place for several generations and had become bound by feelings of solidarity. Families of every economic standing resided in the same quarter; the wealthy and the notable assumed leadership. Each quarter had leaders who represented it before the city at large, and to a great extent the quarter formed a small subsociety functioning at an intimate level in a manner that made it in some respects similar to a country village.

Occupations had different levels of acceptability. Carpenters, barbers, smiths of all kinds, plumbers, butchers, and mechanics were held in varying degrees of low esteem, with these kinds of work frequently performed by minority-group members. The opprobrium that continued to attach to the occupations even after independence, despite the good pay frequently obtainable, has been attributed to the fact that such jobs did not originate in the pastoral and agrarian life that was the heritage of most of the population.

The arrival of the Europeans disturbed the traditional equilibrium of urban life. Unaccustomed to the ways of life appropriate to traditional housing, the newcomers built new cities along European lines, with wide streets, private lawns, and separate houses. As growing numbers of Libyans began to copy Europeans in dress and habits and to use European mass-produced products, local artisans were driven into reduced circumstances or out of business. European-style housing became popular among the well-to-do, and the old quarters gradually became neighborhoods of the poor.

Urban migration, which began under the Italians, resulted in an infusion of progressively larger numbers of workers and laid the basis for the modern working class. The attractions of city life, especially for the young and educated, were not exclusively material. Of equal importance was the generally more stimulating urban environment, particularly the opportunity to enjoy a wider range of social, recreational, cultural, and educational experiences.

As urban migration continued to accelerate, housing shortages destroyed what was left of quarter solidarity. The quarters were flooded with migrants, and old family residences became tenements. At the same time, squatter slums began to envelop the towns, housing those the town centers could not accommodate. In place of the old divisions based primarily on family background, income became the basic determinant of differentiation between residential neighborhoods.

Italian hegemony altered the bases of social distinction somewhat, but the change was superficial and transitory; unlike the other Maghribi countries, Libya did not receive a heavy infusion of European culture. As a result, the Libyan urban elite did not suffer the same cultural estrangement from the mass of the people that occurred elsewhere in North Africa. At the end of the colonial period, vestiges of Italian influence dropped quickly, and Arab Muslim culture began to reassert itself.

Before independence rural Libyans looked upon their tribal, village, and family leaders as the true sources of authority, and, in this sense, as their social elite. Appointments to government positions were largely political matters, and most permanent government jobs were allocated through patronage. Local governments were controlled largely by traditional tribal leaders who were able to dispense patronage and thus to perpetuate their influence in the changing circumstances that attended the discovery of oil.

The basic social units were the extended family, clan, and tribe. All three were the primary economic, educational, and welfare-providing units of their members. Individuals were expected to subordinate themselves and their interests to those units and to obey the demands they made. The family was the most important focus of attention and loyalty and source of security, followed by the tribe. In most cases, the most powerful family of a clan provided tribal leadership and determined the reputation and power of the tribe.

Various criteria were used to evaluate individuals as well as families in the competition for preeminence. Lineage, wealth, and piety were among the most prominent. Throughout Libya's history, and especially during the period of the monarchy, family prominence and religious leadership became closely intertwined. Indeed, religious leadership tended to reside within selected family groupings throughout the country and to be passed successively from generation to generation. By the 1960s, local elites were still composed of individuals or families who owed their status to these same criteria. Local elites retained their position and legitimacy well into the mid-1970s, by which time the Revolutionary government had attempted to dislodge them, often without success.

Rural social structures were tribally based, with the nomadic and seminomadic tribesmen organized into highly segmented units, as exemplified by the Sanusi of Cyrenaica (see The Sanusis, this ch.). Originally, tribe members had been nomads, some of the beduin tracing their origins to the Arabian Peninsula. Pride in tribal membership remained strong, despite the fact that many nomads had become sedentary. At the same time, tribally based social organization, values, and world view raised formidable obstacles to the creation of a modern nation-state, because there were virtually no integrative or unifying institutions or social customs on the national level.

In the mid-1970s, the nomads and seminomads who made up most of the effective tribal population were rapidly dwindling in numbers. Tent dwellers numbered an estimated 200,000 in 1973, less than 10 percent of the population, as compared with about 320,000 nomads in 1964. Most of them lived in the extreme north of the country.

By this time, the Revolutionary government had come to look upon tribal organization and values as antithetical to its policies. Even Qadhafi, despite his beduin roots, viewed tribes as anachronistic and as obstacles to modernization. Consequently, the government sought to break the links between the rural population and its traditional leaders by focusing attention on a new elite—the modernizers who represented the new leadership. The countryside was divided into zones that crossed old tribal boundaries, combining different tribes in a common zone and splitting tribes in a manner that weakened traditional institutions and the force of local kinship. The ancient ascriptive qualifications for leadership—lineage, piety, wealth—gave way to competence and education as determined by formal examination.

Tribal leaders, however, scoffed at efforts encouraging members to drop tribal affiliations, and pride in tribal lineage remained strong. This was remarkable in light of the fact that many tribes had long ago shed their beduin trappings and had become agrarian villagers. In effect, the government had brought about the abolition of the tribal system but not the memories of tribal allegiance. According to a 1977 report, a survey of tribes had found that more than three-fourths of the members canvassed were still proud of their tribe and of their membership in it. Yet the attitude shown was a generally mild one; there was little opposition to the new programs and some recognition of the government's efforts on their behalf.

The conversion of nomads into sedentary villagers was accompanied or followed by the selective depopulation of many villages, as a disproportionate number of men between fifteen and forty-five left their herds, farms, and villages to seek urban employment. Their defection was a decisive factor in a decline in agricultural production during the 1970s. As a result, the Revolutionary government adopted a variety of measures aimed at stemming the migration. Of particular importance was an extremely ambitious 10-year agricultural land reclamation and farmer resettlement scheme initiated in 1972; its aim was to reclaim 1 million hectares of land and provide farms for tens of thousands of rural families. The hold of tradition showed in Cyrenaica, however, where farmers chose to resettle only in projects located in their tribal areas, where they could preserve both tribal and territorial linkages.

Still, many of the most energetic and productive were leaving the countryside to seek employment in cities, oil fields, or construction work or to become settlers in the new agricultural development schemes. In some cases entire farm villages considered by the government to be no longer viable were abandoned and their populations were moved elsewhere; thus, the social and political influence of local leaders was ended forever. At the same time modernization was coming to villages in the form of schools, hospitals, electric lights, and other twentieth-century features. In an increasing number of rural localities, former farm laborers who had received titles to farms also owned a house in which electricity, water, and modern appliances (including a radio and perhaps a television set) made their residences almost indistinguishable from those of prosperous urban dwellers.

The Revolution and Social Change

In their September 1969 Revolution, Qadhafi and the young officers who provided most of his support aimed with idealistic fervor at bringing to an end the social inequities that had marked both the colonial periods and the monarchical regime. The new government that resulted was socialist, but Qadhafi stressed that it was to be a kind of socialism inspired by the humanitarian values inherent in Islam. It called for equitable distribution to reduce disparities between classes in a peaceful and affluent society, but in no sense was it to be a stage on the road to communism.

On the eve of the 1969 Revolution, the royal family and its most eminent supporters and officeholders, drawn from a restricted circle of wealthy and influential families, dominated Libyan society. These constituted what may be termed the traditional sociopolitical establishment, which rested on patronage, clientage, and dependency. Beneath this top echelon was a small middle class. The Libyan middle class had always been quite small, but it had expanded significantly under the impact of oil wealth. In the mid-1960s, it consisted of several distinct social groupings: salaried religious leaders and bureaucrats, old families engaged in importing and contracting, entrepreneurs in the oil business, shopkeepers, self-employed merchants and artisans and prosperous farmers and beduins. Workers in small industrial workshops, agricultural laborers, and peasant farmers, among others, composed the lower class.

Most of the urban population consisted of the families of first-generation workers, small shopkeepers, and a horde of public workers. Above them were thin layers of the newly rich and of old, prosperous families. An urban working class, however, had largely failed to develop, and the middle class was a feeble one that in no way resembled the counterpart element that had become a vital political force in many other countries of the Arab world.

At the top of the rural social structure, the shaykhs of the major tribes ruled on the basis of inherited status. In the cities, corresponding roles were played by the heads of the wealthy families and by religious figures. These leaders were jealous of their position and, far from concerning themselves with furthering social progress, saw modernization as a threat. In no way, however, did the leaders present a united front.

The development of the petroleum industry was accompanied by profound technical and organizational changes and by the appearance of a younger elite whose outlook had been greatly affected by technological advances: among their number were technocrats, students, and young army officers. Not the least notable of the factors that set this new element apart was age. The civilians of this group, as well as the military officers, were for the most part in their thirties or younger, and their views had little in common with those of the aging authorities who had long controlled a swollen bureaucracy (11 percent of the 1969 labor force). More urbanized and better educated than their elders, this new group entertained hopes and aspirations that had been frustrated by the group surrounding King Idris. In particular, resentment had been aroused by the arbitrariness, corruption, and inefficiency of Idris' government as well as by its questionable probity in the distribution of oil-funded revenues.

The young officers who formed the Free Officers Movement and its political nucleus, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), showed a great deal of dedication to the Revolutionary cause and a high degree of uniformity in political and economic outlook (see Qadhafi and the Revolutionary Command Council, ch. 1). In Libya, as in a number of other Arab countries, admission to the military academy and careers as army officers were options available to members of the less privileged economic strata only after national independence was attained. A military career, offering new opportunities for higher education and upward economic and social mobility, was thus a greater attraction for young men from poorer families than for those of the wealthy and the traditional elite. These youthful revolutionaries came from quite modest social backgrounds, representing the oases and the interior as opposed to the coastal cities, and the minor suppressed tribes as opposed to the major aristocratic ones.

The officers of the RCC—all captains and lieutenants—represented the forefront of a social revolution that saw the middle and lower middle classes assert control over social and political prerogatives heretofore denied them. They quickly displaced the former elite of the Idris era and became themselves the prime movers of the Libyan state. Numbering only about a dozen men, they were gradually joined by sympathetic civilian and military personnel in constituting a new elite.

By the late 1980s, this governing class consisted of Qadhafi and the half-dozen remaining members of the Free Officers Movement, government ministers and other high state officials and managers, second-echelon officers of the Free Officers Movement, and top officials and activists of local mass organizations and governing councils. Civilian officials, also part of the political elite, usually were better educated than their military colleagues. Many of them possessed college degrees, came from urban middle-class backgrounds, and were indispensable for the administrative functioning of government and the economy. Below this elite was the upper middle class composed of educated technocrats, administrators, and remnants of a wealthy commercial and entrepreneurial class. The lower middle class contained small traders, teachers, successful farmers, and low-level officials and bureaucrats. This new and small revolutionary elite sought to restructure Libyan society. In broad terms, the young officers set off to create an egalitarian society in which class differences would be minimal and the country's oil wealth would be equally shared. Their aim was to curb the power and wealth of the old elite and to build support among the middle and lower middle classes from which they had come and with which they identified. The policies they devised to remold society after 1969 entailed extension of state control over the national economy, creation of a new political structure, and redistribution of wealth and opportunity through such measures as minimum wage laws, state employment, and the welfare state.

The Arab Socialist Union (ASU) created in 1971 was thus intended as a mass mobilization device (see Subnational Government and Administration, ch. 4). Its aim was the peaceful abolition of class differences to avoid the tragedy of a class struggle; the egalitarian nature of its composition was shown by a charter prescribing that at all levels 50 percent of its members must be peasants and laborers. At the heart of the cultural revolution of 1973 was the establishment of people's committees (see The Popular Revolution and People's Committee, ch. 4). These were made up of working-level leaders in business and government, who became the local elites in the new society. That same year brought enactment of a law requiring that larger business firms share profits with their personnel, appoint workers to their boards of directors, and establish joint councils composed of workers and managers.

At the same time, the government launched a long-term campaign against a new privileged class pejoratively identified as "bourgeois bureaucrats." Multiple dismissals at this time included top university administrators, hospital directors, and oil-industry officials, as well as numerous lower ranking employees. However, in 1975, public administrators, including educational and public health service, made up nearly 24 percent of the labor force—more than twice the proportion at the time of the monarchy's demise. Late in 1976, a newspaper editorial complained that the labor force still contained tens of thousands of administrators and supervisors—most of them in the public sector—while in other countries this element seldom exceeded 2 percent of the total.

Having attacked the bureaucracy and concentrations of wealth and privilege, the regime in the later 1970s dealt with the entrepreneurial middle class (see Role of Government, ch. 3). The first restrictions on private traders appeared as early as 1975, but the real blows came a few years later. A 1978 law struck at much-prized investments in private property by limiting ownership of houses and apartments to one per nuclear family, although the government promised compensation to the dispossessed. New restrictions were placed on commercial and industrial establishments, foreign trade became a monopoly of public corporations, workers assumed control of major industrial and commercial enterprises, and private wholesale trade was abolished. Finally, state investments and subsidies were shifted away from owners of small businesses.

Although the Libyan middle class was suppressed by the abovementioned restrictions in the late 1970s, it was not destroyed. Indeed, a significant number of its members adapted themselves to the social dictates of the Revolutionary regime by cooperation with it or by recruitment into the modernizing state apparatus. Its ranks still contained educated technocrats and administrators, without whose talents the state could not function, as well as remnants of the commercial and entrepreneurial class, some of them well-to-do. A separate category of small traders, shopkeepers, and farmers could also be identified. They, too, sought careers in the state sector, although many of them continued to operate small businesses alongside public enterprises. Those who could not adapt or who feared persecution fled abroad in significant numbers (see The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, ch. 1).

In contrast with the old regime, it was now possible for members of the middle and lower classes to seek and gain access to positions of influence and power. The former criteria of high family or tribal status had given way to education to a considerable degree, although patronage and loyalty continued to be rewarded as well. But, in general, social mobility was much improved, a product of the revolutionary order that encouraged participation and leadership in such new institutions as the Basic People's Congresses and the revolutionary committees (see Glossary; see also The Subnational Government and Administration, ch. 4). Only the highest positions occupied by Qadhafi and a small number of his associates were beyond the theoretical reach of the politically ambitious.

The core elite in the 1980s, which consisted of Qadhafi and the few remaining military officers of the RCC, presented a significant contrast of its own with respect to the top political leadership of the Idris era. This was the result of a commitment to national unity and identity, as well as of common social background. Within this small group, the deeply ingrained regional cleavages of the past, particularly that between Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, had almost disappeared and were no longer of political significance. Similarly, the ethnic distinction between Arab and Berber within the elite was no longer important. The old urban-rural and center-periphery oppositions, remained important, but they did not characterize the core elite itself. Rather, they differentiated the core elite from the country's former rulers, because the Revolutionary leadership was deeply rooted in the rural periphery, not the Mediterranean coastal centers.

The rest of society, including government officials immediately below Qadhafi, appeared to be a good deal less unified. Despite the exertions of the core elite, a sense of national unity and identity had not yet developed in the late 1980s, and loyalty to region, tribe, and family remained stronger than allegiance to the state. There was much alienation from the regime, often expressed in terms of lethargy and passivity. Incessant pressures on the part of the regime to enlist as many people as possible in running public affairs had provoked much resentment and resistance. Many adults did not participate, despite the exhortations and oversight of the revolutionary committees, themselves a source of uncertainty and anxiety.

All of these pressures applied to the educated middle class, estimated to number perhaps 50,000 out of a total population of 3.6

million. Many were clearly alienated by the shortages of consumer goods, the militarization of society, and the constant demands to participate actively in the institutions of the *jamahiriya* (see Glossary), sentiments that characterized other social classes as well. Like their fellow citizens, the educated sought refuge in the affairs of their families, demonstrating yet again the strength of traditional values over revolutionary norms, or in foreign travel, especially in Europe.

The country's youth were also pulled in opposite directions. By the mid-1980s, the vast majority knew only the Revolutionary era and its achievements. Because these gains were significant, not surprisingly young people were among the most dedicated and visible devotees of the Revolution and Qadhafi. They had benefited most from increased educational opportunities, attempted reforms of dowry payments, and the emancipation of young women (see The Family, the Individual, and the Sexes, this ch.). Libyan youth also enjoyed far more promising employment prospects than their counterparts elsewhere in the Maghrib.

With few outlets such as recreation centers or movies for their energies, a large number of youth were found in the revolutionary committees, where they pursued their task of enforcing political conformity and participation with a vigor that at times approached fanaticism. Others kept watch over the state administration and industry in an attempt to improve efficiency. Not all were so enthusiastic about revolutionary goals, however. For instance, there was distaste for military training among students in schools and universities, especially when it presaged service in the armed forces. In the 1980s, some of this disdain had resulted in demonstrations and even in executions (see Opposition to Qadhafi, ch. 4).

By the late 1980s, Libyan society clearly showed the impact of almost two decades of attempts at restructuring. The country was an army-dominated state under the influence of no particular class or group and was relatively free from the clash of competing interests. Almost all sources of power in traditional life had been eliminated or coopted. Unlike states such as Saudi Arabia that endeavored to develop their societies within the framework of traditional political and economic systems, Libya had discarded most of the traditional trappings and was using its great wealth to transform the country and its people.

With its highly egalitarian socialist regime, Libya differed considerably in its social structure from other oil-rich states. Salaries and wages were high, and social services were extensive and free. There was much less accumulation of private wealth than in other oil states, and social distinction was discouraged as a matter of deliberate public policy. But Libyan society was deeply divided, and entire segments of the population were only superficially committed to the course that the revolutionary regime had outlined. And while the old order was clearly yielding to the new, there was much doubt and unease about where society and state were headed.

The Family, the Individual, and the Sexes

Social life in Libya centered traditionally on the individual's family loyalty, which overrode other obligations. Ascribed status often outweighed personal achievement in regulating social relationships, and the individual's honor and dignity were tied to the good repute of the kin group, especially to that of its women.

Women have played a role secondary to that of men in most aspects of life, and tradition has prescribed that they remain in the home, often in seclusion. The status of women in the 1970s, however, improved substantially, and the once-common seclusion became less common. Nonetheless, to a considerable extent the two sexes continued to constitute largely separate subsocieties, each with its own values, attitudes, and perceptions of the other.

Family and Household

Libyans reckon kinship patrilineally, and the household is based on blood ties between men. A typical household consists of a man, his wife, his single and married sons with their wives and children, his unmarried daughters, and perhaps other relatives, such as a widowed or divorced mother or sister. At the death of the father, each son ideally establishes his own household to begin the cycle again. Because of the centrality of family life, it is assumed that all persons will marry when they reach an appropriate age. Adult status is customarily bestowed only on married men and, frequently, only on fathers.

In traditional North African society, family patriarchs ruled as absolute masters over their extended families, and in Libya the institution seems to have survived somewhat more tenaciously than elsewhere in the area. Despite the changes in urban and rural society brought about by the 1969 Revolution, the Revolutionary government has repeatedly stated that the family is the core of society.

The 1973 census, the last for which complete data were available in mid-1987, showed that the typical household consisted of five to six individuals and that about 12 percent of the households were made up of eight or more members. The pattern was about the same as that reported from the 1964 census, and a 1978 Tripoli newspaper article called attention to the continued strength of the extended family. Individuals subordinated their personal interests to those of the family and considered themselves to be members of a group whose importance outweighed their own. Loyalty to family, clan, and tribe outweighed loyalty to a profession or class and inhibited the emergence of new leaders and a professional elite.

Marriage is more a family than a personal affair and a civil contract rather than a religious act. Because the sexes generally were unable to mix socially, young men and women enjoyed few acquaintances among the opposite sex. Parents arranged marriages for their children, finding a mate either through their own social contacts or through a professional matchmaker. Unions between the children of brothers were customarily preferred, or at least matches between close relatives or within the same tribe. One study, however, showed that many marriages occurred outside these bounds, the result of increased levels of education and internal migration. Nomads, particularly the Tuareg, have always allowed much more freedom of choice and courtship.

According to law, the affianced couple must have given their consent to the marriage, but in practice the couple tends to take little part in the arrangements. The contract establishes the terms of the union and outlines appropriate recourse if they are broken. The groom's family provides a dowry, which can amount to the equivalent of US$10,000 in large cities. Accumulation of the requisite dowry may be one reason that males tend to be several years older than females at the time of marriage.

Islamic law gives the husband far greater discretion and far greater leeway with respect to marriage than it gives the wife. For example, the husband may take up to four wives at one time, provided that he can treat them equally; a woman, however, can have only one husband at a time. Despite the legality of polygyny, only 3 percent of marriages in the 1980s were polygynous, the same as a decade earlier. A man can divorce his wife simply by repeating "I divorce thee" three times before witnesses; a woman can initiate divorce proceedings only with great difficulty. Any children of the union belong to the husband's family and remain with him after the divorce.

Both the monarchical and Revolutionary governments enacted statutes improving the position of females with respect to marriage. The minimum age for marriage was set at sixteen for females and at eighteen for males. Marriage by proxy has been forbidden, and a 1972 law prescribes that a girl cannot be married against her will or when she is under the age of sixteen. Should her father forbid her marriage to a man whom she has chosen for herself, a girl who is a minor (under the age of twenty-one) may petition a court for permission to proceed with her marriage.

The Revolutionary government has enacted several statutes expanding women's rights and restricting somewhat those of men in matters of divorce. Women received increased rights to seek divorce or separation by either customary or legal means in cases of abandonment or mistreatment. Other laws prohibit a man from taking a second spouse without first obtaining the approval of his first wife and forbid a divorced man from marrying an alien woman, even an Arab from another country. A companion law prohibits men in the employ of the state from marrying non-Arab women. Yet the child born abroad of a Libyan father is eligible for Libyan citizenship irrespective of the mother's nationality, while a child born to a Libyan mother would not be accorded automatic Libyan citizenship.

In a society as tradition-bound as Libya's, the effects of these new laws were problematic. Despite the backing of the regime and Qadhafi's calls for still further modifications in favor of women, the society reportedly was not yet ready to acknowledge the new rights, and women were still hesitant in claiming them.

The Traditional View of Men and Women

The social setting of the family significantly affects the circumstances of a wife. Until the discovery of petroleum—and to a lesser degree until the 1969 Revolution—conservative attitudes and values about women dominated society. By the 1980s, however, modifications in the traditional relationship between the sexes were becoming evident, and important changes were appearing in the traditional role of women. These varied with the age, education, and place of residence of the women.

In traditional society, beduin women—who did not wear the veil that symbolized the inferior and secluded status of women—played a relatively open part in tribal life. Women in villages also frequently were unveiled and participated more actively in the affairs of their community than did their urban counterparts. Their relative freedom, however, did not ordinarily permit their exposure to outsiders. A sociologist visiting a large oasis village as recently as the late 1960s told of being unable to see the women of the community and of being forced to canvass their opinions by means of messages passed by their husbands. The extent to which the community was changing, however, was indicated by the considerable number of girls in secondary school and the ability of young women to find modern-sector jobs—opportunities that had come into being only during the 1960s.

Urban women tended to be more sophisticated and socially aware, but they were also more conservative in social relations and dress. For example, unlike rural women, who moved freely in the fields and villages, urban women walked in the street discreetly in veiled pairs, avoiding public gathering places as well as social contact with men. Among the upper class urban families, women fulfilled fewer and less important economic functions, and their responsibilities were often limited to the household. Greater sexual segregation was imposed in the cities than in the countryside because tribal life and life in farm villages made segregation virtually impossible.

While women remained in the home, men formed a society organized into several recognizable groupings. These consisted of such coteries as school classmates, village or family work associates, athletic clubs, or circles of friends meeting in cafes. In earlier times, the group might have been a religious brotherhood.

Like most Arabs, Libyans valued men more highly than women. Girls' upbringing quickly impressed on them that they were inferior to men and must cater to them; boys learned that they were entitled to demand the care and concern of women. Men regarded women as creatures apart, weaker than men in mind, body, and spirit. They were considered more sensual, less disciplined, and in need of protection from both their own impulses and the excesses of strange men.

The honor of the men of the family, easily damaged and nearly irreparable, depended on the conduct of their women. Wives, sisters, and daughters were expected to be circumspect, modest, and decorous, with their virtue above reproach. The slightest implication of unavenged impropriety, especially if made public, could irreparably destroy a family's honor. Female virginity before marriage and sexual fidelity thereafter were essential to honor's maintenance, and discovery of a transgression traditionally bound men of the family to punish the offending woman.

A girl's parents were eager for her to marry at the earliest possible age in order to forestall any loss of her virginity. After marriage, the young bride went to the home of her bridegroom's family, often in a village or neighborhood where she was a stranger and into a household where she lived under the constant and sometimes critical surveillance of her mother-in-law, a circumstance that frequently led to a great deal of friction. In traditional society, girls were married in their early teens to men considerably their senior. A woman began to attain status and security in her husband's family only if she produced boys. Mothers accordingly favored sons, and in later life the relationship between mother and son often remained warm and intimate, whereas the father was a more distant figure. Throughout their years of fertility, women were assumed to have an irrepressible sexual urge, and it was only after menopause that a supposed asexuality bestowed on them a measure of freedom and some of the respect accorded senior men. Old age was assumed to commence with menopause, and the female became an *azuz,* or old woman.

The New Society of the Revolutionary Era

The roles and status of women have been the subject of a great deal of discussion and legal action in Libya, as they have in many countries of the Middle East. Some observers suggested that the regime made efforts on behalf of female emancipation because it viewed women as an essential source of labor in an economy chronically starved for workers. They also postulated that the government was interested in expanding its political base, hoping to curry favor by championing female rights. Since independence, Libyan leaders have been committed to improving the condition of women but within the framework of Arabic and Islamic values. For this reason, the pace of change has been slow.

Nonetheless, by the 1980s relations within the family and between the sexes, along with all other aspects of Libyan life, had begun to show notable change. As the mass media popularized new ideas, new perceptions and practices appeared. Foreign settlers and foreign workers frequently embodied ideas and values distinctively different from those traditional in the country. In particular, the perceptions of Libyans in everyday contact with Europeans were affected.

The continued and accelerating process of urbanization has broken old kinship ties and association with ancestral rural communities. At the same time, opportunities for upward social movement have increased, and petroleum wealth and the development plans of the Revolutionary government have made many new kinds of employment available—for the first time including jobs for women. Especially among the educated young, a growing sense of individualism has appeared. Many of these educated and increasingly independent young people prefer to set up their own households at marriage rather than to live with their parents, and they view polygyny with scorn. In addition, social security, free medical care, education, and other appurtenances of the welfare state have lessened the dependence of the aged on their children in village communities and have almost eliminated it in the cities (see Health and Welfare, this ch.).

In the 1970s, female emancipation was in large measure a matter of age. One observer generalized that city women under the age of thirty-five had discarded the traditional veil and were quite likely to wear Western-style clothing. Those between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five were increasingly ready to consider such a change, but women over the age of forty-five appeared reluctant to give up the protection their veils and customary dress afforded. A decade later, veiling was uncommon among urban women, as it had always been in rural areas. Women were also increasingly seen driving, shopping, or traveling without husbands or male companions.

Since the early 1960s, Libyan women have had the right to vote and to participate in political life. They could also own and dispose of property independently of their husbands, but all of these rights were exercised by only a few women before the 1969 Revolution. Since then, the government has encouraged women to participate in elections and national political institutions, but by 1987 only one woman had advanced as far as the national cabinet, as an assistant secretary for information and culture.

Women were also able to form their own associations, the first of which dated to 1955 in Benghazi. In 1970 several feminist organizations merged into the Women's General Union, which in 1977 became the Jamahiriya Women's Federation. Under Clause 5 of the Constitutional Proclamation of December 11, 1969, women had already been given equal status under the law with men. Subsequently, the women's movement has been active in such fields as adult education and hygiene. The movement has achieved only limited influence, however, and its most active members have felt frustrated by their inability to gain either direct or indirect political influence.

Women had also made great gains in employment outside the home, the result of improved access to education and of increased acceptance of female paid employment. Once again, the government was the primary motivating force behind this phenomenon. For example, the 1976–80 development plan called for employment of a larger number of women "in those spheres which are suitable for female labor," but the Libyan identification of what work was suitable for women continued to be limited by tradition. According to the 1973 census, the participation rate for women (the percent of all women engaged in economic activity) was about 3 percent as compared with 37 percent for men. The participation was somewhat higher than the 2.7 percent registered in 1964, but it was considerably lower than that in other Maghrib countries and in most of the Middle Eastern Arab states.

In the 1980s, in spite of the gain registered by women during the prior decade, females constituted only 7 percent of the national labor force, according to one informed researcher. This represented a 2-percent increase over a 20-year period. Another source, however, considered these figures far too low. Reasoning from 1973 census figures and making allowances for full- and part-time, seasonal, paid, and unpaid employment, these researchers argued convincingly that women formed more than 20 percent of the total economically active Libyan population. For rural areas their figure was 46 percent, far higher than official census numbers for workers who in most cases were not only unpaid but not even considered as employed.

Among nonagricultural women, those who were educated and skilled were overwhelmingly employed as teachers. The next highest category of educated and skilled women was nurses and those found in the health-care field. Other areas that were open to women included administrative and clerical work in banks, department stores, and government offices, and domestic services. Women were found in ever larger numbers as nurses and midwives, but even so, Libyan health care facilities suffered from a chronic shortage of staff.

By contrast, in clerical and secretarial jobs, the problem was not a shortage of labor but a deep-seated cultural bias against the intermingling of men and women in the workplace. During the 1970s, the attraction of employment as domestics tended to decline, as educated and ambitious women turned to more lucrative occupations. To fill the gap, Libyan households sought to hire foreigners, particularly Egyptians and Tunisians.

Light industry, especially cottage-style, was yet another outlet for female labor, a direct result of Libya's labor shortage. Despite these employment outlets and gains, female participation in the work force of the 1980s remained small, and many so-called "female jobs" were filled by foreign women. Also, in spite of significant increases in female enrollments in the educational system, including university level, few women were found, even as technicians, in such traditionally male fields as medicine, engineering, and law.

Nonurban women constituted a quite significant if largely invisible proportion of the rural work force, as previously mentioned. According to the 1973 census, there were only 14,000 economically active women out of a total of 200,000 rural females older than age 10. In all likelihood, however, many women engaged in agricultural or domestic tasks worked as unpaid members of family groups and hence were not regarded as gainfully employed, accounting at least in part for the low census count. Estimates of actual female rural employment in the mid-1970s, paid and unpaid, ranged upward of 86,000, as compared with 96,000 men in the rural work force. In addition to agriculture, both rural and nomadic women engaged in the weaving of rugs and carpets, another sizable category of unpaid and unreported labor.

Beginning in 1970, the Revolutionary government passed a series of laws regulating female employment. Equal pay for equal work and qualifications became a fundamental precept. Other statutes strictly regulated the hours and conditions of work. Working mothers enjoyed a range of benefits designed to encourage them to continue working even after marriage and childbirth, including cash bonuses for the first child and free day-care centers. A woman could retire at age fifty-five, and she was entitled to a pension (see Health and Welfare, this ch.). Recently, the regime has sought to introduce women into the armed forces (see Women in the Armed Forces, ch. 5). In the early 1980s the so-called ''Nuns of the Revolution'' were created as a special police force attached to revolutionary committees. Then in 1984 a law mandating female conscription that required all students in secondary schools and above to participate in military training was passed. In addition, young women were encouraged to attend female military academies, the first of which was established in 1979. These proposals originated with Qadhafi, who hoped that they would help create a new image and role for the Libyan woman. Nonetheless, the concept of female training in the martial arts encountered such widespread opposition that meaningful compliance seemed unlikely.

The status of women was thus an issue that was very much alive. There could be no doubt that the status of women had undergone a remarkable transformation since the 1969 Revolution, but cultural norms were proving to be a powerful brake on the efforts of the Qadhafi regime to force the pace of that transformation. And despite the exertions and rhetoric of the government, men continued to play the leading roles in family and society. As one observer pointed out, political and social institutions were each pulling women in opposite directions. In the late 1980s, the outcome of that contest was by no means a foregone conclusion.

Religious Life

Nearly all Libyans adhere to the Sunni branch of Islam, which provides both a spiritual guide for individuals and a keystone for government policy. Its tenets stress a unity of religion and state rather than a separation or distinction between the two, and even those Muslims who have ceased to believe fully in Islam retain Islamic habits and attitudes. Since the 1969 coup, the Qadhafi regime has explicitly endeavored to reaffirm Islamic values, enhance appreciation of Islamic culture, elevate the status of Quranic law and, to a considerable degree, emphasize Quranic practice in everyday Libyan life.

In A.D. 610, Muhammad (the Prophet), a prosperous merchant of the town of Mecca, began to preach the first of a series of revelations said to have been granted him by God (Allah) through the agency of the archangel Gabriel. The divine messages, received during solitary visits into the desert, continued during the remainder of his life.

Muhammad denounced the polytheistic paganism of his fellow Meccans, his vigorous and continuing censure ultimately earning him their bitter enmity. In 622 he and a group of his followers were forced to flee to Yathrib, which became known as Medina (the city) through its association with him. The hijra (flight, known in the West as the hegira) marked the beginning of the Islamic era and of Islam as a powerful historical force; the Muslim calendar begins with the year 622. In Medina Muhammad continued his preaching, ultimately defeated his detractors in battle, and had consolidated the temporal as well as spiritual leadership of most Arabs in his person before his death in 632.

After Muhammad's death, his followers compiled his words that were regarded as coming directly from God in a document known as the Quran, the holy scripture of Islam. Other sayings and teachings of the Prophet, as well as the precedents of his personal behavior as recalled by those who had known him, became the hadith (''sayings''). From these sources, the faithful have constructed the Prophet's customary practice, or *sunna*, which they endeavor to emulate. Together, these documents form a comprehensive guide to the spiritual, ethical, and social life of the faithful in most Muslim countries.

In a short time, Islam was transformed from a small religious community into a dynamic political and military authority. During the seventh century, Muslim conquerors reached Libya, and by the eighth century most of the resistance mounted by the indigenous Berbers had ended. The urban centers soon became substantially Islamic, but widespread conversion of the nomads of the desert did not come until after large-scale invasions in the eleventh century by beduin tribes from Arabia and Egypt.

A residue of pre-Islamic beliefs blended with the pure Islam of the Arabs. Hence, popular Islam became an overlay of Quranic ritual and principles upon the vestiges of earlier beliefs—prevalent throughout North Africa—in jinns (spirits), the evil eye, rites to ensure good fortune, and cult veneration of local saints. The educated of the cities and towns served as the primary bearers and guardians of the more austere brand of orthodox Islam.

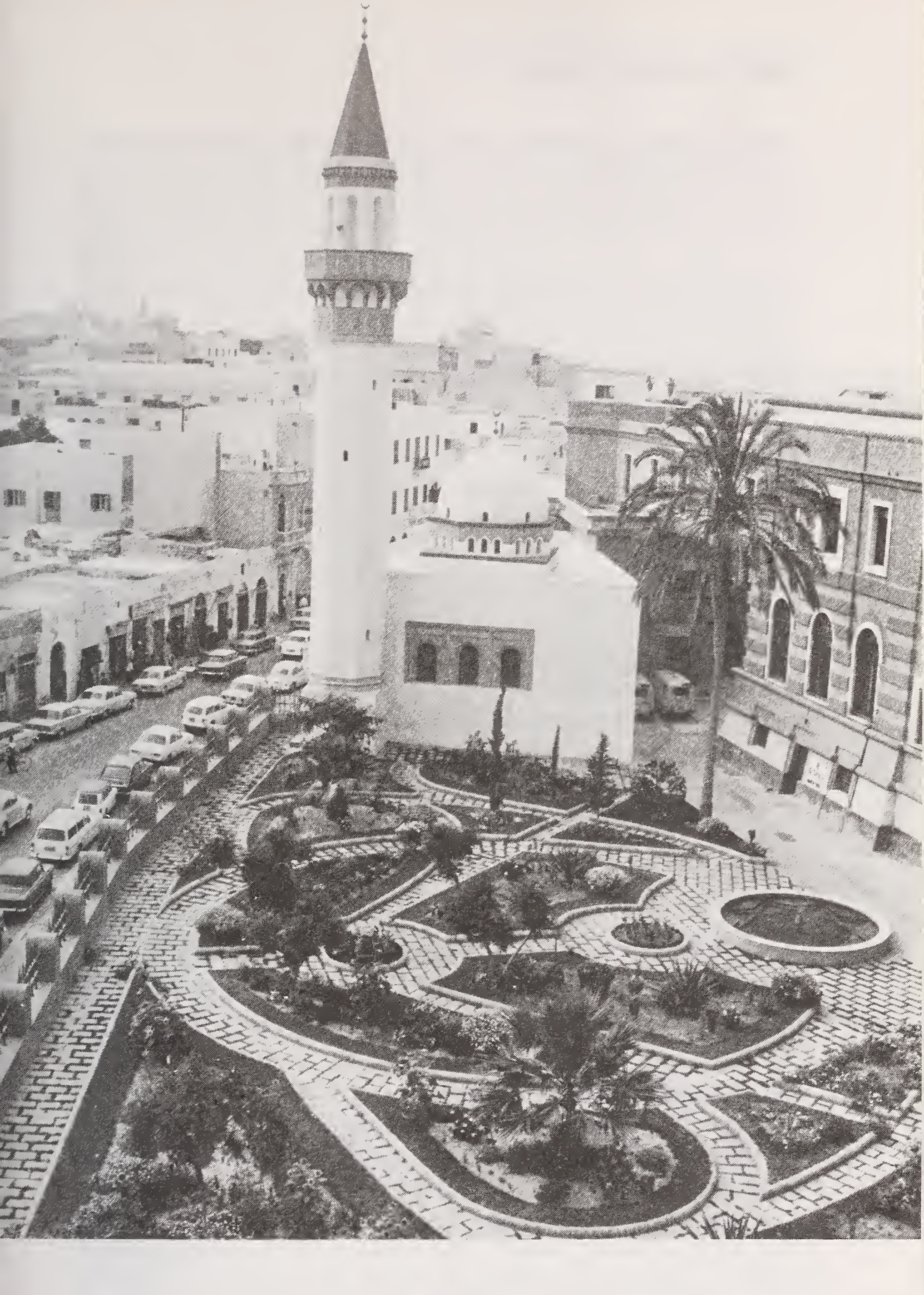
Tenets of Islam

The *shahadah* (profession of faith, or testimony) states succinctly the central belief, ''There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet.'' The faithful repeat this simple profession on ritual occasions, and its recital designates the speaker as a Muslim. The term *Islam* means submission to God, and the one who submits is a Muslim.

The God preached by Muhammad was previously known to his countrymen, for *Allah* is the general Arabic term for the supreme being rather than the name of a particular deity. Rather than introducing a new deity, Muhammad denied the existence of the pantheon of gods and spirits worshipped before his prophethood and declared the omnipotence of God, the unique creator. Muhammad is the ''Seal of the Prophets,'' the last of the prophetic line. His revelations are said to complete for all time the series of revelations that had been given earlier to Jews and Christians. God is believed to have remained one and the same throughout time, but humans are seen as having misunderstood or strayed from God's true teachings until set aright by Muhammad. Prophets and sages of the biblical tradition, such as Abraham, Moses, and Jesus are recognized as inspired vehicles of God's will. Islam, however, reveres as sacred only the message, rejecting Christianity's deification of the messenger. It accepts the concepts of guardian angels, the Day of Judgment, resurrection, and the eternal life of the soul.

The duties of the Muslim form the ''five pillars'' of the faith. These are *shahadah, salat* (daily prayer), *zakat* (almsgiving), *sawm* (fasting), and *hajj* (pilgrimage). The believer prays facing Mecca at five specified times during the day. Whenever possible, men observe their prayers in congregation at a mosque under direction of an imam, or prayer leader, and on Fridays are obliged to do so. Women are permitted to attend public worship at the mosque, where they are segregated from men, but their attendance tends to be discouraged, and more frequently they pray in the seclusion of their homes.

In the early days of Islam, a tax for charitable purposes was imposed on personal property in proportion to the owner's wealth; the payment purified the remaining wealth and made it religiously legitimate. The collection of this tax and its distribution to the needy were originally functions of the state. But with the breakdown of Muslim religiopolitical authority, alms became an individual responsibility. With the discovery of petroleum in Libya and the establishment of a welfare society, almsgiving has been largely replaced by public welfare and its significance diluted accordingly (see Health and Welfare, this ch.).



A mosque in Tripoli
Courtesy United Nations

Fasting is practiced during the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, Ramadan, the time during which the first revelations to Muhammad found in the Quran occurred. It is a period during which most Muslims must abstain from food, drinking, smoking, and sexual activity during the daylight hours. The well-to-do accomplish little work during this period, and many businesses close or operate on reduced schedules. Because the months of the lunar calendar revolve through the solar year, Ramadan occurs during various seasons. In Libya, among the strictest of Muslim countries, cafes must remain closed during the day; they open their doors after dark, and feasting takes place during the night.

Finally, at least once during their lifetime all Muslims should make the *hajj* to the holy city of Mecca to participate in the special rites that occur during the twelfth month of the lunar calendar. Upon completion of this and certain other ritual assignments, the returning pilgrim is entitled to the honorific ''al Haj,'' before his name.

In addition to prescribing specific duties, Islam imposes a code of conduct entailing generosity, fairness, honesty, and respect for others. Its proscribes adultery, gambling, usury, and the consumption of carrion, blood, pork, and alcohol. Although proscription of alcohol is irregularly enforced in most Muslim countries, the Libyan Revolutionary government has been strict in ensuring that its prohibition be effective, even in the households of foreign diplomats.

Muslims traditionally are subject to the sharia, or religious law, which—as interpreted by religious courts—covers most aspects of life. In Libya the Maliki school is followed. One of several schools of Islamic law, it predominates throughout North Africa. The sharia, which was developed by jurists from the Quran and from the traditions of the Prophet, provides a complete pattern for human conduct.

Saints and Brotherhoods

Islam as practiced in North Africa is interlaced with indigenous Berber beliefs. Although the orthodox faith preached the unique and inimitable majesty and sanctity of God and the equality of God's believers, an important element of North African Islam for centuries has been a belief in the coalescence of special spiritual power in particular living human beings. The power is known as *baraka*, a transferable quality of personal blessedness and spiritual force said to lodge in certain individuals. Those whose claim to possess *baraka* can be substantiated—through performance of apparent miracles, exemplary human insight, or genealogical connection with a recognized possessor—are viewed as saints. These persons are known in the West as marabouts, a French transliteration of *al murabitun* (those who have made a religious retreat), and the benefits of their *baraka* are believed to accrue to those ordinary people who come in contact with them.

The cult of saints became widespread in rural areas; in urban localities, Islam in its orthodox form continued to prevail. Saints were present in Tripolitania, but they were particularly numerous in Cyrenaica. Their *baraka* continued to reside in their tombs after their deaths. The number of venerated tombs varied from tribe to tribe, although there tended to be fewer among the camel herders of the desert than among the sedentary and nomadic tribes of the plateau area. In one village, a visitor in the late 1960s counted sixteen still-venerated tombs.

Coteries of disciples frequently clustered around particular saints, especially those who preached an original *tariqa* (devotional "way"). Brotherhoods of the followers of such mystical teachers appeared in North Africa at least as early as the eleventh century and in some cases became mass movements. The founder ruled an order of followers, who were organized under the frequently absolute authority of a leader, or shaykh. The brotherhood was centered on a *zawiya* (pl., *zawaayaa*—see Glossary).

Because of Islam's austere rational and intellectual qualities, many people have felt drawn toward the more emotional and personal ways of knowing God practiced by mystical Islam, or Sufism. Found in many parts of the Muslim world, Sufism endeavored to produce a personal experience of the divine through mystic and ascetic discipline.

Sufi adherents gathered into brotherhoods, and Sufi cults became extremely popular, particularly in rural areas. Sufi brotherhoods exercised great influence and ultimately played an important part in the religious revival that swept through North Africa during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In Libya, when the Ottoman Empire proved unable to mount effective resistance to the encroachment of Christian missionaries, the work was taken over by Sufi-inspired revivalist movements. Among these, the most forceful and effective was that of the Sanusis, which extended into numerous parts of North Africa.

The Sanusis

The Sanusi movement was a religious revival adapted to desert life. Its *zawaayaa* could be found in Tripolitania and Fezzan, but Sanusi influence was strongest in Cyrenaica. Rescuing the region from unrest and anarchy, the Sanusi movement gave the

Cyrenaican tribal people a religious attachment and feelings of unity and purpose.

The Sanusis formed a nucleus of resistance to the Italian colonial regime (see Italian Colonialism, ch. 1). As the nationalism fostered by unified resistance to the Italians gained adherents, however, the religious fervor of devotion to the movement began to wane, particularly after the Italians destroyed Sanusi religious and educational centers during the 1930s. Nonetheless, King Idris, the monarch of independent Libya, was the grandson of the founder of the Sanusi movement, and his status as a Sanusi gave him the unique ability to command respect from the disparate parts of his kingdom.

Despite its momentary political prominence, the Sanusi movement never regained its strength as a religious force after its *zawaayaa* were destroyed by the Italians. A promised restoration never fully took place, and the Idris regime used the Sanusi heritage as a means of legitimizing political authority rather than of providing religious leadership.

After unseating Idris in 1969, the Revolutionary government placed restrictions on the operation of the remaining *zawaayaa*, appointed a supervisor for Sanusi properties, and merged the Sanusi-sponsored Islamic University with the University of Libya. The movement was virtually banned, but in the 1980s occasional evidence of Sanusi activity was nonetheless reported.

Islam in Revolutionary Libya

Under the Revolutionary government, the role of orthodox Islam in Libyan life has become progressively more important. Qadhafi is a highly devout Muslim who has repeatedly expressed a desire to exalt Islam and to restore it to its proper—i.e., central—place in the life of the people. He believes that the purity of Islam has been sullied through time, particularly by the influence of Europeans during and after the colonial period, and that its purity must be restored—by such actions as the restoration of sharia to its proper place as the basis of the Libyan legal system, the banning of ''immodest'' practices and dress, and the symbolic purification of major urban mosques that took place in 1978.

Qadhafi also believes in the value of the Quran as a moral and political guide for the contemporary world, as is evident from his tract, *The Green Book*, published in the mid-1970s (see *The Green Book*, ch. 4). Qadhafi considers the first part of *The Green Book* to be a commentary on the implications of the Quranic injunction that human affairs be managed by consultation. For him, this means direct democracy, which is given ''practical meaning'' through the creation of people's committees and popular congresses. Qadhafi feels that, inasmuch as *The Green Book* is based solely on the Quran, its provisions are universally applicable—at least among Muslims.

Soon after taking office, the Qadhafi government showed itself to be devoutly fundamentalist by closing bars and nightclubs, banning entertainment deemed provocative or immodest, and making use of the Muslim calendar mandatory. The intention of reestablishing sharia was announced, and Qadhafi personally assumed chairmanship of a commission to study the problems involved. In November 1973, a new legal code was issued that revised the entire Libyan judicial system to conform to the sharia, and in 1977 the General People's Congress (GPC—see Glossary) issued a statement that all future legal codes would be based on the Quran.

Among the laws enacted by the Qadhafi government a series of legal penalties prescribed during 1973 included the punishment of armed robbery by amputation of a hand and a foot. The legislation contained qualifying clauses making its execution unlikely, but its enactment had the effect of applying Quranic principles in the modern era. Another act prescribed flogging for individuals breaking the fast of Ramadan, and yet another called for eighty lashes to be administered to both men and women guilty of fornication.

In the early 1970s, Islam played a major role in legitimizing Qadhafi's political and social reforms. By the end of the decade, however, he had begun to attack the religious establishment and several fundamental aspects of Sunni Islam. Qadhafi asserted that the Quran should be the sole guide to Islamic governance, and he believed in the ability of every Muslim to read and interpret it. He denigrated the roles of the ulama (see Glossary), imams, and Islamic jurists and questioned the authenticity of the hadith, and thereby the *sunna,* as a basis for Islamic law. The sharia itself, Qadhafi maintained, governed only such matters as properly fell within the sphere of religion; all other matters lay outside the purview of religious law. Finally, he called for a revision of the Muslim calendar, saying it should date from the Prophet's death in 632, an event he felt was more momentous than the hijra ten years earlier.

These unorthodox views on the hadith, sharia, and the Islamic era aroused a good deal of unease. They seemed to originate from Qadhafi's conviction that he possessed the transcendent ability to interpret the Quran and to adapt its message to modern life. Equally, they reinforced the view that he was a reformer but not a literalist in matters of the Quran and Islamic tradition. On a practical level, however, several observers agreed that Qadhafi was less motivated by religious convictions than by political calculations. By espousing these views and by criticizing the ulama, he was using religion to undermine a segment of the middle class that was notably vocal in opposing his economic policies in the late 1970s. But Qadhafi clearly considered himself an authority on the Quran and Islam and was not afraid to challenge traditional religious authority. He also was not prepared to tolerate dissent.

The Revolutionary government gave repeated evidence of its desire to establish Libya as a leader of the Islamic world. Moreover, Qadhafi's efforts to create an Arab nation through political union with other Arab states were also based on a desire to create a great Islamic nation. Indeed, Qadhafi drew little distinction between the two.

The government took a leading role in supporting Islamic institutions and in worldwide proselytizing on behalf of Islam. The Jihad Fund, supported by a payroll tax, was established in 1970 to aid the Palestinians in their struggle with Israel. The Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic at the University of Benghazi was charged with training Muslim intellectual leaders for the entire Islamic world, and the Islamic Mission Society used public funds for the construction and repair of mosques and Islamic educational centers in cities as widely separated as Vienna and Bangkok. The Islamic Call Society (Ad Dawah) was organized with government support to propagate Islam abroad, particularly throughout Africa, and to provide funds to Muslims everywhere.

Qadhafi has been forthright in his belief in the perfection of Islam and his desire to propagate it. His commitment to the open propagation of Islam, among other reasons, has caused him to oppose the Muslim Brotherhood, an Egyptian-based fundamentalist movement that has used clandestine and sometimes subversive means to spread Islam and to eliminate Western influences. Although the brotherhood's activities in Libya were banned in the mid-1980s, it was present in the country but maintained a low profile (see Religious Opposition, ch. 4). In 1983 a member of the brotherhood was executed in Tripoli, and in 1986 a group of brotherhood adherents was arrested after the murder of a high-ranking political official in Benghazi. Qadhafi has challenged the brotherhood to establish itself openly in non-Muslim countries and has promised its leaders that, if it does, he will support its activities.

Qadhafi has stressed the universal applicability of Islam, but he has also reaffirmed the special status assigned by the Prophet to Christians. He has, however, likened them to misguided Muslims who have strayed from the correct path. Furthermore, he has assumed leadership of a drive to free Africa of Christianity as well as of the colonialism with which it has been associated.

A health care center in Benghazi
Courtesy United Nations

Health and Welfare

Social Welfare

A government advertisement appearing in an international publication in 1977 asserted that the Libyan social security legislation of 1973 ranked among the most comprehensive in the world and that it protected all citizens from many hazards associated with employment. The social security program instituted in 1957 had already provided protection superior to that available in many or most developing countries, and in the 1980s the welfare available to Libyans included much more than was provided under the social security law: work injury and sickness compensation and disability, retirement, and survivors' pensions. Workers employed by foreign firms were entitled to the same social security benefits as workers employed by Libyan citizens.

Subsidized food, inexpensive housing, free medical care and education, and profit-sharing were among the benefits that eased the lives of all citizens. The government protected the employed in their jobs and subsidized the underemployed and unemployed. In addition, there were nurseries to care for the children of working mothers, orphanages for homeless children, and homes for the aged. The welfare programs had reached even the oasis towns of the desert, where they reportedly were received with considerable satisfaction. The giving of alms to the poor remained one of the pillars of the Islamic faith, but the extent of public welfare was such that there was increasingly less place for private welfare. Nonetheless, the traditional Arab sense of family responsibility remained strong, and provision for needy relatives was still a common practice.

Medical Care

The number of physicians and surgeons in practice increased fivefold between 1965 and 1974, and large increases were registered in the number of dentists, medical, and paramedical personnel. Further expansion and improvement followed over the next decade in response to large budgetary outlays, as the Revolutionary regime continued to use its oil income to improve the health and welfare of all Libyans. The number of doctors and dentists increased from 783 in 1970 to 5,450 in 1985, producing in the case of doctors a ratio of 1 per 673 citizens. These doctors were attached to a comprehensive network of health care facilities that dispensed free medical care. The number of hospital beds increased from 7,500 in 1970 to almost 20,000 by 1985, an improvement from 3.5 beds to 5.3 beds per 1,000 citizens. During the same years, substantial increases were also registered in the number of clinics and health care centers.

A large proportion of medical and paramedical personnel were foreigners brought in under contract from other Arab countries and from Eastern Europe. The major efforts to "Libyanize" health care professionals, however, were beginning to show results in the mid-1980s. Libyan sources claimed that approximately 33 percent of all doctors were nationals in 1985, as compared with only about 6 percent a decade earlier. In the field of nursing staff and technicians, the situation was considerably better—about 80 percent were Libyan. Schools of nursing had been in existence since the early 1960s, and the faculties of medicine in the universities at Tripoli and Benghazi included specialized institutes for nurses and technicians. The first medical school was not established until 1970, and there was no school of dentistry until 1974. By 1978 a total of nearly 500 students was enrolled in medical studies at schools in Benghazi and Tripoli, and the dental school in Benghazi had graduated its first class of 23 students. In addition, some students were pursuing graduate medical studies abroad, but in the immediate future Libya was expected to continue to rely heavily on expatriate medical personnel.

Among the major health hazards endemic in the country in the 1970s were typhoid and paratyphoid, infectious hepatitis, leishmaniasis, rabies, meningitis, schistosomiasis, and venereal diseases. Also reported as having high incidence were various childhood diseases, such as whooping cough, mumps, measles, and chicken pox. Cholera occurred intermittently and, although malaria was regarded as having been eliminated in the 1960s, malaria suppressants were often recommended for use in desert oasis areas.

By the early 1980s, it was claimed that most or all of these diseases were under control. A high rate of trachoma formerly left 10 percent or more of the population blinded or with critically impaired vision, but by the late 1970s the disease appeared to have been brought under control. The incidence of new cases of tuberculosis was reduced by nearly half between 1969 and 1976, and twenty-two new centers for tuberculosis care were constructed between 1970 and 1985. By the early 1980s, two rehabilitation centers for the handicapped had been built, one each in Benghazi and Tripoli. These offered both medical and job-training services and complemented the range of health care services available in the country.

The streets of Tripoli and Benghazi were kept scrupulously clean, and drinking water in these cities was of good quality. The government had made significant efforts to provide safe water. In summing up accomplishments since 1970, officials listed almost 1,500 wells drilled and more than 900 reservoirs in service in 1985, in addition to 9,000 kilometers of potable water networks and 44 desalination plants. Sewage disposal had also received considerable attention, twenty-eight treatment plants having been built.

Housing

Housing was one of the major concerns of the Revolutionary government from the beginning, and the provision of adequate housing for all Libyans by the 1980s remained a top priority. The former regime had undertaken to build 100,000 units to relieve a critical housing shortage, but this project had proved an expensive fiasco and was abandoned after 1969. A survey at the time of the Revolution found that 150,000 families lacked decent shelter, the actual housing shortfall being placed at upward of 180,000 dwellings.

Both the public and private sectors were involved in housing construction during the 1970s. Private investment and contracting accounted for a large portion of all construction until new property ownership laws went into effect in 1978 that limited each family to only one dwelling. Despite the decline of privately financed undertakings, the housing sector constituted one of the most notable of the Revolution's achievements. By the late 1970s, the hovels and tenements surrounding Benghazi and Tripoli had begun to give way to modern apartment blocks with electricity and running water that stretched ever farther into what had once been groves and fields. These high-rise apartments became characteristic of the skylines of contemporary Benghazi, Tripoli, and other urban areas.

Between 1970 and 1986, the government invested some LD2.8 million (for value of the Libyan dinar (LD—see Glossary) in housing, which made possible the construction of 277,500 housing units, according to official sources. To reach these targets, the regime drew not only upon Libyan resources but also enlisted firms from France, the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), Spain, Italy, Turkey, the Republic of Korea (South Korea), and Cuba. Since 1984, budget allocations for housing have fallen in keeping with a general decline in government spending. Many housing contracts have been suspended or canceled as a result, causing financial difficulties for foreign firms. A shortfall in new construction also raised the prospect of overcrowding and the creation of new shantytowns as the country's burgeoning population threatened to overwhelm the supply of housing.

Education

Under the monarchy, all Libyans were guaranteed the right to education. Primary and secondary schools were established all over the country, and old Quranic schools that had been closed during the struggle for independence were reactivated and new ones established, lending a heavy religious cast to Libyan education. The educational program suffered from a limited curriculum, a lack of qualified teachers—especially Libyan—and a tendency to learn by rote rather than by reasoning, a characteristic of Arab education in general. School enrollments rose rapidly, particularly on the primary level; vocational education was introduced; and the first Libyan university was established in Benghazi in 1955. Also under the monarchy, women began to receive formal education in increasing numbers, rural and beduin children were brought into the educational system for the first time, and an adult education program was established.

Total school enrollment rose from 34,000 on the eve of independence in 1951, to nearly 150,000 in 1962, to about 360,000 at the time of the 1969 Revolution. During the 1970s, the training of teachers was stressed in an effort to replace the Egyptian and other expatriate personnel who made up the majority of the teaching corps. Prefabricated school buildings were erected, and mobile classrooms and classes held in tents became features of the desert oases.

Modern housing built on the outskirts of Tripoli

In 1986 official sources placed total enrollments at more than 1,245,000 students, of whom 670,000 (54 percent) were males and 575,000 (46 percent) were females (see table 2, Appendix). These figures meant that one-third of the population was enrolled in some form of educational endeavor. For the 1970–86 period, the government claimed nearly 32,000 primary, secondary, and vocational classrooms had been constructed, while the number of teachers rose from nearly 19,000 to 79,000 (see table 3, Appendix). The added space and increased number of new teachers greatly improved student-teacher ratios at preprimary and primary levels; rising enrollments in general secondary and technical education, however, increased the density of students per classroom at those levels.

At independence, the overall literacy rate among Libyans over the age of ten did not exceed 20 percent. By 1977, with expanding school opportunities, the rate had risen to 51 percent overall, or 73 percent for males and 31 percent for females. Relatively low though it was, the rate for females had soared from the scanty 6 percent registered as recently as 1964. In the early 1980s, only estimates of literacy were available—about 70 percent for men and perhaps 35 percent for women.

In 1987 education was free at all levels, and university students received substantial stipends. Attendance was compulsory between the ages of six and fifteen years or until completion of the preparatory cycle of secondary school. The administrative or current expenses budget for 1985 allocated 7.5 percent of the national budget (LD90.4 million) to education through university level. Allocations for 1983 and 1984 were slightly less—about LD85 million—just under 6 percent of total administrative outlays.

From its inception, the Revolutionary regime placed great emphasis on education, continuing and expanding programs begun under the monarchy. By the 1980s, the regime had made great strides, but much remained to be done. The country still suffered from a lack of qualified Libyan teachers, female attendance at the secondary level and above was low, and attempts in the late 1970s to close private schools and to integrate religious and secular instruction had led to confusion. Perhaps most important were lagging enrollments in vocational and technical training. As recently as 1977, fewer than 5,000 students were enrolled in 12 technical high schools. Although unofficial estimates placed technical enrollments at nearly 17,000 by 1981, most doctors, dentists, and pharmacists in the early 1980s still came from abroad. Young Libyans continued to shun technical training, preferring white collar employment because it was associated with social respect and high status. As a consequence, there seemed to be no immediate prospect for reducing the heavy reliance on expatriate workers to meet the economy's increasing need for technical skills.

A major source of disruption was the issue of compulsory military training for both male and female students. Beginning in 1981, weapons training formed part of the curriculum of secondary schools and universities, part of a general military mobilization process (see Conscription and the People's Militia, ch. 5). Both male and female secondary students wore uniforms to classes and attended daily military exercises; university students did not wear uniforms but were required to attend training camps. In addition, girls were officially encouraged to attend female military academies. These measures were by no means popular, especially as they related to females, but in the mid-1980s it was too soon to assess their impact on female school attendance and on general educational standards.

Primary and Secondary Education

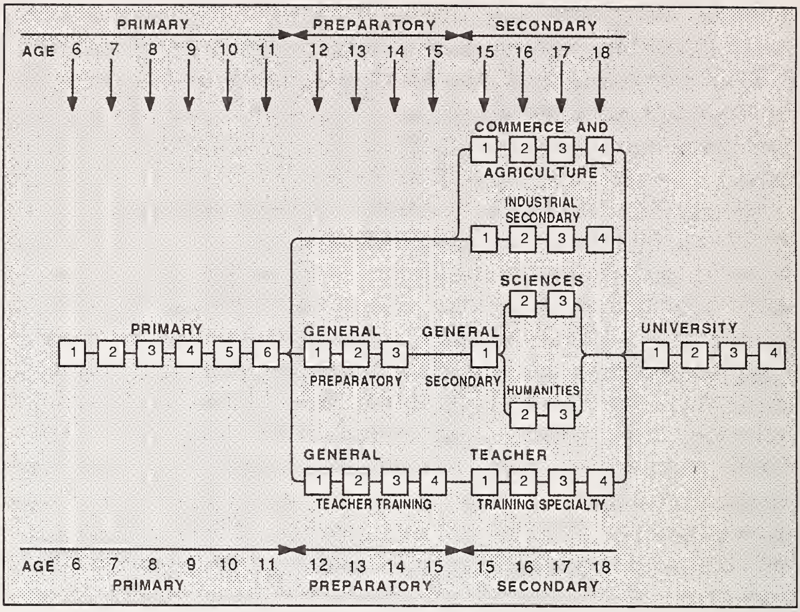
In 1987 the school program consisted of six years of primary school, three years of preparatory school (junior high), and three years of secondary (high) school. A five-year primary teaching program could be elected upon completion of primary school. A technical high-school program (including industrial subjects or commerce and agriculture) and two-year and four-year programs for the training of primary-school teachers were among the offerings at the secondary level (see fig. 6). In the mid-1970s, nearly one-half of the primary, preparatory, and secondary enrollments were in Tripoli and Benghazi, but by the late 1980s schools were well distributed around the country, and boarding facilities for students from remote areas were available at some schools at all academic levels.

The enrollment of girls in primary schools increased from 34 percent of the total in 1970 to nearly 47 percent in 1979. During the same period, female enrollment in secondary schools was up from 13 percent to 23 percent, and in vocational schools from 23 percent to 56 percent of total enrollment. However, the number of girls attending school in some rural areas was well below the national average, and a high female dropout rate suggested that many parents sent their daughters to school only long enough to acquire basic skills to make them attractive marriage partners. During the early 1980s, a variety of courses was taught in primary and secondary classes. English was introduced in the fifth primary grade and continued thereafter. Islamic studies and Arabic were offered at all levels of the curriculum, and several hours of classes each week were reportedly devoted to Qadhafi's *The Green Book.*

Higher Education

The University of Libya was founded in Benghazi in 1955, with a branch in Tripoli. In 1973 the two campuses became the universities of Benghazi and Tripoli, respectively, and in 1976 they were renamed Gar Yunis University and Al Fatah University, respectively. In 1981 a technical university specializing in engineering and petroleum opened at Marsa al Burayqah. Enrollments were projected at 1,700 students. In addition, there were technical institutes at Birak, Hun, and Bani Walid. By the early 1980s, schools of nuclear and electronic engineering and of pharmacy had been established at Al Fatah University, while plans called for the construction of an agricultural school at Al Bayda for 1,500 students.

Expansion of facilities for higher education was critical to meeting skilled personnel requirements. Technical education was being emphasized in keeping with a trend toward more specialized facilities for both secondary and university studies. In 1982 the GPC passed a resolution calling for the replacement of secondary schools by specialized training institutes whose curricula would be closely integrated with those of the universities and technical institutes. In 1985 the GPC called for a further expansion of vocational and professional training centers and for measures to compel technically trained students to work in their fields of specialization. Students were also expected to play a more active role in the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GENERAL TEACHER TRAINING
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PRIMARY
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Figure 6. School System, 1987

economy as the country attempted to overcome the shortage of skilled manpower caused by the expulsion of foreign workers in 1985 (see Population, this ch.). In view of declining allocations for education in the mid-1980s, however, it was doubtful if these and other goals would be met.

University enrollment figures for the 1980s were unavailable in 1987. However, they had risen without interruption since the 1950s, and it seemed probable that this trend was continuing. About 3,000 students were enrolled in the University of Libya in 1969. By 1975 the figure was up to 12,000, and a 1980 total of 25,000 was projected. Female enrollments rose dramatically during this period, from 9 percent of total enrollments in the 1970–71 period, to 20 percent in the 1978–79 period, to 24 percent in the early 1980s.

In the 1970s, many students went abroad for university and graduate training; in 1978 about 3,000 were studying in the United States alone. In the early 1980s, however, the government was no longer willing to grant fellowships for study abroad, preferring to educate young Libyans at home for economic and political reasons. In 1985 Libyan students in Western countries were recalled and their study grants terminated. Although precise information was lacking, many students were reportedly reluctant to interrupt their programs and return home.

University students were restless and vocal but also somewhat lacking in application and motivation. They played an active role in university affairs through student committees, which debated a wide range of administrative and educational matters and which themselves became arenas for confrontation between radical and moderate factions. University students were also among the few groups to express open dissatisfaction with the Qadhafi government (see Student Opposition, ch. 4). One major source of tension arose from the regime's constant intervention to control and politicize education on all levels, whereas most Libyans regarded education as the path to personal and social advancement, best left free of government meddling.

In 1976 students mounted violent protests in Benghazi and Tripoli over compulsory military training. More recently, in March 1986 students of the faculties of English and French at Al Fatah University successfully thwarted Qadhafi's attempt to close their departments and to destroy their libraries, part of the Arabization campaign and another of Qadhafi's steps to eliminate Western influence. A compromise was worked out whereby the departmental libraries were spared, but both foreign languages were gradually to be phased out of university curricula. After this incident, Qadhafi announced that Russian would be substituted for English in Libyan schools, a policy which, if implemented, was certain to cause both practical and political difficulties.

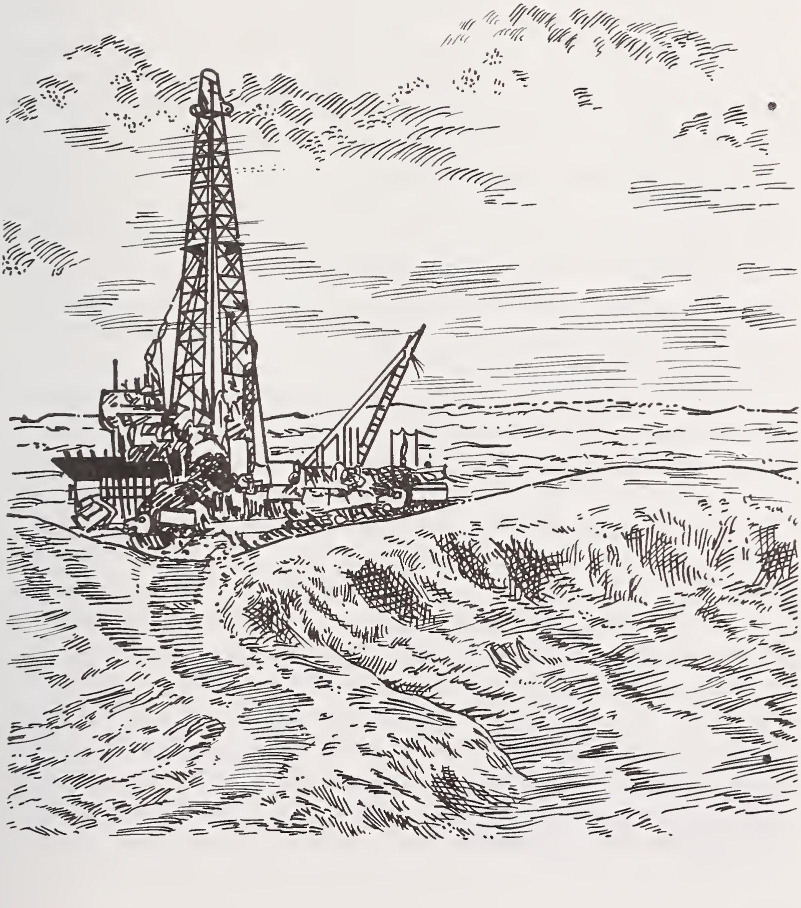
* * *

Despite the attention Libya has received in the press and the appearance of a few major works within the last decade, the literature on Libyan society is relatively thin and uneven. The best and most comprehensive general introduction is also the newest—Lillian Craig Harris's *Libya: Qadhafi's Revolution and the Modern State.* Her primary focus is political and economic, but Harris also discusses the people, the social achievements of the Revolutionary government, and social disaffection. Richard Parker's *North Africa: Contemporary Politics and Economic Development,* gives another overview of Libya in the early 1980s, although he, too, is primarily concerned with politics and foreign affairs rather than with domestic affairs. John Wright's *Libya: A Modern History,* provides extensive coverage of the independence period, being particularly valuable on social change during the 1970s.

There is a general dearth of current reliable social statistics for the 1980s, in contrast with the 1970s. The available data is often a decade or more old and in some cases is missing altogether. The best available sources outside the country are the various publications of the United Nations and the World Bank. Much useful and usually more current data can be found in the quarterly economic reviews published by the Economist Intelligence Unit (London).

The situation is considerably better with respect to analyses of social structure and values. Omar El Fathaly and Monte Palmer's *Political Development and Social Change in Libya* and ''Opposition to Change in Rural Libya'' are concerned with the evolution of social structure since independence. Basing their conclusions on field surveys, these researchers document the resilience of traditional values in shaping contemporary Libyan society, especially its elite structure. In ''Libya: Personalistic Leadership of a Populist Revolution,'' Raymond Hinnebusch dissects the Revolutionary-era elite in a scholarly treatment that also shows how the ideals of the Revolution have affected elite formation. A series of essays covering almost all aspects of society, in some cases since the nineteenth century, comes from Marius and Mary Jane Deeb, *Libya Since the Revolution.* Like El Fathaly and Palmer, the Deebs write on the basis of first-hand experience, but unfortunately their data are largely drawn from the early and mid-1970s. Mustafa Attir's ''Ideology, Value Changes, and Women's Social Position in Libyan Society,'' examines attitudes toward women and traces the evolution of female rights and status over the last four decades. Ann Elizabeth Mayer's ''Islamic Resurgence or New Prophethood,'' details the legal and theological reasoning and posturing that lie behind Qadhafi's view of Islam and his challenge to the religious establishment. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography).

Chapter 3. The Economy



An oil rig in the Libyan desert

THE LIBYAN ECONOMY is unique in North Africa. Whereas Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia all have large populations, considerable agricultural potential, and well-established industrial bases, Libya possesses few of these advantages. It does, however, have abundant energy resources—primarily an attractive type of light low-sulfur crude oil as well as some natural gas. Given the country's small population (3.6 million in 1984) and considerable petroleum-derived income, the Libyan economy has more in common with those of the small oil-exporting Persian Gulf states than with those of its North African neighbors.

Because of Libya's great dependence on oil revenues, the general level of the Libyan economy is closely related to the health of the petrochemical industry. Despite massive investment in agriculture and nonpetroleum-related industry, the percentage of Libya's gross domestic product (GDP—see Glossary) derived from oil has remained fairly constant since the early 1970s, fluctuating between 50 and 60 percent until 1982, when declining oil revenues caused it to drop below 50 percent. Since Muammar al Qadhafi and his associates came to power in 1969, reducing Libya's dependence on oil has been the government's major economic policy objective. Its inability to achieve this goal stems from ill-advised policy decisions as well as the many obstacles to economic diversification in a land lacking in both basic infrastructure and water resources.

Diversification is an important issue because at current rates of production, Libyan oil reserves are not expected to last beyond the second decade of the next century. Thus, the long-term health of the Libyan economy hinges on developing a self-sustaining nonpetroleum sector. Otherwise, once oil reserves are depleted, Libya will become as poor as it was before its current oil boom.

Libya's postindependence economic progress can be divided into four periods. The first period began with Libya's gaining of independence in 1951, included the discovery of oil in 1957, and ended in 1961. The second period dates from 1961, when oil exports moved the country into the forefront of the world's economies. The September 1, 1969, military coup d'état marked the beginninng of the third period, a period that saw Libya change from a Western-oriented capitalist country into a strongly nationalist, anti-Western, socialist state. This period also witnessed the government's growing intervention in the economy, which was largely financed by the booming oil revenues of the 1970s. Falling world oil prices in the early 1980s ushered in the fourth phase of Libya's economic development. The falling prices have dramatically reduced government revenue and caused a serious decline in economic activity.

The economic change between independence and the 1980s was dramatic. In 1951, on the eve of independence, Libya, underdeveloped and backward, was characterized by the United Nations (UN) as perhaps the world's poorest country. Experts predicted that the country would have to be supported for years by international grants-in-aid while it organized itself to try to live within its own meager means. However, in less than 25 years, Libya had turned into a rapidly developing country with accumulated net gold and foreign-exchange reserves equivalent to upward of US$4 billion and an estimated annual income from oil revenues of between US$6 and US$8 billion. Although Libya suffered few balance-of-payments problems, it was beginning to be bothered by inflation. The country seemed to have adequate funds at its disposal, however.

Growth and Structure of the Economy

At the time of independence, the Libyan economy was based mainly on agriculture, which was divided more or less evenly between field (including tree) crops and livestock products. Agriculture provided raw materials for much of the country's industrial sector, exports, and trade; employed more than 70 percent of the labor force; and contributed about 30 percent of the GDP, dependent on climatic conditions.

For the most part, agricultural resources were limited to two comparatively narrow stretches along the Mediterranean Sea and a few desert oases. The cropland had been maltreated, and the pasture had been overgrazed. Erosion was common, production methods were primitive, and close to a quarter of the agricultural area was held on a tribal basis and was being used inefficiently. Rainfall was unpredictable, except that usually it was scarce and ill-timed. When the rains did come, however, they were likely to be excessive. Groundwater was in short supply in the agricultural areas. In some locations it had been so excessively drawn upon that it had become brackish or saline and was no longer suitable even for agriculture. Because the country has no perennial rivers, there was only limited potential for irrigation and even less for hydroelectric power. At the time of independence, the apparently abundant subterranean water supplies located in the Lower Sahara had not yet been discovered. Even if officials had known about the water, its presence, while encouraging, would not have been very helpful in the short term because of lack of development funds and inadequate transport and storage facilities. In 1986, although agriculture contributed a very small share to the GDP, it still provided employment opportunities for a large portion of the population and was therefore still important (see table 4, Appendix). Shortage of water was the main drawback to expansion of cultivable land, but reclamation and irrigation schemes and the introduction of modern farming techniques held promise for the future.

At the time of independence, Libya possessed few minerals in quantities sufficient for commercial use, although iron ore was subsequently found in the Wadi ash Shati in the south-central part of the country. In turn, because of the absence of coal and hydroelectric power, the country had little energy potential. In the modern sense, Libya had practically no industry and, given the limitations of the agricultural sector, could produce few exports to be exchanged for the import commodities the country needed.

At independence, illiteracy was widespread, the level of skills was low, and technical and management expertise and organization were at a premium. (The lack of sufficient numbers of skilled Libyans in the labor force remained a problem in the 1980s; despite large sums of money having been spent on training Libyans, the government still relied on foreign workers.) A large part of the national life was lived under nomadic or seminomadic, rather than settled, conditions. The high birthrate added to the country's poverty. The rapid population increase strained the agricultural economy and resulted in the drift of excess unskilled laborers to urban centers, but these centers, too, lacked sufficient adequately paid employment.

In terms of resources, including human resources, the outlook at independence was bleak. Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, international and other foreign agencies—mainly the United States and Italy—continued to finance the gap between Libya's needs and its domestic resources. The foreign community was not in a position, however, to undertake an across-the-board and sustained development program to set the economy on a course of immediate self-sufficiency. During much of the 1950s, the country's administrative apparatus was unable even to utilize all the resources made available from abroad.

During the decade after the discovery of petroleum, Libya became a classic example of a dual economy, in which two separate economies (petroleum and nonpetroleum) operated side by side. For practical purposes, no connection existed between them except that the petroleum companies employed limited quantities of local labor and paid a portion of their profits to the government in royalties and taxes. The financing and decisions affecting the activities of the petroleum economy came not from the domestic nonpetroleum economy but rather from outside the country. Although this sharp dichotomy was in the process of relaxation after 1965—perhaps especially after 1967—it appears not to have been attacked conceptually, at least not with fervor, until after the 1969 change of government.

The laissez-faire arrangement came to an end with the military coup d'état of September 1, 1969. The previous government's personnel and much of its administrative framework were scrapped, and the oil companies were put on notice that they were overdue on large payments for unpaid taxes and royalties. In other respects affecting the economy, the new government marked time, except for its policy of ''Libyanization''—the process of replacing foreigners and foreign-owned firms in trade, government, and related activities with Libyan citizens and firms. In mid-1970, the government embarked on a program of progressive nationalization.

In addition to establishing at least a temporary veto power over the activities of the oil companies, the nationalization program included sequestration of all Italian assets, socialization (state ownership) of the banking and insurance system, Libyanization of all forms of trade, and steady substitution of Libyans for foreign administrative and management personnel in resident foreign concerns—another aspect of Libyanization. In the petroleum sector, the government put a constantly increasing financial bite on the companies. By the end of 1974, the government either had nationalized companies or had become a participant in their concessions and their production and transportation facilities. The regime thus had a larger share of the profits than under the previous royalty and tax arrangements. However, despite varying degrees of nationalization of foreign oil firms, in 1987 Libya was still highly dependent on foreign companies for the expertise needed in exploitation, marketing, and management of the oil fields and installations that remained the primary basis of the country's economic activity.

After 1972 the government began supplementing its policy of nationalization with an ambitious plan to modernize the economy, modeled largely on neighboring Algeria's experience. The key component of this plan was an intensive effort to build industrial capacity, placing a special emphasis on petroleum-related industry. The industrialization program had two major goals: the diversification of income sources and import substitution. In this latter respect, the plan met with some success, as several categories of imports began to decline in the late 1970s.

In 1981, when oil prices started to fall and the worldwide oil market entered a period of glut, the present phase of independent

Libya's economic history began. The decline in oil prices has had a tremendous effect on the Libyan economy. By 1985 Libyan oil revenues had fallen to their lowest level since the first Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) price shock in 1973. This fall in oil revenues, which constituted over 57 percent of the total GDP in 1980 and from which, in some years, the government had derived over 80 percent of its revenue, caused a sharp contraction in the Libyan economy. Real GDP fell by over 14 percent between 1980 and 1981 and was continuing to decline in late 1986. The negative trend in real GDP growth was not expected to reverse itself soon.

The decline in real GDP placed great strain on government spending, reduced the level of imported goods available in Libyan markets, and increased Libya's debt repayment problems—all of which combined to lower living standards. The decline in oil revenues also caused the Libyan government to revise its somewhat haphazard way of making economic policy decisions, because it no longer possessed the financial resources to achieve its many goals. Thus, during the early and mid-1980s, development projects were subjected to a more rigorous cost and benefit analysis than during the easy money time of the 1970s. As of 1987, however, it was too early to judge the effectiveness of the government's response to falling oil revenues.

Role of the Government

Mainly because of Libya's strategic role in World War II, the Libyan government had come to depend on foreign patrons for its financial needs. During the Italian occupation and in the immediate postwar period, first Italian and then United States and British grants kept the Libyan administration solvent. After 1956 the need for direct foreign subsidies declined as the international oil companies began to invest heavily in Libya—causing substantial capital inflows. During the 1960s, the investments of the previous decade began to pay off, and the country experienced the fruits of rising oil wealth. This trend not only reduced the government's need for foreign assistance, but also generated a huge increase in taxable domestic income. However, Libyan physical and human resource development continued to lag, necessitating sustained reliance on foreign technical assistance. This pattern of dependence on foreigners to perform crucial skilled functions, which subsequent governments have been unable to eliminate, has made Libyans acutely aware of their subordinate status in the world economy in relation to the industrialized West.

Consequently, the Qadhafi government has assigned high priority to the achievement of what it perceives as ''true economic independence.'' This theme has been one of Qadhafi's staple arguments and underlies much of the post-1969 Revolutionary government's economic policies. Qadhafi's other principal economic objective has been to promote equity, which he equates with socialism. Because of Qadhafi's unique conception of the character of the state, his distrust of the private sector, and his abhorrence of the profit motive, he has maintained that it is only through massive state intervention that economic independence and equity can be attained. Thus, the state has taken control of virtually all economic domains since Qadhafi came to power.

Soon after the revolution, a major Libyanization drive was initiated, which involved the expulsion of the remaining Jewish and Italian communities and the nationalization of the country's banks, insurance, and petroleum-marketing companies. Other measures were enacted to restrict the activities of foreigners in commerce and industry.

Throughout the 1970s, the government expanded its role to take control of Libya's economic resources. The public Libyan Petroleum Company (LIPETCO) was supplanted in 1970 by the National Oil Company (NOC), which became responsible for implementing policies decided upon in the Ministry of Petroleum before the latter was dissolved in March 1986. Similarly, the government exercised effective control over water rights and created a large number of state-owned enterprises to oversee Libya's basic infrastructural facilities, such as highways, communications, ports, airports, and electric power stations. Public corporations were also created to run the state airline and to import certain restricted goods. The public import company, the National Organization for Supply Commodities (NOSC), was given a monopoly over the import and sale of many basic consumer items. In 1975 the government became the sole importer and retailer of motor vehicles. The domestic marketing of certain commodities and the provision of certain services were restricted to the public sector. By 1977 these included construction materials, livestock, fertilizers, fish fodder, insecticides, insurance, banking, advertising, and publishing.

Since the late 1970s, the Libyan government has accelerated its assault on the private sector in a determined attempt to stamp out what it identified as bourgeois exploitation. This renewed effort followed the codification of Qadhafi's economic theories in the second volume of his *The Green Book,* published in 1978 (see *The Green Book,* ch. 4). Many of the regime's most radical economic policies began soon after that date. The first concrete manifestation of

Qadhafi's new economic militancy occurred in 1978, when he outlawed rental payments for property, changing all residential tenants into instant owners. The private sector housing and real estate industry was thus eliminated, and the new owners were required to pay monthly "mortgage" payments—usually amounting to about one-third of their former rent—directly to the government; however, families making less than the equivalent of US$500 a month were exempted from this obligation.

Qadhafi initiated another major innovation in 1978 when, during a speech, he urged workers in both the public and private sectors to take control of the enterprises in which they worked by following his dictum: "partners, not wage earners." This new idea went much further than an earlier law in 1973, which had merely instituted mandatory profit-sharing. Now workers were urged to involve themselves in the day-to-day management of the enterprises in which they worked. Within 3 months of this speech, workers in 180 enterprises had formed "workers' committees" which, in principle at least, ran these concerns.

The most ambitious of the 1978 measures, however, was the attempt to do away with all private commerce, retail as well as wholesale. In that year, the responsibilities of the NOSC were considerably enlarged because the state took over responsibility for the importation of all goods and control over all foreign exchange transactions. In theory, all private commercial transactions became illegal as the state began to open centralized supermarkets run by local people's committees with the aim of undermining the numerous neighborhood shops that previously had catered to the daily needs of most Libyans. Eventually, there were 230 such state-run supermarkets in various parts of the country. Although no one expected such a small number of stores to replace fully the thousands of private sector merchants, state planners hoped that the stores would constitute enough of a market presence in each location to exert a downward pressure on private sector prices for competing goods.

The hostility of Qadhafi toward the private sector was based on his view of merchants as nonproductive parasites; he ignored their role as distributors. In fact, many state proclamations explicitly stated that government policy was designed to do away with the whole merchant class. One newspaper editorial emphasized that "One of the goals of these consumer centers is to cut down on the huge number of merchants who are a burden on productivity." The only type of private sector enterprises that the government did not actively seek to eliminate were small service-providing firms, which were not viewed as inherently exploitative.

By 1980 it was clear that Qadhafi's assault on the private sector was not proceeding as fast as he had hoped. Even in a time of relative wealth—oil revenues were nearing their peak and the state had enough revenue to fix the prices of certain goods—the public sector was unable to satisfy demand for many consumer items. The unsatisfied demand left room for private sector activity at various levels of legality. Continuing his attack on the private sector from another angle, in 1980 Qadhafi demonetized all currency notes above one dinar (for value of the Libyan dinar, LD, see Glossary). His action was designed to encourage those holding large quantities of dinars to deposit them in the nationalized banks—thus increasing state control over private sector assets. Many individuals with large cash holdings were reluctant to deposit their savings, however, since withdrawals in excess of LD1,000 were prohibited. They also feared that large deposits could be used against them as evidence of their having engaged in illegal commercial transactions. The main result of the 1980 demonetization, therefore, was a rise in conspicuous consumption, as individuals sought to transfer their savings into material goods, and an increased demand for black market foreign exchange, as persons sought ways to export their dinars.

Most of the post-1977 economic policy innovations of the Qadhafi government were designed to inhibit the private accumulation of wealth and promote an equitable distribution of the national income. The principal vehicles for fostering economic independence in this period have been two five-year plans (1976–80 and 1981–85), which were aimed at directing investment to areas that would contribute to economic autonomy (see table 5, Appendix). In the 1976–80 plan, agriculture and industry received the largest share of investment, whereas the 1981–85 plan allocated more funds to industry and public works, with agriculture coming in third.

Most of the planned agricultural investment has been directed to the development of oasis agriculture and irrigation. Ambitious schemes were launched during the 1970s to use the underground fossil water resources of the Tazirbu, Sarir, and Al Kufrah oases to grow wheat and animal fodder crops (see fig. 4). Similarly, work has begun on the Great Man-Made River (GMMR) scheme to tap desert aquifers to bring water to the coastal agricultural areas where shrinking aquifers and rising salinity threaten to lay waste to historically productive agricultural lands.

Industrial investment has been concentrated on several large-scale projects at industrial centers along the coast. Existing industrial facilities are located at Marsa al Burayqah, Misratah, and Ras al Unuf. Further expansion of these facilities as well as the creation of new ones was a principal objective of the 1981–85 plan. Most industrial projects were designed to create downstream petrochemical employment, satisfy internal demand for processed petroleum products, and take advantage of cheap energy to build export-oriented manufacturing capacity.

The contrast in approaches between the relatively conservative development plans, with their emphasis on investment and resource mobilization, and Qadhafi's more radical "socialist" policies, which seem to sacrifice efficiency for equity, produced inherent tensions in economic policy-making. In certain respects, the pursuit of equity has hindered Libya's quest for economic independence by discouraging private sector growth.

The political climate of Libya in the mid-1980s placed numerous obstacles in the way of private sector development. The 1978 law requiring all enterprises to be run by workers' committees made effective management almost impossible. Furthermore, since workers' committees rarely accepted economic efficiency or profitability as valid objectives, many enterprises no longer had a clearly defined role in the economy. The result of such policies has been to stifle most dynamism in the private sector. Consequently, when the government needed to ensure the accomplishment of key economic tasks, which it was incapable of doing for itself, it had no choice but to turn to foreigners.

Those Libyans possessing managerial experience or engaged in performing key economic activities prior to 1978 became increasingly alienated by the subsequent directions of government policy; many even left the country. Thus, with a severely handicapped domestic private sector and few competent Libyan managers, the completion and operation of practically all key industrial projects depended on foreign expertise. Furthermore, because the post-1978 economic environment had provided little incentive for the training of Libyan managers, there was little likelihood of easily reversing the shortage of indigenous managers.

Some foreign observers have suggested that the sharp drop in oil revenues, which began in the early 1980s, may lead to a reevaluation of many of Qadhafi's more radical socialist policies. Such reassessment could reduce some of the private sector's problems and actually contribute toward economic independence. There were some indications that this was indeed happening in the mid-1980s, as many projects of doubtful economic value were postponed.

Because of declining revenues, the government has been unable to finance much of its ambitious drive to replace the private sector. The expansion of the state-run supermarket system ended as funds grew tighter. By 1985 the stores were unable to supply most basic consumer items, thus failing to drive down private sector prices. Similarly, the government was compelled to expel many foreign workers who had been the mainstay of the economy. Between 1983 and 1987, the number of foreign workers in Libya fell drastically, going from more than 560,000 to about 200,000. This decline was achieved primarily by cutting the number of unskilled foreign laborers employed by the public sector to perform basic service tasks—jobs that many Libyans could fill. Whether the increased demand for labor in the wake of these expulsions will result in a greater Libyanization of the work force, or merely in a rise in the number of unfilled jobs will depend largely on how much the government relaxes its restrictions on private sector employment. In the mid-1980s, few public sector funds were available for hiring Libyans at the higher salaries they would require.

Industry

In 1984 industry, including the exploration, production, transport, and marketing of petroleum products (crude petroleum, natural gas, and condensates derived therefrom), contributed about 60 percent of GDP (at factor cost) and virtually 100 percent of exports. Industrial activities also occupied from 30 to 38 percent of the total labor force in 1984.

Libyan industrial development has been heavily dependent on the oil sector, both for investment revenue and for raw inputs. Throughout the 1970s, the government implemented numerous measures to increase its share of the profits from oil exploitation and marketing. By the mid-1980s, the revenue accruing to foreign oil companies engaged in lifting Libyan oil was taxed at a rate of about 95 percent.

Hydrocarbons and Mining

Since the early 1960s, the petroleum industry has increasingly dominated the whole economy, although in 1984 it provided direct employment for fewer than 10,000 Libyans. The development of the oil industry was remarkable, both in terms of its rapidity and its proliferation. An exceptional combination of circumstances contributed to the development of the petroleum sector. Like Algerian oil, Libyan crude oil, while having a rather high wax content, is lighter and easier to handle than crudes from most other petroleum areas. It also has a low sulfur content, which makes it easier on internal combustion engines and less of a pollution contributant than other crudes. For this reason, Libyan crudes had a receptive market in Europe from the start; furthermore, Libya is one-third closer to European markets than the oil ports of the eastern

Workmen install a valve along pipeline in Ras al Unuf
Courtesy United States Information Agency

Mediterranean. When the Suez Canal was closed by the June 1967 War, forcing tankers from Irān, Iraq, and the Arabian Peninsula to go around the Cape of Good Hope, the advantages of Libyan petroleum were enhanced. Moreover, the lay of the land itself, which allows the output of the wells to be piped directly and easily to dockside totally over Libya's territory, assured steadiness of supply, which has not necessarily been the case for eastern Mediterranean pipeline outlets. In addition, Libya's petroleum development benefited from the technology and experience acquired by the industry in other parts of the petroleum world during the preceding fifty years. Thus, by 1977 Libya was the seventh largest oil producer in the world. However, Libya's position declined somewhat in the early 1980s as OPEC production quotas were cut. By 1986 Libya was only the fifteenth largest producer of crude oil.

For the petroleum industry, the military coup of 1969 did not represent a rupture of continuity; it did, however, introduce a shift in government attitudes toward the purpose and function of the foreign operating companies in line with its general nationalist-socialist political and socioeconomic orientation. It is therefore useful to visualize Libya's petroleum development in terms of two periods, dividing at September 1, 1969, with the earlier period serving to prepare for the later.

Active exploration started in 1953 after oil was discovered in neighboring Algeria. The first well was begun in 1956 in western Fezzan, and the first oil was struck in 1957. Esso (subsequently Exxon) made the first commercial strike in 1959, just as several firms were planning to give up exploration. The first oil flowed by pipeline from Esso's concession at Zaltan to its export facilities at Marsa al Burayqah in 1961. The rush was on, with other companies entering Libya and additional discoveries being made. The original major strikes were in the Sirtica Basin, one of the world's largest oil fields, southeast of the Gulf of Sidra; in 1987 this area was still the source of the bulk of Libya's output. In 1969 a major strike was made at Sarir, well to the southeast of the Sirtica Basin fields, and minor fields were located in northwestern Tripolitania. New deposits were found in the Ghadamis sedimentation basin (400 kilometers southwest of Tripoli) in 1974 and in offshore fields 30 kilometers northwest of Tripoli in 1977.

Since 1977 efforts to tap new deposits have concentrated on Libya's offshore fields. The large Bouri field was due to be brought on-stream by the NOC and AGIP (Azienda Generale Italiana Petroli), a subsidiary of the Italian state oil company consortium, in late 1987. Other offshore exploration ventures were launched following the settlement of maritime boundary disputes with Tunisia in 1982 and Malta in 1983. Libyan access to offshore deposits in these formerly disputed areas was significant, because they may contain as much as 7 billion barrels of oil.

Petroleum production in 1985 was still governed by the Petroleum Law of 1955, which was amended in 1961, 1965, and 1971. The government, through the Ministry of Petroleum, preferred to grant sizable concessions to a number of different foreign companies. To induce rapid exploitation of deposits, the typical concession contract called for progressive nationalization of Libyan operations run by foreign companies over a span of ten years, with the Libyan government's share starting as one-fourth and ending at three-fourths. The government extracted most of its compensation in the form of product sharing. When early concessions to several large companies by Esso, which was the first to export Libyan crude in 1961, proved to be highly profitable, many independent oil companies from noncommunist countries set up similar operations in Libya. In 1969 about thirty-three companies held concessions. Concessionary terms were somewhat tightened during the 1970s, as the post-Revolutionary government pursued a more active policy of nationalization. The vehicle for this policy was the revamped state NOC, which, as noted, was formed in 1970 from LIPETCO. In July 1970, NOC's jurisdiction was expanded by legislation that nationalized the foreign-owned Esso, Shell, and Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi (ENI) marketing subsidiaries, and a small local company, Petro Libya, and transferred their operations to NOC. These operations included managing companies in the importing, distributing, and selling of refined petroleum products at subsidized prices in Libya. In 1971 the companies were merged into a single countrywide marketing enterprise called the Brega Company, which also marketed oil and gas abroad for the government.

The new government's nationalization campaign commenced in December 1971, when it nationalized the British Petroleum share of the British Petroleum-Bunker Hunt Sarir field in retaliation for the British government's failure to intervene to prevent Iran from taking possession of three small islands in the Persian Gulf belonging to the United Arab Emirates. It was not until late 1974 that a compensation agreement was reached between British Petroleum and the Libyan government over the settlement of these nationalized assets. In December 1972, Libya moved against British Petroleum's former partner Bunker Hunt and demanded a 50-percent participation in its operations. When Bunker Hunt refused, its assets were nationalized in June 1973 and turned over to one of NOC's subsidiaries, as had been done earlier with British Petroleum's assets.

In late 1972, a 50-percent participation had been agreed upon with the Italian joint company, ENI–AGIP, and in early 1973 talks began with the Occidental Petroleum Corporation and with the Oasis group. Occidental, accounting for about 15 percent of total production, was one of the major independent producers. In July 1973, it agreed to NOC's purchase of 51 percent of its assets. The Oasis group, another major producer, was one-third owned by the Continental Oil Company, one-third by Marathon Petroleum, and one-sixth each by Amerada Petroleum Company and Shell. The Oasis group agreed to Libyan 51-percent participation in August 1973. On September 1, 1973, Libya unilaterally announced that it was taking over 51 percent of the remaining oil companies, except for a few small operators.

Several foreign oil companies balked at the Libyan proposal but soon found that the government's policy was firm: agree to Libyan participation or face nationalization. Shell refused to accept Libyan participation in its share of the Oasis group, and its operations were nationalized in March 1974. A month earlier, three other reluctant oil companies had been nationalized: Texaco, the California Asiatic Company, and the Libyan-American Oil Company. They finally received compensation for their assets in 1977.

Political events of the 1980s convinced many American-owned companies of the advisability of selling off their Libyan operations. In 1981 Exxon withdrew from Libya, pulling out its long-standing subsidiary operations. Mobil followed suit in 1982, when it withdrew from its operations in the Ras al Unuf system. These withdrawals gave NOC an even greater share in the overall oil industry. Another round of advancing nationalization was made possible in 1986, when United States President Ronald Reagan announced on January 7 his intention to require American companies to divest from their operations in Libya. It was unclear at that time, however, whether the five companies involved would sell their shares to NOC (probably at a substantial loss), or merely transfer them to European subsidiaries not affected by the president's sanctions. According to the latest estimates available in early 1987, NOC's share of the total equity in Libyan petroleum operations stood at 70 percent, with two operating subsidiaries and at least a 50-percent share in each major private concession.

Although NOC nominally had been under control of the Ministry of Petroleum, foreign observers were uncertain what real control the ministry had over the NOC. The ministry's dissolution in March 1986 produced little comment, which seemed to indicate that NOC was the principal instrument of government policy in the oil sector and controlled about two-thirds of Libya's total oil production.

Since 1974 no new concessions have been granted, although the Libyan government has negotiated production-sharing agreements with existing concession holders to induce them to search for new deposits, particularly in the offshore region bordering Tunisia where the large Bouri field is located. These agreements have called for NOC to receive 81 percent of production if the discovery is offshore and 85 percent if it is onshore.

Libyan price policy has largely been settled in meetings of OPEC, which it joined in 1962. Both the pre-Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary governments have remained committed to OPEC as an instrument for maximizing their total oil revenues. Petroleum production (almost all of which was exported) declined during the first half of the 1970s, as a result of both the OPEC and Libyan policy of cutting production to influence price. During the late 1970s, production rose slightly, only to fall again in the 1980s when OPEC reduced its members' production quotas in an attempt to halt the oil price slide. In March 1983, Libya accepted its OPEC quota of 1.1 million barrels per day (bpd—see Glossary). This figure was revised downward again in November 1984, when it was set at 990,000 bpd. Libyan oil production in 1986 averaged slightly more than 1.1 million bpd, having regained the same production it had in 1981. Generally, Libya has adhered to its OPEC quota.

In 1986 Libyan oil fields were served by a complicated network of oil pipelines leading to the five principal export terminals at Marsa al Burayqah, As Sidra, Ras al Unuf, Marsa al Hariqah, and Az Zuwaytinah (see fig. 7). The Sidra terminal exported the largest volume of oil, about 30 percent of the total in 1981. A future sixth terminal was planned at Zuwarah in western Libya. Pipelines to these terminals served more than one company, thus mixing different oil blends that were standardized for export. The share that an individual company received from exports was determined by the amount and quality or the oil that entered the common pipeline. The share of the oil belonging to NOC was either sold directly on the open market or sold back to its producing partner. Libyan refining capacity increased dramatically in 1985, when the export refinery at Ras al Unuf came on stream with a 220,000-bpd capacity. Other refineries existed at Tobruk (20,000 bpd), Marsa al Burayqah (11,000 bpd), and Az Zawiyah (116,000 bpd), giving Libya an overall refining capacity in 1985 of 367,000 bpd.

Production of natural gas in Libya received a major boost in 1971, when a law was passed requiring the oil companies to store and liquify the natural gas condensate from their wells, rather than burning it off as many had previously done. However, natural gas production has lagged far behind oil because the high costs of transport and liquefaction have made it a less attractive alternative. A large liquefaction plant was built at Marsa al Burayqah in 1968, but its export performance has been spotty. About 70 percent of Libya's natural gas production is consumed domestically. Production stood at 12.35 billion cubic meters in 1984, down from 20.38 billion cubic meters in 1980. Total reserves of natural gas were estimated at 600 billion cubic meters in 1985.

According to information available in 1987, Libya's commercially usable mineral resources—apart from its hydrocarbons—were limited to a large iron-ore deposit in the Wadi ash Shati near Sabha in Fezzan (see fig. 8), and scattered, deposits of gypsum, limestone, cement rock, salt, and building stone. There also were small, widely scattered and currently noncommercial deposits of phosphate rock, manganese, barite-celestite, sodium carbonate, sulfur, and alum. Although much of the country had been photographed by the petroleum companies and large portions of it had been mapped by the Italians, by British and American military personnel, and by the United States Geological Survey (from 1954 to 1962) in search of water and minerals, the country is so large that in early 1987 much of it still had not been mapped at scales suitable for definitive mineral inventory.

The Wadi ash Shati iron-ore deposit is apparently one of the largest in the world. Suitable in considerable part for strip mining, it outcrops in or underlies roughly eighty square kilometers of the valley. According to information in the mid-1980s, none of it was high-grade ore. Preliminary estimates suggest that the amount of 30 to 40 percent iron-content ore in the deposits totals anywhere between 700 million and 2 billion tons. Because of the distances and technical problems involved, profitable exploitation of the deposits would depend on the construction of a proposed railroad to the coast. Development of the deposits would allow Libya self-sufficiency in iron and steel, although probably at costs appreciably above those available on an import basis. In 1974 a state-owned company, the General Iron and Steel Corporation, was formed to exploit the deposits. The government hoped that the planned iron and steel manufacturing plant at Misratah, scheduled for completion in 1986, eventually would be able to exploit the Wadi ash Shati deposits. But the commercial viability of using these deposits was not assumed, since initial plans called for the Misratah works to be fed with imported iron-ore pellets.

Other scattered iron-ore deposits in northwestern Tripolitania and northern Fezzan were apparently insufficient to be commercially exploitable under current conditions. Manganese was known to exist in northwestern Tripolitania and, in combination with

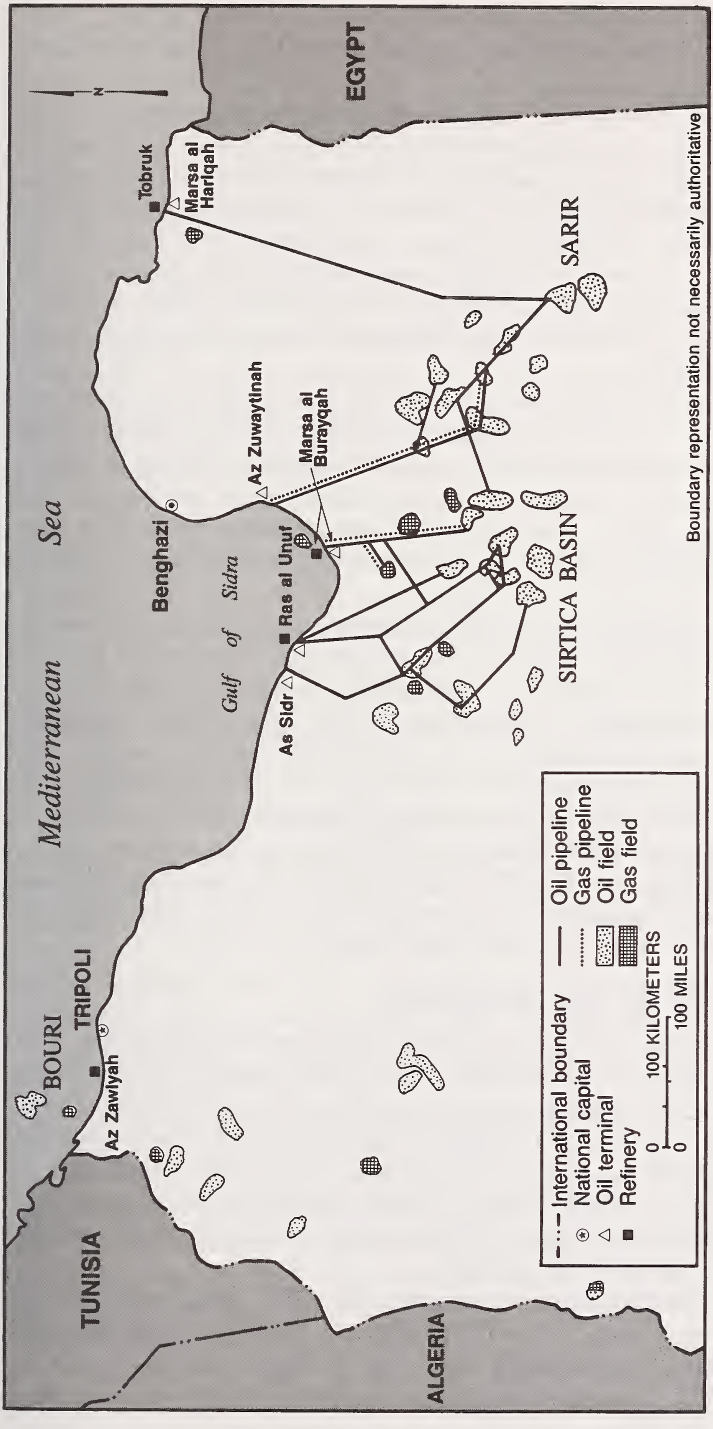

Mediterranean Sea
N
TUNISIA
ALGERIA
EGYPT
BOURI
TRIPOLI
Az Zawiyah
Gulf of Sidra
Benghazi
Tobruk
Marsa al Hariqah
Az Zuwaytinah
Marsa al Burayqah
Ras al Unuf
As Sidr
SIRTICA BASIN
SARIR
Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative
International boundary
National capital
Oil terminal
Refinery
Oil pipeline
Gas pipeline
Oil field
Gas field
0 100 KILOMETERS
0 100 MILES

Figure 7. Petroleum Industry Infrastructure, 1987

the iron-ore deposits, at several locations in the Wadi ash Shati. Known deposits, however, were not considered commercially exploitable.

Salt flats, formed by evaporation at lagoonal deposits near the coast and in closed depressions in the desert interior, are widely scattered through the northern part of the country. In some cases, especially along the Gulf of Sidra, they cover large areas. In the 1980s, about 11,000 tons of salt were produced annually. Evidences of sulfur have been reported at scattered points in the salt flats of the Sirtica Basin and in various parts of Fezzan; sulfur occurs in pure form in Fezzan and is associated with sulfur springs in the Sirtica Basin.

Sodium carbonate (trona) is formed as a crust at the edges and bottoms of a number of dry lakes in Fezzan. Traditionally, about 100 metric tons a year were harvested and sent to market at Sabha. Because sodium carbonate is used in petroleum refining, as well as traditionally in soapmaking and water refining, production may be increased as part of the government's development effort in Fezzan.

Because of the government's interest in social welfare and its financial ability to support it, construction is bound to be a major area of future economic development. Except for wood, the raw materials needed for construction—stone, gravel, clay, limestone, gypsum, and cheap fuel—are found in abundant quantities and suitable commercial qualities adjacent to the major population and production centers in both northern Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. In 1986 plans were announced for a new gypsum mine with a planned output of 200,000 to 300,000 tons a year. Several thousand tons of gypsum are mined annually and indicated reserves of gypsum total about 200 million tons.

Manufacturing and Construction

Growth in Libyan industrial capacity began in force only after 1969. Earlier manufacturing efforts concentrated primarily on processing domestic crops and livestock products and on handicraft products. Before the revolution, 90 percent of Libya's manufacturing establishments were located in Benghazi or Tripoli, and 75 to 80 percent of these were owned by Italians. Nearly 90 percent of the manufacturing establishments were private, and most employed fewer than 20 workers.

This situation started to change after 1969. After marking time for almost a year, the new government opted for a restricted industrial policy resembling the policies of Egypt and Algeria. In the late 1970s, the industrial sector (including manufacturing) was planned by the government, which had assumed control over those aspects of industrial production that were deemed sensitive or too large for the domestic private sector. The new policy leaned heavily on freeing industry, including manufacturing, from dependence on foreign ownership or control. In what appeared to be in part at least a function of its new policy, the government required local companies that engaged in trade to be Libyan and nationalized the properties of Italians, who represented the bulk of the country's entrepreneurship and private sector.

Before 1980 the government concentrated on developing light processing and petrochemical industries. Processing of foodstuffs continued to remain a high priority, and the largest number of plants built during the 1970s were in this area. Other major manufacturing projects during the decade included textile complexes, a new oil refinery, two petrochemical plants, a fertilizer factory, and an electrical cable plant. Gains in value added from manufacturing over this period were impressive. In constant 1980 dollars, value added in manufacturing rose from US$196 million to US$760 million in 1983. Still, in terms of contribution to GDP, in 1983 manufacturing contributed only 4 percent of the total (see table 6, Appendix.). In that year, an estimated 80,500 people worked in the manufacturing sector, about 7 percent of the total labor force. Light industries—mainly food processing—continued to comprise the largest share of total manufacturing capacity by the early 1980s.

Encouraging the development of heavy industry became a high priority for the government in the 1980s. The 1981-85 development plan called for the allocation of LD2.725 billion to heavy industry—15 percent of the total development plan allocation and second only to agriculture at 17 percent. However, as indicated earlier, because expenditure under the development budget was highly dependent on oil revenues, actual expenditures often failed to reach planned levels (see Public Finance and Banking, this ch.). Thus, the government's drive to build heavy industrial capacity in the 1980s has been hampered by declining revenues, and many projects were running behind schedule.

Key heavy industrial developments under construction in the 1981-85 plan included an expansion of the ammonium/urea plant at Marsa al Burayqah, a new ethylene unit at Ras al Unuf, and the large iron and steel complex at Misratah. The Ras al Unuf ethylene plant was completed in 1986, and the other two projects were nearing completion in early 1987.

Projects in the early stages of development in 1987 included a fertilizer complex at Surt, an aluminum smelter and coke plant

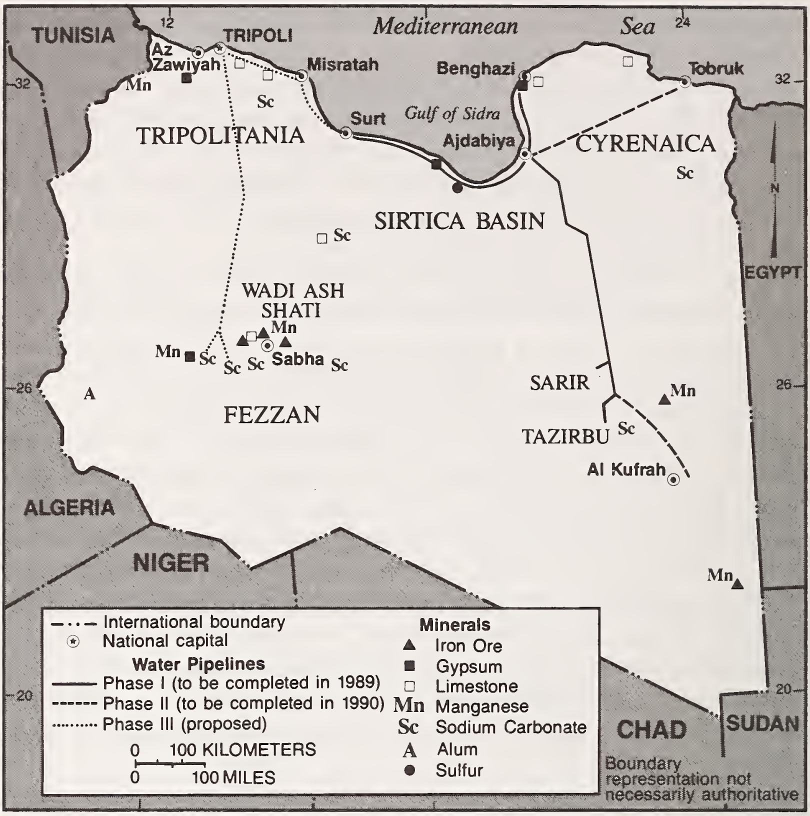

TUNISIA
TRIPOLI
Mediterranean Sea
Az Zawiyah
Misratah
Benghazi
Tobruk
Surt
Gulf of Sidra
Ajdabiya
TRIPOLITANIA
CYRENAICA
SIRTICA BASIN
WADI ASH SHATI
Sabha
FEZZAN
SARIR
TAZIRBU
Al Kufrah
EGYPT
ALGERIA
NIGER
CHAD
SUDAN
International boundary
National capital
Water Pipelines
Phase I (to be completed in 1989)
Phase II (to be completed in 1990)
Phase III (proposed)
0 100 KILOMETERS
0 100 MILES
Minerals
Iron Ore
Gypsum
Limestone
Mn Manganese
Sc Sodium Carbonate
A Alum
Sulfur
Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

Figure 8. Nonpetroleum Resources

at Zuwarah, and a further expansion of the Ras al Unuf petrochemical plant. However, all these projects were in serious jeopardy, as a result of the 1986 decline in oil prices, and Libyan planners were re-evaluating the impact of industrial projects on the balance of payments .

During the period of high oil prices before 1981, the development of import-dependent heavy industry seemed feasible. Libya enjoyed cheap energy costs in comparison to Europe and possessed the foreign exchange to pay for raw material imports. The 1980s decline in oil prices has reduced Libya's advantage in terms of energy costs and greatly cut into its supply of foreign exchange. Whereas in 1979 it may have been possible for the government both to import industrial raw materials and subsidize food imports, by 1987 it was becoming increasingly clear that the available foreign exchange was insufficient to accommodate both programs.

This problem was obvious in existing industry during the mid-1980s, when production and productive capacity ratios for selected manufacturers varied substantially from year to year, depending on whether imported raw materials were available. To cite a dramatic example, in 1983 Libya had a productive capacity of 18,000 washing machine units but produced only 4,533. As a result of cutbacks in foreign exchange allocations in 1984, only 289 machines were produced (productive capacity remained unchanged); thus, used capacity decreased from about 25 percent to under 2 percent.

Used capacity in other manufacturing industries varied widely. In 1984 oil refining operated at 36 percent of capacity, methanol production at 84 percent, ammonia at 91 percent, and tractor production at 67 percent. The country's unused manufacturing capacity could be traced not only to the scarcity of foreign exchange but also to Libya's general shortage of labor.

The construction industry has played a prominent role in economic development, as one would expect in a country largely devoid of infrastructure before the mid-1960s. The construction industry got its start as a result of foreign oil company investment during the 1960s, but since 1969 it has grown in accordance with the government construction projects called for in the successive five-year plans.

In 1975 the government began to reorganize the construction industry to make it more efficient. At that time, there were about 2,000 contractors, many of them small proprietorships or partnerships. The minister of housing was given the authority to merge contracting firms into a smaller number of larger firms capable of carrying out large construction projects. Firms with capital in excess of LD30,000 were converted into corporations, and the majority shares were sold to the public or the government. Previously, the government had set up several state-owned construction companies to build factories and to carry out civil engineering projects. Among the firms were the National Industrial Contracting Company, the General Corporation for the Construction and Maintenance of Roads, and the General Corporation for Civil Works.

The many government-sponsored construction projects of the 1970s created a booming industry, so much so that by the end of the decade Libya had become the world's leading per capita consumer of cement. This was a significant economic achievement, particularly because the 1978 housing law effectively had eliminated private residential construction. In 1986 construction supplied about

11 percent of GDP, second only to public services in the nonpetroleum sector.

The construction industry, however, was damaged more than any other sector by the severe cutback in the number of foreign workers in Libya in the mid-1980s. Between mid-1983 and mid-1984, the number of construction workers dropped from 371,000 to 197,000, mainly because of the departure of foreign workers. Nonetheless, construction remained the number one employer during 1984.

The cutbacks in development spending, together with the foreign worker exodus, led to a decline in overall construction. As an illustration, in 1985 the cement industry, which had been expanded during the building boom, was capable of producing 6 million tons a year, but domestic demand had dwindled to only 4.5 million tons.

In addition to the construction decline, there has been a rapid decline in another economic area, that of traditional handicrafts. Rural artisans have taken up more lucrative employment, and utilitarian handmade products have been replaced by factory-made goods. In an effort to provide continuous employment for those artisans who desire to continue their trades, the government has set up several training centers and provided subsidies for raw materials. Most artisan production is purchased by the government for resale or export. The more popular craft items are carpets, pottery, leather goods, fabrics, and copperware.

Energy

With its substantial hydrocarbon resources and relatively small (although increasing) needs, Libya traditionally has had large energy surpluses. Estimates in 1983 put the amount of Libya's excess energy supply at 94,196 tons of coal equivalent. All electric power was thermally generated by stations powered with natural gas or petroleum. Total generating capacity in 1983 was estimated to be 7,150 gigawatts per hour.

The General Electric Organization, part of the Secretariat of Communications, was in charge of generating electricity. According to its data, domestic usage of electricity exceeded agricultural and industrial usage. The data for 1977 suggested that most homes had electrical power and also indicated the relatively small industrial base of the country. Many oil company installations, however, maintained their own small plants.

Under the 1981–85 development plan, a total of LD779 million was allocated for electrical projects between 1982 and 1985. In addition, Libya has actively sought to develop a nuclear power

An instructor teaches students in an automotive repair class
Courtesy United States Information Agency

generating facility for fear that its rising industrial power needs might begin to cut into oil exports. In 1985 technical studies were under way for the construction of an 880-megawatt nuclear power station near Surt. The Soviet Union had agreed to supply the two 440-megawatt reactor cores needed to power the plant. The total cost of the project was put at US$4.2 billion. According to the secretary for atomic energy, enough local uranium had been discovered to fuel the plant, but studies were also being done on deposits in the Aouzou Strip area in Libyan-occupied Chad (see fig. 3). In 1985 approximately 850 Libyans were undergoing training at the Tajura nuclear research center near Tripoli, which was equipped with a small 10-megawatt research reactor.

Agriculture

The history of Libya's agricultural development has been closely related, although inversely, to the development of its oil industry. In 1958, before the era of oil wealth, agriculture supplied over 26 percent of GDP, and Libya actually exported food. Although gross levels of agricultural production have remained relatively constant, increasing oil revenues have resulted in a decline in agriculture's overall share of national income. Thus, by 1962 agriculture was only responsible for 9 percent of GDP, and by 1978 this figure had tumbled to a mere 2 percent. Even more striking than the downward trend in agriculture's share of GDP was the rise in food imports. In 1977 the value of food imports was more than thirty-seven times greater than it had been in 1958. Therefore, a large part of the rising oil wealth between 1960 and 1979 was spent on imported food products.

To some extent, these trends were neither surprising nor disturbing. Libya's comparatively strong agricultural position in 1958 masked an even greater level of general poverty. Agriculture during the 1950s was characterized by low levels of productivity and income. The advent of oil wealth provided many peasants with opportunities to engage in less exacting and more remunerative work in the urban areas, resulting in a huge rural migration to the cities. In addition, Libya is not well endowed with agricultural resources; over 94 percent of the land consists of agriculturally useless wasteland. The large number of people engaged in agriculture prior to 1960 reflected, therefore, not a thriving agricultural economy but merely the absence of attractive alternatives.

The number of peasants who gave up farming to look for jobs in the oil industry and in urban areas rose dramatically throughout the 1955–62 period. Another adverse effect on agricultural production occurred during the 1961–63 period, when the government offered its citizens long-term loans to purchase land from Italian settlers. This encouraged urban dwellers to purchase rural lands for recreational purposes rather than as productive farms, thereby inflating land values and contributing to a decline in production.

Since 1962 Libyan governments have paid more attention to agricultural development. The government has given inducements to absentee landlords to encourage them to put their lands to productive use and initiated high agricultural wage policies to stem the rural-to-urban flow of labor. These policies met with some success. Production levels began to rise slightly, and many foreign workers were attracted to the agricultural sector. Agricultural development became the cornerstone of the 1981–85 development plan, which attached high priority to funding the GMMR project, designed to bring water from the large desert oasis aquifers of Sarir and Al Kufrah. Agricultural credit was provided by the National Agricultural Bank, which in 1981 made almost 10,000 loans to farmers at an average of nearly LD1,500 each. The substantial amounts of funds made available by this bank may have been a major reason why so many Libyans—nearly 20 percent of the labor force in 1984—chose to remain in the agricultural sector (see table 4, Appendix).

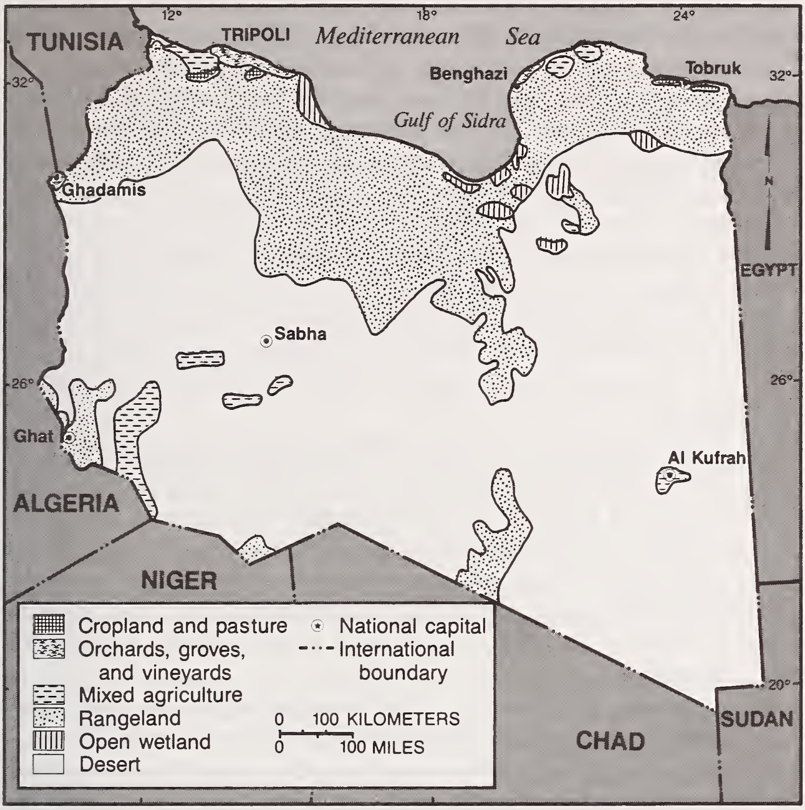

12°
18°
24°
TUNISIA
TRIPOLI
Mediterranean Sea
Benghazi
Tobruk
32°
Gulf of Sidra
Ghadamis
N
EGYPT
Sabha
26°
Ghat
Al Kufrah
ALGERIA
NIGER
CHAD
SUDAN
20°
Cropland and pasture
Orchards, groves, and vineyards
Mixed agriculture
Rangeland
Open wetland
Desert
National capital
International boundary
0 100 KILOMETERS
0 100 MILES

Figure 9. Land Use, 1987

Despite the greater attention to agriculture, however, in 1984 this sector only accounted for about 3.5 percent of GDP, and Libya still imported over 1 million metric tons of cereals (up from 612,000 metric tons in 1974). Also in 1984, the average index of food production per capita indicated a decline of 6 percent from the period 1974 to 1976. On the average, about 70 percent of Libya's food needs were met by imports during the mid-1980s.

Land Use and Irrigation

Although statistics vary, only a very small percentage of Libyan land is arable—probably under 2 percent of total land area (see fig. 9). About 4 percent is suitable for grazing livestock and the rest is agriculturally useless desert. Most arable land lies in two places: the Jabal al Akhdar region around Benghazi, and the Jifarah Plain near Tripoli (see fig. 4). The highest parts of the Jabal al

Akhdar receive between 400 and 600 millimeters of rain annually, whereas the immediately adjacent area, sloping north to the Marj Plain, receives between 200 and 400 millimeters. The central and eastern parts of the Jifarah Plain and the nearby Jabal Nafusah also average between 200 and 400 millimeters of rain annually. The remaining Libyan coastal strip and the areas just to the south of the sectors described average 100 to 200 millimeters of rain yearly. In addition, the Jifarah Plain is endowed with an underground aquifer that has made intensive well-driven irrigation possible. Between these two areas and for a distance of about fifty kilometers south, there is a narrow strip of land that has enough scrub vegetation to support livestock. Desert predominates south of this strip, with only occasional oasis cultivation, such as at Al Kufrah, Sabha, and Marzuq.

Studies published in the late 1970s indicated that at any given time, about one-third of the total arable land remained fallow and that as many as 45 percent of the farms were under 10 hectares. The average farm size was about eleven hectares, although many were fragmented into small, noncontiguous plots. Most farms in the Jifarah Plain were irrigated by individual wells and electric pumps, although in 1985 only about 1 percent of the arable land was irrigated.

Since coming to power in 1969, the Qadhafi government has been very concerned with land reform. Shortly after the Revolution, the government confiscated all Italian-owned farms (about 38,000 hectares) and redistributed much of this land in smaller plots to Libyans. The state retained some of the confiscated lands for state farming ventures, but in general the government has not sought to eliminate the private sector from agriculture as it has with commerce. It did, however, take the further step in 1971 of declaring all uncultivated land to be state property. This measure was aimed mainly at certain powerful conservative tribal groups in the Jabal al Akhdar, who had laid claim to large tracts of land. Another law passed in 1977 placed further restriction on tribal systems of land ownership, emphasizing actual use as the deciding factor in determining land ownership. Since 1977 an individual family has been allotted only enough land to satisfy its own requirements; this policy was designed to prevent the development of large-scale private sector farms and to end the practice of using fertile "tribal" lands for grazing rather than cultivation.

Partly as a result of these policies as well as the dictates of Islamic rules of inheritance, which stipulate that each son should receive an equal share of family land upon the father's death, in 1986 Libyan farms tended to be fragmented and too small to make efficient use of water. This problem was especially severe in the long-settled Jifarah Plain, which has been Libya's single most productive agricultural region.

The falling water tables in Libya's best agricultural lands caused by overirrigation posed a severe long-term ecological threat to agriculture. The government began to recognize this in 1976, and took measures to discourage citrus and tomato cultivation, both of which required large amounts of water. However, the more stringent steps required to save the coastal water resources—principally the regulation of irrigation and changing the land tenure system to make it more water-efficient—conflicted with Qadhafi's concept of economic equity, which favored intensive irrigated cultivation of small plots for family use.

The government's overall strategy for dealing with the impending ecological crisis has not been to reform the practices that brought it about. Rather, the cornerstone of agricultural policy since 1983 has been to avert disaster by pumping large quantities of water to the coast from the fossil reserves of the southern desert. This project, the GMMR, was expected to cost US$15 billion for the first two stages and has largely been spared from the cuts in development spending that have delayed many other projects in the 1980s.

The first phase of the GMMR, on which construction began in 1984, called for the construction of a 1,895-kilometer pipeline to carry water from the Sarir and Tazirbu regions to a holding tank at Ajdabiya. From there the water will be pumped to Surt and Benghazi for both agricultural and urban consumption. Planners anticipated a total cost of about US$3.29 billion for this first phase and a completion date sometime in 1989. The first stage is projected to irrigate an area of 20,000 hectares for vegetables, and 50,000 hectares for cereals, and to enable the raising of some 100 head of cattle. A second stage will connect the fossil reserves at Al Kufrah to the system. It will also extend the pipelines from Ajdabiya to Tobruk. Planning for a possible third stage, which would link Tripoli to the underground reserves of the western Fezzan region and would extend the western coastal terminus from Surt to Tripoli, was also under way in 1987.

After completion of the second stage, the GMMR will be capable of delivering up to 5 million cubic meters of water a day. According to estimates, this amount would be sufficient to irrigate 180,000 hectares in the Surt area, to provide pasture for 2 million sheep and 200,000 cattle, and to supply industrial and domestic needs in Benghazi and Tripoli. According to the project's American designers, the Al Kufrah and Sarir aquifers could sustain pumping at this rate for 50 to 100 years without depletion.

Despite planners' optimistic predictions about the benefits of the GMMR, foreign observers doubt that it will resolve the difficulties facing agriculture. Whatever the size of the desert aquifers, they are finite fossil reserves and will not last indefinitely. Furthermore, the major agricultural developments planned for the Surt region will do nothing to stop the declining levels of productivity in the Jifarah Plain. In fact, the choice of Surt as a site for massive agricultural development may have been prompted more by Qadhafi's family roots being there than its suitability for intensive agricultural development. In addition, urban and industrial demand for water from the south is likely to increase as the population continues to grow and as various industrial projects begin operations.

The GMMR's long-term impact on oasis cultivation in the south is also likely to be negative. Many of Libya's showcase agricultural projects are located in the southern oases that depend on the fossil aquifers that the GMMR will tap. Developments at Al Kufrah and Sarir have used advanced irrigation technology to grow wheat and fodder crops. The depletion of the fossil reserves on which these projects depend means that they have little long-term viability. Given the extremely high cost and low yields achieved as of the early 1980s, a re-evaluation of the economic viability of these projects may well occur.

Crops and Livestock

In the 1980s, statistics on Libyan agricultural production continued to vary widely. For example, figures compiled by the Central Bank of Libya generally exceeded those published by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization by 10 to 100 percent. During the 1980s, wheat and barley were the principal cereal crops, although millet was also grown in the southern oases. Both crops were cultivated throughout the country, in the coastal regions as well as in the desert oases. The optimum yield for wheat cultivation in Libya was thought to be about 5 tons per hectare, but by the mid-1980s yields were only averaging about 0.5 ton per hectare. Citrus production declined to insignificant levels following the government's water conservation measures of 1976. Other important crops were dates, olives, melons, onions, and potatoes. Vegetables were grown in specialized farms near Tripoli. Tree crops remained popular because many farmers combined olive, date, apple, or almond raising with cereal production (see table 7, Appendix).

In the 1980s, livestock represented the largest income-producing item in agricultural production, and the government has instituted numerous measures designed to make the country self-sufficient in meat, poultry, and dairy products. The numbers of sheep, cattle, and poultry were slowly increasing, while the herds of goats and camels were decreasing. Sheep constituted the largest percentage of livestock, numbering some 6.3 million head in 1985. Sheep and goats were used for meat, milk, and wool and were found all over the country. The largest flocks were in the Al Kufrah settlement project. Modern range-management practices and techniques were being used to prevent overgrazing of the land and to make optimal use of the pastures. Thousands of hectares of pastureland had been fenced along the coastal regions for use as cattle breeding stations as well as livestock-fattening pens.

Until the 1970s, cattle were used mainly for transport. During the 1970s, the number of cattle—particularly dairy cattle—increased, as did milk and meat production. By 1985 there were nearly 209,000 head of cattle in the country, and several fodder plants were in various stages of completion as part of an effort to achieve self-sufficiency in animal feedstuffs. The General Dairy and Dairy Products Company was created in 1974 to take over most private dairies and to produce and market all dairy products. Private dairy farms were permitted to operate, but their milk had to be sold to the state company. The government also entered the poultry business on a large scale, and independent farmers found it difficult to compete against the large government poultry farms.

Fishing and Forestry

Although Libya possesses nearly 1,800 kilometers of coastline and the second largest continental shelf in the Mediterranean, its waters are not particularly rich in the plankton needed to sustain highly productive fishing waters. In 1977 Libya's fishing catch stood at 4,803 tons. By 1981 it had risen to 6,418 tons—still one of the smaller national catches in the Mediterranean. Most of Libya's fishing fleet was located on the western half of its coastline, especially around Tripoli, because the country's eastern and central coasts possessed less attractive fishing grounds. Estimates in 1979 put the number of fishing boats at 325, of which 13 were trawlers; the rest were small and medium-sized boats. Approximately 1,000 to 1,200 people were thought to be professional fishermen in 1981. The government has been encouraging fishing activities and attempting to stimulate a demand for fish. In 1986 a new fishing port was under construction at Zuwarah, and numerous ice plants have been built at several coastal sites. Agreements for joint development of fishing have been signed with several countries, including Tunisia and Spain.

Sponge fishing has been monopolized by Greek fishermen who have been licensed by the Libyan government. A tiny percentage of the harvest has been obtained by Libyans using small boats and skin-diving equipment from the shallow waters inshore. The Greeks have used modern equipment to exploit the deepwater beds where the best sponges lie. In an experiment begun in 1977, the government has established freshwater fish farms in several inshore locations.

For commercial purposes, the country has no forests. Although the government designated more than 62,400 hectares as woodland or forest, most of this land is covered with scrub and minor vegetation.

During the 1960s, the government actively pursued an afforestation program; these activities were accelerated in the 1970s. An estimated 213 million seedlings had been planted by 1977, about 33 million of which were fruit trees. Most of the reforestation has been in western Libya. During reforestation efforts, scientist have experimented with a petrochemical spray that is sufficiently porous to allow the occasional rain to trickle and seep through, yet sturdy enough to prevent the seedling from being blown away during one of the country's frequent and severe sandstorms. The government's long-term goals for the massive planting program include the growth of enough trees to meet its domestic lumber needs, which in the past had been met by imports. Short-term goals include soil conservation and reclamation, and the creation of windbreaks for crops and settlements.

Income and Wealth

The declining oil prices of the 1980s reversed the previous decade's trend of sustained growth in national income. In real terms, GDP grew every year from 1972 to 1980. Since 1980, however, there has been a constant decline. A turning point for the economy occurred in 1981, as real GDP dropped a staggering 18 percent. Preliminary figures for 1984 estimated that, in constant 1980 terms, the GDP was LD7.5 billion, a level comparable to that of 1975–76. The rate of growth in real GDP has exhibited widespread fluctuations since 1970. In two years during the mid-1970s (1974 and 1976), real GDP grew at an annual rate of over 18 percent. Apart from these two dramatic years, real GDP grew at an unspectacular average rate of 0.9 percent from 1970 to 1984.

Per capita changes in gross national product (GNP—see Glossary) have largely paralleled changes in GDP. In general, however, GNP growth has not kept pace with population expansion, resulting

Farmers plant seedlings to stem the advance of the desert
Courtesy United States Information Agency

in an overall rate of growth in GNP per capita of – 1.1 percent from 1965 to 1984. Nevertheless, in 1984 dollars, Libya's GNP per capita was US$8,520—roughly equivalent to that of Britain's GNP.

The breakdown of the GDP by contributing sectors changed greatly in the 1960s as the oil wealth began to flow. Whereas in the pre-petroleum period agriculture contributed between 25 and 30 percent of GDP, by 1962 it was down to 10 percent. In the same year, only one year after Libya became a petroleum exporter, oil exports accounted for over 23 percent of GDP.

By 1968 the contribution of petroleum products to GDP had risen to about 60 percent. All other sectors except construction decreased in relative terms between 1962 and 1968; agriculture declined to 3 percent of the total and manufacturing to about 2 percent. In 1971 the contrast between the petroleum sector and the rest of the economy had become even greater. Petroleum had come to account for some 70 percent of GDP, construction 5 percent, agriculture 2 percent, and manufacturing 1 percent. The rest of the economy taken together apparently contributed only about 20 percent of GDP. What these percentages reflected was not an absolute decline in the nonpetroleum sector as a whole but rather the extraordinary relative growth of the petroleum sector.

Between the late 1960s and the early 1980s, there were few major changes in the composition of GDP. In most years, petroleum products accounted for between 50 and 60 percent of GDP. Since 1982, however, declining oil revenues have reduced the petroleum sector's share of GDP. Transportation and construction have accounted for relatively large shares, which is not surprising given the heavy investment effort in infrastructure. The consistently low contributions of agriculture and industry to GDP were disappointing, given the large amount of development spending in those areas. About the only component of GDP to exhibit a steady growth has been the public service sector, which rose from 5 percent in 1978 to 12 percent in 1984 . The burgeoning of the public sector reflected the strong bias against private sector growth that developed over this same period.

An income study of selected households in Tripoli and Benghazi in the early 1970s indicated the existence of a large middle class. Only 1.5 percent of households in Benghazi and 2.3 percent in Tripoli had monthly incomes below LD25. About 7.2 and 5 percent, respectively, of the households in these cities had monthly incomes of over LD300; the vast majority—between 50 and 60 percent—had monthly incomes between LD50 and LD100.

During the 1970s, the usual dichotomy between rural and urban incomes was lessened in Libya. The fringe benefits and free social services that the government brought to the rural areas helped to increase disposable income. Many urban residents retained ties to their families in rural areas and remitted part of their earnings. Farm income generally rose because of increased demand for agricultural products and because of improvements being made in agriculture by the government. Agricultural wage rates were relatively high, reflecting the shortage of labor. Wage rates paid on state-owned farms were higher than on private farms; private farmers tended to hire lower paid foreign agricultural workers, mainly from Egypt.

Since 1978 salaries have been limited to an annual maximum of LD10,000. The construction industry probably paid the highest wages despite the popular conception that oil industry wages were the highest. The oil industry, however, provided more job security.

The true effect on income of the radical measures put into effect in 1978 remained unclear in early 1987. The resolution outlawing rental income did increase the disposable incomes of renters, who in 1978 comprised an estimated one-third of the population. It also eliminated a major income source for landlords and removed what had been the main area of private investment. Although landlords were allowed to continue renting to those in need of short-term accommodation, the 1978 policies severely diminished the economic power of wealthy, large-scale property owners who had been a potent force in politics.

The effect of the law requiring worker participation in management has been less clear-cut. Whereas the 1973 profit-sharing requirement probably increased worker incomes by requiring private and public firms to distribute one-quarter of their profits to workers, the 1978 extension may have hurt workers by undermining the profitability of the enterprises in which they worked. Indeed, many owners liquidated their businesses rather than face losing control of them.

Overall, the generous public attempts to supply subsidized social services, education, and medical care, when combined with the more sporadic availability of subsidized basic consumer items, have increased disposable incomes and caused a general rise in the standard of living for most people when compared to pre-1969 Libya. To a large extent, these policies depended on stable, plentiful oil revenues. The degree to which living standards and income levels can be maintained, given the drop in oil revenues during the 1980s, was not clear in 1987. To a certain extent, at least in the first few years of falling revenues, the government avoided cutting back on consumption by making small cuts in development spending and drawing down on its reserves. This latter policy was especially dramatic, and Libya's total foreign-exchange reserve position declined by 75 percent between 1980 and 1984.

Price information on Libya should be viewed with caution because it rarely has been clear whether price indexes are based on official controlled prices, which may or may not be effective at different times, or on private, noncontrolled prices. Probably the most accurate measure of inflation in the economy is the average annual percentage change in the implicit GDP deflator. By this measure, during the period 1965 to 1973, inflation progressed at a rate of 9.4 percent a year. From 1973 to 1984, the rate increased to 10.8 percent a year. Although these rates were slightly higher than the average inflation rate of industrial market economies, they were less than the average rate of other high-income, low-population oil exporters. Libya's rate of inflation from 1965 to 1984, therefore, was modest in comparison to the inflation rates of some of its counterparts in the Persian Gulf.

Public Finance and Banking

As of early 1985, the public sector consisted of the central government, the municipalities, and the state organizations and agencies. (Before 1975 the public sector included the provinces, but these were abolished as political units in that year.) Municipalities had their own sources of revenue, but most of their budgets were covered by transfers from the central government. Of the numerous public entities, some were profitable and contributed surpluses to the treasury, but others required transfers from the central government to meet their expenses. On a consolidated basis, the public enterprises had an overall surplus of LD25 million. However, in both 1983 and 1984, public enterprises operated at a net loss.

Budget, Expenditures, and Revenues

The first budget surplus in Libya's history occurred in 1966 when oil revenues began to increase spectacularly. Budget methodology and fiscal policy under the monarchy in the 1960s had tended to follow a 1959 World Bank (see Glossary) mission's recommendations, as modified by the progressive influence of rising nationalism and the unforeseen growth of the petroleum industry. Increased integration of the provincial fiscal administrations with the central administration was effectively achieved by the conversion of the monarchy from a federal to a unitary form of government in 1963. The assurance of large future oil revenues enabled the government to introduce, also in 1963, a sizable development plan and a corresponding administrative apparatus. The plan legislation included a provision that not less than 70 percent of all future petroleum revenues should be allocated to the financing of development.

During the monarchy, the government's budget was organized by the Ministry of Finance, discussed and sanctioned by the parliament, and signed into law by the king. It consisted of a current expenses budget and (after 1962) a development expenditures budget. After the June 1967 War, a supplement was added to finance enlarged national defense outlays and annual subsidies to Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.

Under the Revolutionary government, the budget was divided into an annual administrative expenses budget, an annual development expenditures budget, and a special expenditures budget. Beginning in 1982, the government also listed certain key imports under a new commodity budget. Until 1974 the fiscal year (FY—see Glossary) had begun in April, but since January 1974 the fiscal year has been concurrent with the Gregorian calendar year. New procedures for developing the budget were initiated in FY 1978. Initial proposals for the administrative budget started at the municipal level; the proposals were forwarded to an appropriate secretariat for consolidation and subsequent submission to the Secretariat of the Treasury, which reviewed and forwarded the proposals to the General People's Congress (GPC—see Glossary) for final approval. The development budget was prepared initially by the organizations that would implement the specific project; the proposals were then sent to the Secretariat of Planning for revisions and submission to the GPC. The special expenditures and commodity budgets have not been in the formal budget, but they have been approved during the fiscal year by the GPC.

Special expenditures usually have included grants, loans, subsidies, and the purchase of equipment for national defense. The total generally has not been made available to the public because of the defense-related expenditures, but some partial expenditures for special items have been released on occasion. As much as 80 percent of the administrative budget has been spent by the central government—the rest being divided between the municipalities and public enterprises in years when they ran at a net loss. In the mid-1980s, however, municipal allocations were increasing at the expense of central governmental expenditures. In 1983 and 1984, central allocations under the administrative budget were just under 50 percent of the total, whereas the municipalities spent just over 50 percent. By 1985 the municipal share of the total administrative budget allocations had risen to 71.5 percent, whereas the central government took only the remaining 28.5 percent.

Before the 1969 Revolution, the government spent more funds on the administrative budget than on investments. Since 1969, however, development expenditures have been much higher than administrative expenditures because of the government's policy of using oil revenues to build for the future. The development budget generally has covered economic and social projects, but it also has included working capital for public sector corporations and some lending and operating expenditures. The annual development budget has usually corresponded to a certain percentage of the total amount projected to be spent by the current development plan. All budgets have been amended frequently during the course of any year; the amendments generally reflect increases for specific projects or purposes or cover the increased costs of imported items for development projects.

Planned expenditures under both the administrative and development budgets increased rapidly during the 1970s. By FY 1980, the administrative budget had increased by almost five times its level in FY 1974, moving from LD192.9 million to LD950 million. The development budget, over the same time period, increased its planned expenditures by slightly less than a factor of four, from LD740 million to LD2.53 billion. During the 1980s, growth leveled off. The administrative budget increased by only 14 percent between FY 1981 and FY 1984, and allocations to the development budget, which has always been the largest component of total government spending, actually decreased almost 30 percent. Data available for the commodity budget indicate that LD1.56 billion and LD1.67 billion were spent in FY 1983 and FY 1984, respectively.

By far the largest item in the FY 1984 administrative budget was for defense spending, which accounted for 24 percent of the total (see Defense Costs, ch. 5). The next largest item was for education at only 6 percent of the total budget. Under the development budget, the biggest items traditionally have been agriculture, heavy industry, oil and gas extraction, and communications and shipping. The relative levels of expenditures among these four items usually depended on the guiding philosophy behind the particular development plan in force when actual budget allocations were made. Thus, in FY 1974 and 1975, heavy industry and oil extraction received the most funding. From 1976 through 1979, the largest percentages went to agriculture, including irrigation. During the 1980s, heavy industry and, to an increasing extent since 1982, communications and shipping occupied the leading positions in the development budget. Since 1983 the commodity budget has mainly been used to subsidize imports of basic foods, raw materials and parts for light industries, and key engineering projects, principally the GMMR (see Land Use and Irrigation, this ch.).

The government funded these budgets in a simple, if unusual, manner. All nonpetroleum revenues were assigned to cover administrative budget expenditures. Any gap between revenues and expenditures was met by transferring some of the petroleum revenue, a practice that ensured that the administrative budget was always in balance. In FY 1984, for example, 20 percent of the administrative budget was covered by oil revenues. After the administrative budget had been balanced, the remaining oil revenue was used to fund the development budget. In practice, this system meant that, while allocations under the adminstrative budget were almost always assured of being funded, expenditures under the development budget could diverge greatly from planned levels depending upon variations in oil revenues.

Although actual development budget expenditure data—as opposed to allocation data—are hard to come by, Central Bank figures for 1981 and 1982 indicated that the difference between planned and actual expenditures under the development budget could be quite large. For instance, in FY 1981 actual expenditures reached 96 percent of the planned levels, but in FY 1982 they only accounted for 62 percent of the official target. Thus, allocation figures for the development budget must be viewed with skepticism and, despite their impressive theoretical allocations, various development projects were often held up for lack of funds.

The petroleum industry, through payments of taxes, royalties, profits, and fees, has accounted for as much as 80 percent of the government's revenues. The NOC has also paid royalties and taxes, and since 1974 its contributions have assumed greater importance as its production and exports have increased (see Hydrocarbons and Mining, this ch.). Royalties paid by the oil companies have been based on volume of production and a posted price. Taxes have been based on a theoretical profit determined by multiplying the export volume by the posted price and subtracting royalty payments and operating costs. The royalty and tax rates have periodically been revised upward or downward depending upon the world market. By law, 15 percent of the oil revenues must be set aside as reserves.

Nonpetroleum revenues have consisted of profits from other government enterprises, import duties, income taxes, and miscellaneous taxes and fees. In addition to the regular customs duties, two 5-percent taxes have been levied on all imports, the funds being earmarked specifically for municipalities and for charities. Direct taxes—mostly income taxes—have brought in only about 5 percent of total revenue. All income was taxed, the rate depending on the source. In the late 1970s, there were separate taxes for income from rental property, agricultural activities, commerce, industry, and trades. There was also a professional income tax (the first year's earnings of a career were tax exempt), a personal income tax, and a general income tax, which was levied on all persons and companies and included all income—even that subject to one of the special income taxes. The general income tax was very progressive and was designed to prevent capital accumulation. The tax brackets in effect in late 1976, for example, worked out so that a taxpayer with total income of LD192,000 would retain only LD72,000 and only 10 percent of all additional income over the LD192,000 level. In 1987 Libya's tax structure continued to be based on laws dating from the 1970s or before.

The administration of the tax structure was altered with the introduction of the Administrative Contracts Regulations in 1980 and Law No. 5 of 1981, which provided for some tax exemption for foreign companies. Until 1981, all private companies were subject to a company tax, with petroleum companies subject to a special petroleum tax on their profits. Although in the past Libya had not appeared to encourage new foreign investment, a number of incentives in the form of tax exemptions were built into the 1981 law to encourage such investments.

Balance of Payments

The government's balance-of-payments statement, which has been prepared annually by the Central Bank, has provided a shorthand presentation of Libya's economic relations with the rest of the world. Although balance-of-payments statements generally may be arranged in different ways to meet different requirements, they frequently have been presented in terms of a current account that included the exchange of goods and services and transfers (donations); a capital account that reflected movement of direct investment, government borrowing and lending, and trade financing; and a reserves account showing whether monetary institutions have on balance acquired or paid out foreign currencies in the other accounts. The Libyan payments balance has been presented according to that formula (see table 8, Appendix).

The balance-of-payments statements issued between 1960 and 1977 spelled out in dramatic fashion Libya's meteoric transition from poverty to wealth. In 1960 exports (mostly agricultural) reached their then-customary total of less than the equivalent of US$10 million. Imports totaled US$177 million. The result was an unfavorable trade balance, to which was added a negative balance on the service account. The combination was barely offset by a large item for oil company investment and by sizable grant aid from Britain, the UN, the United States, and Italy. Capital movements were minimally favorable on balance.

By 1963 the payments picture was already changing rapidly. Although imports had increased appreciably, exports had outstripped them, providing a solidly favorable trade balance for the first time in the country's history. Government services and investment income (mainly oil company profits) were approximately in balance, but other services (mainly expenditures abroad by the oil companies connected with their Libyan operations) were increasing rapidly, and goods and services showed a small debit balance. This was just about offset by transfers (gifts and contributions from abroad), and the total current account was in balance. The capital account showed a credit, and the exchange reserves rose by US$27 million.

The upward trend continued throughout the 1970s except for 1973, 1975, and 1978, when the overall balance of payments was in deficit. The balance of payments has been heavily dependent on oil exports and public sector imports, and in each of those three years increases in imports relative to exports pushed the overall balance into deficit. Nevertheless, Libya recorded its largest balance-of-payments surplus in 1980, when it reported a net gain in foreign reserves of over US$6.7 billion.

Since 1980, however, declining oil export revenues have pushed the overall balance into a sustained deficit, as net changes in reserves for 1981 through 1984 were all negative. In general, Libya's trade balance has remained solidly positive because oil revenues, even in the 1980s, have been sufficient to cover imports of merchandise. The principal drain on Libya's balance of payments and the source of much of its external payments difficulties during the early and mid-1980s have been the large deficits Libya has experienced in its trade in services. The major components of this "invisible trade" were payments to foreign consultants and contractors, as well as to the resident foreign workers in Libya, who customarily remitted large portions of their salaries to their home countries.

In response to its deteriorating balance-of-payments situation in the 1980s, Libya has used several strategies. Foremost has been the drawing down on its substantial reserves of foreign exchange built up during the 1970s. Thus, other than for gold reserves (which have remained fairly stable), Libya's total foreign exchange reserves (including Special Drawing Rights (SDRs)—see Glossary, and its deposits with the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—see Glossary) declined from US$13.1 billion in 1980 to US$9 billion in 1981, US$7 billion in 1982, US$5.2 billion in 1983, and US$3.6 billion in 1984. Despite this drastic decline, in 1984 Libya's reserves still afforded it an estimated 5.3 months of import coverage, a figure well above the average for comparable high-income oil exporters.

Libya has also taken steps to reduce remittances by foreign workers. In the 1982–83 period, foreigners comprised about 47 percent of total productive manpower. In 1984, however, the government reduced from 90 to 75 percent the wages that foreign workers were permitted to repatriate. This action, combined with the worsening economic climate in Libya, sparked a flight of foreign workers. The total number dropped from 560,000 in 1983 to perhaps 300,000 in mid-1984. In 1985 the government resorted to coercion, forcibly expelling many remaining workers. In August and September, more than 30,000 Tunisians and about 20,000 Egyptians were expelled. Smaller numbers of workers from Mauritania, Mali, and Niger were also forced to leave. By 1986 further expulsions had dropped the number of foreigners working in Libya to fewer than 200,000.

The final method used by the government to reduce its service trade deficit has been to delay payments to contractors and to induce them to accept barter arrangements. By late 1986, Libya had fallen more than US$2 billion behind in its payments to contractors. In an effort to meet its obligations without disbursing its valuable foreign exchange, Libya has encouraged its creditors to accept oil rather than hard currency in return for their services. Although many debts were settled this way from 1982 through 1985, the sharp drop in oil prices in early 1986 ended such arrangements. At that point, the Libyans refused to adjust their prices to world market levels—resulting in a 30-percent overvaluation of their oil in relation to its price on the open market.

Stringent exchange controls have been in effect since the 1969 coup d'état in an effort to stem capital outflows resulting from private sector pessimism about investment opportunities in an avowedly socialist-nationalist-revolutionary state. The exchange controls were administered by the Central Bank. Since 1979 almost all imports have been under the control of sixty-two public corporations, and import licenses no longer have been issued to private companies. The only imports not directly under state control have been made by contractors, but all imports from Israel and South Africa have been prohibited.

Since the 1969 coup, residents have been allowed specific amounts of foreign exchange each year for personal commitments abroad (excluding family remittances), foreign education, overseas travel (pilgrims to Mecca were allowed an additional sum), and business travel. In addition, the government specified that travel fares must be paid in Libyan currency. Temporary residents could take out no more foreign currency and travelers' checks than they had declared to customs officials on their entry into the country.

For practical purposes, most gainfully employed nonresidents were allowed to maintain nonresident accounts in local banks into which could be deposited the compensation for their gainful employment and interest accrued on such deposits. Withdrawals for remittance abroad might be drawn against such deposits up to 75 percent of net salary each month. Foreign contractors working in Libya under their own names had to maintain ''special resident accounts,'' into which the funds with which they entered the country and the proceeds of their professional activities in Libya had to be deposited and against which withdrawals might be made with approval of the Central Bank. Profits and dividends could be transferred freely. Blocked accounts could be withdrawn for local or foreign use up to limited amounts during the first five years' duration of such account; after five years the deposit could be withdrawn in full.

Foreign Aid and Investment

Since 1985 direct foreign investment has not been permitted in Libya. Until 1984 Libya had had a negative direct investment balance for every year since 1971, indicating that Libyan investment overseas far outstripped foreign investment in Libya.

Existing foreign investment was concentrated in the petroleum sector. In 1986 the United States ordered all American companies to liquidate their Libyan investments. It was not clear at that time, however, whether this action would result in a decline in the overall level of foreign investment in Libya, or whether the affected companies would merely transfer their Libyan investments to non-American subsidiaries.

Libyan investment abroad was made through the Libyan Arab Foreign Bank (LAFB) and the Libyan Arab Foreign Investment Company (LAFICO). Libyan investments have been particularly high in Italy, the best known being LAFICO's 15 percent share in Fiat, which it finally sold in September 1986. Other significant Libyan investments in Italy have included the LAFB's 1986 acquisition of 70 percent of the ailing Tamoil petroleum distribution company and the acquisition of 50 percent of LAFICO's Chempetrol. Chempetrol supplied about half of Italy's methanol imports in 1986. Libyan assets in the United States were frozen in early 1986, but the action had little impact because of the negligible funds involved. At the time of the freeze, the Central Bank held only about 10 percent of its assets in the United States.

Libya has also given and received foreign aid. On the receipt side, Libya consistently has sought to barter oil for long-term technical assistance agreements. During the 1970s, many cooperation agreements were conducted on this basis—particularly with East European nations. Yugoslavia, in particular, has been instrumental in providing Libya with timely aid. Yugoslav contractors were granted about 11 percent of the total volume of projects under the 1976–80 development plan in return for oil and some Libyan financing of several projects in Yugoslavia. In 1986, because of payment arrears on civil works contracts, Yugoslavia agreed to accept increased oil shipments valued at US$20 million. Much of Libya's debt for the military assistance it received from the Soviet Union has similarly been paid for with oil. In 1985 foreign observers estimated that Libya was sending 125,000 bpd of oil to Moscow to cover its arrears.

By 1984 Libyan assistance to other countries had fallen dramatically from levels at the beginning of the decade. Libyan foreign aid allocations peaked in 1980 at US$376 million. They declined in 1981 to US$262 million before dropping sharply in 1982 to only US$43 million. A recovery occurred in 1983, as Libyan funds earmarked for foreign aid rose again to US$142 million, only to plummet in 1984 to US$17 million. This latter figure represented only .06 percent of GNP, well below the OPEC average for foreign assistance of 1.16 percent.

Libyan bilateral assistance programs have concentrated on countries where Libya has substantial strategic interests. Many of these countries are located in the Sahel region of sub-Saharan Africa. Throughout the 1970s, Libyan aid projects were mainly concentrated in Chad, Mauritania, and Niger. Since 1980, with the general decline in foreign assistance allocations, promises of Libyan aid to sub-Saharan Africa have not always lived up to the expectations they created and have resulted in discontent on the part of recipient states.

Banking, Credit, and Currency

As a result of its World War II association, Libya became a member of the British sterling bloc when independence was established in 1951. Shortly after independence, a national currency was created: the Libyan pound, as it was then known, divided into 100 piastres (of 10 millièmes each), having a par value of US$2.80. The currency unit remained tied to sterling until the sterling devaluation of November 1967, when the Libyan pound failed to devalue and the direct link with sterling was terminated. Libya continued as a member of the sterling bloc, however, until it was expelled by the British in the aftermath of the Libyan nationalization of British Petroleum's assets in Libya in December 1971 (see Hydrocarbons and Mining, this ch.). Effective September 1, 1971, the currency unit was changed from the Libyan pound to the Libyan dinar (LD), divided into 1,000 dirhams, with no change in its par value. In the late 1980s, the currency was still sometimes referred to as the pound, and merchants sometimes quoted prices in piastres. The new currency comes in banknotes of 250 and 500 dirhams and 1, 5, and 10 dinars, as well as subsidiary coins of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 dirhams.

In the general revaluation of gold, which also took place in December 1971, Libyan currency retained its existing parity with gold. As a consequence, the dollar value of the dinar rose from US$2.80 to US$3.04, where it was kept until 1974 when it moved to LD1 equal to US$3.3778. The dinar was maintained at this rate until March 1986, when the government switched from a fixed dollar rate to a floating rate linked to the SDR. This move resulted in a 10-percent decline in the value of the dinar.

During the years immediately after independence, an international commission acted in lieu of a bank of issue, and the several currencies serving as legal tender in various parts of the country were replaced by the new Libyan currency. Pursuant to legislation of 1955 (amended in 1958), the National Bank of Libya was established in 1956 to replace the commission and to perform some of the functions of a central bank under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance. The commercial banks for the most part were branches of major international banking institutions. In the main, they were engaged in providing short-term international and domestic commercial credit.

In 1963 the Central Bank of Libya replaced the National Bank of Libya. The government gave the new bank sole right of currency issue and made it responsible for maintaining monetary stability and the external value of the Libyan currency and for regulating currency and credit. The bank could also make advances to the central government up to 10 percent of estimated current revenues. The commercial banks were required to maintain liquidity ratios and reserves in the Central Bank against deposits as prescribed by the Central Bank. Until 1970 the Central Bank also carried out commercial operations, but in that year the National Commercial Bank was founded to take over the commercial division of the Central Bank and the operations of two small foreign banks.

The military government that took power in 1969 viewed the banking sector as a primary object of its general program of Libyanization. In November 1969, the new government required that all banks in the country be Libyan controlled, and it bought out the 51-percent control of the commercial banks that had not already converted to Libyan control. In July 1970, the government took 100-percent control of four of the major banks with foreign minority ownership. In December 1970, the government purchased outright all banks that still had some foreign minority participation and, by a process of merging, reduced the number of commercial banks to five. Libyan citizens were permitted to purchase minority interests in the banks.

In addition to the National Commercial Bank, commercial banks in operation in 1987 included the Jamahiriya Bank, known as the Jumhuriya Bank until its present name was adopted in 1977. It operated nearly thirty branches throughout the country. Other commercial banks included the Sahara Bank, formerly the Banco di Sicilia, and the Umma Bank, the successor to the Banco di Roma. The Wahda Bank was formed in 1970 from the merger of five other banks.

In addition to the state-owned commercial banks, Libya was home to the National Agricultural Bank, the Industrial and Real Estate Bank of Libya, LAFICO, and LAFB. The agricultural bank was a specialized institution established in 1957 to provide interest-free production loans to farmers. It also made medium-term loans for up to five years for machinery and materials and long-term loans for up to fifteen years for land reclamation projects, irrigation, and agricultural construction. The agricultural bank purchased produce from farmers at a guaranteed profit and sold them supplies at subsidized prices. The bank has a good record; in the past, about 90 percent of all loans have been repaid.

The Industrial and Real Estate Bank of Libya was both a development bank, providing industrial credits, and a home finance agency, making housing loans. Most of its loans were for home purchases. LAFICO was created in 1972 as a joint effort of the five commercial banks, the insurance industry, and other government agencies to promote housing, industry, commerce, and tourism. It also made investments outside Libya. In early 1972, the government established LAFB as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Central Bank, but not subject to the Central Bank's legislation, regulations, or exchange control. It engaged in financial and banking operations outside the country and acted as the foreign agent for the government and Libyan commercial banks. Its main purposes were to encourage regional development—particularly of countries friendly to Libya, to become active in international financial markets, and to serve as a vehicle for Libyan assistance to other countries. By 1978 LAFB had set up a worldwide chain of eighteen subsidiaries and affiliates in which it held anywhere from 7 to 51 percent of the equity. In 1985 LAFB had total worldwide assets of US$2.9 billion.

The insurance industry was also nationalized. In December 1970, insurance companies were required to have 60-percent government participation, and in 1971 they were totally taken over and merged into two companies. Credit has generally been plentiful, although the Central Bank's credit policy was to support the government's development effort. This meant that at times, such as in 1977, the Central Bank limited credit to the private sector and directed it instead to state entities. This has also been done to halt the rapid growth in the money supply and the inflationary rate. The largest percentage of loans made by the banking system has been for housing and commerce. In 1975 the government declared interest to be usury and prohibited it, but commissions for services rendered remained legal, and banks could charge commissions. Such commissions generally have been kept low on items such as construction loans. In practice, Libyan banks still charged interest on loans and paid interest on deposits. In 1985 the prime lending rate stood at 7.5 percent, while deposit and lending rates were set at 5.5 and 7.0 percent, respectively.

Foreign Trade

By the mid-1980s, the government conducted virtually all foreign trade either directly or through public corporations. Import licenses were no longer issued to the private sector. The foreign exchange needed to purchase imports has been allocated by the commodity budget since its inception in 1982. Exports consisted almost entirely of hydrocarbons. Between 1978 and 1985, crude oil exports accounted for between 85 to 99 percent of total annual exports. Exports of other hydrocarbons, mainly methanol and liquefied natural gas, were irregular and depended on bilateral supply agreements of limited duration.

The balance of trade has consistently been in Libya's favor since 1963, when oil exports first reached significant levels. Whereas during the 1970s exports kept ahead of imports by a wide margin, since 1981 this has not been true. For example, during 1982 Libya's trade balance showed a surplus of only LD2 billion, the smallest surplus since the mid-1960s. Only a drastic cut in imports kept the trade balance as a surplus after 1981. In 1985 exports stood at LD3.2 billion, while imports totaled LD1.4 billion.

The decline in Libya's trade position after 1981 was largely the result of falling oil prices and decreasing volumes of oil exports. The oil price decline resulted from factors beyond Libya's control, but much of the decline in export volume resulted from Libya's decision to stay generally within its OPEC production quotas. These quotas were reduced in the early and mid-1980s as OPEC tried to use its market power to reverse the falling price trend.

The composition of imports was more varied than that of exports. Figures for 1981 indicated that the largest percentage of imports, by value, was the category of machinery and transport equipment. Manufactured goods, principally metal manufactures and iron and steel, came second, followed by foodstuffs. The percentage of foodstuffs in the import bill has been rising steadily since disposable incomes began rising.

The direction of trade has undergone a significant change since the mid-1970s (see table 9, Appendix). Whereas during much of the mid- to late-1970s the United States was Libya's leading export market, American trade restrictions had reduced Libya's trade with the United States to zero by 1983. Italy remained Libya's most important trading partner in the mid-1980s, followed by the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). These two countries together supplied about 30 percent of Libya's imports and bought slightly under 50 percent of its exports in 1984.

Domestic Trade and Tourism

The development of internal trade has been severely restricted by government actions during the late 1970s that were aimed at curbing the activities of private sector merchants (see Role of the

Government, this ch.). In general, domestic trade remained in a state of limbo in the mid-1980s. Government policy was extremely hostile to private trade, but because of declining oil revenues the government was unable to keep up with the demand for most goods, subsidized or not. Reports that the state-run supermarkets were experiencing supply problems proliferated during 1985 and 1986. Shopping was said to be a major daily activity that demanded time and perseverance. The confusion reigning in the retail sector in 1985 pushed the government to announce the opening of yet another chain of state-run shops—the ''green market'' (*as suq al khadhra*)—to sell subsidized goods. It was unclear, however, how much of a force these shops would be, or whether they would receive the funds necessary to sell goods at subsidized prices.

Beyond the urban areas, rural markets were held every Tuesday and Friday. Most farmers bought and sold in local markets, rarely traveling to distant ones. Although Libya officially adhered to the metric system, everyday practice continued to favor Arabic measures. A common measure used in wholesale trade was the *marta,* equivalent to about sixteen kilograms.

The government's imprint on other areas of domestic trade was strong. Storage facilities for agricultural commodities and general goods, including perishables, were provided by a state-owned storage and refrigeration company. Moreover, all advertising was done through the only advertising firm in the country, the government-owned General Company for Distribution, Publication, and Advertisement.

A potential source of income for Libya is tourism. Libya's warm and pleasant climate in coastal areas, together with the presence of a large number of Greek and Roman ruins (particularly at Leptis Magna or Labdah, east of Tripoli), would seem to indicate at least a modest potential for tourist development. In April 1972, however, Qadhafi publicly declared that he opposed public investment in the tourist industry. Despite this pronouncement, by the late 1970s several tourist complexes were planned both on the coast and in the interior. The number of tourists visiting Libya at that time was in the 300,000 a year range. Most came from other Arab countries. Because of the prohibitions against alcohol, the lack of nightlife, and the strained political climate, foreign observers doubted that the tourist industry would expand.

Transportation and Telecommunications

Although the transportation and communications sector was a relatively unimportant contributor to GDP (5.2 percent in 1984), it absorbed a large share of the annual development budgets. In

1982 actual expenditure on transportation and communications (including shipping) comprised 17.5 percent of total development budget expenditure. Much of this expenditure was oil-sector-related in that it was designed to lessen oil transport costs and to facilitate access to hydrocarbon development sites.

Transportation

Libya's transportation network has been considerably expanded since 1978 (see fig. 10). At that time, Libya had only about 8,800 kilometers of roads, of which perhaps one-half were paved. However, by 1985 Libya possessed between 23,000 and 25,600 kilometers of paved roads. Surfaced roads existed between the north and the southern oases of Al Kufrah, Marzuq, and Sabha. These roads have done much to end the isolation of these remote settlements. In particular, the agricultural projects underway in the desert oases have benefited from the more efficient crop marketing made possible by these roads. The National General Company for Roads oversaw all new construction and maintenance.

The number of vehicles in Libya steadily increased in the 1970s and early 1980s. By 1985 there were 313,000 automobiles and trucks in the country, as well as about 70,000 buses. The ratio of automobile ownership to population was on a par with that of many West European countries. Urban and interurban bus routes were maintained by the state-owned General Corporation for Public Transport.

As of 1985, Libya had no railroads; however, discussions had been held with China over the possibility of technical assistance in railway construction. Plans existed for a possible rail link between the Tunisian rail system and Tripoli. Another possible project envisioned transporting iron-ore deposits in the Fezzan to the Misratah iron and steel works via rail. Given Libya's financial constraints in the mid-1980s, however, prospects for these projects were not bright.

Libya has had a long history of port congestion. In 1977 the average waiting time for ships to be unloaded in Tripoli harbor was twenty-four days. Consequently, since the mid-1970s, port improvements have been a top priority for the government. These improvements raised Libya's total dry cargo handling capacity from 10.5 million tons in 1976 to 13.7 million tons in 1980. In 1985 major cargo-handling ports were located at Tripoli, Benghazi, Tobruk, and Qasr Ahmad (near Misratah). Projects underway at Tripoli in 1985 were designed to raise the port's handling capacity to 12.5 million tons a year. Similar construction projects at the Benghazi port envisioned expanding its capacity to 3.5 million tons a year.

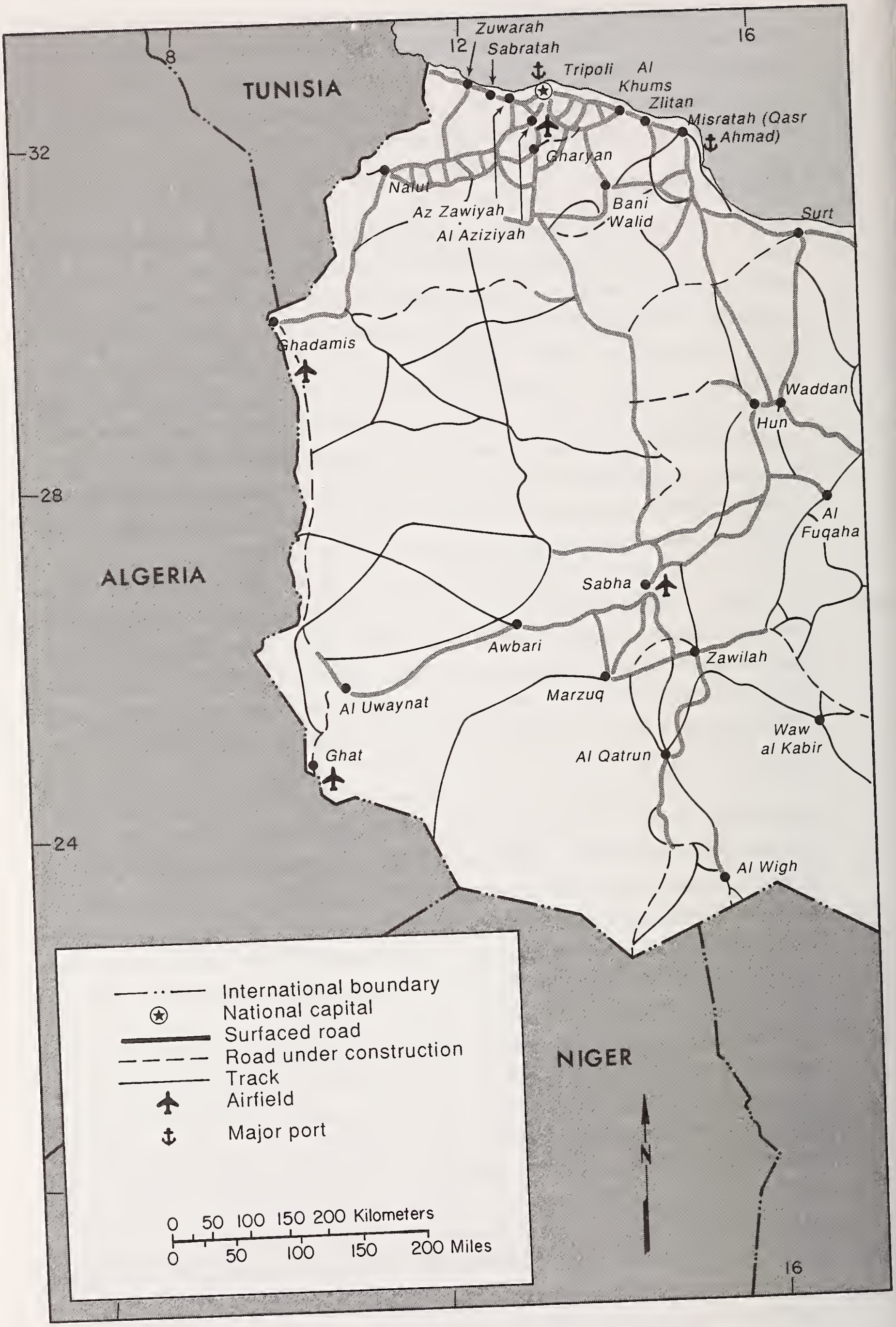
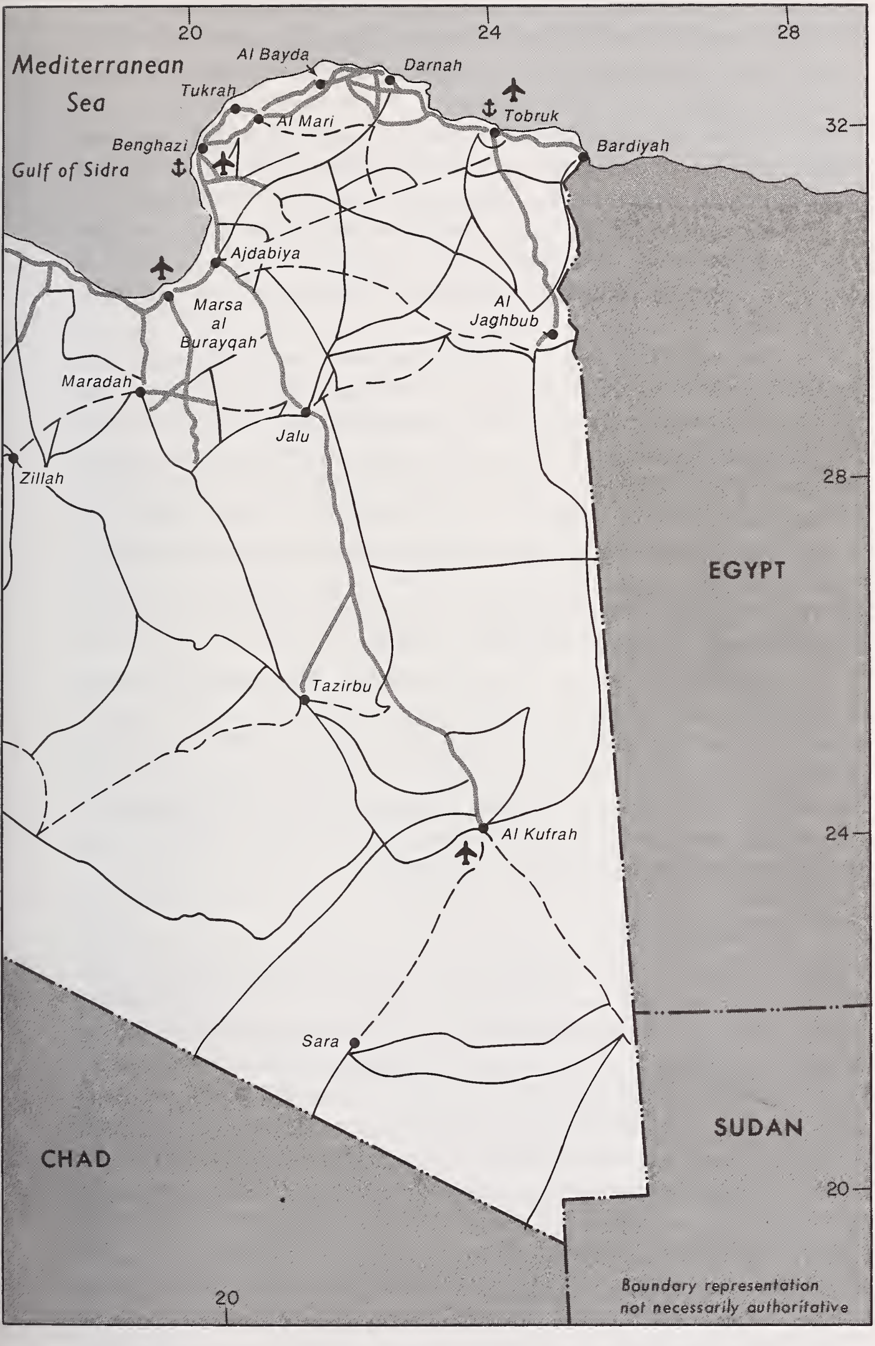

Zuwarah
12
Sabratah
Tripoli
Al Khums
Zlitan
Misratah (Qasr Ahmad)
16
8
TUNISIA
32
Nalut
Gharyan
Az Zawiyah
Al Aziziyah
Bani Walid
Surt
Ghadamis
Waddan
Hun
28
Al Fuqaha
ALGERIA
Sabha
Awbari
Zawilah
Marzuq
Al Uwaynat
Waw al Kabir
Ghat
Al Qatrun
24
Al Wigh
NIGER
International boundary
National capital
Surfaced road
Road under construction
Track
Airfield
Major port
N
0 50 100 150 200 Kilometers
0 50 100 150 200 Miles
16

Figure 10. Transportation System, 1985


20
24
28
32
28
24
20
20
Mediterranean Sea
Gulf of Sidra
Al Bayda
Darnah
Tukrah
Al Marj
Tobruk
Bardiyah
Benghazi
Ajdabiya
Marsa al Burayqah
Al Jaghbub
Maradah
Jalu
Zillah
EGYPT
Tazirbu
Al Kufrah
Sara
SUDAN
CHAD
Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

Qasr Ahmad was equipped to handle about 1.5 million tons a year. Plans for a new port facility also were being formulated in 1985 to provide logistical support to the Bouri offshore oil field, which was then coming into production.

In the mid-1970s, Libya embarked on an ambitious program of ship acquisition to build up its merchant fleet. However, it failed to take into account world competition and, by 1977, as much as 70 percent of its total tonnage was idle—the largest such proportion in the world at that time. Libya has since sold a number of its tankers and in 1985 owned fourteen oil tankers and eighteen cargo ships.

Civil aviation in Libya in 1987 was the responsibility of the Secretariat of Communications, which operated all airports, and the Civil Aviation Institute, which trained all personnel. The three international airports in 1985 were located at Tripoli (Al Aziziyah), Benghazi (Benina), and Sabha. Smaller airfields were located at Marsa al Burayqah, Tobruk, Ghat, Ghadamis, Al Kufrah, and several other locations. Most civil air personnel went abroad for training. Britain suspended its air traffic control training program for Libyans in 1985, but Pakistan subsequently agreed to train about seventy-eight Libyan air-traffic controllers.

The national air carrier, Libyan Arab Airlines (LAA), was nationalized in 1973. Possessing only a dozen aircraft in 1977, it grew rapidly, expanding its fleet to twenty-five aircraft in 1985. The main aircraft in service were manufactured by Boeing, Hawker Siddeley, Caravelle, and Fokker. In 1980, LAA carried 1.17 million passengers. A new carrier called United African Airlines (UAA) was created in 1985 in association with LAA.

Telecommunications

In 1987 Libya had a modern telecommunications system that provided high-quality service between the country's main population centers. All telecommunications activities were carried out by the General Post, Telephone, and Telegraph Organization, a subsidiary of the Secretariat of Communications. In 1975 a microwave system connecting radio, telephone, and television signals along the coast was established; it was superseded in 1985 by a US$25 million high-capacity cable system and a submarine cable that linked the whole coastal strip with parts of the south all the way to the Chadian border. The transmission systems included microwave radio relay, coaxial cable, submarine cable, tropospheric scatter, and satellites. The system was capable of serving approximately 10 million telephone subscribers, including those along the densely populated Mediterranean coast.

Telecommunications in Libya were greatly improved in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The interior of the country was served by various systems. Radio relay and coaxial cable extended to numerous points and a domestic satellite system was constructed to serve areas not fully integrated into the ground-based networks. The number of telephone lines increased from 90,000 in 1978 to 215,000 in 1985—an average of 1 telephone for every 100 citizens. Switching was predominantly automatic.

International telecommunications links, like the domestic routes, were linked via multiple transmission systems. Submarine cables extended from Tripoli to Marseilles, France, and Catania, Italy, providing telephone and telegraph circuits between Libya and Western Europe. A satellite ground-station complex located near Tripoli operated through the Atlantic Ocean and Indian Ocean satellites of the International Telecommunications Satellite (INTELSAT) Organization. Additionally, Libya was a member of the regional Arab Satellite (ARABSAT) Organization.

Radio broadcast transmissions were made by five high-power and numerous low-power AM stations for domestic service and by a high-power transmitter located at Sabratah, near Tripoli, for international shortwave service. FM broadcasting was expanded to reach most of the country.

* * *

Many studies on the economy of Libya since the revolution tend to emphasize the political aspects of Libyan economic policy, giving scant attention to the economic ramifications of governmental policy choices. A major exception to this rule are the works of J.A. Allan, who has written several excellent analytical pieces on the Libyan economy. Allan's *Libya, the Experience of Oil* remains the principal source on the economy before 1980. Allan presents a useful summary of the problems facing Libyan agriculture in his chapter "Capital Has Not Substituted for Water in Agriculture," to be found in J.A. Allan (ed.), *Libya Since Independence.* Another good summary of the economy can be found in the chapter by Stace Birks and Clive Sinclair in Richard Lawless and Allan Findlay (eds.), *North Africa.* In addition to these analytical works, much information can be culled from the Economist Intelligence Unit's *Quarterly Economic Review* series on Libya, various issues of *Middle East Economic Digest,* and *Africa Research Bulletin.* The best source of government statistics is the Central Bank of Libya, *Annual Report* series, for various years. (For complete citations and further information, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 4. Government and Politics

اتحاد الجمهوريات العربية
الجمهورية العربية الليبية

The national emblem of Libya

SWEEPING AND FUNDAMENTAL changes were introduced in Libya after Colonel Muammar al Qadhafi and his Free Officers Movement overthrew the Sanusi monarchy on September 1, 1969, and proclaimed the "Green Revolution." Because of the many radical and experimental policies that Qadhafi has tried to implement in Libya, he has been described frequently as a mercurial and quixotic leader. But while Qadhafi's policy making has been unpredictable, it has not been random or capricious. Rather, Qahafi's political behavior has been dictated by his own elaborate and evolving normative political ideology, which he set forth in his three-volume *The Green Book*.

The essence of Qadhafi's philosophy is the Third Universal Theory, so-called because it is intended to be an alternative to capitalism and Marxism. The theory calls for the institution in Libya of what Qadhafi calls "direct democracy." In a direct democracy, as envisaged by Qadhafi, citizens govern themselves through grassroots activism without the mediation or intervention of state institutions or other organizational hierarchies in the military, tribes, ulama, or intelligentsia. In an effort to implement direct democracy, Qadhafi altered or dismantled governmental and social structures. He launched a Cultural Revolution in 1973, instituted "people's power" in 1975, and proclaimed that Libya was a "state of the masses" in 1977. Finally, to emphasize his policy of decentralization, Qadhafi relinquished his own formal governmental position in 1979 and insisted he be referred to simply as "Leader of the Revolution."

The striking innovation in the Libyan political system since Qadhafi came to power resulted from his desire to replace subnational traditional leaders with administrators with the skills needed to modernize the country. The changes were also ostensibly intended to foster egalitarianism, mass mobilization, revolutionary commitment, public participation, and self-determination among Libyan citizens. From a pragmatic perspective, however, the changes served primarily to undermine the authority of traditional or alternate elite groups that posed a potential challenge to Qadhafi's leadership.

It is ironic, then, that the changes intended to enfranchise the citizenry have instead served primarily to bolster Qadhafi's personal power by diminishing governmental checks and balances on his executive power and eliminating all other power bases. In 1987 there was little doubt that Qadhafi remained the country's strongman, the fulcrum of power, and the single most important figure in Libya.

Although Qadhafi in theory advocated dismantling the structure of government, in reality Libya in 1987 had an elaborate and complex bureaucratic structure because the new organizations Qadhafi created had been superimposed upon existing institutions. In 1987 the primary formal instrument of government was the General People's Congress (GPC), both an executive and legislative body, which convened three times annually. The GPC was headed by a small General Secretariat composed primarily of members of the former Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), which was abolished in 1977. A General People's Committee performed the function of a cabinet, replacing the old Council of Ministers. Subnational representation and participation were accomplished through four roughly parallel and overlapping structures: people's committees that were organized at the basic (urban ward or rural village) and municipal levels; Arab Socialist Union (ASU), the only authorized political mass organization; Basic Popular Congress (BPC); and revolutionary committees (see Glossary), organized both geographically and functionally. The lines of authority and responsibility among these four bodies were unclear, which occasionally caused intense competition and rivalry within the government. Moreover, in 1987 there were indications that Qadhafi intended to introduce a fifth similar organizational structure in the form of a new political party.

On the international level, Libya sought to foster pan-Arabism and Islamic and Third World solidarity. Initially, Libya advocated positive neutrality, but, for pragmatic reasons, soon gravitated toward a close relationship with the Soviet Union. Concurrently, Libya's interpretation of the North-South dimension of global politics emphasized the division between industrialized, resource-consuming nations and underdeveloped resource producers, a division that, in Qadhafi's view, overshadowed the East-West dichotomy. Libya under Qadhafi played a leading role in the efforts among producing countries to gain full control of petroleum production and to use that production for internal development and as a political weapon with which to reward friendly nations and punish opponents.

Qadhafi is hostile toward the United States and other Western countries because these countries generally support Israel. Because of its anti-Western stance, the Libyan regime gained a reputation for conducting unconventional, belligerent, and aggressive foreign relations. There were frequent and widespread allegations that Libya sponsored transnational terrorist activities, supported dozens of insurrectionary movements worldwide, and assassinated exiled opponents. Just as Libya's domestic policies had resulted in a situation contrary to what Qadhafi claimed he desired, so too had its foreign policy. Qadhafi's maverick foreign policy not only angered Western countries, but it also alienated many of Libya's erstwhile or potential allies in the Third World that were the intended audience of the Third Universal Theory.

Because of the precipitous decline of the oil revenues that had funded Qadhafi's foreign and domestic policies, the dizzying pace of internal change, and the country's image as an international pariah, the regime's viability and durability were questioned. Nevertheless, in late 1987, most foreign observers doubted that a coup d'état was imminent.

Internal Politics

Until 1951 Libya was under foreign domination. In November 1949 the United Nations (UN) General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a sovereign Libyan state comprising three historically diverse regions: Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and Fezzan. The UN commissioner for Libya, Adrian Pelt, suggested the formation of a preparatory committee of twenty-one Libyans (seven from each region) to initiate the framing of a constitution. The committee created the National Constituent Assembly, which first met in November 1950 and subsequently formed committees to draft a constitution. On October 7, 1951, the new constitution was promulgated, and on December 24, King Idris proclaimed Libya's sovereignty and independence (see The United Nations and Libya, ch. 1).

The constitution established Libya as a monarchy; succession was to pass to Idris's designated heirs. Because of its historically distinct regions, the new country was organized as a federation, each region becoming a province and maintaining its own autonomous administration and legislature. Benghazi and Tripoli alternated as the federation's capital. As do many European parliamentary systems, the constitution provided for an executive branch—the Council of Ministers (or cabinet)—headed by a minister and responsible to the lower house, or Chamber of Deputies, of the bicameral legislature. The number of deputies was 55, later increased to 103. The upper house, or Senate, comprised twenty-four members, eight from each province. The king held considerable executive authority; he formally appointed the Council of Ministers and half of the senators and had the right to veto legislation and dissolve the lower house (see Independent Libya, ch. 1).

The king endorsed legislation, passed in April 1963, that produced a major constitutional revision; the federal form was replaced by a unitary structure that emphasized centralized national authority. Provincial boundaries were erased, and ten smaller governorates (*muhafazat*; sing., *muhafazah*) were created, each headed by a governor appointed by the central government. The constitution was also modified to provide for the extension of suffrage to women and for the royal appointment of all senators. Also, whereas the 1951 constitution had vested sovereignty in the nation and declared the nation to be the source of all power, the 1963 revision proclaimed that sovereignty belonged only to God (Allah) and that it was given as a sacred trust to the state, which was the source of all power.

The 1951 constitution, as amended in 1963, remained in effect until September 1, 1969. At that time a group of military officers and men headed by Captain (later Colonel) Qadhafi overthrew the monarchy and proclaimed a republic instead (see The September 1969 Coup, ch. 1). The supreme organ of the Revolutionary regime, the RCC, replaced the existing constitution with the Constitutional Proclamation of December 11, 1969, which was to be superseded by a new constitution at some future, unspecified date. Meanwhile, existing laws, decrees, and regulations not in conflict with the December proclamation remained in effect. The proclamation confirmed the RCC as the supreme authority, officially renamed the country the Libyan Arab Republic, and provided for a system of government (see National Executive and Legislative Evolution, this ch.). It vested sovereignty in the people, made Islam the state religion, and declared Arabic the official language. Education and health care were specified as constitutional rights.

The December 1969 proclamation declared the Libyan people to be part of the Arab nation, dedicated to "the realization of socialism through the application of social justice which forbids any form of exploitation . . . [The state's] aim is to eliminate peacefully the disparities between social class[es]." Furthermore, the 1969 proclamation charged the state with endeavoring "to liberate the national economy from dependence and foreign influence." Public ownership was proclaimed the basis of social development and self-sufficient productivity, but nonexploitive private property would be protected, and inheritance would be governed by the Islamic sharia (see Glossary). Freedom of opinion was guaranteed "within the limits of public interest and the principles of the Revolution."

On the same day that the RCC issued the December 1969 proclamation, it also issued the Decision on the Protection of the Revolution. The decision established the death penalty for anyone attempting to overthrow the Revolutionary regime and stipulated imprisonment for ''anyone who commits an act of aggression'' against the new government. Aggressive acts were defined as propagandizing against the regime, arousing class hatred among the people, spreading false rumors about political and economic conditions in the country, and demonstrating or striking against the government.

On March 2, 1977, in a novel approach to democratic government, Libya adopted a provision known as the Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority. The declaration changed the official name of the country to the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (sometimes seen as Jamahiriyah). The word *jamahiriya* is derived from the Arabic word ''*jamahir*,'' meaning ''masses.'' Qadhafi coined the word *jamahiriya*; it has no official translation but unofficially has been translated as a ''state of the masses,'' ''people's authority,'' or ''people's power.'' According to Qadhafi, the *jamahiriya* system was to be ''a state run by the people without a government,'' and it heralded the dawn of a new, more advanced stage in humanity's political evolution, just as the phase of republics represented an advancement over the age of monarchies.

National Executive and Legislative Evolution

The Revolutionary Command Council (RCC)

The Constitutional Proclamation of December 11, 1969, designated the RCC as the supreme executive and legislative authority in Libya. The RCC itself was a collegial body in which issues and policies were debated until enough consensus developed to establish a unified position. As the RCC's chairman, however, Qadhafi was the dominant figure in the Revolutionary government. Although he lacked absolute authority to impose his will on his RCC colleagues, they generally deferred to him as the primary leader and spokesman.

The RCC appointed the members of the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers was responsible collectively to the RCC, which could dismiss the prime minister individually or accept the resignation of other ministers. The prime minister's resignation automatically caused the resignation of the entire Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers also was charged with executing general policy in accordance with RCC decisions. When these decisions required new laws, the Council of Ministers drafted legislation for the RCC's consideration. Promulgation was by RCC decree.

After 1969 numerous cabinet shuffles occurred, sometimes in reaction to dissension within the Council of Ministers and threats against the RCC and at other times in attempts to balance or modify the mix of civilian and military members of the cabinet. Qadhafi became prime minister in January 1970, but by 1972 he increasingly left routine administrative tasks to another RCC member, Major Abdel Salaam Jallud (also seen as Jalloud), in order to devote himself to revolutionary theory (see Political Ideology, this ch.). In July 1972, Jallud assumed the position of prime minister. At the time there was speculation in the foreign press that the new Council of Ministers' composition indicated dissension within the RCC and the diminishing of Qadhafi's authority; these notions proved erroneous, however, at least regarding the latter point. Qadhafi retained the positions of chairman of the RCC, commander in chief of the armed forces, and president of the mass political organization, the ASU, and he personally administered the oath of office to Jallud.

Qadhafi's continuing dedication to revolutionary theorizing led to an April 1974 decree relieving him of his other political, administrative, and protocol duties so that he might devote all of his time to his primary interest. Jallud assumed the functions Qadhafi relinquished; he had already been performing many of them unofficially. Despite the fact that Qadhafi retained the position of commander in chief of the armed forces, speculation again arose that his power and authority were waning. Instead, the RCC decree appeared only to have formalized a division of labor between Qadhafi's theoretical interests and Jallud's practical political and administrative interests—a division that had existed informally for some time.

The General People's Congress

The executive system comprising the RCC and the Council of Ministers continued to operate into 1977, with occasional cabinet shuffles. In late 1976, Qadhafi emerged from relative isolation to resume leadership of the RCC. On the seventh anniversary of the Revolution, September 1, 1976, Qadhafi introduced a plan to reorganize the Libyan state. The plan's primary feature was a proposal that a new representative body (the GPC) replace the RCC as the supreme instrument of government. A five-member General Secretariat was created to stand at the apex of the GPC. The details of the plan were included in the draft Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority, adopted by the GPC in extraordinary session on March 2, 1977. The declaration included several basic points: the change in the country's name to the Socialist

People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the establishment of popular direct authority through a system culminating in the GPC, and the assignment of responsibility for defending the homeland to every man and woman through general military training.

The GPC also adopted resolutions that designated Qadhafi as its secretary general; created the General Secretariat of the GPC, which comprised the remaining members of the defunct RCC; and appointed the General People's Committee, which replaced the Council of Ministers, its members now called secretaries rather than ministers (see fig. 11). For symbolic reasons, initially no secretary of defense was appointed within the General People's Committee, defense having become the responsibility of all citizens.

Since its formation the GPC has met in ordinary session annually, usually for about two weeks in November or December. Delegates numbered over 1,000, somewhat more than 60 percent of whom were leaders of the ASU basic and municipal popular congresses (see Subnational Government and Administration, this ch.). Other delegates included the members of the General Secretariat of the GPC and the General People's Committee, leaders of the geographically based zone and municipal people's committees, and representatives from functionally based organizations.

With the RCC and the Council of Ministers abolished, all executive and legislative authority technically was vested in the GPC. The GPC, however, formally delegated most of its important authority to its general secretary and General Secretariat and to the General People's Committee. In its December 1978 session, the GPC authorized the General People's Committee to appoint ambassadors, and the secretary of foreign affairs was authorized to receive the credentials of foreign diplomats. The General People's Committee, in accordance with conditions established at the GPC's December 1978 session and on recommendation of the secretary of the Internal Security Authority, awards and cancels Libyan citizenship. The GPC retains the power to select the president and judges of the Supreme Court, the governor and deputy governor of the Central Bank of Libya, the attorney general, and other high officials. The suggestions and advice of the GPC General Secretariat and the General People's Committee probably are decisive regarding such appointments, however. The General Secretariat appoints the members of the General People's Committee.

The GPC has the formal power to declare war, ratify treaties with other countries, and consider general policy plans and their implementation. In these and other functions, however, it is again subject to the advice of the General People's Committee and the supervision of the general secretary and General Secretariat, which make the final decisions. Yet it would be inaccurate to dismiss the GPC as a mere rubber stamp. It has functioned as a clearinghouse and sounding board, receiving the views of the masses (through lower level representative congresses, committees, and functional organizations) and transmitting them to the General Secretariat and General People's Committee. Conversely, it transmits the decisions of the national leadership to the masses, encouraging mass participation in the political system and lending legitimacy to General Secretariat decisions and policies through advice and formal approval. Qadhafi served as secretary general of the GPC until March 1979, at which time he once again formally resigned from all his positions to devote himself to revolutionary action and, in his words, to ensure the ''separation of the state from the Revolution.''

Subnational Government and Administration

Because of continuing historical and tribal divisiveness, the federation was replaced with a unitary system in 1963, and the three subnational provinces were replaced by ten governorates (see fig. 1). The governorates were subdivided into districts (*mutasarrifiyat*; sing., *mutasarrifiyah*), each of which was further subdivided into subdistricts (*mudiriyat*; sing., *mudiriyah*). Executive heads of these geographical units included the governor (*muhaafiz*), district chief (*mutasarrif*), and subdistrict chief (*mudir*), respectively. Large cities, such as Tripoli and Benghazi, were organized as municipalities, headed by mayors, and subdivided into wards.

All subnational executive administrators were appointed by royal authority on recommendation of the minister of interior and approved by the Council of Ministers. Their appointment frequently was based on tribal and subtribal considerations as well as family prestige derived from the family's historical importance, religious standing and leadership, and wealth. Thus, much of the historical divisiveness that the switch from a federal to a unitary system was designed to overcome was perpetuated in the frequent appointment of members of regional and local elite families as subnational administrators.

Interested in minimizing tribal and regional differences and in encouraging mass participation in the political system, the RCC began modifying the subnational government structure soon after the 1969 Revolution. Laws implemented in 1970 and 1971 established the Ministry of Local Government (which assumed some of the duties formerly exercised by the Ministry of Interior), gave local authorities more power to implement policies of the central (national) government, and redesignated some of the names and boundaries of the ten governorates. Selection of chief executives in the governorates, districts, subdistricts, and municipalities remained within the purview of the central government, appointments being made by the RCC on the recommendation of the minister of interior. Lower level administrators were required to meet standardized civil service qualifications.

For the most part, subnational government continued to function as a hierarchical system of administrative links with the central government rather than as a vehicle for popular representation or participation. The RCC as a whole and Qadhafi in particular remained highly critical of inefficient bureaucracy, the lack of commitment to the Revolution displayed by many civil servants and other subnational government functionaries, and the reluctance or inability of the population to participate in the political system. Between 1971 and 1987, subnational government and administration were developed in five major stages in order to correct these deficiencies.

The Arab Socialist Union

The 1971 creation of the ASU, an imitation of the Egyptian counterpart of the same name, marked the first stage in the drive to modify subnational government. The ASU was envisioned as the direct link between the people and the government (and particularly the RCC). Its purpose was to provide the masses with a system that allowed for participation and representation (thus fostering national unity), commitment to the Revolution, and loyalty to the RCC) but that could be carefully directed by the RCC. Resolutions passed by ASU organs required RCC decrees or orders for implementation, and the RCC could annul any ASU decision at any level and dissolve any ASU organ. As chairman of the RCC, Qadhafi became president of the ASU.

The ASU was organized on three tiers: at the basic (or local) level, the governorate level, and the national level. Membership was based on both geography (or residence) and function (work places, universities, and government bureaucracies). ASU units at both the basic and governorate level were composed of two elements, the conference and the committee. All local and functional ASU members within a basic area constituted the Basic Conference. The Basic Committee, which functioned as the conference's executive, comprised ten members elected by and from the conference. The committee in turn elected its own secretariat and appointed special subcommittees to investigate matters and suggest policies of local interest. The Governorate Conference consisted of two or more representatives elected from each basic unit, the number of representatives depending on the size of the basic unit's membership. The Governorate Committee consisted of twenty members elected by and from conference members. The committee also elected its secretariat and appointed research subcommittees. ASU university units were equivalent to, and organized in the same manner as, ASU governorate units.

The ASU unit at the national level was the National Congress (sometimes seen as National Conference), an early version of the GPC. It comprised ten, fourteen, or twenty representatives from each ASU governorate unit (depending on the size of the membership of that unit). The National Congress also included members of the RCC and Council of Ministers and delegates from functional organizations.

From its inception, Libyan officials stressed that the ASU was not a political party; rather, it was a mass organization that formed an activist alliance comprising members of various social forces within the population (laborers, farmers, soldiers, women, and so forth) that were committed to the principles of the Revolution. Emphasis was placed on "toilers," or workers—initially farmers and laborers—who were to constitute at least half of the membership of all ASU units at all levels. The worker category was later expanded to include—along with farmers and laborers—professionals, artisans, employees, traders, and students. Intellectuals and nonexploitive capitalists were considered workers at one time but were later excluded. Membership in the ASU was open to anyone from the worker categories who was over eighteen years of age, in good legal standing, of sound mental health, and not a member of the former royal family or associated with the defunct monarchical government. Exceptions in these cases could be granted by the RCC. By the time of the first ASU National Congress in 1972, membership was reported to include over 300,000 of some 1 million eligible persons.

A second stage in subnational government revision occurred with the passage of several laws in 1972. Through these laws the districts and subdistricts were abolished, reducing administrative subdivisions to the governorate and the municipality. (Municipalities could be subdivided into branches and other units, but these were secondary, created only when needed on a municipal council's recommendation to the prime minister.) Certain ministerial prerogatives in administration, finance, and local civil service matters were transferred to the governors and mayors. The functions of the Ministry of Municipalities were reabsorbed by the Ministry of Interior, and the prime minister supervised a system of representative councils at the governorate and municipal levels, councils that were influenced significantly by the ASU.

A busy street in Benghazi
Courtesy Keith Daber

Governorate and municipal councils were concerned primarily with implementing national policies and drafting plans and regulations pertaining to the provision of regular and emergency health, education, social welfare, and transportation services, as well as with undertaking development and agricultural improvement projects. A governorate had primary authority over these functions when they crossed municipal boundaries.

Governorate councils comprised both appointed and elected seats. The prime minister appointed ASU members, upon the governor's advice and the ASU's recommendation, to fill ten seats. The popular elections to fill the other seats were supervised by the ASU. The councils also included the area directors of health, education, and other services. Municipal councils were composed of six appointed ASU members, other members of the ASU who were elected through ASU-supervised popular elections, and municipal service administrators. All council decisions were sent to the prime minister, who could reject them. If the council persisted, the matter would be sent to the Council of Ministers for final review. The prime minister also was empowered to dissolve councils.

The Cultural Revolution and People's Committees

Bureaucratic inefficiency and lack of public participation continued to plague the subnational governmental system. Not only did the ASU organization appear too complex to foster public involvement by the politically unsophisticated masses, but there was the additional problem of poor coordination between the ASU and subnational administrators. In large part to correct these problems, Qadhafi proclaimed the Cultural Revolution on April 15, 1973. The institutional linchpin of the Cultural Revolution was the people's committee, which also was the primary component of the third stage in the development of subnational administration.

Similar in structure to the ASU, people's committees were both functionally and geographically based. Functionally based people's committees were established in universities, schools, private business firms (including foreign-owned oil companies), farms, public utilities, banks, government organs, the broadcast media, and at harbor and airport facilities. Geographically based people's committees were formed at the governorate, municipal, and zone levels (municipalities being composed of several zones). Direct popular elections filled the seats on the people's committees at the zone level. The zone-level committees selected representatives who collectively formed the Municipal People's Committee; municipal people's committees in turn selected representatives to form the governorate people's committees. Any citizen of at least nineteen years of age was permitted to vote and to run for committee membership, but there were no standardized rules governing the formation of the people's committees, at least at the beginning. This resulted in considerable confusion, particularly when multiple people's committees formed in the same place began denouncing each other. In such instances, new RCC-sanctioned elections had to be called. The deadline for the formation of people's committees was August 1973. Estimates of the number of committees in existence by that time vary from approximately 1,000 to more than 2,000.

According to Qadhafi, people's committees were to be the primary instrument of the Revolution. They were to decide what and who conformed to the principles of the Revolution, a task that included the purging of government officials (up to the rank of undersecretary) and private executives and managers. Thousands of functionaries were dismissed, demoted, or transferred. In rare cases, executives and other functionaries were promoted. Such actions severely disrupted the orderly operation of countless government offices and private enterprises, so much so that by the fall of 1973 the press and the RCC were publicly criticizing the zeal with which committees substituted unqualified replacements for experienced persons. At no time did the RCC lose control of the situation, however; on occasion it reversed people's committee actions, dismissed individual committee members, and even dissolved whole committees, sanctioning new elections in the process. In a positive sense, the people's committees provided the masses with still more opportunities to participate in the governmental system, and the purges resulted in the replacement of critics (both real and imagined) of the Qadhafi regime by militants who felt more closely linked to the RCC and the Revolution.

The people's committees originally were seen as an experiment, but by October 1973 a new law had formalized their existence and set their term of membership at three years. More significantly, the law transferred the authority and functions of municipal and governorate councils to the people's committees at the same levels. The chairmen of the governorate people's committees became the governors; the chairmen of the municipal people's committees became mayors.

During 1974 doubts increased regarding the operation of the people's committees. The Libyan press warned of the danger inherent in the creation of a new bureaucratic class. In early September, an RCC spokesman publicly accused the committee system of degenerating into anarchy and rashness and of deviating from the path of true democracy. New elections for all levels of people's committees were held from September 14 to October 3; some of the existing committees were reelected.

At the 1974 National Congress, Qadhafi stated that the complexity of administrative machinery limited mass interest in political participation, and he called for the removal of obstacles between the people and the government. He believed that policy planning should be centralized but that execution should be decentralized. The congress responded by recommending the abolition of governorates. It also stressed the primacy of the people's committees in administrative affairs and the ASU's supervisory authority over the committees.

In February 1975, the RCC issued a law that abolished the governorates and their service directorates; however, twelve years later many sources continued to refer to the governorates as though they still existed. A separate Ministry of Municipalities reemerged from the Ministry of Interior. Direction of the services previously administered by the governorate directorates—education, health, housing, social services, labor, agricultural services, communications, financial services, and economy—was transferred to nine newly created control bureaus. Each control bureau was located in the appropriate ministry, and the ministry became responsible for delivery of the service to the country as a whole. Another RCC law, issued on April 7, formally established the municipality as the sole administrative and geographical subdivision within Libya. It further stipulated that each municipality would be subdivided into quarters, each quarter to have its own people's committee. The municipal people's committee would comprise representatives from the quarters' committees.

The Basic People's Congress

The blurred lines of responsibility dividing the ASU (as the organization charged with mobilizing the masses) and the people's committees (charged with being the primary administrative instrument of the Revolution) led to minimal cooperation and even conflict between the two systems. Political participation by the population as a whole was lacking, and administration was inefficient. Qadhafi decided that if coordination and cooperation between the ASU and the people's committees were to be increased, and if organized functional groups (especially labor) were to be brought further into an integrated participatory system, still another innovation was required. The fourth stage in modifying subnational government and administration involved a reorganization of the ASU, announced by Qadhafi on April 28, 1975.

Membership in the reorganized ASU was open to all Libyans (except convicted criminals and the mentally ill) as well as to all Arabs living outside Libya. At the lowest geographic level, the submunicipal zone, the population formed the BPC, all citizens within the jurisdiction of a given BPC automatically becoming members of it. By 1987 over 2,000 BPCs had been created. The BPC was headed by an executive or leadership committee of ten members, directed by a secretary (sometimes referred to as a chairman). The leadership committee's function was strictly administrative—announcing congress meetings, preparing minutes, and setting the agenda. Qadhafi noted that the leadership committees would be selected rather than elected, the results of elections not having been entirely satisfactory in the past. Press reports later announced, however, that ASU elections at all levels were held between November 9 and December 3, 1975 (the term ''election'' possibly having been used in the broadest sense to include some less direct selection process). Each municipal district was composed of several BPCs. The Tripoli ASU municipal district, for example, comprised forty-four BPCs in 1975. Members of the leadership committees of all BPCs within a given municipal district formed the Municipal Popular Congress. A leadership committee of twenty members was selected by that congress.

Leadership committee chairmen from the BPCs and the Municipal Popular Congress were delegates to the highest ASU organ, the National Congress, which met in 1972 and 1974. Also represented at the municipal congresses and the National Congress were delegates from professional groups and organized labor, a modification in the old form of ASU functional representation based on work places. The April 1975 ASU reorganization announcement stipulated that the national representative organ was to be called the National General Congress. A November 13 decree included formal provisions for the new congress, the first session of which was held in January 1976. By the time of its September 1976 session, the national representative body had become the GPC, which had transcended the old ASU National Congress in formal power and purpose.

With the 1975 reorganization of the ASU, the roles of the people's committees and the ASU's BPCs were demarcated, at least theoretically. People's committees were responsible for political matters, and they debated both domestic and foreign policies as presented by the national leadership in the form of a standard agenda. In terms of authority, the political organ was superior to the administrative, the ASU having been assigned supervisory and guidance functions over the people's committees. The GPC, embodying the will of the lower municipal and basic popular congresses, was the highest legislative and executive authority in the country.

The Revolutionary Committees

Appearance of revolutionary committees in late 1977 marked a further evolution of the political system. In response to Qadhafi's promptings, revolutionary committees sprang up in offices, schools, businesses, and in the armed forces. Carefully selected, they were estimated at 3,000 to 4,000 members in 1985. These supposedly spontaneous groups, made up of zealous, mostly youthful individuals with modest education, functioned as the watchdogs of the regime and guides for the people's committees and popular congresses. As such, their role was to raise popular awareness, to prevent deviation from officially sanctioned ideology, and to combat tribalism, regionalism, self-doubt, apathy, reactionaries, foreign ideologies, and counterrevolutionaries. The formation of the revolutionary committees was a consequence of Qadhafi's impatience with the progress of the revolution, his obsession with achieving direct popular democracy, and his antipathy toward bureaucracy.

The introduction of the revolutionary committees added still another layer to the political system, thus increasing its complexity. The revolutionary committees sent delegates to the GPC. Under Qadhafi's direct command and with his backing, they became so powerful that they frequently intimidated other GPC delegates. Reports of their heavy-handedness and extremism abound. In the

1980s, the ''corruption trials'' in revolutionary courts in which a defendant had no legal counsel and no right of appeal were widely criticized both at home and abroad (see Law and the Judiciary, this ch.). The infamous ''hit squads,'' composed of elements of the revolutionary committees, pursued Qadhafi's opponents overseas, assassinating a number of them. Violent clashes occurred between revolutionary committees and the officially recognized or legitimate people's groups and the armed forces. It became clear by the mid-1980s that the revolutionary committees had frequently stifled freedom of expression. Regardless of Qadhafi's intentions, they had clearly ''undermined any meaningful popular participation in the political process,'' as Lillian Craig Harris, an authority on Libya, observed.

Summary and Trends in 1987

Despite the fact that Qadhafi has established an elaborate and complex system of overlapping institutions to foster public representation and ''direct democracy,'' the Libyan regime in 1987 was still controlled by a small group of powerful men. Although no official leadership hierarchy delineated the relative power of these top leaders, Colonel Muammar al Qadhafi was de facto chief of state without holding such a title. He remained the primary decision maker and continued to act as the supreme commander of the armed forces, the Leader of the Revolution, and its founding father and foremost theoretician. Dr. Miftah al Usta Umar, secretary of the General People's Congress, theoretically served as the chief of state. Abdel Salaam Jallud continued to be identified as Libya's number two man, despite doubts raised by his three-month stay in Syria. His return to Libya in early March 1987, however, indicated that rumors of a rift with Qadhafi were exaggerated.

The most recent government shuffle, taking place in early March 1987, entailed the replacement of Jadallah Azzuz at Talhi as secretary general of the General People's Committee (a position corresponding to prime minister). His successor, Umar al Muntasir, who served previously as secretary of industries, was little known outside Libya. The Libyan news agency JANA announced that Talhi had replaced Kamal Hassan Mansur as secretary of foreign liaison (corresponding to foreign minister).

Outside the formal government or cabinet structure, the most important figures of the Libyan regime, in addition to Jallud, included Armed Forces Chief of Staff Abu Bakr Yunis, Inspector General of the Armed Forces Mustafa Kharrubi, and Colonel Khuwayldi al Hamidi, head of the ''shock force'' of the revolutionary committees tasked with suppressing political dissent.

All of these men were among the twelve founders of the Free Officers Movement, whose members seized power in September 1969. And, following the purges in the aftermath of a 1975 coup attempt, they were the only original members of the original twelve Free Officers Movement who remained in power. The cohesion of this inner core has continued with little or no sign of conflict or dissension.

Prominent among the revolutionary committees' young radicals was Musa Kusa, who was in charge of the International Revolutionary Committee (sometimes called the Libyan World Center for Resistance to Imperialism, Zionism, Racism, Reaction, and Fascism). Qadhafi's cousin, Ahmad Qadhafadam, played a prominent role in actions against "stray dogs," i.e., Libyans opposed to Qadhafi who were outside the country and were targets for assassination. Finally, Khalifa Hunaysh headed the presidential guard, a group that protected Qadhafi.

The regime faced tumultuous internal crises in 1987. The military establishment was disgruntled and demoralized by the war in Chad, economic problems were exacerbated by the world oil glut, and disputes among certain key regime figures threatened to erode Qadhafi's personal power base (see Growth and Structure of the Economy, ch. 3; State of Internal Security, ch. 5). A rift between Colonel Hassan Ishkal (also seen as Eshkal), military commander of the oil-rich central region and a long-time friend of Qadhafi, and Hunaysh, culminated in Ishkal's death under mysterious circumstances in Tripoli on November 24, 1986. Although the facts were not definitively established, foreign observers believed that Ishkal, who was Qadhafi's cousin, was killed by supporters of Hunaysh. Significantly, both men were members of Qadhafi's tribe—the Qadhafadam—upon which Qadhafi has relied increasingly in recent years. But after the daily newspaper *Jamahiriyah* vehemently criticized the Qadhafadam tribe, the Libyan leader decided to distance himself from his kin. Foreign observers believed that unless intratribal conflicts were kept within manageable limits, yet another crucial base of Qadhafi's support would be eroded. The question arose as to how many domestic interest groups the regime could afford to alienate before it was left with no support.

Unlike many leaders, who, when confronted by mounting threats to regime stability, adopted a conservative and cautious approach to consolidate their grip on power, Qadhafi met threats with further changes. Qadhafi had often launched new domestic or foreign political initiatives to distract attention from domestic crises, and in view of this record, further political change came as no surprise. On November 3, 1986, *Az Zahf al Akhdar* (The Green March), the mouthpiece of the revolutionary committees, carried a long article, probably written by Qadhafi, which surprisingly argued the urgent need to form a new political party. In an astonishing assertion, the article indicated that such a new political party would replace the people's congresses. According to the article, the people's congresses should be ''crushed'' because of ''exploitation, stealing, monopoly, haughtiness, domination, favoritism, tribalism, reactionism, and corruption'' among the masses, which they represented. The statement was apparently motivated by recognition of the need to purge the GPC and the people's congresses of elements who voiced their opposition to some of Qadhafi's policies.

In the opinion of informed observers, Qadhafi's practical political decision making contradicted his political theories. For ideological reasons, he genuinely wanted the masses to evolve into a self-governing polity. For pragmatic reasons, however, he vetoed popular policies with which he disagreed, using the rationale that he was protecting the people from ''opportunists'' and ''counterrevolutionaries.'' However, such paternalistic intervention contravened the very political process Qadhafi advocated by preventing the masses from reaching the stage of true self-reliance, Qadhafi's ostensible goal.

Despite these shortcomings, however, it seemed clear that the basic goal of direct democracy had been achieved to some extent. Certainly, most Libyans were better represented than they had been under the monarchy. By the late 1980s, there were many opportunities for the populace to participate in the political process and to influence the planning and regulations that affected their daily life. On occasion, the populace have succeeded in revising or changing national policy. For example, faced with the strong opposition of the 1984 GPC, Qadhafi conceded that military training of women would not require women to move away from home. In addition, ''people's power'' did provide for some genuine debate and consultation on most local and many regional matters. The *jamahiriya* system gave people experience in the exercise of responsibility that had largely been denied them in the past, if only because Qadhafi, whether or not by choice, did not wield absolute dictatorial power.

Qadhafi's power and his ability to veto citizens' wishes was circumscribed to some extent by the General Secretariat, which challenged his views. Moreover, Qadhafi's frequent resignations did not gain him many concessions from his colleagues. As Raymond Hinnebusch pointed out, the fact that Qadhafi felt the need to resort to such measures or threats indicated that policy decisions were taken by a majority vote and that Qadhafi could be defied.

Although popular participation and self-representation in Libya's government have increased, there are clearly limits to how much control citizens can ultimately exert over their government. On the one hand, Qadhafi has set limits to the extent of dissent he will permit. Qadhafi created the revolutionary committees specifically to counteract growing people's power. And, just as the Chinese Cultural Revolution degenerated into chaos because of the excesses of the Red Guards, Libya's own Cultural Revolution, in its quest to remold society according to Qadhafi's idiosyncratic vision of a pure Islam, may culminate in similar disruptions and upheavals. As of late 1987, however, the Libyan case had been far less radical, with markedly less violence. On the other hand, the implementation of the direct democracy is predicated on the assumption of sustained political interest and sound judgment that may be unrealistic for many of the citizenry. For example, women's participation in the political system was still at a low level in 1987, despite official encouragement of their participation. Nevertheless, as a unique type of direct popular democracy, the *jamahiriya* experiment was not likely to be of more than fleeting interest for policy makers, political theorists, and, those concerned with Third World development. Lillian Craig Harris suggested that although Qadhafi's utopian and simplistic *The Green Book* will not survive his tenure, the fact that he has so radically changed the Libyan political order indicates that at least some vestiges of his philosophy will endure indefinitely.

Although the ideal of greater public participation in government through direct democracy had appeal as a theory, Qadhafi has not been able to implement it practically; therefore, Libya's extremely complicated and inefficient system of government was unlikely to be emulated. One reason for the incredible, and growing, complexity of the Libyan political system was that new structures were frequently superimposed on already existing ones without the elimination or even simplification of the existing structures. As a result of blurred lines of authority and responsibility, problems of cooperation and coordination between different parts of institutions have arisen. In the late 1970s, for instance, there were tensions between the ASU and the popular committees. Later, in the 1980s, friction developed between the revolutionary committees on the one hand and the army and people's congresses on the other. In view of the extremely rapid pace of political and socioeconomic change, it seemed evident that the *jamahiriya* system needed time to mature.

Qadhafi's revolutionary transformations have outpaced government institution-building and the citizen's political absorptive capacity, causing widespread reaction and rejection of his plans.

The GPC in 1977 rejected Qadhafi's plan to dismantle the government (the presidency, the cabinet, and other political and administrative structures). The 1983 GPC called for more moderate changes at a slower rate. Similarly, the 1984 GPC rejected Qadhafi's proposals to enlist women in the armed forces, to revise the law to give women equal rights in divorce, and to abolish elementary schools in favor of parental tutoring. As of April 1987, the second and third of these proposals appeared to have been put aside while a compromise was worked out regarding the highly controversial issue of women's military training in locations far from their homes.

The preceding examples underline the resilience of traditions and traditional culture, including Islamic values and teachings (see Religious Life, ch. 2). Much to Qadhafi's chagrin, various aspects of traditional culture have proved to be too deeply rooted to permit the elite to sweep them aside easily. Therefore, Qadhafi's impatience at what he considers an unduly slow pace of change will probably continue for a long time. From this standpoint, the whole edifice of political and socioeconomic change wrought by the Libyan revolutionary elite under the guidance of Qadhafi still appears rather fragile. The post-Qadhafi era may go in directions very different from, and at odds with, at least some of the basic ideological features espoused by the previous elite. The real challenge facing Qadhafi was whether he could transform his revolution from above into a truly broad-based and popular mass revolution.

Law and the Judiciary

During the period of the Ottoman Empire, a dual judicial system that distinguished between religious and secular matters developed in Libya and other subject countries. For Muslims, the majority of cases—those involving personal status, such as marriage and inheritance—fell within the jurisdiction of religious courts, which applied the Maliki interpretation of Islamic law—the sharia (see Islam and the Arabs, ch. 1; Tenets of Islam, ch. 2). The courts were organized into both original jurisdiction and appellate levels and each was directed by a qadi (see Glossary), an Islamic religious judge. Secular matters—those involving civil, criminal, and commercial law—were tried in a separate court system. Laws covering secular matters reflected Western influence in general and the Napoleonic Code in particular. Non-Muslims were not under sharia. For example, the Jewish minority was subject to its own religious courts. Europeans were subject to their national laws through consular courts, the European nations having secured capitulary rights from the Turks.

The colonial powers that ruled Libya after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire maintained the dual judicial structure. After Libya achieved independence, however, an attempt was made to merge the religious and secular legal systems. The merger, in 1954, involved the subordination of Islamic law to secular law. Popular opposition, however, caused the reestablishment of the separate religious and secular jurisdictions in 1958.

The 1969 constitutional proclamation provided little guidance for the post-Revolutionary judiciary. Equality before the law and presumption of innocence were stipulated, and inheritance was made subject to sharia. The RCC was given the power to annul or reduce legal sentences by decree and to declare general amnesties. Also stipulated was the independence of judges in the exercise of their duties, subject to law and conscience. It was the RCC, however, that promulgated laws.

Judicial independence and the due process of law were respected during the first decade of the post-Revolutionary regime, except when political crimes were involved. After 1979, however, the situation deteriorated in direct proportion to the growth of the revolutionary committees (see The Revolutionary Committees, this ch.).

Qadhafi and other RCC members believed that the separation of state and religion, and thus of secular and religious law, was artificial—that it violated the Quran and relegated sharia to a secondary status. Two post-Revolutionary bodies dealt with this situation. The Legislative Review and Amendment Committee, composed of Libyan legal experts, was created in October 1971 to make existing laws conform to sharia. The ultimate aim was for Islam to permeate the entire legal system, not only in personal matters, but also in civil, criminal, and commercial law. The Higher Council for National Guidance was created the next year (see Political Ideology, this ch.). Among its philosophical and educational duties was the presentation of Islamic moral and spiritual values in such a way that they would be viable in contemporary Libyan society.

Application of Islamic legal tenets to contemporary law and society presented certain difficulties. There was, for example, the question of the proper contemporary meaning of traditional Islamic physical punishments, such as the severance of a hand for the crime of theft. Debates arose over whether severance should mean actual amputation or merely impeding the hand from future crime by removing need and temptation. The most literal interpretations were adopted, but their actual imposition as legal punishment was very much restricted by exemptions and qualifications, also based on Islamic tenets. A thief's hand would not be amputated, for example, if he truly repented of his crime or if he had committed the theft to feed a starving family. Indeed, numerous observers have reported that the more extreme physical punishments are rarely, if ever, performed.

Court Structure

With the acceptance of the primacy of Islamic law, the dual religious-secular court structure was no longer necessary. In November 1973, the religious judicial system of qadi courts was abolished. The secular court system was retained to administer justice, but its jurisdiction now included religious matters. Secular jurisprudence had to conform to sharia, which remained the basis for religious jurisprudence. In 1987 the court system had four levels: summary courts (sometimes referred to as partial courts), courts of first instance, appeals courts, and the Supreme Court (see fig. 11).

Summary courts were located in most small towns. Each consisted of a single judge who heard cases involving misdemeanors. Misdemeanors were disputes involving amounts up to Libyan dinar (LD) 100 (for value of the Libyan dinar—see Glossary). Most decisions were final, but in cases where the dispute involved more than LD20 the decision could be appealed.

The primary court was the court of first instance. One court of first instance was located in each area that formerly had constituted a governorate before the governorates as such were abolished in 1975. Courts of first instance heard appeals from summary courts and had original jurisdiction over all matters in which amounts of more than LD100 were involved. A panel of three judges, ruling by majority decision, heard civil, criminal, and commercial cases and applied sharia to personal or religious matters that were formerly handled by the qadi courts.

The three courts of appeals sat at Tripoli, Benghazi, and Sabha. A three-judge panel, again ruling by majority decision, served in each court and heard appeals from the courts of first instance. Original jurisdiction applied to cases involving felonies and high crimes. Sharia judges who formerly sat in the Sharia Court of Appeals were assigned to the regular courts of appeals and continue to specialize in sharia appellate cases.

The Supreme Court was located in Tripoli and comprised five chambers: civil and commercial, criminal, administrative, constitutional, and sharia. A five-judge panel sat in each chamber, the majority establishing the decision. The court was the final appellate body for cases emanating from lower courts. It could also interpret constitutional matters. However, it no longer had cassation or annulment power over the decisions of the lower courts, as it did before the 1969 Revolution. Because there was a large pool of

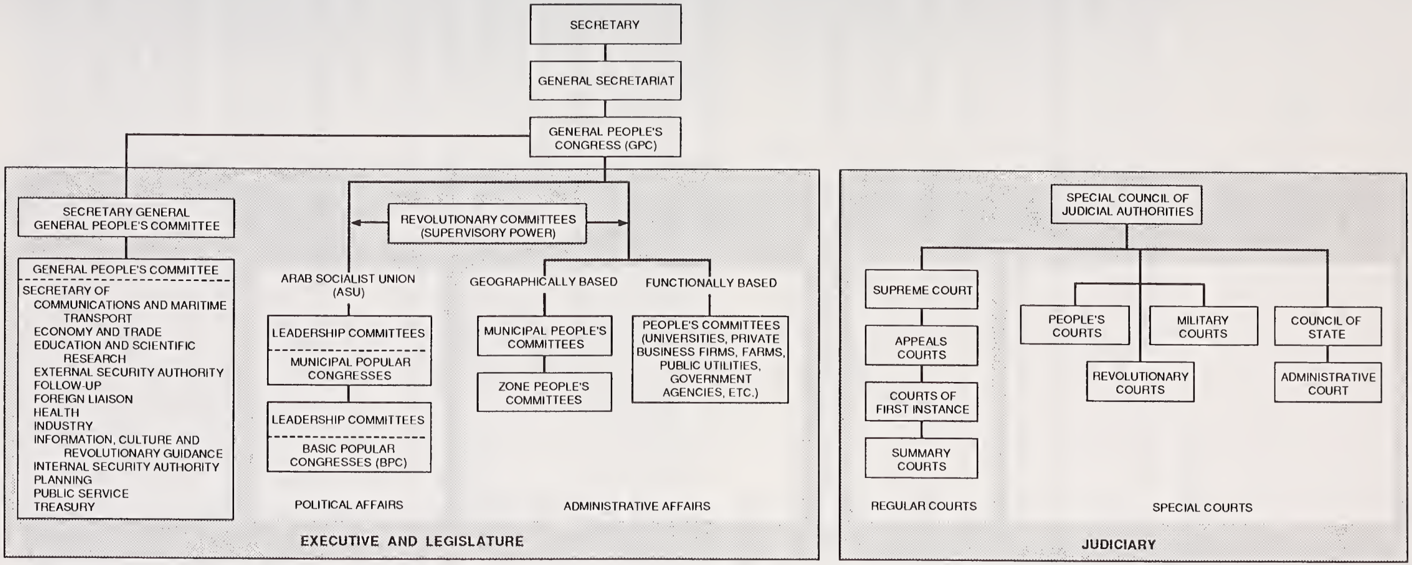

SECRETARY
GENERAL SECRETARIAT
GENERAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (GPC)
SECRETARY GENERAL GENERAL PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE
GENERAL PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE
SECRETARY OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND MARITIME TRANSPORT
ECONOMY AND TRADE
EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
EXTERNAL SECURITY AUTHORITY
FOLLOW-UP
FOREIGN LIAISON
HEALTH
INDUSTRY
INFORMATION, CULTURE AND REVOLUTIONARY GUIDANCE
INTERNAL SECURITY AUTHORITY
PLANNING
PUBLIC SERVICE
TREASURY
REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES (SUPERVISORY POWER)
ARAB SOCIALIST UNION (ASU)
LEADERSHIP COMMITTEES
MUNICIPAL POPULAR CONGRESSES
LEADERSHIP COMMITTEES
BASIC POPULAR CONGRESSES (BPC)
POLITICAL AFFAIRS
GEOGRAPHICALLY BASED
MUNICIPAL PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES
ZONE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES
FUNCTIONALLY BASED
PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES (UNIVERSITIES, PRIVATE BUSINESS FIRMS, FARMS, PUBLIC UTILITIES, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, ETC.)
ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS
EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATURE
SPECIAL COUNCIL OF JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES
SUPREME COURT
APPEALS COURTS
COURTS OF FIRST INSTANCE
SUMMARY COURTS
REGULAR COURTS
PEOPLE'S COURTS
MILITARY COURTS
REVOLUTIONARY COURTS
COUNCIL OF STATE
ADMINISTRATIVE COURT
SPECIAL COURTS
JUDICIARY

Figure 11. Government Organization, June 1987

Supreme Court justices from which the panel was drawn at a given time, the total number of justices was not fixed. All justices and the president (also seen as chairman) of the court were appointed by the GPC; most likely the General Secretariat made the actual selections. Before its abolition, the RCC made Supreme Court appointments.

Other Juridical Organs

Some bodies involved in the administration or the enforcement of justice were situated outside the regular court system. For example, the Supreme Council of Judicial Authorities was an administrative body that coordinated and supervised the various courts. It also established the salaries and seniority rules for judges, whom it could transfer or retire. The Council of State, much like the French Conseil d'Etat, delivered advisory legal opinions for government bodies regarding draft legislation and other actions or regulations it was contemplating, as well as contract negotiations in which it might be involved. It also included an administrative court to provide relief in civil cases involving arbitrary or otherwise unfair administrative decisions.

The People's Court

In 1971 a people's court was established to try members of the former royal family, the prime ministers and other officials of the monarchical regime, people accused of rigging elections in behalf of that regime, and journalists and editors accused of corrupting public opinion before the Revolution. A member of the RCC presided over the court, which also included one representative each from the armed forces, the Islamic University, the Supreme Court, and the police. Trials and retrials continued at least as late as 1975, when former King Idris was sentenced to death in absentia. An amnesty for some of those sentenced in 1971 was granted by the RCC in 1976.

With matters pertaining to the former monarchical regime having been resolved, it appeared that several people's courts were being used in the late 1970s to try crimes against the post-Revolutionary state. In January 1977, a new people's court was formed to try political detainees. The Decision on the Protection of the Revolution, issued December 11, 1969, generally defined crimes against the state as those involving attempted forcible overthrow of the ruling regime or otherwise rallying opposition to it. Such crimes may be referred to a people's court, but plots and conspiracies against the state are usually referred to special military courts created on an ad hoc basis for that purpose. The military courts and the people's courts have been criticized for violating the legal rights of defendants in political cases (see Criminal Justice System, ch. 5).

The Revolutionary Courts

In the early 1980s, a separate and parallel judicial system emerged that abrogated many procedures and rights ensured by the traditional court system. With the regime's blessing and encouragement, revolutionary committee members established revolutionary courts that held public, often televised, trials of those charged with crimes against the Revolution. A law promulgated in 1981 prohibited private legal practice and made all lawyers employees of the Secretariat of Justice. In these courts, the accepted norms—such as due process, the right to legal representation, and right of appeal—were frequently violated. According to Amnesty International, Libya held seventy-seven political prisoners in 1985, of whom about eighteen were held without trial or remained in detention after having been acquitted. Others allegedly died under torture while in the custody of members of the revolutionary committees. Libya also sanctioned murder of political opponents abroad, a policy reaffirmed on March 2, 1985, by the GPC.

Unions and Syndicates

Immediately after the Revolution, the role that labor unions, professional syndicates, and other organized interest groups would play in the new society was in doubt. Regarding labor unions, for example, Qadhafi stated in a November 4, 1969, speech in Tripoli: "There will be no labor unions . . . . Laborers and the Revolution are an indivisible entity. There may be certain labor organizations, but only for ordinary administrative duties." On November 30, however, Qadhafi stated in an interview that there was no thought of abolishing labor unions and student organizations, but they must "truly represent their groups with a revolutionary spirit. We do not accept intermediaries between the Revolution and its working forces."

After the Revolution, most pre-Revolutionary interest groups were abolished and new ones created. Functioning within the framework of the ASU at first, and the GPC after 1976, the new interest groups lacked autonomy and played an insignificant political role. In January 1976, the ASU National Congress emphasized that political activity was to be solely within the purview of popular congresses. After 1976 labor unions and other associations performed only administrative duties pertaining to the occupations or nonpolitical activities of their members. Strikes have been prohibited since

1972. In Qadhafi's ideology, workers should be transformed into partners; to work for wages is a form of slavery. Therefore, he urged workers to take over companies, factories, and schools and to set up people's committees to manage production and decide priorities. In theory, this system would make labor unions unnecessary.

In fact, however, unions continued to exist. In the mid-1980s, there were some 275,000 members belonging to 18 trade unions, which together formed the Tripoli-based National Trade Union Federation. In addition, separate syndicates existed for teachers, engineers, physicians, lawyers, and other professionals. Other groups represented women and students. The GPC included components of all these units. Although Libyan interest groups did not have a real political role similar to that such groups play in the Western tradition, their responsibilities included contributing to the Cultural Revolution, raising the revolutionary consciousness of their members, and mobilizing support for national leaders and their policies.

Before the Revolution of 1969, organized labor played a significant role in opposing the monarchy. Yet the union movement was too young to be established firmly, and it had no connection with the military group that overthrew the king. Consequently, unions and most other interest groups have not resisted the limitations imposed within the post-Revolutionary framework and the concomitant lack of a real political role. Students have proved an exception, however. Early post-Revolutionary enthusiasm for the RCC quickly changed to opposition as a significant number of students reacted against restrictions on the autonomy of student leaders (see Student Opposition, this ch.).

Opposition to Qadhafi

It was not surprising that opposition arose to the rapid radical changes ushered in by the Qadhafi regime. The wealthy, the privileged, and the traditional tribal and religious elites resented their post-Revolutionary loss of power. The ranks of the opposition also grew to include sections of the armed forces, university students, intellectuals and technocrats, and even some of the new political and tribal leaders who clashed with the core elite for one reason or another.

For its part, the Revolutionary regime made it clear from the outset that it would brook no opposition. Opposition from political parties or other interest groups was viewed as harmful to national unity. Speaking in October 1969, Qadhafi stated that Libya needed "national unity free of party activities and division" and that "he who engages in party activities commits treason." The December

1969 Decision on the Protection of the Revolution, the Penal Code, and Law No. 71 of 1972 rendered political party activities a crime and formed a strict legal injunction against unauthorized political activity, particularly if such activity should physically threaten the state. Insulting the Constitution or popular authorities and joining a nonpolitical international society without permission were both punishable by imprisonment. Attempting to change the government or the Constitution through force, propagandizing theories or principles aimed at such action, and forming an illegal group were crimes punishable by death. One of the basic points of the Cultural Revolution, declared in April 1973, called for the repression of communism and conservatism. Also to be repressed were capitalism, atheism, and the secretive Muslim Brotherhood (see Glossary).

Despite legal strictures and physical attempts to nullify opposition, there has been resistance to the Revolutionary regime. The discovery of a plot involving two cabinet ministers (lieutenant colonels who were not RCC members) was announced in December 1969. A second plot, allegedly based in Fezzan and involving a distant cousin of former King Idris, was discovered in July 1970. Participation of foreign mercenaries was alleged in both cases (see Qadhafi and the Revolutionary Command Council, ch. 1). Other resistance has been encountered from traditional tribal leaders who have not welcomed their own displacement by modernizing technocrats, government administrators, people's committees, and popular congresses. Numerous technocrats and other elements of the urban population opposed Qadhafi's emphasis on religion. Traditional Islamic religious leaders also opposed Qadhafi's approach to Islam because its uniquely personal and fundamentalist nature superseded their intermediary position and interpretive function. As in many other developing countries, aspects of the modernization process—such as education and mass communications—also result in impatience and dissatisfaction with the ruling regime. Increased education and exposure to the mass media were intended to inculcate Libyan citizens with patriotism and loyalty to the regime; however, through education and the media, Libyans also were informed of standards of living and political freedoms enjoyed elsewhere in the world. Exposure to the media created rising expectations that probably increased demands on the government rather than increasing support for it through propaganda.

Student Opposition

As previously noted, students have been the source of the most visible opposition to the Qadhafi regime. They initially appeared to support the Revolution. Friction soon developed, however, when it became clear that student organizations would lose their autonomy within the ASU or GPC framework. The Revolution, nonetheless, continued to have student supporters, and many of the first people's committees formed in the wake of the 1973 Cultural Revolution were established at universities. Those committees radically altered curricula, dismissed professors and deans, and terminated the school term early so that students could join volunteer projects and receive military training. Seventeen years after the Qadhafi-led coup, students as a whole remained divided between supporters and critics of the Revolutionary regime.

A particularly serious incident occurred in January 1976 when students at the University of Benghazi protested government interference in student union elections. Elected students who were not ASU members were considered officially unacceptable by the authorities. Security forces moved onto the campus, and violence resulted. Reports that several students were shot and killed in the incident were adamantly denied by the government. Nonetheless, sympathizers organized more protests. Qadhafi and Jallud, speaking on April 6 at Tripoli University, called on revolutionaries there to drive out the opposition. Some clashes occurred as the newly formed people's committee undertook the purging of nonrevolutionaries. The school was finally closed temporarily and then renamed Al Fatah University. Since that time, there have been intermittent reports of student rebelliousness. In April 1984, for instance, two students at Al Fatah University were publicly hanged. Apparently in revenge, two revolutionary committee members were found murdered on campus. According to Amnesty International, two more students died in 1985, allegedly under torture while in the custody of the revolutionary committees.

Military Opposition

The military remained the most serious threat to the Qadhafi regime. By March 1987, there were signs of disaffection among the officers. In part, this was the result of mounting casualties and setbacks in the Chad war. Such discontent was illustrated by the defection to Egypt in early March of six air force personnel, including a lieutenant colonel. Upon landing at Abu Simbel airfield in Upper Egypt, the airmen denounced Qadhafi's rule and requested asylum.

Qadhafi's calls for a people's army that would eventually replace the professional military evidently disturbed the armed forces. Furthermore, the revolutionary committees often increased their power at the military's expense. In addition, the military resented the revolutionary committees' interference in national security affairs. It was reported, for example, that brief armed clashes between the two groups took place when certain missile positions were unable to respond to the United States air attacks in April 1986 because revolutionary committee members who were supposed to man them could not be found.

That Qadhafi had entrusted the revolutionary committees with the vital mission of manning air defense positions underscored the extent to which he has deployed them to counterbalance the power of the armed forces. It indicated that Qadhafi had learned one vital lesson from the often-turbulent Middle East politics, namely that the military has masterminded most coups d'état. In measure to forestall possible coup attempts, military commanders were frequently rotated or forced into early retirement. In 1984, for example, about seventy senior officers were obliged to retire. Despite such precautions, the military had managed to stage most of the attempts against Qadhafi since 1976. Most experts believed that the military was the group most likely to topple Qadhafi.

Religious Opposition

In April 1973, Qadhafi launched the five-point Cultural Revolution (see Political Ideology, this ch.). Among the points was the replacement of existing laws by sharia. In a speech on April 28, he asked University of Benghazi law students to help revise the legal codes and repeatedly emphasized the principle of the primacy of Islamic law over other jurisprudence. The traditional religious establishment gave initial support to Qadhafi's restoration of Islamic jurisprudence, but it soon started to oppose his actions, accusing him of pretensions.

First, Qadhafi challenged the traditional role of the ulama (Islamic jurists or scholars) as expert interpreters of the Quran. Because the Quran is written in Arabic, argued Qadhafi, anyone who knows Arabic can understand it. As did Martin Luther's Protestantism, Qadhafi's interpretation of Islam recognizes no need for intermediaries between God and humans.

Furthermore, Qadhafi in effect arrogated a new role to himself—that of a *mujtahid*, a Muslim jurist who renders decisions based on the opinions of one of the four legal schools of Islam. In this case, Qadhafi sought to reinterpret the Quran in light of modern conditions and current needs. His insistence on the necessity to sweep aside virtually the entire body of Islamic commentary and learning, including the hadith (the Prophet Muhammad's sayings), and to limit the legitimate sources of legislation to the Quran alone has caused misgivings throughout the Islamic world.

Moreover, Qadhafi's interpretation of Islam was considered radical. He considered the Quran to be the only source of sharia and community. As did other Muslim reformers, Quran saw deviation from "true" Islamic teachings as the cause of the weakness of Islamic lands, including Libya. Like them, he also called for a return to the source, the Quran. But unlike most other reformers, Qadhafi excluded the hadith and the sunna (the lifestyle and deeds of the Prophet) as reliable sources of legislation. By questioning the authenticity of the hadith, Qadhafi has in effect dismissed the entire edifice of traditional *fikh* (Islamic jurisprudence). As one scholar, Ann Elizabeth Mayer, put it, "discrediting the hadith entails rejection of by far the greater part of Islamic law." In essence, Qadhafi rejected *taqlid* (obedience to received authority, i.e., the revelation of God to the Prophet Muhammad) in favor of *ijtihad* (the right to interpretation).

In 1977 Qadhafi took yet another unprecedented, no less controversial step, altering the Muslim calendar. Instead of starting from the date of the Prophet's migration to Medina, the year began with the date of the Prophet's death. Shocked by Qadhafi's radical reinterpretation of Islam, the ulama accused him of heresy. Characteristically, however, the Libyan leader was undaunted.

The confrontation with the ulama began in the mid-1970s, when they criticized some aspects of Qadhafi's increasingly idiosyncratic and radical ideology. In 1977, for example, the grand mufti (chief religious judge) of Libya criticized the sequestration of private property, which resulted from the new law prohibiting the ownership of more than one house.

The clergy were upset because, in effect, *The Green Book* was displacing sharia as the blueprint for Libya's political and social development. Furthermore, inasmuch as the Third Universal Theory is purportedly a relevant model for non-Muslim Third World countries, the theory's reliance on Islamic precepts had to be diluted (see The Third Universal Theory, this ch.).

Accusing the ulama of siding with the upper classes, in February 1978 Qadhafi warned them against interfering in the regime's socialist policies. A few months later, some mosques were seized and their imams (prayer leaders) replaced by more compliant ones. To undermine further the legitimacy of the religious leaders, Qadhafi blamed the grand mufti for failing to declare a jihad (see Glossary) against the Italians during the 1930s. Qadhafi's relentless attacks on the traditional religious establishment succeeded in eroding its hitherto lofty status, thereby removing a powerful center of opposition to regime-sponsored changes.

Apart from conflicts with the traditional religious hierarchy, Qadhafi had a longstanding conflict with the Muslim Brotherhood and other fundamentalist groups, whose membership went into exile or underground during Qadhafi's tenure. In March 1987, it was reported that nine Muslim dissidents, members of a little-known group called Holy War, were executed for plotting to assassinate Soviet advisers. A revolutionary committee member was assassinated in Benghazi in October 1986 by the hitherto unknown Hizballah (Party of God). As a result, the revolutionary committees began to monitor more closely than before the activities of the mosques, the imams, and the fundamentalists. The country's forty-eight Islamic institutes reportedly were closed in late 1986, apparently to stem the tide of religious, particularly fundamentalist, opposition.

Exiled Opposition

Over twenty opposition groups exist outside Libya. The most important in 1987 was the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), formed in October 1981, and led by Muhammad Yusuf al Magariaf, formerly Libyan ambassador to India. The NFSL was based in Sudan until the fall of the Numayri regime in 1985, after which its operations were dispersed. The NFSL rejected military and dictatorial rule and called for a democratic regime with constitutional guarantees, free elections, free press, and separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The group published a bimonthly newsletter, *Al Inqadh* (Salvation).

The NFSL claimed responsibility for the daring attack on Qadhafi's headquarters at Bab al Aziziyah on May 8, 1984. Although the coup attempt failed and Qadhafi escaped unscathed, dissident groups claimed that some eighty Libyans, Cubans, and East Germans perished. According to various sources, the United States Central Intelligence Agency trained and supported the NFSL before and after the May 8 operation. Domestically, some 2,000 people were arrested and 8 were hanged publicly. The NFSL also organized the April 1984 demonstration in London in which a British policewoman was killed by a Libyan diplomat, leading to the breaking of diplomatic relations between Tripoli and London.

Another opposition group, the Libyan Liberation Organization, based in Cairo, was formed in 1982. In 1987 it was led by Abdul Hamid Bakkush, a prime minister during the Idris monarchy. In mid-November 1984, Libyan officials were greatly embarrassed by their premature claims of responsibility for the assassination of Bakkush. In fact, the entire operation was elaborately stage-managed by the Egyptian security forces, who produced a very much alive Bakkush on television along with members of the four-man hit squad, which reportedly consisted of two British citizens and two Maltese.

Al Burkan (The Volcano), a highly secretive and violent organization that emerged in 1984, has been responsible for the assassination of many Libyan officials overseas. For instance, it claimed responsibility for the death of the Libyan ambassador in Rome in January 1984, and, a year later, for the assassination of the Libyan Information Bureau chief, also in Rome. A Libyan businessman with close ties to Qadhafi was shot dead on June 21, 1984, in Athens during the visit of Abdul Salaam Turayki, Libya's secretary of foreign liaison.

Less well-known opposition groups outside Libya were the Libyan Constitutional Union, the pro-Iraqi Libyan National Movement, the Libyan National Democratic Grouping led by Mahmud Sulayman al Maghrabi, Libya's first post-Revolutionary prime minister, and Al Haq, a rightist pro-monarchy group.

The opposition groups outside Libya remained disunited and largely ineffective. Divided ideologically into such groups as Baathists (see Glossary), socialists, monarchists, liberals, and Islamic fundamentalists, they agreed only on the necessity of overthrowing the Qadhafi regime. An initial step toward coordination was taken in January 1987 when eight opposition groups, including the Libyan National Movement, the Libyan National Struggle Movement, and the Libyan Liberation Organization, agreed to form a working group headed by Major Abd al Munim al Huni, a former RCC member who has been living in Cairo since the 1975 coup attempt that was led by another RCC member, Umar Muhayshi. Some observers speculated that because Huni appeared to be acceptable to all opposition groups and in view of his close ties to the military, he may well be the man most likely to succeed Qadhafi. If the Iranian experience offered any insights, the hallmark of the post-Qadhafi era would be a bloody power struggle between erstwhile coalition groups of diverse ideological beliefs. By early 1987, it was by no means clear which faction might emerge as the ultimate victor, should Qadhafi be toppled. It must be kept in mind, however, that the Libyan leader has outlasted many of his enemies, both foreign and domestic.

To deal with outside opposition, the Libyan regime continued its controversial policy of physical liquidation of opponents. On March 2, 1985, the GPC reiterated its approval of the policy of "the pursuit and physical liquidation of the stray dogs." During the 1985 wave of violence, a number of Libyans living abroad were killed or wounded. Among the casualties were former ambassador

Izzedin Ghadamsi, seriously wounded in Vienna on February 28; businessman Ahmad Barrani, killed in Cyprus on April 2; another businessman, Yusuf Agila, wounded in Athens on October 6; and Gibril Denali, a thirty-year-old student living in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) as a political refugee, assassinated in Bonn on April 6. The liquidation policy continued into 1987 when Muhammad Salim Fuhaymah, a prominent Libyan dissident, was assassinated in Athens on January 7.

The physical liquidation policy has drawn universal condemnation. However, the impact of the policy, should not be exaggerated. During 1984, there were 4 assassinations of Libyans abroad and between 20 and 120 executions internally. Scholar Lillian Craig Harris, writing in late 1986, stated that since 1980 twenty anti-Qadhafi Libyans had been assassinated abroad.

Political Ideology

In the late 1980s, Qadhafi continued to perceive himself as a revolutionary leader. Qadhafi has always claimed that the September 1969 overthrow of the monarchy was a popular revolution, not merely a military coup d'état. In fact, only a few military officers and enlisted men took part in the September revolution. Qadhafi reconciled the apparent inconsistency by stressing that the military—and more specifically the Free Officers Movement, whose members took part in the coup and subsequently formed the RCC—shared the humble origins of the people and represented their demands. Qadhafi depicted the military as the vanguard elite of the people, a concept adopted from Marxist-Leninist ideology. But although Qadhafi wanted to be recognized as a revolutionary leader and justified military domination of Libya with the concept of the vanguard elite, he excoriated communism as well as capitalism.

The wellsprings of Qadhafi's political thought are the Quran and Nasserism. As an ardent admirer of Egypt's Gamal Abdul Nasser, Qadhafi has never wavered in the conviction that he is Nasser's legitimate heir. As such, he felt compelled to advance Nasser's struggle for Arab unity and socialism. Qadhafi was influenced by Nasser's theory of the concentric Islamic, Arab, and African circles of influence. Unlike Nasser, however, Qadhafi developed a brand of socialism that he believed to be consonant with Islamic principles.

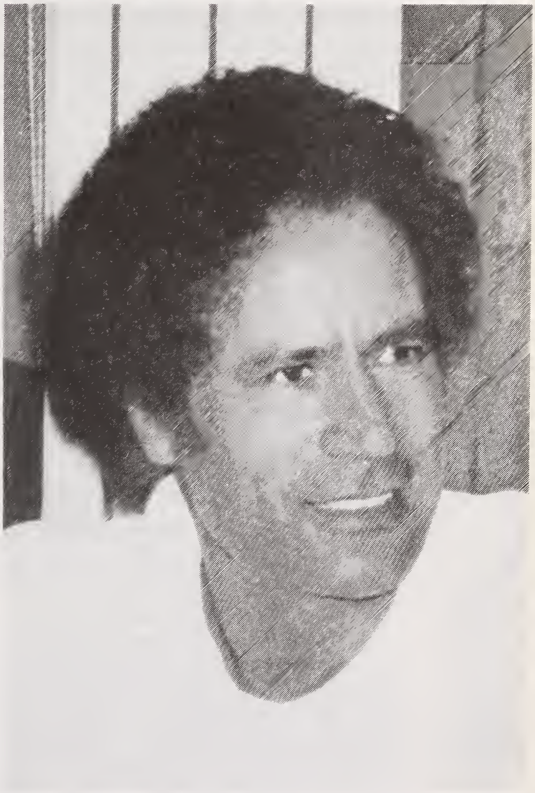
Qadhafi expanded Nasser's political thought by emphasizing the Islamic bases of socialism in that the Quran condemns class domination and exploitation. Qadhafi stated that although Islam ''cannot be described as socialism in its modern sense, it strives to a certain extent to dissolve the differences among classes.'' According to Qadhafi, ''almsgiving is the nucleus of the socialist spirit in Islam.'' Socialism in Libya was to mean ''social justice.'' Work, production, and resources were all to be shared fairly, and extreme disparities between rich and poor were to be eliminated. But social hierarchy, as provided for in the Quran, would remain, and class harmony, not class warfare, would be the result. Qadhafi stressed that this socialism, inherent in Islam, was not merely a stage toward communism, as the Marxist theorists would argue.

For Qadhafi as for Nasser, Arab nationalism took primacy over pan-Islamism. Both leaders can be described as secularists, although Qadhafi increasingly emphasized the Islamic roots of his ideology. Yet, his main interest undoubtedly lay in the secular rather than the sacred world. Revolution, the propagation of *The Green Book*, mass mobilization, and liberation remained his obsessions. ''I love the people, all the people,'' he proclaimed in a 1986 interview with a French television newscaster published in *Jeune Afrique.* ''I would like the people to vanquish the government, the armies, the police, the parties, and the parliaments,'' he said in explanation of his notion of direct democracy in which people rule themselves without the mediation of traditional governmental institutions. ''I am the prophet of the revolution and not the prophet of Allah,'' Qadhafi declared in the same interview, ''for what interests me in this century is that *The Green Book* become the bible of the modern world.''

The secular basis of Qadhafi's philosophy was emphasized further by the Libyan adoption of the Baath Party slogan of unity, freedom, and socialism. These ideals were embodied in the first revolutionary pronouncement of September 1, 1969, and reiterated in the Constitutional Proclamation of December 11, 1969. They were afterward refined and modified in response to practical Libyan considerations. The ideal of freedom included the freedom of the nation and its citizens from foreign oppression. Freedom was considered to have been achieved by the Revolution and the subsequent negotiations that quickly ended the existence of foreign military bases in Libya. The ideal of freedom also encompassed freedom from want of the basic necessities of life and freedom from poverty, disease, and ignorance. In this regard, the ideal of freedom called for the ideal of socialism.

Libyan socialism has succeeded to the extent that social welfare programs have been subsidized by oil revenues. By all accounts, the Qadhafi regime has succeeded to an impressive degree in fulfilling basic human material needs (see Health and Welfare, ch. 2). Libya has also been relatively successful in achieving economic

Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt (top) was the ideological mentor of Colonel Muammar al Qadhafi (bottom)
Nasser photo
Courtesy Embassy of Egypt



egalitarianism. To Qadhafi, such equality entails abolishing the conventional employer-employee relationship. Wage labor is regarded as a form of slavery. Similarly, to prevent landlord-tenant relationships, no person may own more than one house. Furthermore, because domestic servants are considered "a type of slave," the residents of a house should perform their own household work. To achieve economic justice, the slogans of "partners, not wage-earners" and "those who produce, consume" have been proclaimed and, to a significant degree, established.

The Libyan revolutionary ideal of unity was Arab unity, the cause for which Qadhafi was the undisputed champion after the death of Nasser. Qadhafi believed that, through unity, Arabs had achieved greatness during the Middle Ages, when Arab accomplishments in the arts and sciences had overshadowed European counterparts. He further believed that foreign oppression and colonial domination ended Arab unity; until it was restored, the Arab world would suffer injustice and humiliation, as it had when Palestine was lost. Qadhafi believed that the ideal of unity should be realized through practical steps, initial combinations of Arab states providing the nucleus for some form of ultimate unity. Toward this end he initiated unity schemes between Libya and several other countries, but, as of 1987, none of the schemes had been successful (see Foreign Relations, this ch.). At the 1972 National Congress, Qadhafi likened the role of Libya in unifying the Arab nation to that of Prussia in unifying Germany and to that of Piedmont in unifying Italy.

Although most Arab leaders share or sympathize with Qadhafi's ideology of Arab unity, most consider as naive his ardent conviction that unity can be accomplished. Despite his transnational orientation, Qadhafi is parochial in his outlook. His beduin background, obviously a critical factor shaping his personality, inculcated a set of values and modes of behavior often at odds with prevailing international norms. Therefore, he has been awkward at diplomatic give-and-take in comparison to other Arab leaders. For Qadhafi, nomadic life is preferable to urban ways because of its simplicity, pervasive sense of egalitarianism, and puritanism unpolluted by modern, largely alien, cultural influences.

Third Universal Theory

In the early 1970s, Qadhafi began to synthesize and expand his ideas of Arab unity, independence, economic egalitarianism, and cultural authenticity into the Third Universal Theory. The importance of this new theory to the regime was shown by the creation of the Higher Council for National Guidance on September 10,

1972. The council comprised the RCC chairman; the ASU secretary general; the minister of education; the minister of information and culture; the minister of youth and social affairs; the minister of planning, the University of Libya's president; the administrative chairmen of religious endowments; the Muslim Call Society chairman, and the ASU secretary of thought and culture.

The Higher Council for National Guidance was created to disseminate and implement Qadhafi's Third Universal Theory (also seen as the Third International Theory or simply the Third Theory). The Third Universal Theory was predicated on the belief that the two dominant socio-politico-economic ideologies—capitalism and communism—had been proved invalid. According to the theory, capitalism placed the good of a few individuals ahead of that of the community as a whole; communism so emphasized the community that individual development was stifled. Nations constituting what is commonly referred to as the Third World were caught between proponents of the two ideologies: the United States and the Soviet Union, both of which, according to Qadhafi, were "imperialist states which seek to achieve their ambitions by extending their zones of influence."

Qadhafi proclaimed that the Third Universal Theory, because it was based on the Quran, predated capitalism and communism. Furthermore, it offered an alternative. It rejected the class exploitation of capitalism and the class warfare of communism, finding that, in practice at least, systems based on both ideologies were dominated by a small elite. According to the Third Universal Theory, classes were an artificial colonial import. Far from building a system that rested on some form of class relations, the theory sought to eliminate class differences. It embodied the Islamic principle of consultation (*shura*), by which community or even national affairs would be conducted through mutual consultation in which the views of all citizens were exchanged. This principle was manifested later in Libya in the creation of people's committees and popular congresses (see Subnational Government and Administration, this ch.).

The Third Universal Theory was an attempt to establish a philosophical grounding, based on Islam, for positive neutrality on the part of Third World nations. Under the theory, Third World states could coexist with the United States and the Soviet Union, and they could enter into agreements with them for their own purposes. But Third World states in general and Arab states in particular should not fall under the dominance of either of the two ideological, imperialist superpowers. In dividing the world between the two superpowers and their supposed prey, the Third Universal

Theory anticipated much of what has come to be called the North-South interpretation of international relations, whereby the world is divided into natural-resource-consuming nations (the industrialized North) and the natural-resource-producing nations (the underdeveloped South). Indeed, Qadhafi has championed this interpretation of international relations (see Foreign Relations, this ch.). Guided by this viewpoint, Libya has been a strong supporter of national liberation movements against colonial regimes, even though the terrorist tactics used by some groups have tarnished Libya's international reputation and led to economic sanctions and to military attacks in mid-1986.

Central to the Third Universal Theory are the concepts of religion and nationalism as embodied in Islam. Qadhafi believes that religion and nationalism have been the ''two paramount drives that moved forward the evolutionary process. They constitute man's history as they have formed nations, peoples, wars.'' In short, Qadhafi believes that religion determines human actions and interactions.

The atheism of the communists is another reason Qadhafi finds their ideology invalid. According to Qadhafi, communists cannot be trusted because they fear no ultimate judgment and thus may break their word if they consider it beneficial in any particular case. Islam, as the essence of monotheism, is the true religion that encompasses Jews, Christians, and Muslims, all of whom followed God's prophets. The differences among these religions exist not because of the prophets' teachings but because of differences among their followers.

According to Qadhafi, if religion is basic to the individual, nationalism is basic to the society. The Quran refers to tribes and nations that are inherent in the universe. A person belongs to a nationality upon birth. Only later does he or she become a conscious member of a religion. Thus, Qadhafi faults those who deny the validity of nationality. His concept of nationality, therefore, relates to his concept of Arab unity.

In this regard, Qadhafi adheres to the traditional, secularly based view of Arab nationalism propounded by such thinkers as Michel Aflaq, a founder and key political philosopher of the Baath Party, and Nasser. For Qadhafi, nationalism takes precedence over religion. In a wide-ranging speech before the GPC meeting in Sabha on March 2, 1987, Qadhafi denounced Islamic fundamentalism as ''nonsense'' and stated that ''no banner should be hoisted over the Arab homeland except the banner of pan-Arabism.''

The Cultural Revolution

Qadhafi was evidently disappointed with the failure of the Libyan populace to embrace and practice the principles of the Third

Universal Theory. Characteristically impatient, by 1973 Qadhafi had grown critical of the people's lack of revolutionary commitment. He complained of the general refusal to fill positions in the military or to take jobs in the countryside (for which foreign workers had to be recruited), of students who wished to study only in the United States, and of an increase in the crime rate. Perhaps worst of all to Qadhafi was the apathy and reluctance with which a significant portion of the Libyan people greeted the impending Libyan merger with Egypt scheduled for September of 1973. He contended that such attitudes threatened the revolutionary advances anticipated when the monarchy was overthrown. That action had changed the form of government, but if other fundamental social, economic, and political changes were to be accomplished, the people would have to be rededicated to the Revolution. Thus in an April 15, 1973, speech at Zuwarah, Qadhafi proclaimed the Cultural Revolution.

The Cultural Revolution comprised five points: the annulment of all existing laws promulgated by the previous monarchical regime and their replacement by laws based on sharia; the repression of communism and conservatism by purging all political deviates—those who opposed or resisted the Revolution, such as communists, atheists, members of the Muslim Brotherhood, advocates of capitalism, and agents of Western propaganda; the distribution of arms to the people so that a popular resistance would protect the Revolution; administrative reform to end excessive bureaucracy, dereliction of duty, and bribery; and the promotion of Islamic thought by rejecting any ideas that were not in keeping with it, especially ideas imported from other countries and cultures. People's committees were established nationwide to enforce these policies and to control the Revolution from below (see Subnational Government and Administration, this ch.). If the people refused to participate in the popular Revolution, Qadhafi threatened to resign, a tactic he had used on several occasions.

In May 1973, Qadhafi discussed the Cultural Revolution with foreign reporters and tried to stress its dissimilarity from the Chinese Cultural Revolution. According to Qadhafi, the Libyan Cultural Revolution—unlike the Chinese Cultural Revolution—did not introduce something new, but rather marked the return to the Arab and Islamic heritage. It represented a quest for authenticity in that it tried to forge or unearth linkages to the religio-cultural foundations of society.

Several experts agree that Libya's Cultural Revolution struck a responsive chord in the Libyan psyche, similar to that struck by the rejection of Westernization in Iran. To a significant extent, Qadhafi's insistence on a foreign policy independent of either superpower, his hostility toward Israel and its supporters, his search for an alternate model based on indigenous Muslim values, and his criticism of bureaucracy and consumerism were shared by the Libyan people. Qadhafi did not appear odd in the Libyan context, despite his image in the foreign media. Instead, as expert Lisa Anderson stated, he was "an uncanny reflection of the average Libyan."

The Green Book

Qadhafi spelled out his prescriptions for the Libyan Cultural Revolution in *The Green Book,* which grew eventually to comprise three slim volumes. Many foreign observers who had compared Libya's Cultural Revolution to the Chinese Cultural Revolution, naturally compared *The Green Book* to Mao's "little red book." Like Mao's red book, *The Green Book* has been widely distributed both inside and outside the country. Both are written in a simple, understandable style with many memorable slogans. In size, both are rather modest, but their impact cannot be exaggerated. In a sense, *The Green Book* has vied with the Quran as the basis for Libya's development, much as the little red book attempted to supplant the Confucian system of thought.

The Green Book, Part I

In April 1974, Qadhafi relinquished his governmental duties to devote full time to ideological concerns and mass organization. A year later, he announced the reorganization of the ASU to include popular congresses, topped by the GPC. In March 1977, the GPC became, at least formally, the primary instrument of government in Libya. The reorganization of the ASU and the elevation of the GPC were carried out in conjunction with Qadhafi's political theories found in his work, *The Green Book, Part I: The Solution of the Problem of Democracy. The Green Book* begins with the premise that all contemporary political systems are merely the result of the struggle for power between instruments of governing. Those instruments of governing—parliaments, electoral systems, referenda, party government—are all undemocratic, divisive, or both. Parliaments are based on indirect democracy or representation. Representation is based on separate constituencies; deputies represent their constituencies, often against the interests of other constituencies. Thus, the total national interest is never represented, and the problem of indirect (and consequently unrepresentative) democracy is compounded by the problem of divisiveness. Moreover, an electoral system in which the majority vote wins all representation means that as much as 49 percent of the electorate is unrepresented. (A win by a plurality can have the result that an even greater percentage of the electorate is unrepresented; electoral schemes to promote proportional representation increase the overall representative nature of the system, but small minorities are still left unrepresented.) Qadhafi also believes referenda are undemocratic because they force the electorate to answer simply yes or no to complex issues without being able to express fully their will. He says that because parties represent specific interests or classes, multiparty political systems are inherently factionalized. In contrast, a single-party political system has the disadvantage of institutionalizing the dominance of a single interest or class.

Qadhafi believes that political systems have used these kinds of indirect or representative instruments because direct democracy, in which all participate in the study and debate of issues and policies confronting the nation, ordinarily is impossible to implement in contemporary times. Populations have grown too large for direct democracy, which remained only an ideal until the formulation of the concepts of people's committees and popular congresses.

Most observers would conclude that these organizations, like congresses or parliaments in other nations, obviously involve some degree of delegation and representation. Qadhafi, however, believes that with their creation contemporary direct democracy has been achieved in Libya. Qadhafi bases this conviction on the fact that the people's committees and popular congresses are theoretically responsible not only for the creation of legislation, but also its implementation at the grass-roots level. Moreover, they have a much larger total membership as a percentage of the national population than legislative bodies in other countries.

In many ways, Qadhafi's political ideology is part of the radical strain of Western democratic thought associated primarily with Jean-Jacques Rousseau. For, as scholar Sami Hajjar noted, Qadhafi's notions of popular sovereignty are quite similar to the Rousseauian concept of general will. Both hold that sovereignty is inalienable, indivisible, and infallible. Both believe in equality and in direct popular rule. Thus, concludes Qadhafi, "the outdated definition of democracy—democracy is the supervision of the government by the people—becomes obsolete. It will be replaced by the true definition: democracy is the supervision of the people by the people."

The Green Book, Part II

Qadhafi begins *The Green Book, Part II: The Solution of the Economic Problem: "Socialism,"* published during 1977, with a brief examination of the relationship between workers (producers) and employers (owners). He recognizes that the lot of the worker has improved dramatically since the Industrial Revolution. The worker has gained fixed working hours, overtime pay, different kinds of leave, profit sharing, participation in management, job security, and the right to strike. Drastic changes have also occurred in ownership, including the transference of private ownership to the state (see Income and Wealth, ch. 3).

Despite these significant changes, however, the basic relationship between the producer, who is a wage earner, and the owner, who pays the wages, is still one of slavery. Even where the state owns the enterprise and the income derived from it reverts to the community, the plight of the wage earner, who contributes to the productive process for someone else's benefit, remains the same. Qadhafi's solution to the problem is to abolish the wage system. Rather than contributing to the productive process for the owner's benefit, or profit, the actual producer should be a partner in the process, sharing equally in what is produced or in the income derived from what is produced.

Qadhafi believes that a person cannot be free "if somebody else controls what he needs" to lead a comfortable life. Thus, each person must fully possess a house, a vehicle, and an income. Individuals cannot be wage earners because someone else would then control their income. They cannot have an extra house to rent, for in renting property they would be controlling a primary need of someone else. According to Qadhafi, "The legitimate purpose of the individual's economic activity is solely to satisfy his [material] needs"; it is not to create a surplus in order to gain a profit. Qadhafi maintains that profit and money will eventually disappear as basic human needs are met. The only provision for a differentiation in wealth is social reward, in which the society allocates to an individual a certain share of its wealth equivalent to the value of some special service rendered.

The 1969 constitutional proclamation recognized both public ownership ("the basis of the development of society") and private ownership (so long as it was nonexploitive). The application of Qadhafi's new views on ownership began some months after publication of Part II of *The Green Book*. In May 1978, a law was passed giving each citizen the right to own one house or a piece of land on which to build a house. Ownership of more than one house was prohibited, as was the collection of rent. On September 1, the ninth anniversary of the September Revolution, Qadhafi called on workers to "free the wage earners from slavery" and to become partners in the productive process by taking over "the public and private means of production.'' The takeover of scores of firms followed; presumably the firms were to be controlled by the new people's committees. Still another aspect of the drive against exploitation was Qadhafi's late-autumn ban on commercial retail activity. The Libyan leader advised retailers to enter productive occupations in agriculture or construction (see The Revolution and Social Change, ch. 2). However, the immediate practical result of these changes, was economic chaos and a significant decrease in production (see Income and Wealth, ch. 3).

With regard to land, Qadhafi rejects the idea of private ownership. Drawing a distinction between ownership and use, he argues that land is the collective property of all the people. Every person and his heirs have the right to use the land to satisfy their basic needs. The land belongs to those who till it. To hire farm hands is forbidden because it would be exploitive.

The Green Book, Part III

In *The Green Book, Part III: The Social Basis of the Third Universal Theory*, published in 1978, Qadhafi reiterates and elaborates his view of nationalism and briefly discusses a few other subjects. Qadhafi argues that whereas Marx maintained that class struggle is the crucial variable accounting for change, it is nationalism that is ''the real constant dynamic force of history.'' Qadhafi draws a sharp distinction between a state and a nation or nation-state. A state ''embraces several nationalisms,'' and sooner or later will disintegrate as various national movements clamor for independence or self-determination. A nation-state, consists of a group of people with a prolonged shared history, a common heritage, and ''a sense of belonging to a common destiny.'' Ideally, ''Each nation should have one religion,'' Qadhafi writes, to avoid the potential for conflicts. He believes that national unity is threatened by the resurgence of tribal or sectarian identities. Qadhafi points to the Lebanese civil war as an illustration of the triumph of sectarianism over nationalism.

Part III of *The Green Book* also contains a discussion of such topics as the role of women, minorities, and education. ''There is no difference in human rights between men and women,'' Qadhafi declares. But a woman has ''a natural role'' that is different from the male's, namely motherhood. Children should be raised by their mothers, not sent to nurseries. Furthermore, a woman, who ''is created beautiful and gentle,'' should not be forced by economic necessity or by a misguided call for equality to do a man's work, such as ''carrying heavy weights.''

With regard to minorities, Qadhafi distinguishes between two types. One type belongs to a nation that provides it with a social framework, but also threatens to encroach on its social rights; the other type has no nation, forms its own social framework, and is destined eventually to constitute a nation by virtue of a sense of solidarity.

Qadhafi also gives his radical views of education. Qadhafi condemns formal education as "an act of dictatorship destructive to freedom because it deprives people of their free choice, creativity, and brilliance." He proposes that "all methods of education prevailing in the world should be destroyed" and replaced with a system where "knowledge about everything is available to each person in the manner that suits them."

Foreign Relations

Paralleling the swift and fundamental domestic transformations Qadhafi initiated upon coming to power in 1969 were equally radical and controversial foreign policy changes. King Idris had been pro-Western, quiescent if not passive, and scarcely interested in pan-Arab issues. Qadhafi, in contrast, was markedly anti-Western, highly activist, and a strong advocate of Arab unity. Although Qadhafi's internal policies could be ignored or tolerated by the rest of the world, regardless of their radicalism, his foreign policies elicited strong resentment and widespread condemnation from many quarters. Even the so-called "progressive" or revolutionary regimes in Algeria, Iraq, and Syria that supported some of Qadhafi's policies opposed his maladroit diplomacy, rhetorical excess, and provocative tactics.

Allegations of Qadhafi's involvement in subversive activities were numerous (see International Terrorism and Support for Insurgent Groups, ch. 5). Over the years, Libya has been accused of subversion by several Arab countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. For example, Libyan agents reportedly planned on several occasions to disrupt the pilgrimage at Mecca in Saudi Arabia. And for many years Libya supported the mostly Christian rebels in southern Sudan, who are led by John Garang, as against the central government in Khartoum. Many observers linked Libya's lack of restraint in foreign affairs with its oil wealth, which paid for foreign adventures while keeping the domestic population content.

By disregarding the rules of the international political game, Libya became so ostracized and isolated that when the United States bombed Libyan cities in April 1986, only a few countries condemned the action strongly. Potential friends in the Arab world were already alienated by the constantly changing pattern of Libyan alliances.

Nevertheless, Libya was subject to certain practical limitations. Its oil revenues were dependent on the world market and subject to inflationary pressures. Although well armed, Libya's military was undermanned, unable in most cases to support foreign policy initiatives by force. Libyan foreign policy was not so erratic and disjointed as it appeared, however. Instead, it was consistent with, and in large part based on, the initially proclaimed ideals of the Revolution and the developments that followed (see Political Ideology, this ch.).

Libyan foreign policy grew from the historical legacy of colonial domination, Nasser's philosophy, and the creation of Israel. Qadhafi's concept of foreign relations has been influenced by his desire to promote Libya's role regionally and internationally and to see Libya play a leading role in countering Israel. For example, Qadhafi advocates Arab unity not only for ideological reasons, but because of his conviction that a unified Arab nation would be capable of defeating Israel militarily.

Qadhafi's worldwide support of revolutionary and insurgent movements evolved in part from the sponsorship and funding he provided to Palestinian organizations that fought against Israel. Moreover, Qadhafi's antipathy toward imperialism derives both from Libya's struggle against Italian colonialism and from the perceived creation of Israel by the United States and European powers. And, although Qadhafi espouses nonalignment, he has advocated a close Arab relationship with the Soviet Union as a means of obtaining arms to defeat Israel and excoriated the United States because of its support of Israel.

Libyan foreign policy is not, however, dictated entirely by opposition to Israel. Libya's activism in Africa and the Mediterranean basin is motivated by a desire to be a regional power. In the 1980s, Libya's reckless and adventurous intervention in the Third World was driven by Qadhafi's desire to disseminate his Third Universal Theory and his personal aspirations for worldwide recognition.

Arab Relations

Qadhafi has been a leading proponent of Arab unity (*qawmiya*), calling for a union that would stretch from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean. He believes that the members of such a union would have complementary resources: oil and other minerals, manpower, and space for population expansion. Apparently, Qadhafi views this union as taking the form of a strong federation, similar to those of the United States and the Soviet Union, rather than as a unitary state. Qadhafi has said that "it is ironic to see that Americans and Soviets, who are not of the same origin, have come together to create united federations, while the Arabs, who are of the same race and religion, have so far failed to realize the most cherished goal of the present Arab generation." Whether each Arab country's borders are considered sacrosanct or "natural" in some historical sense, over time, particularistic nationalisms have proved too powerful to be superseded by Arab unity.

Pursuing unity on a step-by-step basis, Qadhafi has sponsored or joined ill-fated mergers with Egypt, Syria, and, most recently, Morocco. He also has called on Sudan, Algeria, and other countries to participate in unity schemes. Since 1969 there have been seven unity attempts, all except one initiated by Libya. Less than four months after Qadhafi's coup d'état, Libya joined Egypt and Sudan in signing on December 27, 1969, the Tripoli Charter, which called for the formation of a "flexible federation." On January 1, 1972, the Federation of Arab Republics, consisting of Egypt, Syria, and Libya came into existence. Yet another merger, accepted in principle in August 1972, between Egypt and Libya theoretically took effect on September 1, 1973. The union failed, however, because of disagreements over the timing and objectives of war and diplomatic alternatives to the conflict with Israel. In early 1974, a merger of Libya and Tunisia was proclaimed, only to be repudiated two days later by President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia. Looking once again toward the Mashriq (see Glossary), Qadhafi and President Hafiz al Assad of Syria proclaimed a unity of their two countries on September 10, 1980. In 1987, however, the unity provisions existed only on paper because neither side was willing to surrender its sovereignty.

Turning his attention to his weak neighbor to the south, Qadhafi in 1981 proposed a merger plan with Chad. Goukouni Oueddei, then in power in N'Djamena, rejected the proposal and this merger plan, like all previous plans, failed to materialize. Since then, Libya's involvement in the Chadian civil war has deepened (see Invasion of Chad, ch. 5).

Obsessed by the goal of pan-Arab unity, Qadhafi tirelessly, albeit thus far ineffectively, continued to seek partners. On August 13, 1984, a marriage of convenience between Libya and Morocco was consummated with the signing of the Oujda Treaty. At the time of the treaty, Qadhafi was at odds with all the Arab states except Syria and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen), so the agreement signaled an end to Libyan isolation and revived Qadhafi's ambitions of pan-Arab leadership. The treaty also restored Qadhafi's hope of extending the union to include Algeria and Tunisia as well as Syria. Such a scheme, he thought, could be the nucleus of a more complete pan-Arab union. Not surprisingly, dissolution of this union came as abruptly as its formation. The visit of Shimon Peres, Israel's prime minister, to Morocco in July 1986 provided the main reason for the estrangement (also see Maghrib Relations, this ch.).

Despite the failure of unification attempts, Qadhafi condemns Arab leaders who for various reasons opposed such schemes. Because they worked against his purported goal of achieving unity, Qadhafi's resorts to subversion, threats, and meddling in the internal affairs of others proved unsuccessful and costly. Qadhafi's methods have alienated potential cooperators, frightened possible Arab union candidates, and, in the last analysis, isolated Libya in regional affairs. With ambitions of their own, and with differing agendas and priorities, Arab governments have learned, at best, to tolerate the Libyan leader. Many resent his self-appointed role as philosopher-leader of all Arabs. Few, if any, are by temperament given to impetuousness; therefore, they oppose Qadhafi's sudden radical policy shifts. Nevertheless, the pan-Arab thesis championed by Qadhafi, that strength increases with unity, is still valid. It is also widely shared as a goal among Arabs, notwithstanding the aforementioned difficulties.

Mediterranean Relations

The Mediterranean basin is an area of major importance to Libyan military and political policy. Soon after the revolution, Libya called for the conversion of the Mediterranean Sea into a neutral "sea of peace" through the removal from the area of all foreign naval fleets and military installations, particularly North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bases. Libya repeated the call at the 1973 Algiers conference of the Nonaligned Movement, and other countries, including neighboring Tunisia and Algeria, have supported the idea.

The keystone to Libya's Mediterranean neutralization policy is Malta. During the Anglo-Maltese negotiations in 1972 covering British bases on the island, Libya offered economic assistance to Malta if it would exact a pledge that the bases would not be used again to fly supply missions to Israel (as they had been used during the 1956 Suez Canal crisis and the June 1967 War). The ruling Labour Party government of Maltese Prime Minister Dom Mintoff negotiated such an agreement, and Libyan-Maltese economic relations began to expand. Libya encouraged immigration by Maltese workers, and Malta provided technical training for Libyans.

Libyan-Maltese relations, on the whole, have been cordial. In the 1980s, Libya generally perceived Malta's foreign policy as positive and friendly. Nevertheless, the issue of maritime boundaries between the two countries remained an irritant. It was finally resolved in mid-1985 when the International Court of Justice at The Hague ruled in favor of Libya. As a result of this decision, Malta lost eighteen nautical miles to its southern neighbor.

While pursuing relations with Malta, Libya continued to develop its overall Mediterranean policy. In mid-1975, Libya and Turkey concluded several cooperative agreements and decided to establish a joint ministerial committee. Plans were formulated to increase the number of Turkish workers in Libya from 6,000 to 60,000 by the end of 1976. The wave of expulsions of foreign workers in the fall of 1985, was evidently politically motivated as some 130,000 people—primarily Egyptians, Tunisians, and Mauritanians—were expelled. Some 50,000 Turkish workers remained in Libya, however, alongside 15,000 workers from the Republic of Korea (South Korea) despite the obvious closeness of those two countries to the West generally and the United States in particular.

Libyan relations with Cyprus and Greece have been largely harmonious. Late in 1973, Libya established diplomatic relations with Cyprus. Archbishop Makarios, then president of Cyprus, visited Libya in June 1975, where he recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian Arabs. In early 1976 and again in mid-1977, Greece and Libya signed economic and technical cooperation pacts. They also agreed to establish a joint ministerial committee.

Maghrib Relations

Although some analysts classify Libya as part of the Maghrib (see Glossary), only the province of Tripolitania shares a common history and culture with other Maghribi countries (see Islam and the Arabs, ch. 1). The lack of a Maghribi heritage, together with the Revolutionary government's predilection for Mashriq affairs, in 1970 caused Libya to withdraw from the Permanent Maghrib Consultative Committee, an organization founded by the Maghribi states to foster the eventual development of an economic community. Nonetheless, Libya pursued an active foreign policy toward the Maghrib, a policy that usually revolved around the issues of Arab unity and the Western Sahara dispute.

During a December 1972 visit to Tunisia, Qadhafi publicly called for its merger with Libya. Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba rejected the idea and chided Qadhafi for his youthful naiveté. In

January 1974, only a few months after the failure of the Libyan-Egyptian merger, Qadhafi pursued a new unification plan during a meeting with Bourguiba at Jerba. Bourguiba first accepted the proposed Arab Islamic Republic, but then reversed his decision. He later stated that he had agreed only to the concept of eventual Maghribi unification, not to any specific bilateral union at the time. Relations subsequently deteriorated and became more strained in 1975, when Tunisia supported the partition of the Western Sahara territory by Morocco and Mauritania.

In March 1976, Libya began expelling several thousand Tunisian workers. Later the same month, Tunisian authorities announced the discovery of a plot aimed at high government officials (perhaps even Bourguiba) and alleged that Libya was involved, despite Qadhafi's denials. Tunisia later accused Libya of providing military training to opponents of the Bourguiba regime. Now and then, Tunisia (as well as other neighboring countries) has protested against alleged Libyan subversion attempts. In 1976, for instance, Tunisia charged Libya with attempting to assassinate Prime Minister Hedi Nouira. And in February 1980, Libya was accused of instigating the abortive uprising by Tunisian insurgents in the town of Gafsa in central Tunisia, a charge that Libya promptly denied. Nevertheless, diplomatic relations between the two countries were severed.

As Tunisia's economic and political difficulties grew in the 1980s, dissent became more vocal, particularly in the poorer southern region, paving the way for increasing the links between the Jamahiriya and the Tunisian dissidents. Two issues caused problems for the Libyan-Tunisian relationship. The first, concerning maritime boundaries between the two North African countries, was settled by an International Court of Justice ruling in favor of Libya in 1982. The Court reaffirmed its ruling in 1985, at which time it rejected Tunisia's appeal for reconsideration. The second problem resulted from the expulsion from Libya in August 1985, of 40,000 Tunisian workers, part of the downturn in the Libyan economy as a result of shrinking oil revenues. The expulsions were also partially based on political considerations because Qadhafi has considered expulsions a political weapon with which to threaten uncooperative governments. In retaliation, Tunisia expelled 300 Libyans, including 30 diplomats.

In the early months of 1987, there were signs of improvement in Libyan-Tunisian relations. In March, Major Khuwayldi al Hamidi spent three days in Tunisia as official guest of the government and met with President Habib Bourguiba, Prime Minister Rachid Sfar, and other high-ranking officials.

Libya's closest Maghribi bilateral relationship has been with neighboring Algeria. Both countries share similar revolutionary Arab ideologies, state-controlled economic systems, and Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil policies, and both have undertaken Third World leadership initiatives. Furthermore, both countries have comparable relations with the United States and the Soviet Union. Algeria has concentrated on internal development, however, whereas Libya has pursued internal development and external activities almost equally. The two countries' bilateral ties were strained by Libya's 1974 attempt to merge with Tunisia, Algeria preferring to have its borders shared by relatively weak states rather than by states that have been strengthened and enlarged through unification.

Although Libya and Algeria have been allies on the Western Sahara issue, differences in their positions became increasingly pronounced in late 1978. Both countries originally had pressed for Spanish evacuation from the area and supported the local independence group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (Frente Popular por la Liberación de Saguia el Hamra y Río de Oro—Polisario) toward this end. Algeria wanted the area to become an independent state. Libya felt Arab unity would be better served if the area merged with a larger state, preferably Mauritania, with which it had close relations at the time. (Libya had been the first country to recognize independent Mauritania; Mauritania was the first country to recognize Libya's Revolutionary regime.) Libya opposed the forceful repression of Western Saharan nationalism, however, and when Morocco and Mauritania decided to partition the area by force (Morocco obtaining the larger share), Libya joined Algeria in supporting Polisario's struggle against the two partitioning countries. Together with Algeria and thirty-six other countries, Libya has recognized the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), formed in Algeria in 1976. Libya also supported the SADR's bid for membership in the Organization of African Unity (OAU), along with twenty-five other African states.

Libyan-Moroccan relations have, on the whole, been unfriendly. A wide gulf separates moderate, monarchist, pro-Western Morocco from the revolutionary, pro-Soviet Jamahiriya. Rabat has often protested Tripoli's attempts at subversion, for example, during the 1971 military coup attempt. Morocco's foreign policy goals have usually been at odds with those of Libya. Qadhafi, for instance, denounced Moroccan assistance to the government of Zaire when rebels staged an invasion from neighboring Angola. In an abrupt about-face, however, Morocco signed the Oujda Treaty in August 1984, which called for unity with Libya.

For Morocco's King Hassan II, the union restored the regional Maghribi balance of power, which had tilted in favor of Algeria, Morocco's main rival and the primary supporter of the Polisario. Algeria consistently supported the right of Western Saharans to self-determination in the SADR. The SADR was proclaimed on February 27, 1976, one day after the Spanish withdrawal. King Hassan put forward his country's claims over the former Spanish-ruled territory, led 350,000 of his citizens in 1975 on a peaceful ''Green March'' to key areas in the Saharan territory, and subsequently occupied the former Spanish colony.

In view of their sharp ideological differences, the accord between Qadhafi and King Hassan was evidently the result of expediency. The king expected to persuade the Libyan leader to cease supporting the Polisario and wanted access to Libyan oil. For his part, Qadhafi regarded Morocco as a source of human resources and support. Apparently, Qadhafi stopped his support of the Polisario, albeit only temporarily.

Relations with Sub-Saharan Africa

Libya's very active interest in sub-Saharan Africa has been directed toward isolating Israel diplomatically, liberating African countries under colonial or apartheid regimes, providing economic aid to developing African countries, and propagating Islam. During 1972 and 1973, through bilateral relations and membership in the OAU, Libya and other Arab states successfully reversed Israel's formerly strong diplomatic position in Africa. Qadhafi drew a parallel between Israeli occupation of Arab territory and colonialism in Africa and frequently offered significant economic assistance to countries that would sever ties with Israel. By November 1973, twenty-seven African governments had broken relations with Israel, many declaring their support for the PLO in the process.

Libya also has supported numerous black African independence movements, although the extent and nature of the support have not always been clear. Libyan support apparently was significant for Angola (where aid was first extended to Holden Roberto's National Front for the Liberation of Angola, and only later to Agostinho Neto's Movement for the Liberation of Angola, which defeated Roberto's group in a civil war), Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique in their struggles against Portuguese colonialism. Libya continued to contribute funds to liberation efforts throughout 1978. Some sources report that nationalist guerrillas of both Zimbabwe and Namibia have received direct Libyan aid.

For some time, Libya has had a special, if not always smooth, relationship with Uganda. Libya supported the government of Idi

Amin in exchange for Uganda's severance of relations with Israel. (A particularly close bilateral relationship had existed between Israel and the Ugandan regime Amin overthrew in 1971.) Libya came to Uganda's assistance in 1972, and again in 1978, when it airlifted troops and supplies, thus demonstrating a certain degree of logistical capability. The aid proved militarily futile, however, as Libyan troops were routed quickly. For a brief period, the deposed Idi Amin found asylum in Tripoli.

Sudan

Libya's relations with Sudan, like relations with virtually all other Arab and African countries, fluctuated. Initially, Libya supported Sudanese President Jaafar an Numayri against an unsuccessful leftist coup attempt in 1971. Libya turned over two of the top communist plotters to the Sudanese authorities, who executed them shortly afterward. However, a year later Sudan accused Libya of involvement in three successive coup attempts and severed diplomatic relations. Relations began improving by the fall of 1977, as Numayri and Sudanese opposition leaders began a reconciliation. In February 1978, Libya and Sudan agreed to resume relations but relations soon became strained after Qadhafi condemned Sudanese support for President Anwar al Sadat of Egypt and for the Camp David accords of September 1978.

Libya was particularly annoyed by the steadily improving relations between Sudan and Egypt during the closing years of the Numayri regime, which culminated eventually in an Egyptian-Sudanese integration charter that provided Egypt with an air base in Sudan that could serve as a counterweight to Libyan regional power. Feeling threatened by the Cairo-Khartoum alliance and its alignment with the West, in August 1981 Qadhafi formed the Tripartite Alliance with Ethiopia and the PDRY (South Yemen), each of which was aligned closely with the Soviet Union.

After Numayri's fall from power in April 1985, Sudanese-Libyan relations improved. Qadhafi ended his aid to the Christian and animist, southern-based, Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) led by Garang and welcomed the incoming government of General Sawar Dhahab. In July 1985, a military protocol was signed between the two countries, and Qadhafi was the first head of state to visit the new Khartoum government. Qadhafi then strongly supported Sudanese opposition leader Sadiq al Mahdi, who became prime minister on May 6, 1986. Nonetheless, the initial euphoria was subsequently replaced by Sudan's search for a truly neutral regional and global stance. With regard to the Chadian conflict, for instance, Mahdi's government declared its neutrality and asked that Libyan forces be withdrawn from Sudanese territory. Prime Minister Mahdi's attempts to mediate the Libyan-Chadian conflict have so far proved unsuccessful, although delegations from the warring factions have met several times during 1986 and 1987, under Sudanese aegis.

Chad

In 1975 Libya occupied and subsequently annexed the Aouzou Strip, a 70,000-square-kilometer area of northern Chad adjacent to the southern Libyan border. Qadhafi's move was motivated by personal and territorial ambitions, tribal and ethnic affinities between the people of northern Chad and those of southern Libya, and, most important, the presence in the area of uranium deposits needed for atomic energy development.

Libyan claims to the area were based on a 1935 border dispute and settlement between France (which then controlled Chad) and Italy (which then controlled Libya). The French parliament never ratified the settlement, however, and both France and Chad recognized the boundary that was proclaimed upon Chadian independence.

Qadhafi became entangled in factional rivalries among the various Chadian groups. In the late 1970s, it appeared as though Libyan ambitions were being achieved. Goukouni Oueddei, a member of the Tebu Muslim tribe in northern Chad, was installed as president in April 1979 with Libyan support. In January 1981, the two countries announced their intention to unite.

Goukouni's overthrow in 1983 led to further Libyan involvement in Chad. From his Libyan exile, Goukouni reorganized his forces and occupied the strategic northern town of Faya Largeau. As the conflict drew in other players, particularly France, Chad was in effect a partitioned country. With French help, the N'Djamena government of Hissein Habré controlled the southern part of Chad. The area north of the sixteenth parallel, however, was controlled by Goukouni and his Libyan backers. According to the terms of a September 1984 treaty, France withdrew its forces from Chad. Libya, however, decided to keep its troops there, and skirmishes and fighting continued intermittently.

The stalemate in Chad ended in early 1987 when the Habré forces inflicted a series of military defeats on the Libyans and their Chadian allies, at Fada, Ouadi Doum, and Faya Largeau (see Invasion of Chad, ch. 5). The press engaged in considerable speculation on the repercussions of these humiliations on Qadhafi and his regime. It was reported that Goukouni was being kept forcibly in Tripoli, and that, as a result of some disagreements with the Libyan leader, he was wounded by a Libyan soldier. Qadhafi's position had clearly been weakened by these developments, and the long-term fighting in Chad aroused discontent in the Libyan army as well.

Relations with Western Europe and the United States

During the 1980s, Libyan relations with Western Europe and the United States have been generally strained. In the preceding decade, however, relations were relatively cooperative. Although the new regime required the closing of British and American military bases in Libya in 1970, its strident anticommunism pleased the Western powers. This policy orientation was confirmed in 1971 when Libya supported Sudanese President Numayri against an unsuccessful leftist coup attempt. And at the 1973 conference of the Nonaligned Movement in Algiers, Qadhafi challenged the validity of Fidel Castro's credentials as a nonaligned leader.

Qadhafi believed that most West European nations had repudiated their imperialist legacy by the 1970s, a conviction that paved the way for increased trade, if not for cordial political relations. Libyan ties with Western Europe were for the most part commercial. The Federal Republic of Germany, for example, was a major purchaser of Libya's petroleum exports. Libya also purchased some military equipment from Western Europe, notably from France. Libya developed extensive commercial relationships with Italy and Britain. Commercial ties prospered for pragmatic reasons even as Qadhafi denounced the European Economic Community's trade relations with Israel and with NATO bases in the Mediterranean. On only several occasions have Libyan political considerations overridden the economic imperative, as in 1973 when Libya joined the Arab oil boycott that adversely affected several West European nations. For their part, the West European nations have likewise continued to trade with Libya despite proved Libyan involvement in terrorism on the continent.

France

Libya developed particularly close relations with France after the June 1967 War, when France relaxed its arms embargo on non-front-line Middle East combatants and agreed to sell weapons to the Libyans. In 1974 Libya and France signed an agreement whereby Libya exchanged a guaranteed oil supply for technical assistance and financial cooperation. By 1976, however, Libya began criticizing France as an "arms merchant" because of its willingness to sell weapons to both sides in the Middle East conflict. Libya later criticized France for its willingness to sell arms to Egypt. Far more serious was Libya's dissatisfaction with French military intervention in the Western Sahara, Chad, and Zaire. In 1978

Qadhafi noted that although economic relations were good, political relations were not, and he accused France of having reverted to a colonialist policy that former French president Charles de Gaulle had earlier abandoned.

In the 1980s, Libyan-French discord centered on the situation in Chad. As mentioned, the two countries found themselves supporting opposite sides in the Chadian civil war. In late 1987, there were some French troops in Chad, but French policy did not permit its forces to cross the sixteenth parallel. Thus, direct clashes with Libyan soldiers seemed unlikely.

Italy

Italy was one of Libya's major trading partners in the late 1970s. Relations with Italy, however, have been somewhat mercurial. In 1973 Libyan aircraft strafed an Italian combat vessel patrolling an area in the Mediterranean where an earlier dispute had led to the detention of Italian fishing trawlers. Libya officially apologized for the strafing incident and relations improved in 1974 with Jallud's visit to Italy and the conclusion of several commercial and technical agreements. However, there were three more incidents involving Italian fishing boats operating near the Libyan coast in December 1975. Earlier that year, British press reports alleged that Libya was funding radical Italian political groups.

Despite these frictions, relations improved in 1975 because agreement was reached regarding compensation for property lost when Italians left Libya under pressure after the 1969 Revolution. A major commercial transaction was completed in December 1976; Libya purchased more than 9 percent of the stock of the Fiat Company, placing two representatives on Fiat's fifteen-member board of directors in the process. Increasing pressures were brought on Fiat, Italy's largest privately owned firm, by the Italian government and Western interests to buy back Libyan-owned stock shares, which by 1986 amounted to a 15.2-percent share in the firm. The Libyan government-owned Libyan Arab Foreign Investment Company agreed to divest itself of the stock in September 1986, presumably to generate revenue of over US$3 billion to compensate for lower Libyan oil revenues.

Britain

Britain's relations with post-Revolutionary Libya were strained because of the close political, economic, and military relationship the British had cultivated with King Idris. After Qadhafi came to power, Britain suspended sales of military equipment, and Libya nationalized British Petroleum's interests, ostensibly in retribution for perceived British complicity in the Iranian occupation of three Persian Gulf islands. Libya supported Malta during that country's negotiations regarding British military base leases. Libya also allegedly supported the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Nevertheless, in an October 1978 address in Tripoli, Qadhafi stated that there were no differences so severe as to preclude the establishment of good relations with Britain.

However, British-Libyan relations deteriorated markedly during the 1980s. A critical point was reached in 1984 when a British policewoman was killed by a gunman inside the Libyan People's Bureau (embassy) in London. This incident led to the breaking of diplomatic relations. Further discord followed the arrest of six British citizens in Libya, evidently in retaliation for the arrest of four Libyans in Manchester on charges stemming from March 1984 bombings in London and Manchester. Relations plummeted when Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher permitted United States aircraft to use British bases on April 15, 1986, for a strike on Libyan cities.

United States

In the 1980s, Qadhafi came to regard the United States as the leader of Western imperialism and capitalism. He vigorously condemned several United States policies—including military and economic support for Israel and support for a political settlement in the Middle East; resistance to the establishment of a new world economic order between resource producers and consumers; and support for relatively conservative, Western-oriented countries of the Third World, particularly Arab and African states. Since the Revolution, United States-Libyan relations have been limited to relatively modest commercial and trade agreements (see Foreign Trade, ch. 3).

Libya has attempted to influence the United States through American oil companies operating within Libyan boundaries. Constant pressure on the companies concerning pricing and government participation eventually resulted in the Libyan state's assumption of a controlling interest in some firms and nationalization of others. The United States was the primary target of the oil boycott that Libya and other Arab states invoked after the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

In addition to conflicts caused by Libyan oil policies, the United States and Libya have disagreements over Libyan claims to territorial waters. Since 1973 Libya has considered the Gulf of Sidra as territorial waters. Beyond that, Libya claimed another twelve nautical miles (approximately twenty kilometers) of territorial waters. The United States refused to recognize Libya's claim, and this refusal became a recurrent cause for contention between the two countries. Under President Jimmy Carter, the United States armed forces were ordered not to challenge Libyan claims by penetrating into the claimed territory, even though relations deteriorated when, on December 2, 1979, the United States embassy in Tripoli was burned by demonstrators apparently influenced by the takeover of the United States embassy in Tehran. President Ronald Reagan's administration, however, was determined to assert the principle of free passage in international waters.

In 1981 President Reagan began taking action against Libya. On May 6, 1981, the Reagan administration ordered the closing of the Libyan People's Bureau in Washington, and twenty-seven Libyan diplomats were expelled from the United States for supporting international terrorism. Then, on August 19, 1981, two Libyan Su-22 fighters were shot down by United States F-14 jets during naval maneuvers in the Gulf of Sidra. In December President Reagan called on the approximately 1,500 American citizens still living in Libya to leave or face legal action. In March 1982, oil imports from Libya were embargoed and technology transfer banned. In January 1986, Libyan assets in the United States were frozen as part of a series of economic sanctions against Libya.

United States-Libyan tensions erupted in April 1986. On April 5, Libyan agents planted a bomb in a Berlin nightclub frequented by United States service personnel. The explosion killed 2 people, 1 an American serviceman, and injured 204 others. In retaliation, on April 15, the United States launched air strikes on Tripoli and Benghazi. As a result, a number of Libyan civilians were killed. Observers speculated that the attack was intended to kill the Libyan leader himself (see Encounters with the United States, ch. 5).

The air strikes were certainly intended to encourage the Libyan military to overthrow Qadhafi. However, the air strikes were opposed by virtually all segments of the population, who rallied behind their leader. Moreover, not only did Qadhafi thrive on the public attention but his determination to stand up to a superpower threat appeared to have enhanced his stature. Even the major opposition group abroad, the NFSL, denounced the use of force by foreign powers in dealing with Libya, as did the London-based Libyan Constitutional Union. In 1987, a year after the raid, it was still unclear whether the raids had succeeded in countering terrorism. Observers were not certain whether Libya had actually adopted a new policy with regard to supporting terrorism, which seemed to have diminished considerably, or merely learned how to avoid leaving fingerprints.

Relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe

During the early years of Qadhafi's regime, Libya pursued a genuinely nonaligned policy. Qadhafi perceived Soviet imperialism to be as great a threat to Libya in the politico-economic sphere as Western hegemony. Furthermore, communism's atheism was antithetical to Qadhafi's religious beliefs. Qadhafi approved of the 1972 Egyptian expulsion of Soviet advisers and condemned the fifteen-year Iraqi-Soviet friendship pact signed the same year.

Nevertheless, the Soviet Union, anticipating potential benefits from cultivating the newly established regime in Tripoli, quickly extended recognition three days after the coup. Notwithstanding the RCC's suppression of local communist elements and its strident anticommunist rhetoric, the Soviets viewed with satisfaction the regime's gradually increasing anti-Western orientation. After it was obliged to withdraw Soviet personnel from Egypt in 1972, the Soviet Union's interest in Libya heightened significantly. When the Western powers stopped selling arms to Libya in 1974, the first Soviet arms sale to Qadhafi was concluded in December of that year.

A major arms deal was concluded between Libya and the Soviet Union in 1975, costly enough that it apparently necessitated reductions in spending on social welfare and economic development. However, Libya denied reports in the Egyptian press and elsewhere that the agreement granted the Soviet Union military bases on Libyan territory. As of 1987, these denials appeared to have been truthful, although reportedly around 3,500 Soviet and East European military advisers were stationed in Libya (see Foreign Military Assistance, ch. 5). Libya's arms purchases, which by 1987 had far exceeded the needs of its small armed forces, led some observers to conclude that Libya was serving as an entrepôt for weapons destined for other points in Africa in which the Soviet Union was involved. But Libya's military debt to Moscow, estimated in 1986 at US$4 to US$6 billion, continued to be a source of difficulty in bilateral relations.

Libya also has negotiated numerous economic, commercial, and cultural agreements with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Agreements involving the exchange of Libyan oil for technical expertise and equipment have been made with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), and Yugoslavia. East European countries also have contributed a significant number of medical personnel to Libya's health care program (see Medical Care, ch. 2). In addition, the East Germans have played a key role in the late 1970s and 1980s in Libya's domestic intelligence field. Libya also has economic agreements with Romania but ties have been strained because of the latter's relatively cordial relationship with Israel.

Libyan-Soviet relations improved during the 1980s because both countries opposed the American-sponsored Middle East peace process. The Soviet Union was opposed primarily because of its lack of a role in the negotiations, but Libya considered the 1978 Camp David accords as a betrayal of long-standing Arab and Palestinian aspirations. In view of the wide ideological gulf and policy differences between the two nations, the Soviet-Libyan relationship has been based primarily on mutual self-interest. Libya needed a source of arms and a counterbalance to the growing United States-Egyptian alliance. For the Soviet Union, Libya was an important source of hard currency (it was estimated that Libyan weapons purchases in 1980 represented 10 percent of Soviet hard-currency earnings), an irritant to its Western superpower rival, and a potentially useful destabilizer of the regional status quo.

Although the Libyan-Soviet relationship continued to be close in the 1980s, Qadhafi was far too independent to be a submissive protegé, despite his dependence on Moscow for military hardware. Instead, he insisted on following his own vision in domestic and international affairs. Many of his beliefs conflicted with Soviet doctrines. For example, Qadhafi's Third Universal Theory conflicted with the Marxist tenets of class warfare and the vanguard role of the proletariat.

The lack of effective Soviet support to Libya during and after the United States raid in April 1986 underlined Moscow's reluctance to risk a confrontation with Washington by supporting Qadhafi too strongly. It was reported that the Soviets withheld vital intelligence information from Libya during the confrontation in the Gulf of Sidra. Moscow, however, reportedly was embarrassed by the ineffectiveness of Libya's Soviet-supplied air defenses.

Multilateral Relations

The United Nations

Libya actively used regional and international organizations in pursuit of its foreign policies. Indeed, independent Libya was established in large part by UN actions. A member of the UN and most of its specialized agencies, Libya frequently brought such matters as colonialism and racism in Africa, Western imperialism, and North-South economic relations before the General Assembly. Libya also used the UN as a forum in which to attack Zionism and the state of Israel. Libyan pressure was a primary factor in the acceptance of the PLO's representation of the Palestinian Arabs at the UN. Libya took an active part in UN affairs. For example, in November 1975, Qadhafi called for the abolition of the veto right held by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. The following year, the Libyan press singled out United States' use of the veto for special criticism. Also in November 1975, the Libyan agriculture minister demanded the expulsion of the United States and Israel from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. In March 1978, Libya took strong exception to the posting of UN peacekeeping forces in southern Lebanon after the Israeli invasion of that area. The Libyan position, according to a GPC communique, was that "any acceptance of UN forces in the land adjacent to our occupied Palestinian land . . . [would mean] acceptance of the Zionist presence and the bestowing of legitimacy on it."

The Organization of African Unity

Libya has used the OAU to advocate the same policies it has espoused in the UN. During the early 1970s, Libyan diplomacy, including offers of economic assistance, resulted in most OAU members' severing diplomatic relations with Israel. Qadhafi has long condemned the apartheid policies of white regimes in Africa. In a 1973 message to all OAU members, he compared Zionist imperialism (i.e., continued Israeli occupation of Egyptian territory taken in the June 1967 War) with the policies of Portugal, Southern Rhodesia—now Zimbabwe—and South Africa. He demanded that members boycott a coming OAU meeting and that OAU headquarters be removed from Addis Ababa if Ethiopia (then under the rule of Emperor Haile Selassie) did not break relations with Israel. His demand was ignored; many OAU members, both Arab and African, saw it as a clumsy attempt to politicize the organization. Such differences notwithstanding, Libya has been a major supporter of African independence movements within and outside the OAU framework.

At the February 1978 OAU ministerial council meeting in Tripoli, Libya (already a member of the OAU Liberation Committee) was made a member of a new military committee. Other members of the new committee included the front-line countries against colonialism in southern Africa: Botswana, Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, and Tanzania. The committee's purpose was to obtain and provide sophisticated weaponry for the black African national liberation movements. It was at the ministerial council meeting that Qadhafi called for the inclusion of several West European island possessions in the African liberation movement.

Qadhafi did not fare as well in the OAU in the 1980s. In 1981 the organization approved Qadhafi as the host of the next OAU conference. Qadhafi's bid was frustrated twice, however. First, Morocco and its allies boycotted the Tripoli meeting because of the SADR's attendance. Then, in November 1982, the conference lacked a quorum when many delegations boycotted it because of the controversy surrounding the Qadhafi-sponsored Chadian representation. Qadhafi's third attempt to become OAU chairman in 1983 also failed when delegations wary of Qadhafi's unpredictable and extremist policies selected Ethiopia for the next conference site and chairman. Still, Qadhafi is usually supported by the more radical states such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, and Ethiopia.

At the 1986 conference of the Nonaligned Movement in Harare, Zimbabwe, the Libyan position was endorsed when the conference, which included many OAU countries, denounced the United States bombings of April 1986. At the same conference, however, Qadhafi's denunciation of the whole stance of nonalignment caused great embarrassment to the conference hosts and failed to win any real conference support.

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries

Libya joined OPEC in 1962. Since the Revolution, Libya has played a prominent role in negotiations with the multinational oil companies, succeeding in significantly increasing the producers' revenues from oil production. Libya also has lobbied, without notable success, for the investment of petroleum profits in Third World nations rather than in industrialized countries.

Libya has pursued the same general policies within the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), of which it is a founding member. In 1972 Libya recommended an amendment to the OAPEC membership eligibility requirements, changing the stipulation that oil be "the major and basic source" to merely "an important source" of a country's national income. As a result of the adoption of that amendment, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt joined OAPEC later in the year. Libya has been an advocate of the use of oil as a political weapon; it enthusiastically backed OAPEC's oil embargo of the United States and the Netherlands, as well as the production reduction affecting most other West European countries after the October 1973 War. Libya unsuccessfully resisted OAPEC's decision to remove the embargo in March 1974.

Other Multilateral Organizations

Libya is a member of several other regional and international groups, including the League of Arab States (Arab League), the

Islamic Conference, the Arab-African Development Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank. As a leading member of the Third World movement, it has been a strong proponent of the establishment of a new world economic order between North and South.

Nuclear Development

Qadhafi's stance on nuclear weapons has been contradictory. Unconfirmed but persistent press reports beginning soon after the 1969 Revolution indicated that Libya wanted to purchase a nuclear weapon or the components for such a device. According to one report, Qadhafi sent his deputy, Jallud, to Beijing (formerly Peking) in an unsuccessful attempt to purchase tactical nuclear weapons. Qadhafi has voiced his concern over the Israeli nuclear capability and publicly expressed his desire to obtain nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, in 1975 Libya reaffirmed its commitment to the 1968 Treaty of Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed originally by the monarchy in 1968 (see Foreign Military Assistance, ch. 5). Qadhafi also stated in interviews in 1981 and 1984 that Libya was only interested in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, and he scoffed at the idea of ''an Islamic bomb.''

There is no doubt, however, that Libya has undertaken extensive bilateral negotiations to secure nuclear research facilities and power plants, and many Libyan students in nuclear energy fields have been sent to United States, West European, and East European universities to further their studies. According to the terms of a 1974 nuclear cooperation treaty with Argentina, Libya was provided with equipment and technical training. Argentina agreed to send senior geologists to Libya to advise on uranium prospecting and uranium enrichment. One alleged reason Libya occupied the Aouzou Strip in Chad in 1975 was that the area was thought to be rich in uranium deposits. Libya and India agreed in July 1978 to cooperate in the peaceful application of nuclear energy, in line with India's ''atoms for peace'' policy. Libya also contributed money to Pakistan's nuclear effort. France agreed in 1976 to build a nuclear research plant in Libya designed to power a water desalination plant.

Libya's main partner in the nuclear field, however, has been the Soviet Union. A small (ten megawatt) Soviet-supplied reactor began operation in Tajura (outside Tripoli) in 1981. Three years later, a research center was opened at the same site; aided by Soviet staff, it continued to operate in 1987. In early 1986, however, a plan for the construction of nine 440-megawatt nuclear power plants was suspended indefinitely.

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In the 1970s, relatively few scholarly books were published about Libya. For a study of the early years of the Libyan Revolution, Ruth First's *Libya: The Elusive Revolution* is perhaps the single most authoritative source. Henry Pierre Habib's *Politics and Government of Revolutionary Libya*, though likewise dated, contains useful information, although it is biased favorably toward the regime. In the early 1980s, several important books filled the vacuum of information on Libya. *Libyan Sandstorm* by John K. Cooley, published in 1982, provides an entertaining yet meticulously researched journalistic account of the activities of the Qadhafi regime. *Qaddafi and the United States Since 1969* by P. Edward Haley, published in 1984, provides a comprehensive and detailed description of Libyan foreign policy, particularly insofar as it affects United States interests. In 1986 and 1987, as Libya became more newsworthy, a spate of new books were published on the topic. Among these, *Libya: Qadhafi's Revolution and the Modern State* by Lillian Craig Harris provides an excellent general overview of the situation in Libya. *Qaddafi and the Libyan Revolution* by David Blundy and Andrew Lycett is a highly critical and well documented probe of Libyan-sponsored terrorism. Jonathan Bearman's *Qadhafi's Libya* is a sympathetic yet informative analysis of the Libyan Revolution. *The Making of a Pariah State: The Adventurist Politics of Muammar Qaddafi* by Martin Sicker concentrates on Libyan foreign relations. *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830–1980* by Lisa Anderson looks at Libya in a larger historical context. *Qaddafi: His Ideology in Theory and Practice* by Mohamed A. El-Khawas focuses on Qadhafi's thought. With regard to the latter topic, the English language translation of Qadhafi's three-volume *The Green Book* is widely available. Likewise, as a primary research source, an English language version of the Libyan newspaper *Az Zahf al Akhdar* is available.

Because of the rapid pace of political change in Libya, books soon become outdated, and to obtain recent information on the subject one must rely on news media, in which Libya is well covered. For further detail, one must turn to specialized periodicals such as *Africa Confidential, African Economic Digest, Africa Research Bulletin, Middle East Economic Digest,* the *Economist Intelligence Unit Quarterly Reports* on Libya, and the chapters on Libya in the annual *Middle East Contemporary Survey.* French-language sources include *Le Monde Afrique* and *Jeune Afrique.* (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 5. National Security

عابرات الحدود

A Libyan surface-to-surface missile supplied by the Soviet Union

BEFORE THE COUP that brought Colonel Muammar al Qadhafi to power in 1969, Libyan national security clearly meant protection of the reign of King Idris and of the national development goals his regime had adopted. Insurance against potential external threats was sought through various compacts with Western powers—principally the Libyan-United Kingdom Treaty of Friendship of 1953, which granted the British continued use of their World War II Al Adem (Al Adam) Air Base near Tobruk (Tubruq). A similar treaty in 1954 perpetuated use of Wheelus Air Base, near Tripoli, by the United States Air Force. Meanwhile, the monarchy devoted its own resources to the business of warding off domestic threats—largely arising from its faction-ridden army.

After Idris was deposed, Qadhafi insisted on the early termination of the treaties that gave Britain and the United States permission to maintain forces on Libyan soil. The country's energies were turned to the cause of pan-Arabism and to supporting fellow Arab countries in their conflict with Israel. The armed forces were doubled in size but, until 1973, the expansion was grounded on a reasonable balance that took into account the country's available resources and the fact that its neighbors were neither aggressive nor naturally hostile. Qadhafi became frustrated over Egypt's failure to consult with Libya in prosecuting the 1973 war against Israel and the fading of his pan-Arabist ambitions in the failure of the unions concluded with Egypt and Syria and later Tunisia. New revenues derived from the escalating price of oil were now available, and the Soviet Union was prepared to supply arms that Western powers had vetoed. For Moscow, the appeal was, first, the commercial one of a cash customer and, second, the potential of Libya as a new client state in the Mediterranean area, following the Soviet 1972 expulsion from Egypt.

Only gradually did the extent of Qadhafi's arms appetite become apparent. To Libya's existing fleet of Mirage aircraft from France, large numbers of Soviet fighters were added, including the up-to-date MiG-25. Although Libya had only 7 percent of the population of France, Libya's inventory of over 500 combat aircraft was roughly equivalent to that of France. A force of 3,000 tanks was purchased, although only one-third could be deployed with active units. Its hitherto inconsequential navy was outfitted with submarines and high-speed missile boats. Because voluntary enlistments were wholly inadequate to man the new equipment, conscription was introduced in 1978.

Because the inflated arsenal could not be justified by any perceived threat to the nation's borders, there was initial speculation that Libya was becoming a Soviet surrogate in Africa, stockpiling modern weapons for future adventures on that continent. This notion, however, was contradicted by Libya's evident determination to employ its newly purchased arms as it saw fit. Its alignment with Moscow, although based on parallel interests, was a limited one that did not extend to Soviet bases on Libyan soil.

In the decade between 1973 and 1983, arms acquisitions amounted to US$28 billion, of which US$20 billion worth had originated with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But the quantity and sophistication of the new weaponry outstripped the ability of the limited skilled personnel to employ it. In spite of a multitude of foreign technical advisers and trainers, a shortage of qualified personnel needed to operate and maintain the military hardware persisted. Moreover, the wide range of models and countries of manufacture has created logistics and maintenance problems.

The Libyan armed forces have not, in fact, thus far played a significant role in Qadhafi's declared objective of the destruction of Israel by united Arab might because Libya's direct involvement in the Arab-Israeli wars has been negligible. Nonetheless, Qadhafi often has been a divisive element in the Middle East.

Libya's acknowledged sponsorship of terrorism for the purpose of "liquidating" exiled opponents of the regime and of punishing moderate Arabs and others regarded as opposing the primary purpose of defeating Israel has brought it into conflict with the West and particularly the United States. Hostile encounters with United States military, especially the American retaliatory bombing attack of 1986, demonstrated serious weaknesses in Libya's threat perception and defense posture. The incidents, however, caused many African and Middle Eastern countries briefly to band together in public support of Libya and in condemnation of the United States.

By early 1987, some observers believed that Qadhafi's hold on the Libyan public had waned, owing to his radical and sometimes bizarre policies in the name of the Libyan Revolution. Yet opposition groups, consisting mostly of Libyan exiles, have been ineffective. The main threat to Qadhafi's continued rule came from the army itself. Numerous plots and coup attempts have been uncovered, most of which have not seriously threatened Qadhafi's authority. Distrustful of the professional military, Qadhafi often shifted senior officers from one post to another to prevent the officer corps from closing ranks. In addition, he entrusted his personal security to a handpicked detachment from his own region. A comprehensive internal security system involving police, secret service, and local revolutionary committees was alert to any indications of disloyalty or conspiracies. Any form of dissent from the policies of the government was deemed contrary to the Revolution and subject to severe punitive measures.

Origins of the Modern Armed Forces

The roots of the contemporary Libyan army can be traced to the Libyan Arab Force (popularly known as the Sanusi Army) of World War II. Shortly after Italy entered the war, a number of Libyan leaders living in exile in Egypt called on their compatriots to organize themselves into military units and join the British in the war against the Axis powers. Five battalions, which were initially designed for guerrilla warfare in the Jabal al Akhdar region of Cyrenaica, were established under British command. Because the high mobility of the desert campaigns required a considerable degree of technical and mechanical expertise, the Libyan forces were used primarily as auxiliaries, guarding military installations and prisoners. One battalion, however, participated in the fighting at Tobruk.

After Britain succeeded in occupying the Libyan territories, the need for the British-trained and -equipped Sanusi troops appeared to be over. The Sanusi Army was reluctant to disband, however, and the majority of its members arranged to be transferred to the local police force in Cyrenaica under the British military administration. When Libya gained its independence in 1951, veterans of the original Sanusi Army formed the nucleus of the Royal Libyan Army.

Until the discovery and exploitation of oil, beginning in the late 1950s, Libya was one of the poorest countries in the world. Limited available natural resources and a small population provided little basis for viable defensive strength, and the new state was militarily insignificant during its early years. King Idris deliberately divided the security forces into a regular army and a variety of armed police forces. The primary mission of the armed police was to counterbalance dissidents within the faction-torn armed forces and thus preclude a coup against the monarchy.

With substantial British assistance, the army was slowly enlarged, and by September 1969 its strength was estimated at roughly 6,500—about half the size of the armed police. The police forces, composed mainly of conservative tribal elements that the king considered more reliable than the regular army, were extremely diverse. They ranged from several lightly armed territorial forces to the mobile National Security Force, which was equipped with helicopters and armored cars. Units of the prestigious Cyrenaican Defense

Force, assisted and advised by British military specialists, were garrisoned at several places in Cyrenaica.

The small naval and air components were not developed until later. The navy was established in November 1962, and the air force was formed in August 1963. Consisting initially of only a few aircraft and two pilots, by 1967 the air force had increased to about 250 American-trained personnel and a few jet trainers and piston-engine transports. After the June 1967 War, demand for more sophisticated aircraft resulted in the purchase of ten American F-5 fighter-bombers in 1968 and 1969. Throughout this early period, the British were influential in the development of the Libyan navy, which, however, grew extremely slowly and even by the time of Qadhafi's coup in 1969 consisted of just over 200 men.

Partly because of the limited resources in trained personnel locally and partly because the monarchy was suspicious of the professional military, the idea of purchasing a sophisticated air defense missile system and training a few specialists in its operation gained popularity among the king's nonmilitary advisers. In 1968 the government entered into a contract with Britain for the installation of an air defense system to be delivered over five years at a cost of almost US$300 million. Under the contract, the British agreed to supply a complex antiaircraft missile system and radar detection and control equipment and to train Libyans to operate them. The high priority assigned to this project and the unprecedented expense involved were reflected in an accompanying decision to postpone the introduction of the monarchy's second five-year development plan until April 1969. Idris, however, was unwilling to disrupt the balance between the army and the police by providing the military element with tanks, artillery, and armored personnel carriers, recognizing that such equipment could be employed against his regime as easily as against a hostile external force. Ironically, when Qadhafi and his Free Officers Movement mounted their overthrow of the monarchy, the ostensibly reliable police did not interfere.

Assuming power after the 1969 coup, the new Qadhafi regime integrated major elements of the police into the army. Although he canceled the British air defense project, Qadhafi began to build up the country's military strength through large equipment purchases from foreign suppliers. In 1970 the government contracted to buy 110 Mirage jet fighters from France. Thereafter, the air force grew rapidly and became an important component of the armed forces. Similar purchases provided tanks and artillery for the army and vessels for the navy.

Within a year after the coup, the size of the military establishment was estimated at about 22,000 men—over three times the figure immediately before the coup. Although this increase followed a major recruitment effort, it was primarily the result of the merger of the regular army with most of the former National Security Force and the Cyrenaican Defense Force, which between them had comprised about 14,000 troops.

In 1971 the government announced the creation of the Popular Resistance Force, a militia that was under the operational control of the chief of staff of the Libyan armed forces. Initially, the primary mission of the force was to guard government buildings, oil installations, and other important facilities in the event of war or internal disorders.

Less than a year after the 1969 coup, Qadhafi and his fellow Free Officers assumed control of British and United States bases in Libya and began to sever military supply links with those countries. France, politically less objectionable to Qadhafi, became the leading source of arms but, in 1974, Libya reached agreement with the Soviet Union for the purchase of equipment on a scale well in excess of France's production capacity, even if France had not been deterred by Qadhafi's increasingly radical and irrational behavior. Tremendous quantities of modern Soviet armaments were delivered beginning in 1975, and the flow was continuing in 1987. In spite of the fact that thousands of advisers from the Soviet Union and other communist countries helped with manning, maintenance, and training in the use of the new equipment, the sheer quantity overwhelmed the ability of the Libyan armed forces to introduce it into operational units.

Prodigious importation of new weapons systems was accompanied by a rapid buildup of manpower. When voluntary enlistments proved inadequate, the government invoked a conscription law calling for three to four years service for all males between the ages of seventeen and thirty-five. Consequently, the armed forces more than doubled in strength between 1974, when the first arms agreement with the Soviet Union was concluded, and 1986, when the total manpower of the three services was estimated at over 90,000. In addition to creating the most highly mechanized army among the Arab nations, by the late 1980s Qadhafi had procured a fleet of submarines, corvettes, and missile boats that constituted a significant new naval force in the Mediterranean. The Soviet Union had also supplied Libya with modern fighter aircraft, a bomber and transport force, and a sophisticated air defense system.

The Military Leadership

The group of junior officers who seized power in 1969 wanted to introduce a radical form of Arab and Islamic socialism. The

Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) of Qadhafi and eleven other officers assumed formal responsibility for drawing up general policies. The initial civilian cabinet was frustrated by the RCC's insistence on reviewing all of its decisions. After its resignation, a new cabinet in January 1970 had Qadhafi as prime minister, Major Abdul Salaam Jallud as deputy prime minister, and other RCC members in key ministerial positions.

Although the RCC always spoke with one voice and Qadhafi and his associates generally succeeded in instilling a spirit of unity and discipline among the military, there was internal dissent. Differences came into the open in 1975 because of disagreement over the priority being given to armament purchases over domestic social needs in the use of oil revenues. As a result, the minister of planning was dismissed, and others left their posts. By late 1975, only five of the original twelve members were still serving on the RCC.

Officially phased out in 1977, the RCC was succeeded by the General Secretariat of the General People's Congress (GPC). At first this new policy-setting body was little more than the RCC under a new name. In the reorganization of 1979, however, when Qadhafi relinquished his position as secretary general, Jallud was replaced by a civilian as deputy secretary general and the other three military members of the General Secretariat were likewise replaced by civilians. They continued to serve as senior policy advisers to Qadhafi, although their public role was curtailed.

In 1987, the most senior positions of the military hierarchy were held by members of the original RCC. Qadhafi retained the title of supreme commander of the armed forces. General Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir was commander in chief of the armed forces. Major Khuwayldi al Hamidi was chief of the general staff and headed the People's Militia or People's Army (formerly the Popular Resistance Force.) Colonel (formerly General) Mustafa al Kharrubi was inspector general of the armed forces and commandant of the navy and air force. Major Jallud held no military position, but he headed the revolutionary committees and was acknowledged to be Qadhafi's second in command.

In the course of the post-coup reorganization of the military into a single unified command, the RCC retired or fired—for political reasons—the entire leadership of generals and colonels along with a number of officers of lesser rank identified with the Idris regime. Qadhafi and the other RCC members maintained that the former military leaders had been involved extensively in various forms of corruption, particularly in arms-procurement contracts. In addition, the former high command had been largely in agreement with the monarchy's position on such issues as the continued presence of British and United States military bases on Libyan territory and the country's rather limited involvement in the Arab-Israeli disputes.

The former military leadership was also believed to have tolerated and in many instances to have profited personally from a recruitment and promotion system that awarded high posts to individual tribal leaders and members of influential families. Senior officers were chosen not on the basis of military qualities or experience, but rather because of personal loyalty or political favors provided to King Idris or in recognition of their political and religious conservatism. These factors, which had brought the senior officers their initial commissions and subsequent promotions, caused much of the low morale among junior officers and contributed to the eventual overthrow of the monarchy.

Unlike the former military leaders, many of whom were from the middle and upper classes, and by virtue of their social status could just as easily have chosen higher education or the bureaucracy as routes to advancement, most of the RCC officers were from the lower strata of society. For them, the most logical source of upward mobility under the monarchy had been the military. Of the original RCC members, most of whom were in their mid-twenties at the time of the 1969 uprising, approximately half were from tribal or peasant backgrounds. They reflected the country's three traditional geographic divisions, with roughly one-third coming from each of the major regions—Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and Fezzan.

In political outlook, the military leadership that rose to power after 1969 has been described as both soldier-revolutionary and ardent pan-Arabist. In published interviews, the senior officers, particularly Qadhafi, recalled that their identification with the goal of regional Arab unity and the adoption of a more militant posture toward Israel dated from their secondary school years, when their hero was Egypt's President Gamal Abdul Nasser.

The new military leaders frequently emphasized their passionate commitment to the moral tenets of Islam and to their own concept of Islamic socialism. Qadhafi and the other senior military figures became the dominant influence group in the country, representing both the modernizing and the traditional aspects of national life. On the one hand, they have been committed to modernization, reflected in their acquiring technical military equipment and sophisticated weaponry and training personnel to operate and maintain them. Commitment to modernization also was demonstrated by their continuing emphasis on improving the literacy rate and on the development of technical skills and training. On the other hand, many of the top officers, including Qadhafi, have remained proud of their desert backgrounds, their religious convictions, their social relationships, and their traditional belief in the overall primacy of Arab and Islamic attitudes and values. One important exception to emphasis on traditional values has been Qadhafi's desire for a role for women in the armed forces, a proposal that was rejected by the normally obedient GPC.

International Military Concerns and Objectives

Libyan Security Concerns

In little more than a decade, Qadhafi effected a transformation of Libya into a militarized nation. The armed forces were rapidly expanded, acquiring greatly enhanced firepower and mobility. The able-bodied civilian population was formed in well-equipped militia units. Libya's new military establishment and arsenal have enabled Qadhafi to project his radical vision and ambitions beyond the country's borders. In spite of frequently irrational and inconsistent behavior, he has advanced Libya to the forefront of politics in North Africa and thrown its weight against peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

As affirmed by Qadhafi's public statements, his primary purpose in the Libyan arms buildup is destruction of Israel. The armed forces, however, have not been shaped to confront Israel directly nor has Qadhafi been eager to commit Libya to battle with Israel in alliance with other Arab powers. To a limited extent, he has used his arms inventory as a stockpile, supplying weapons selectively to those countries and groups most opposed to Israel's existence. His rhetoric has been devoted to appeals to develop a combined Arab and Islamic force strong enough to wage a successful "holy war" against Israel.

In 1987 most observers doubted that either the Libyans or the Soviets viewed the stored Soviet equipment as an arms depot prepositioned for eventual use by Soviet forces in action in North Africa. The matériel has been purchased outright by Libya at a considerable sacrifice to the country's economy. In spite of large numbers of Soviet advisers and support personnel, the unused equipment reportedly has not been maintained in an adequate state of readiness to be employed at short notice. Anticipated use by the Soviet forces presupposes close cooperation and approval by Qadhafi of Soviet operations in North Africa, but other evidence suggested that he was far from willing to agree to a more active Soviet role in the area.

The traditional mission of Libyan armed forces has been to protect Libya's territorial integrity and national sovereignty. Normally, the limited capability of neighboring states to threaten Libya's borders would not justify a primed and powerful defense arm (see fig. 12). Qadhafi, however, has inflamed relations with all of his neighbors on one or more occasions. In the late 1980s, the military remained ready for possible open conflict with Egypt, whose moderate policy toward Israel Qadhafi viewed as a provocation. Libya's buildup of naval and air strength helped to protect the country's exposed Mediterranean coastline against attack and gave Qadhafi a tangible means for enforcing Libya's claim to the Gulf of Sidra and its natural resources as Libyan territorial waters. Moreover, submarines and fast-attack craft with missiles gave Libya a potential striking power that even major naval forces in the Mediterranean were forced to heed.

Libya's arms buildup and demonstrated mobility provided the indispensable underpinning to Qadhafi's efforts to play a leading role in African politics by extending his influence, particularly to the Sahelian nations to the south. Libyan involvement has taken the form of subversion, military assistance, and direct military intervention aimed at winning other countries to support Qadhafi's radical policies or supplanting existing governments with others more amenable to him. Libya's efforts to dominate the Sahel presented a more imminent threat because of the military weakness, poverty, and unstable governments in the area. In addition, territorial claims have been advanced against Chad, Niger, and Algeria.

Performance in Combat

Although never tested in large-scale actions, the Libyan armed forces have been involved in low-level hostilities on a number of occasions. A sharp series of border clashes occurred with Egypt in 1977, and Libyan forces were flown into Uganda in 1978 in an unsuccessful effort to defend the regime of Idi Amin Dada against invading Tanzanian forces. In addition, the Libyans have conducted a series of campaigns in northern Chad since 1980. In brief engagements in 1981 and 1986, they proved to be outmatched against United States air power.

The cause of the hostilities between Egypt and Libya was never clearly established, although the attacks were probably initiated by Egypt as punishment for Libyan interference and a warning against the Soviet-backed arms buildup. After border violations alleged by both sides, fighting escalated on July 19, 1977, with an artillery duel, and, two days later, a drive along the coast by Egyptian armor and infantry during which the Libyan army was engaged. Egypt claimed successful surprise air strikes against the Libyan air base at Al Adem (Gamal Abdul Nasser Air Base) just south of Tobruk, destroying aircraft on the ground; surface-to-air missile batteries and radar stations were also knocked out.

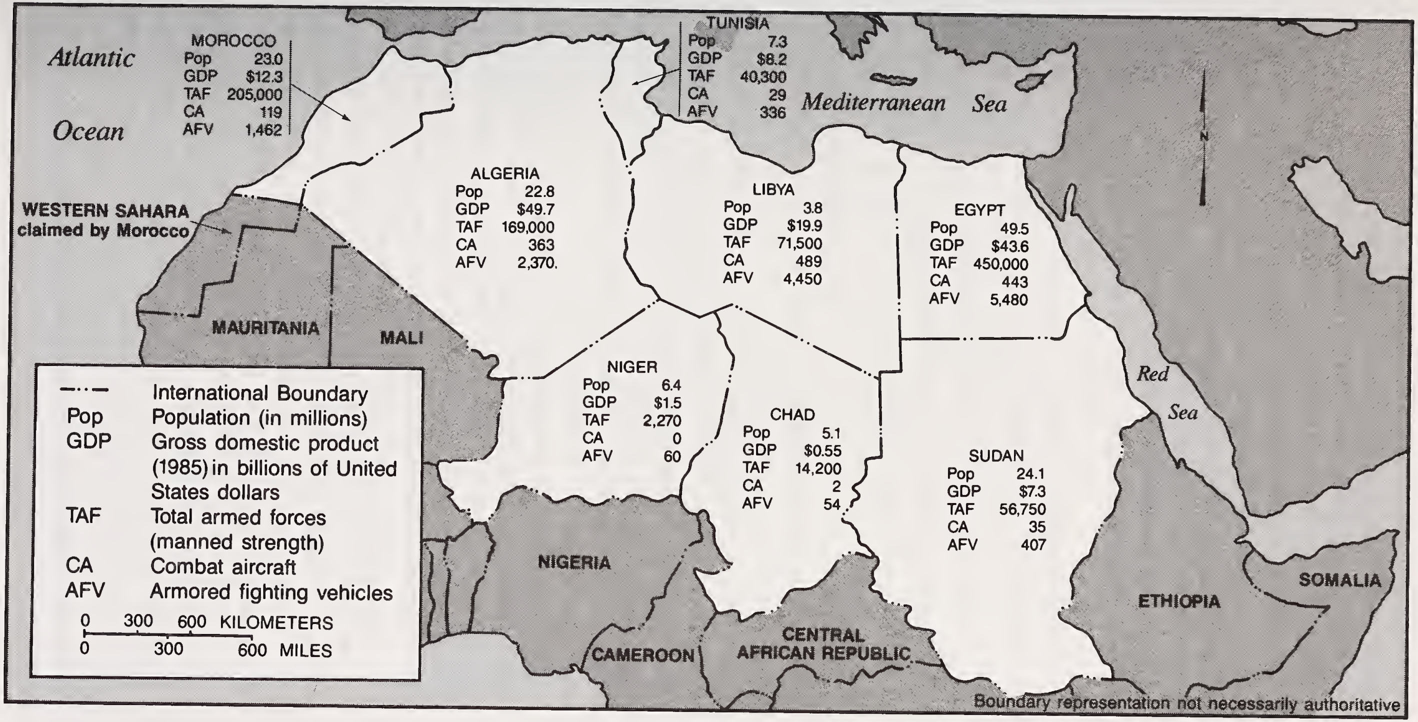
When the Egyptians withdrew on July 24, most foreign analysts agreed that the Egyptian units had prevailed, although Libyan forces reacted better than had been expected. The Qadhafi regime nevertheless hailed the encounter as a victory, citing the clash as justification for further purchases of modern armaments.

In the case of Uganda, Qadhafi had befriended the despotic ruler Idi Amin as a fellow Muslim and potential ally of the Arab cause in Africa. Libya had intervened on Amin's behalf during his first confrontation with neighboring Tanzania in 1972 by airlifting a contingent of four hundred troops into the country. During the invasion of Uganda by Tanzanian troops and Ugandan exiles in 1978, a new Libyan force estimated at 2,000 to 2,500 was sent, assisting in the defense of Entebbe and the capital of Kampala by covering road junctions with armored equipment. Inexperienced, undisciplined, and in unfamiliar forested terrain, the Libyan troops were quickly routed in attacks by foot soldiers. As many as 600 Libyans were estimated to have been killed during the Ugandan operation, and the defeated remainder were hurriedly withdrawn. The troops reputedly were led to believe they were being airlifted into Uganda for training exercises with Ugandan units. They were totally unprepared for actual combat and, having little motivation to fight, often tried to flee.

Invasion of Chad

Libya's involvement in Chad dates to the early 1970s, when Qadhafi began supporting the antigovernment rebels of the Front for the National Liberation of Chad (FROLINAT). Libyan intervention has resulted in de facto control over the northern part of the country and three phases of open hostilities—in 1980–81, 1983, and late 1986—when incursions were launched to the south of Chad. During the first two phases, the Libyan units acquitted themselves more professionally than in their previous encounters with Egypt and in Uganda. In mounting the 1980 incursion, they successfully traversed hundreds of miles of desert tracks with armored vehicles and carried out air operations under harsh climatic conditions. They also gained valuable experience in logistics and maintenance of modern military forces over lengthy supply lines.

Libya's 1980 intervention in Chad was on behalf of President Goukouni Oueddei against the French-backed forces of Hissein Habré, who at the time also enjoyed Libyan support. Qadhafi's actions were portrayed as support for the Chadian northern groups of Islamic, and to some extent Arab, culture, but his objective was


Atlantic
Ocean
MOROCCO
Pop 23.0
GDP $12.3
TAF 205,000
CA 119
AFV 1,462
TUNISIA
Pop 7.3
GDP $8.2
TAF 40,300
CA 29
AFV 336
Mediterranean Sea
N
ALGERIA
Pop 22.8
GDP $49.7
TAF 169,000
CA 363
AFV 2,370.
LIBYA
Pop 3.8
GDP $19.9
TAF 71,500
CA 489
AFV 4,450
EGYPT
Pop 49.5
GDP $43.6
TAF 450,000
CA 443
AFV 5,480
WESTERN SAHARA
claimed by Morocco
MAURITANIA
MALI
NIGER
Pop 6.4
GDP $1.5
TAF 2,270
CA 0
AFV 60
CHAD
Pop 5.1
GDP $0.55
TAF 14,200
CA 2
AFV 54
SUDAN
Pop 24.1
GDP $7.3
TAF 56,750
CA 35
AFV 407
Red Sea
NIGERIA
CAMEROON
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
ETHIOPIA
SOMALIA
International Boundary
Pop Population (in millions)
GDP Gross domestic product (1985) in billions of United States dollars
TAF Total armed forces (manned strength)
CA Combat aircraft
AFV Armored fighting vehicles
0 300 600 KILOMETERS
0 300 600 MILES
Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

Source: Based on information from *The Military Balance,* 1986–87, London, 1987, 102–04.

Figure 12. Balance of Power in North Africa, 1986

the creation of a Libyan sphere of influence in Chad. Even before 1980, Libyan forces had moved freely in northern areas of the country, operating from the 100-kilometer-wide Aouzou Strip (see Glossary), which Libya had occupied by 1973 (see fig. 13).

In June 1980, an offensive by Habré's forces resulted in the capture of Faya Largeau, the key center of northern Chad. Beginning in October of that year, Libyan troops airlifted to the Aouzou Strip operated in conjunction with Goukouni's forces to drive Habré back. Faya Largeau was then used as an assembly point for tanks, artillery, and armored vehicles that moved south against the capital of N'Djamena.

An attack spearheaded by Soviet T-54 and T-55 tanks, and reportedly coordinated by advisers from the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic, brought the fall of the capital in mid-December. The Libyan force, numbering between 7,000 and 9,000 men of regular units and the paramilitary Islamic Pan-African Legion, 60 tanks, and other armored vehicles, had been ferried across 1,100 kilometers of desert from Libya's southern border, partly by airlift and tank transporters and partly under their own power. The border itself was 1,000 to 1,100 kilometers from Libya's main bases on the Mediterranean coast.

Under increasingly insistent pressure from other African countries and from political factions in Chad, the Libyans withdrew in November 1981. Upon their return to Libya, Qadhafi announced that his troops had killed over 3,000 of the "enemy" while losing 300 themselves; other estimates of Libyan casualties were considerably higher.

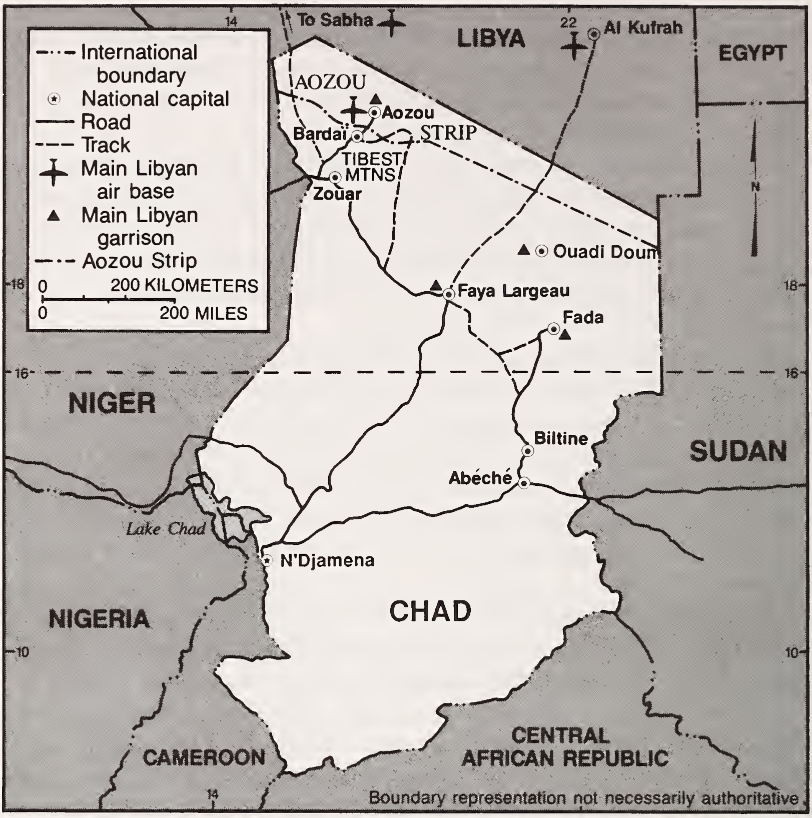
Without military support from Libya, Goukouni's forces were unable to stop the advance of Habré's Armed Forces of the North (FAN), which overran the capital in June 1982. The second Libyan intervention in favor of Goukouni occurred between June and August 1983, with the distinction that Goukouni was now the head of a rebel faction against the legally constituted government of Habré. To make the 1983 phase of the Chadian war appear purely indigenous, the Libyans recruited, trained, and armed Chadian dissidents under Goukouni's nominal command. Supplemented by heavy artillery, the insurgents began well but were soundly defeated in July by Chadian government forces, bolstered by French and United States military supplies and a token force of Zairian troops. Qadhafi called for a Libyan intervention in force. A sustained air bombardment was launched against Faya Largeau after its recapture by Habré on July 30, using Su-22 fighters and Mirage F-1s from the Aouzou air base, along with Tu-22 bombers from Sabha. Within ten days, a large ground force had been assembled east and west of Faya Largeau by first ferrying men, armor, and artillery by air to Sabha, Al Kufrah, and the Aouzou airfield, and then by shorter range transport planes to the area of conflict. The fresh Libyan forces attacked the Faya Largeau oasis on August 10, driving the Chadian government units out.

The subsequent intervention of 3,000 French troops ended the Libyan successes and led to a de facto division of the country, with Libya maintaining control of all the territory north of the sixteenth parallel. Under an agreement for mutual withdrawal from Chad, French troops withdrew by early November 1984, but the Libyans secretly dispersed and hid their units.

In December 1986, an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 Chadian government troops were moved into the Tibesti Massif region of northwestern Chad to support Goukouni's forces, most of whom had rebelled against the Libyans after Goukouni grew disillusioned with his Libyan backers in late 1986. Combined Goukouni and Habré forces then reportedly routed a 1,000-man Libyan garrison at Fada, claiming to have captured or destroyed a large number of tanks.

In March 1987, the main Libyan air base of Ouadi Doum was captured by Chadian forces. Although strongly defended by mine fields, 5,000 troops, tanks, armored vehicles, and aircraft, the Libyan base was overcome by a smaller Chadian attacking force equipped with trucks mounted with machine guns and antitank weapons. Two days later, the Libyans evacuated their main base of Faya Largeau, 150 kilometers farther south, which was in danger of being encircled. Observers estimated that in the Chadian victories in the first 3 months of 1987 more than 3,000 Libyan soldiers had been killed or captured or had deserted. Large numbers of tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery, fixed-wing aircraft, and helicopters were captured or destroyed. In some cases, Libya sent its own aircraft to bomb abandoned Libyan equipment to deny its use to the Chadians. It was reported that in many cases Libyan soldiers had been killed while fleeing to avoid battle. At Ouadi Doum, panicked Libyans had suffered high casualties running through their own mine fields.

These military actions left Habré in virtual control of Chad and in a position to threaten the expulsion of Libya from the Aouzou Strip. The full effect of these stunning defeats had yet to be assessed as of May 1987. It was clear, however, that they had affected the perception of Libya as a significant regional military power. They also cast renewed doubt on the competence and determination of Libyan fighting men, especially in engagements beyond the country's borders to which they evidently felt no personal commitment.



International boundary
National capital
Road
Track
Main Libyan air base
Main Libyan garrison
Aozou Strip
0 200 KILOMETERS
0 200 MILES
To Sabha
LIBYA
Al Kufrah
EGYPT
AOZOU
Aozou
Bardai
STRIP
TIBESTI MTNS
Zouar
Ouadi Doum
Faya Largeau
Fada
NIGER
SUDAN
Biltine
Abéché
Lake Chad
N'Djamena
CHAD
NIGERIA
CAMEROON
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
N
14
22
18
16
10
Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

Figure 13. Libyan Intervention in Chad, 1980–Mid-1987

Encounters with the United States

In 1973 Qadhafi claimed the Gulf of Sidra to be within Libyan territorial waters by drawing a straight line between a point near Benghazi and the western headland of the gulf at Misratah (see fig. 14). His claim was not generally accepted, although only the United States presented a direct challenge by declaring that its ships would continue to regard all areas beyond a distance of twelve nautical miles from the coast as international waters. On several occasions, Libyan fighter planes harassed United States planes from carriers maneuvering in the area. When the United States Sixth Fleet began exercises in August 1981, Libyan fighter planes were assembled from elsewhere in the country to fly patrols near the American ships. On August 19, two Su-22 fighter-bombers were intercepted by two F-14 Tomcat fighters from the aircraft carrier

Nimitz. While trying to escort the Libyans out of the exercise area, one of the American planes was the target of an air-to-air Atoll missile but was able to evade it. Both Libyan planes were then shot down with Sidewinder missiles launched by the Tomcats. The two Libyan pilots managed to eject and were rescued from the sea. The ease with which the American planes disposed of their attackers demonstrated that the earlier generation Su–22 and its Atoll missile could not prevail against more sophisticated United States equipment.

Tensions between the two countries mounted after the hijacking of a TWA airliner at Beirut in July 1985 and bombing attacks at American airline counters at Rome and Vienna in December of that year. Qadhafi was implicated in these actions through his patronage of the alleged perpetrator, the Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal (see International Terrorism and Support for Insurgent Groups, this ch.). The Libyans also began installing batteries of SA–5 missiles acquired from the Soviet Union in late 1985, along with associated radar, to augment their air defense capabilities. United States naval vessels continued to challenge Qadhafi's claim to the Gulf of Sidra, periodically crossing the line of Libyan territorial claim, which he came to refer to as the ''line of death'' (see fig. 14).

Three carrier task forces of the Sixth Fleet with 225 aircraft assembled off the Libyan coast for maneuvers in March 1986. On March 24, six SA–5s were launched from the new missile base at Surt against American aircraft. None was hit, however, because the SA–5, with a range of 240 kilometers, could threaten high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft over the Gulf of Sidra but was relatively ineffective against high-performance jet fighters. Subsequently, the missile site was put out of action by carrier-based A–6 Intruders firing High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles (HARMs), that homed in on the Libyans' radar guidance signals. A second strike followed the next day to knock out a replacement radar unit. Although Soviet technicians were believed to be present to oversee the installation and operation of the SA–5 batteries, none was reported injured in the exchanges.

At the same time, a French-built Combattante-class missile attack craft was destroyed when it approached United States Navy ships protecting the aircraft carriers. The Libyan vessel was hit by two Harpoon missiles launched from an A–7 Corsair aircraft. The most serious loss for the Libyans was one of the eight Soviet-supplied Nanuchka-class missile corvettes in an attack by two A–6s shortly after midnight on March 26. A total of five attacks was carried out on Libyan ships.

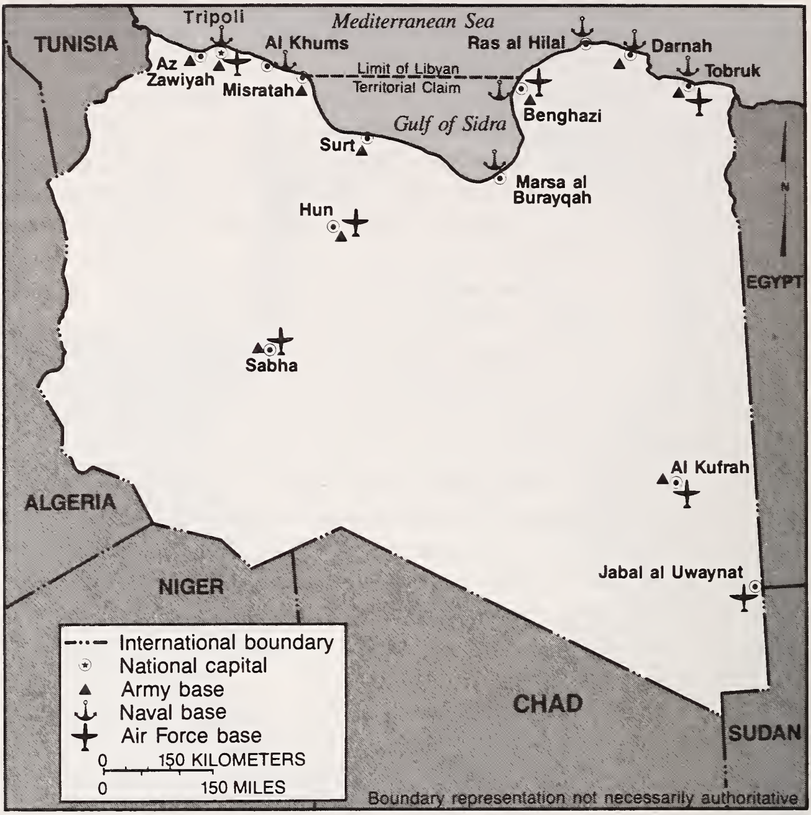

TUNISIA
Tripoli
Mediterranean Sea
Al Khums
Ras al Hilal
Darnah
Tobruk
Az Zawiyah
Misratah
Limit of Libyan Territorial Claim
Gulf of Sidra
Benghazi
Surt
Marsa al Burayqah
Hun
N
EGYPT
Sabha
Al Kufrah
ALGERIA
NIGER
Jabal al Uwaynat
International boundary
National capital
Army base
Naval base
Air Force base
0 150 KILOMETERS
0 150 MILES
CHAD
SUDAN
Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

Figure 14. Principal Military Installations, 1987

Ten days later, on April 5, 1986, a bomb exploded in a discotheque in Berlin frequented by United States service personnel. Of the 200 injured, 63 were American soldiers; one soldier and one civilian were killed. Messages intercepted by the United States, including one from the Libyan mission in East Berlin, furnished what the United States government described as evidence of Libyan involvement in the bombing, which was probably carried out by the Abu Nidal organization.

On April 15, the United States retaliated by attacking military installations in Benghazi and Tripoli. Eighteen FB-111 bombers, supported by four EF-111 electronic countermeasures aircraft, left England, refueling several times en route, and struck the Tripoli airport, a frogman training center at the naval academy, and the nearby Al Aziziyah barracks, where Qadhafi often resided. The aircraft carriers *Coral Sea* and *America* launched twenty-four A-6 and F/A-18 Hornet strike aircraft against radar and antiaircraft sites at Benghazi before hitting the Benina military airfield and the Jamahiriya barracks. A number of casualties also occurred in residential areas of Benghazi and several Western embassies were damaged.

Several transport aircraft and some Soviet-built MiG-23 fighters and helicopters were destroyed on the ground at the two airfields. The only loss among the American attackers was one FB-111 that failed to return to its base in England. Although retaliation for the Berlin bombing had been anticipated, Libyan air defenses seemed almost wholly unprepared for the attack. In fact, it was reported that antiaircraft fire had not begun until after the American planes had passed over their targets at Tripoli. It was reported that some Libyan soldiers abandoned their posts in fright and confusion and officers were slow to give orders. Also, Libyan fighters failed to get airborne to challenge the attacking bombers.

The Armed Forces

The military has been among the most representative institutions in the country, drawing its membership from all strata of society. The integration of the different forces, organized before 1969 under separate commands, and the disarming of the Cyrenaican tribes were generally regarded as significant first steps toward establishing national unity. According to some authorities, these steps will eventually break down tribal, regional, and parochial tendencies.

Until the early 1980s, service pay, special commissaries, and related benefits placed the average soldier in a privileged position relative to the population as a whole. Military leaders nevertheless sought to avoid the public display of material ostentation with which many officers under the earlier monarchy had been associated. Most of the senior officers were noted for their austere, almost puritanical, personal habits. For more than a decade after the coup, the rank of colonel, which Qadhafi assumed after taking power, acted as a ceiling on grade level. Although the rank of general was subsequently adopted by some service chiefs, it was announced in mid-1986 that the rank of colonel would again be the highest in the armed forces. Observers noted, for example, that Kharrubi was being referred to as colonel instead of general. The ranks of many other officers may also have been reduced, in some cases as a result of dissatisfaction with their responses to the American raid a few months earlier.

In his public conduct, Qadhafi was the archetype of the ascetic behavior that characterized senior Libyan officers in the early days of the Revolution. He cultivated an image of incorruptibility and of simple personal habits, promoting the idea that military service was a patriotic obligation for which little material reward should be expected.

In general, the morale of the military was high as a result of Qadhafi's extravagant modernization program, which was accompanied by new weapons systems, opportunities for training abroad for younger officers, and major construction projects. Moreover, experience gained in operations in Chad enabled the military to address some of the deficiencies revealed in the clashes with Egypt and in Uganda.

In spite of the historical importance of the military in the overthrow of the monarchy and its participation in the government during the first decade under Qadhafi, underlying tensions between civil and military authorities became visible during the early 1980s. Although there was little discernible dissension among the most senior military figures, whose fortunes were closely linked with Qadhafi, there reportedly was disgruntlement among more junior officers, who rejected the adventurist policies that had needlessly provoked the hostility of Libya's Arab neighbors. The economic austerity arising from the drop in oil revenues and Qadhafi's bizarre economic theories contributed to the disaffection. As a result of budget stringencies, military pay was often two or three months in arrears, commissary stocks were little better than the meager supplies in government-run shops, and military construction projects were scaled back sharply.

On numerous occasions, Qadhafi declared that ultimately the traditional military establishment should "wither away," to be replaced by an armed citizenry. This eventuality conformed with the Third Universal Theory in that the populace would then be directly involved in assuring their own security (see Political Ideology, ch. 4). Accordingly, all members of society must be prepared to function as soldiers. Although Qadhafi seemed to treat the disappearance of the professional military more as a theoretical goal than an imminent reality, his remarks added to the deteriorating morale of the officer corps.

Qadhafi and knowledgeable observers recognized that only the army represented a separate source of power that could threaten to overturn the existing regime. A government journal warned in 1982 that "armies believe the power to bear arms is by proxy for the masses and they thus create dictatorial classes which monopolize the weapons and crush the masses with them." This was followed by an extraordinary campaign unleashed against the military in 1983. The ideological weekly of the revolutionary committees, *Az Zahf al Akhdar*, branded officers as reactionaries, guilty of corruption, smuggling, and smoking hashish. These fascists "must be immediately removed," said the editor, because they "mock the people and get drunk with the bourgeoisie." Although these views could not have been published without official sanction, Qadhafi refrained from associating himself fully with them. He said the army was not corrupt and that the officers with a bourgeois orientation were only remnants from the traditional royal army.

Although *Az Zahf al Akhdar* moderated its charges following Qadhafi's intervention, its campaign, focusing on the luxurious cars, dwellings, and working quarters of the officers, was resumed in 1984. Assuming that Qadhafi could muzzle these denunciations of the military if he chose, he may have failed to do so because of suspicions of military disloyalty and a desire to deflate the prestige of the military establishment as a potential competing political force. Thus, in spite of his dependence on the armed forces to execute his wide-ranging ambitions, Qadhafi may feel constrained to seek some balance by giving freer rein to the revolutionary committees and by strengthening the People's Militia.

The revolutionary committees introduced into work places and communities were not at first extended to the military (see The Revolutionary Committees, ch. 4). When they were later imposed, there were complaints that they were controlled by officers with insufficient revolutionary zeal. After the early 1980s, however, a paramilitary wing of the revolutionary committees, the revolutionary guards, became entrenched within the armed forces. They served as a parallel channel of control, a means of ideological indoctrination in the barracks, and an apparatus for monitoring suspicious behavior. The revolutionary guards reportedly held the keys to ammunition stockpiles at the main military bases, doling ammunition out in small quantities as needed by the regular forces.

The influence of the revolutionary guards increased after a coup attempt in May 1985 (see State of Internal Security, this ch.). The guards, assisted by the revolutionary committees, set up roadblocks and arrested thousands of individuals suspected of being implicated. The revolutionary guards were believed to be no more that 1,000 to 2,000 strong, but they were outfitted with light tanks, armored cars and personnel carriers, multiple rocket launchers, and SA-8 antiaircraft missiles. Most had been recruited from Qadhafi's own tribal group in the Surt region.

The United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) estimated that Libya spent US$1.8 billion on arms purchases in 1984. Accordingly, if the ACDA figure of US$5.2 billion in total defense expenditures in 1984 is accepted, true defense costs exclusive of new weapons acquisitions would still be about US$3.4 billion or several times the officially acknowledged rate of spending. This would include such items as pay and benefits, military construction, fuel, maintenance, and the cost of the Chadian campaign.

Organization of the Armed Forces

The Army

In 1987 the army—by far the largest and most developed branch of the military forces—was still organized tactically in battalion formations. These included twenty tank battalions, thirty mechanized infantry battalions, ten artillery battalions, and two special forces groups comprising ten paratroop battalions. Air defense was organized into two antiaircraft battalions and six surface-to-air missile battalions. Two surface-to-surface missile brigades were equipped with free rocket over ground (FROG) and Scud missiles acquired from the Soviet Union.

Although the pattern of equipment purchases and the creation of divisional headquarters units suggested that a transition to a more integrated structure of mobile armored and mechanized infantry was contemplated, by early 1987 the shift to such an organizational form had not yet occurred. During specific deployments, as in Chad, units were brought together on an ad hoc basis. If the tank and mechanized battalions were to be consolidated into a more unified command structure, this would most likely be designed for planning territorial defense rather than for desert combat operations; the system existing in 1987 of independent battalions afforded more flexibility for desert combat.

In early 1987, the Libyan army was well outfitted with modern armaments, including rocket systems, armored vehicles for its infantry and artillery, engineering equipment, up-to-date Soviet infantry weapons, sophisticated fire-control systems, flame throwers and chemical munitions, and antitank guided missiles. Libya's more than 3,000 tanks gave it the tenth largest tank force in the world. Its range of tracked and wheeled armor, tank transporters, and air transport ensured it the necessary mobility to bring its forces to bear rapidly against any threat to its territorial integrity and enabled it to intervene in ventures far beyond its borders (see table 10, Appendix).

The army was nevertheless confronted by grave deficiencies. The high technological level of its equipment demanded a corresponding level of technical competence in operation and maintenance that the army lacked. Maintenance and repair problems were exacerbated by the diversity of arms sources—British, American, French, Soviet, Italian, and Brazilian. The numerous foreign advisers and technicians were insufficient to overcome low standards of support and logistics. To judge from the ability the Libyans demonstrated in Chad to sustain modern combat operations over extended supply lines, some progress was being made in correcting these problems.

The pattern of troop concentrations could not be determined precisely from published sources. Some troops were at the operational sites, including Tripoli, Misratah, Az Zawiyah, Surt, Benghazi, Darnah, and Tobruk, that were established at strategic points along the Mediterranean coast during World War II (see fig. 14). Others were at inland sites at desert oases, such as Sabha, and farther south, at Al Kufrah, which became the main base for operations in Chad. Areas adjacent to the Egyptian border, particularly along lines of movement, were also well defended. Many army units were scattered throughout populated areas, owing in part to their responsibility for training People's Militia units.

Few details were available on army training. The military academy at Benghazi, established before independence with British assistance, offered its cadets courses in higher education and military subjects to prepare them for active duty as junior officers. Qadhafi and other members of the RCC attended the institution, but it was closed after the coup. Later a military academy opened at Tripoli.

In 1985 a military engineering college (at an unspecified location) to provide training in all technical military specialities was proposed. The college was to have a four-year program leading to a bachelor's degree. At about the same time, the establishment of a reserves college with a one-year program leading to the rank of second lieutenant in the reserves was announced. Admission would be contingent on the attainment of a university degree or its equivalent and a demonstration of "adherence to the great Fatah revolution." Because Libya is not known to have an active reserve program, it remained unclear how the graduates of this institution would be used.

The Navy

The navy has always been the stepchild of the Libyan armed forces, although its Soviet-supplied submarines and fast-attack craft with missiles have endowed it with the potential for inflicting damage on other naval powers in the Mediterranean. The enormous firepower available to small vessels armed with missiles and sophisticated electronic guidance systems has enabled Qadhafi to assemble a modern flotilla at relatively low cost and with few personnel. The navy consisted of no more than 200 officers and men when the first warship was delivered to the Idris regime in 1966. Under Qadhafi, naval personnel had increased to 6,500 by 1986 and was expected to rise still further to meet the staffing needs of additional ships on order.

Traditionally, the navy's primary mission has been to defend the coast and to assist the other services in maintaining internal security and public order. After the previously separate customs and harbor police were joined with the navy in a single command under the Ministry of Defense in 1970, the mission was extended to include responsibilities for curbing smuggling and for enforcing customs laws. The rapid naval buildup that occurred during the 1970s was intended to enforce Qadhafi's claim of sovereignty over the Gulf of Sidra with its sponging and fishing grounds as well as potential unexploited mineral wealth. The navy could also deter landings or raids aimed against the country's oil fields and vulnerable oil transport network. The purpose of acquiring amphibious ships for landing infantry and tanks was less obvious. One explanation might be to present a threat to Egyptian forces near the border with Libya. The Egyptians' sole land supply route is the coastal road from Alexandria.

The navy has always been dependent on foreign sources for equipment, spare parts, and training. In 1972 a British naval advisory mission that had assisted in the development of the Libyan navy since its founding was terminated. Training was shifted to Greece and to Egypt and later to the Soviet Union. The initial ship orders, placed with British yards, were for patrol boats and corvettes. The largest surface ship in the Libyan navy, a frigate of about 1,500 tons with a crew of 130, was ordered just before the 1969 coup and delivered in 1973. Later, high-speed patrol boats and corvettes equipped with surface-to-surface missiles were purchased from France, Italy, and the Soviet Union. Between 1976 and 1983, six Soviet Foxtrot-class submarines were delivered. Each required a crew of seventy-five; in addition, twelve Soviet advisers were reportedly assigned to each vessel. (For an inventory of ships of the Libyan fleet, see table 11, Appendix).

Little information was available on the navy's organizational structure, but Tripoli was known to be the site of the naval command headquarters and of the principal naval base. Other bases were located in the ports of Benghazi, Darnah, Tobruk, and Marsa al Burayqah. A repair base was located at Al Khums east of Tripoli, and a submarine base was under construction at Ras al Hilal.

As of early 1987, the Libyan navy had faced no hostile actions except for the encounter with the American fleet in March 1986

Sailors of Libya's growing navy

in which one missile boat and a corvette were destroyed and others possibly damaged. Earlier, it was reported that the small Libyan vessels were experiencing difficulty in obeying Qadhafi's order to remain at sea to avoid the risk of being bombed in port by American planes. The fleet reported breakdowns of engines and electronic failures as well as shortages of food and fuel.

By early 1987 it was considered probable that the Libyan navy was overextended, having carried out a rapid buildup without sufficient trained personnel. More than one-third of the entire naval complement of 6,500 would be required to supply a single crew for each of the ships in commission in 1986. In addition, personnel would have to be found to staff a number of other vessels on order. Aggravating the problem of reaching a satisfactory level of operation, training, and maintenance was the need to become familiar with a variety of modern weapons systems from numerous supplier countries, among them Britain, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union.

The Air Force

Last of the military services to be established, the air force has been obliged to struggle to develop trained air and ground crews to match the rapid acquisition of modern planes and weaponry (see table 12, Appendix). As a result, in spite of the significant inventory of combat aircraft, amounting to more than 500 as of early 1987, Libyan air units have been committed only reluctantly and have not acquitted themselves impressively in air-to-air engagements. However, the considerable air transport fleet has apparently been employed capably in Chad and elsewhere. Although the air force has been extensively used in support of Libyan ground units in the fighting in Chad, it does not seem to have played a decisive role.

At the time of the overthrow of the monarchy in 1969, the roster of personnel was only about 400 officers and enlisted men. A recruitment drive undertaken in 1970 eventually brought a tenfold increase in the force by 1978. As of 1986, its strength was estimated at 10,000.

The country's burgeoning inventory of air force weapons accounted for a considerable share of Libya's procurement efforts. The hundreds of aircraft acquired since 1969 included American helicopters and transports (although deliveries of United States planes were blocked in 1975), later-model French close-air-support fighters, and up-to-date fighter interceptors from the Soviet Union. Of the combat aircraft, the United States Department of State estimated in 1983 that 50 percent remained in storage, including most of the MiG fighters and Tu-22 bombers. According to another report, the Mirage aircraft were so neglected that only half were in flying condition, the others being cannibalized for spare parts. Pilots from Syria and other countries reportedly helped fly the Libyan planes, and instructors, technical personnel, and maintenance teams included Soviets, Pakistanis, and Yugoslavs.

With Soviet assistance, the air force was organized into one medium bomber squadron, three fighter interceptor squadrons, five forward ground attack squadrons, one counterinsurgency squadron, nine helicopter squadrons, and three air defense brigades deploying SA-2, SA-3, and Crotale missiles. (The three SA-5 launch sites were operated by army units.)

The air force's primary installation was the huge Uqba ibn Nafi Air Base (the former Wheelus Air Base) near Tripoli. It had excellent operational features and contained the service's headquarters and a large share of its major training facilities. Both MiG fighters and Tu-22 bombers were located there. A large air base at a site near Benghazi shared with the civil airport also had some MiG squadrons. Most of the Mirages were located at Gamal Abdul Nasser Air Base. Two airfields not far from the Egyptian border, at Al Kufrah Oasis and at Jabal al Uwaynat in the far south, were among the Libyan installations attacked by Egyptian air crews during the 1977 border clash. The Soviets have constructed another base in central Libya at the new army headquarters site of Al Jufrah near Hun with a runway of over 4,000 meters.

An air force academy established at Az Zawiyah near Misratah in 1975 was reportedly staffed mainly by Yugoslavs. Institutions referred to as ''secondary colleges,'' possibly technical training schools, were opened at Sabha and at Uqba ibn Nafi Air Base in 1978. Basic pilot training was conducted on Italian-manufactured SF–260 planes before the students moved on to the Soko G–2AE Galebs (Yugoslav) and the Aero L–39 Albatros (Czechoslovak) at Az Zawiyah. Additional training took place outside Libya. Several hundred Libyan students were reportedly undergoing instruction with the Dassault firm in France in 1983 as part of the Mirage contract. This was at a time of confrontation between French and Libyan forces in Chad.

Information on training programs conducted by the Soviet Union was scanty but in light of the sophisticated weapons in the air force inventory, it could be assumed that much time and effort were invested in producing even a limited number of combat-ready crews, backed up by ground support personnel. Soviet specialists reportedly accompanied the Libyans during the 1980 incursion into Chad and possibly were directly involved in missions of the Tu–22 bombers.

The performance of the Libyan air force in emergency conditions cannot have been reassuring to Qadhafi. Libyan pilots have reportedly experienced difficulty in finding and identifying aircraft they have been ordered to intercept. They have been reluctant to fly at night for fear of being unable to locate their bases. To some extent, these problems may reflect outdated navigation and radar aids in their combat aircraft, which are mostly older, stripped-down versions of Soviet designs. The two Su–22 fighters were handicapped in their engagement with carrier-based American F–14s in 1981 because the equipment, instruments, and air-to-air missiles were outmoded in comparison with those of their adversaries. In spite of Qadhafi's express warning that his air force would repel the United States fleet in the Gulf of Sidra in 1986, his planes did not seriously challenge the American naval units. In addition, Libyan planes did not take off to meet the American fighter-bombers that attacked targets at Benghazi and Tripoli in April 1986; consequently many planes were destroyed or damaged on the ground. In Chad it was reported that many Libyan bombing raids were carried out at excessively high altitudes when met with antiaircraft fire.

Conscription and the People's Militia

The concept of universal military service is embodied in Statute 3 for 1984, approved by the GPC in March 1984. This law declared that all Libyans coming of age, whether male or female, were to receive regular military training, as long as they were physically able. Military studies were to be among the basic subjects of the educational curriculum at all stages above the elementary level. Military studies and training in regular military establishments of "specialized cadres in warfare" were to be restricted for the present to males.

The statute provided for Libya to be divided into defense regions, the responsibility for defending each region being that of its inhabitants. Defense regions were to regard themselves as strategic reserves for each other. The new law did not supersede the provisions of the Compulsory Military Service Statute of 1978, which made all males between the ages of seventeen and thirty-five subject to a draft commitment of three years of active service in the army or four years in the navy or air force. Students could defer service until completion of their studies. The actual application of conscription laws in 1987 was not entirely clear. In one case, a young man called up for two years' service was required to serve six years. In 1986, of 936,000 men in the 15 to 59 age category, about 550,000 were fit for military service. About 39,000 Libyans reach military age each year; many, however, lack the basic education needed to absorb training in the use and servicing of modern weaponry.

The implementing regulations for the 1984 statute stipulated that all secondary schools and equivalent institutions were to be assigned to various military units (see Education, ch. 2). Each student was to devote two days each month to training with the nearest military element having a specialization approximating that of the unit to which the student had been assigned. One month each year was to be spent with the student's original military unit.

Members of all government and business enterprises as well as artisans, professionals, and farmers, were also to train for two days a month and one month a year. At some factories, the military commitment was more onerous. When the work day finished at 2:00 P.M., employees were obliged to spend three to four hours with their military units five days each week. Such periods of intensive training continued for six months or more at intervals of every few years.

To a considerable extent, the new law merely reinforced a program in existence for some years to mobilize the entire population of physically fit students and working people into local militia units centered on schools, communities, and work places. The number of individuals organized into paramilitary units has been estimated at 45,000 but may have increased with the application of the new law. In 1987 the People's Militia was headed by Major Khuwayldi

الجيل الحض
براعم واشبال وسواعد الفاتح
مصرف

Military and People's Militia units on parade in Tripoli al Hamidi, one of the original members of the RCC. The militia units reportedly were generously equipped with arms, transport, and uniforms. In November 1985, it was announced that the first contingent of ''armed people'' trained as paratroopers had made a demonstration drop.

In early 1986, Western reporters were shown military training at a high school in Tripoli at which a minimum of two out of thirty-six class hours a week were devoted to military studies. In addition, one of three summer months was spent at a military camp. Graduates either entered the army directly or went on to college. Those entering college had to continue reserve training at their former high schools. The weekly lessons included hand-grenade throwing, signals and codes, and machine-gun maintenance. High schools concentrated on designated specialties, which in the case of the institution visited was the operation of the Soviet truck-mounted Katyusha rocket launcher.

The mission of the People's Militia was territorial defense, and it was to function under the leadership of local military commanders. Qadhafi contended that it was the People's Militia that met the Egyptian incursions during the border clash of 1977, although the Egyptians insisted that their successful raids had been contested by regular army units. The militia forces are not known to have faced any other test that would permit an appraisal of their performance in home defense or as auxiliaries to the regular army. There was some evidence that local commanders had not responded energetically to their responsibility for training and supervising militia units.

Women in the Armed Forces

Qadhafi has persistently sought to usher in a policy of direct participation by women in national defense. His efforts, which have been resisted by conservative elements of Libyan society and apparently by most young women as well, derived from his argument that women of the Arab world live in a subjugated state and must be liberated from oppression and feudalism. Qadhafi viewed practices governing a woman's role in society and her legal rights as disrespectful, reactionary, and contrary to the Quran (see The Traditional View of Men and Women, ch. 2).

Speaking at a rally in Tripoli in 1978, Qadhafi said that the goal of a totally armed people would be fully realized ''when all Libyans—men and women—have been trained in an organized, modern fashion.'' Addressing in the same speech the political and religious problems that a full-fledged military role for women presented in Islamic Libya, Qadhafi declared that this ''is not against religion, not against marriage, not against ethics.''

Women have played a significant role in Qadhafi's military build-up

Shortly thereafter, it was announced that women were to be conscripted along with men, but this plan apparently was not fully implemented. A women's army college opened in Tripoli in 1979, training volunteers aged thirteen to seventeen in basic military subjects and the use of various weapons. A total of 7,000 students had passed through the academy by 1983. Some female pilots and naval recruits had reportedly also been enlisted. Nevertheless, the notion of women as soldiers remained unpopular. Some observers believed that many of the students had been coerced into entering the academy. The institution was closed in November 1983, reportedly after students ripped down fences to escape and return to their homes.

Nonetheless, the new legislation introduced in February 1984 covering universal military service specifically included women. When the GPC took the almost unprecedented step of rejecting the proposal, Qadhafi saw this as evidence of lingering reactionary attitudes in a society that had not wholeheartedly accepted the Revolution. "Spontaneous demonstrations" of young women demanding the right to engage in military service were organized. In a speech on March 12, 1984, Qadhafi announced that popular demand made it necessary to introduce compulsory military service for all in spite of the GPC's action. After the Libyan retreat from Chad in March 1987, there were indications that women had served there in administrative positions.

The women's military academy was not reopened, however, and no immediate steps were taken to institute full-time military service for women. Training was apparently to remain an adjunct to high school and university studies. Even so, there was evidence that the program was not being resolutely enforced. As late as April 1986, the Libyan press mentioned complaints over the delays and haphazard nature of the training programs at the Zlitan Women Teachers' Institute, apparently owing to the indifference of local military authorities.

Other Paramilitary Forces

In about 1980, Qadhafi introduced the Islamic Pan-African Legion, a body of mercenaries recruited primarily among dissidents from Sudan, Egypt, Tunisia, Mali, and Chad. West African states with Muslim populations have also been the source of some personnel. Believed to consist of about 7,000 individuals, the force has received training from experienced Palestinian and Syrian instructors. Some of those recruited to the legion were said to have been forcibly impressed from among nationals of neighboring countries who migrated to Libya in search of work.

According to *The Military Balance,* published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the force was organized into one armored, one infantry, and one paratroop/commando brigade. It has been supplied with T-54 and T-55 tanks, armored personnel carriers, and EE-9 armored cars. The Islamic Pan-African Legion was reported to have been committed during the fighting in Chad in 1980 and was praised by Qadhafi for its success there. However, it was believed that many of the troops who fled the Chadian attacks of March 1987 were members of the Islamic Pan-African Legion.

In an effort to realize Qadhafi's vision of a united Arab military force, plans for the creation of an Arab legion have been announced from time to time. The goal, according to the Libyan press, would be to assemble an army of 1 million men and women fighters to prepare for the great Arab battle—"the battle of liberating Palestine, of toppling the reactionary regimes, of annihilating the borders, gates, and barriers between the countries of the Arab homeland, and of creating the single Arab Jamahiriya from the ocean to the gulf." In March 1985, it was announced that the National Command of the Revolutionary Forces Command in the Arab Nation had been formed with Qadhafi at its head. A number of smaller radical Arab groups from Lebanon, Tunisia, Sudan, Iraq, the Persian Gulf states, and Jordan were represented at the inaugural meeting. Syrian Baath Party and radical Palestinian factions were also present. Each of these movements was expected to earmark 10 percent of its forces for service under the new command. As of April 1987, there was no information confirming the existence of such a militia.

Uniforms, Ranks, and Insignia of the Armed Forces

When the army and navy were formed, the uniforms adopted by each service reflected British military and naval tradition. Modifications have occurred over the intervening years, however, and in early 1987 Libyan uniforms were similar to those worn by military personnel of a number of Middle Eastern Arab countries.

The standard field uniform for Libyan paratroopers (Army commandos) is a two-piece camouflage uniform made of water-repellent cotton. The shirt is similar in design to the United States Army fatigue shirt. The shirt and trousers are camouflaged in blue-green, light green, and dark brown. The standard headgear for paratroopers is a sky-blue beret. The uniforms of the air force, however, continued to resemble in both style and color the uniforms of the United States Air Force, which served as a model when the Libyan air arm was established.

Originally the rank structure of all three services was similar to that of the British armed forces, but some modifications were introduced in light of the small size of the Libyan military establishment. In early 1979, the system prescribed by law still included nine officer grades and five enlisted ranks; there were no warrant officer equivalents (see figs. 15 and 16). Although three general officer grades continued to be authorized, they have been used rarely since 1969. Promoted to the grade of colonel (*aqid*) after assuming power, Qadhafi has maintained a ceiling on the grade level of his officers corps in keeping with his desire to avoid the ostentatious public image the generals of the monarchy had conveyed. In January 1976, the Arab Socialist Union's National Congress attempted to promote Qadhafi to major general. The Libyan leader stated that he would accept the honor as an expression of gratitude from his compatriots but would retain the title of colonel because it had become an accepted and traditional part of his name.

Defense Costs

The pattern of defense spending has been difficult to appraise with any exactitude since the mid-1970s, when government restrictions on the publication of military information were imposed. Detailed budgets, once available, have not been disclosed since the mid-1970s. Total amounts allocated to defense in the national budget were available, but apportionments to individual service

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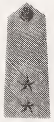
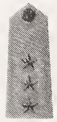
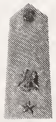
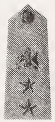
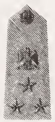
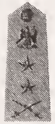
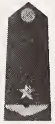
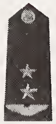
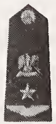
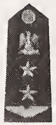
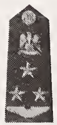
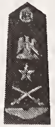
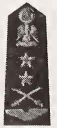
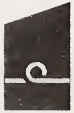
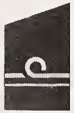
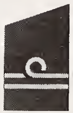
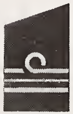
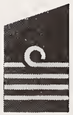
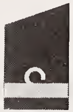
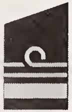
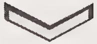
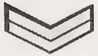
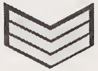
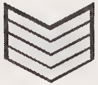
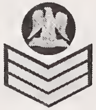
ARMY									
U.S. RANK TITLES	2D LIEUTENANT	1ST LIEUTENANT	CAPTAIN	MAJOR	LIEUTENANT COLONEL	COLONEL	BRIGADIER GENERAL	MAJOR GENERAL	LIEUTENANT GENERAL
LIBYAN RANK	MULAZIM	MULAZIM AWWAL	NAQIB	RAID	MUQADDAM	AQID	AMID [1]	LIWA [1]	FARIQ [1]
AIR FORCE									
U.S. RANK TITLES	2D LIEUTENANT	1ST LIEUTENANT	CAPTAIN	MAJOR	LIEUTENANT COLONEL	COLONEL	BRIGADIER GENERAL	MAJOR GENERAL	LIEUTENANT GENERAL
LIBYAN RANK	MULAZIM	MULAZIM AWWAL	NAQIB	RAID	MUQADDAM	AQID	AMID [1]	LIWA [1]	FARIQ [1]
NAVY									
U.S. RANK TITLES	ENSIGN	LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE	LIEUTENANT	LIEUTENANT COMMANDER	COMMANDER	CAPTAIN	COMMODORE ADMIRAL	REAR ADMIRAL	VICE ADMIRAL

NOTE- [1] As of December 1987, no one occupied these ranks.

Figure 15. Commissioned Officers Ranks and Insignia, 1987

LIBYAN RANK		JUNDI	JUNDI AWWAL	ARIF	RAQIB	RAQIB AWWAL	MUSAID
ARMY (Air Force and Navy Rank Insignia Not Known)		NO INSIGNIA					
U.S. RANK TITLES	1	BASIC PRIVATE	PRIVATE 1ST CLASS	CORPORAL	SERGEANT	STAFF SERGEANT	MASTER SERGEANT
	2	AIRMAN BASIC	AIRMAN 1ST CLASS	SERGEANT	STAFF SERGEANT	TECHNICAL SERGEANT	SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT
	3	SEAMAN RECRUIT	SEAMAN	PETTY OFFICER 3D CLASS	PETTY OFFICER 2D CLASS	PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS	SENIOR CHIEF PETTY OFFICER

NOTES- [1] Army. [2] Air Force. [3] Navy.

Figure 16. Enlisted Personnel Ranks and Insignia, 1987

components or specific programs were impossible to ascertain. Moreover, the figures published for the defense budget clearly fell far short of actual expenditures. In all likelihood, many military outlays were hidden under other budget items or obscured by manipulation of prices or exchange rates. The value of imported military equipment alone has generally been far in excess of the allocations to defense as recorded in the budget. The massive purchases from the Soviet Union, estimated at over US$1 billion annually since the mid-1970s, do not appear in the budget either as payments or amortization of military credit.

Increased spending for military improvements and other defense needs was made possible by the vast revenues from petroleum—particularly after the government nationalized the industry. Even during the monarchy, a doubling of military expenditures between 1964 and 1968 demonstrated that this new source of revenue permitted an upgrading of the military that was previously unattainable. Nonetheless, defense expenditures under the monarchy continued to be relatively modest. As one specialist wrote just before the 1969 coup, ''thus far Libya has avoided succumbing to the lure of the arms race or procurement of nonessential prestige military forces.''

Within a few years after the assumption of power by the Qadhafi regime, defense spending accelerated dramatically. It continued to rise nearly every year, although at a somewhat reduced rate after 1978. Arms imports ordinarily formed more than half of total defense expenditures. However, some slackening in the value of imported equipment has occurred since 1982. This is attributed in part to the saturation of the Libyan defense forces and in part to financial strains on the government arising from the sharp decline in oil prices.

The limited official data published by Libya offer a completely different picture from the estimates compiled by non-Libyan sources. In the administrative budget for 1984, the amount shown for the armed forces is LD340 million (for value of the Libyan dinar, see Glossary), which constituted 23.6 percent of the budget. This represented a substantial increase over the LD300 million shown for 1983, composing 19.7 percent of the administrative budget. Defense expenditures were omitted from the budget published for 1985, and no explanation was supplied of the component items in the ostensible disbursements for defense in 1983 or 1984.

According to estimates compiled by ACDA, Libyan military expenditures rose eightfold between 1973 and 1979, when a peak of US$3 billion annually was reached. Spending then remained fairly level until a new upswing in spending began by 1983. By

1984, annual outlays on defense were estimated at US$5.1 billion. The 1979 figure represented 12.4 percent of gross national product (GNP), whereas the 1984 figure represented 17.8 percent of GNP and an exceptionally high 40 percent of total government expenditures. On the basis of the ACDA estimate, military spending would have amounted to US$1,360 per capita in 1984. This compared to a figure of US$34 per capita for Africa as a whole and was about twice the level of average per capita spending on defense of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Only Israel, Saudi Arabia, and several smaller states of the Arabian Peninsula had military outlays on a scale comparable to those of Libya.

Foreign Military Assistance

Because of a relatively low level of technical and industrial development—apart from the petroleum sector—since independence Libya has been forced to rely on foreign sources of assistance in its efforts to establish a credible military posture. During the eighteen years of the monarchy, the Idris government turned to the West for help in forging a national military system. In the process, the government entered into a number of treaties and other agreements of a military nature, particularly with Britain and the United States. One of the most important of these agreements was the Treaty of Friendship concluded in 1953 by Britain and Libya that included reciprocal pledges of assistance in case of an armed conflict. The treaty, which was to have remained in force for twenty years, granted the British continued rights to the use of military bases along the Mediterranean coast in exchange for extensive military supplies and training assistance.

Similar arrangements concluded with the United States a year later granted the use of Wheelus Air Base in exchange for military assistance grants and the purchase of excess stocks of American weapons. United States military aid was devoted mainly to the organization and development of the Libyan air force. Many of the personnel recruited to that new branch received American training, and most of the aircraft acquired during its early years were provided by the United States.

Since the mid-1970s, arms deliveries to Libya have originated predominantly in the Soviet Union and other communist countries. According to ACDA, these sources accounted for 60 percent of total military imports between 1981 and 1985. Such sources included the Soviet Union (US$4.6 billion), Czechoslovakia (US$875 million), People's Republic of China (US$320 million), and Poland (US$300 million). Major Western sources were France (mostly naval craft previously ordered) at US$725 million and Italy, which provided supplies amounting to US$850 million. The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was the only other significant West European source, furnishing US$180 million worth of equipment. Such other suppliers as Brazil and Yugoslavia accounted for a further US$2.6 billion.

The Quest for New Sources of Arms

After the young officers led by Qadhafi deposed the Idris regime, it was almost inevitable that their government would look for new sources of military equipment. One of the many causes of the coup was the monarchy's unwillingness to involve Libya militarily in the Arab-Israeli conflict. To have continued to rely solely on Britain and the United States for arms would have invited domestic and Arab criticism inasmuch as both countries were regarded as hostile to the interests of the Arab world because of their support for Israel. The Libyans therefore cancelled the treaty with Britain and, in March 1970, the British evacuated their bases near Tobruk and Benghazi. United States operational and maintenance support of the Libyan air force ended the following June when American personnel evacuated Wheelus Air Base. Overall American military assistance between 1958 and 1970 had amounted to US$17.4 million in grant aid and US$43.4 million in sales.

In 1970 the Libyan government announced that it had contracted for the purchase of French weapons systems, notably Mirage fighters, valued at US$400 million. Using facilities that were formerly part of Wheelus Air Base, French instructors engaged in the training of Libyan pilots and ground crews to operate and maintain the Mirages. The choice of France as an alternative arms supplier was a logical one for Libya. Not only was France increasingly dependent upon Libyan oil supplies, but its policy toward the Arab-Israeli dispute was acceptable to Qadhafi.

Failing in its efforts to acquire medium tanks from either France or Britain, Qadhafi turned to the Soviet Union. Moscow had quickly recognized the new Libyan regime and responded with equal speed to the request for weapons. In July 1970, the first Soviet military vehicles, including 30 medium tanks and 100 armored personnel carriers, arrived in Libya.

Apart from France, however, during the early 1970s neighboring Egypt had the greatest influence on Qadhafi's drive to upgrade his defense forces. Egypt had supported the coup by positioning Egyptian units at strategic points throughout Libya to help prevent any attempt by royalist forces to stage a countercoup. By 1972 an estimated 2,000 Egyptian soldiers were serving in the country as instructors. Training was also provided for both officers and enlisted personnel at installations in Egypt. After the military academy at Benghazi closed, a number of Libyans were trained at the Egyptian military academy.

The October 1973 War, which drew sharp criticism from Qadhafi over the Egyptian military effort and the willingness of President Anwar Sadat to accept a disengagement agreement with Israel, produced a rift between the two North African neighbors. Egypt withdrew from Libya all Egyptian pilots and two vessels it had lent the Libyan navy. Cooperation in air defense was also terminated as Egypt withdrew surface-to-air missiles it had provided earlier and halted work on the air defenses it had been developing to protect Tripoli, Benghazi, and Tobruk.

Libya then turned to Pakistan for help. A small Pakistani advisory contingent that had been giving training on helicopters and transport aircraft was expanded to about 600—including 40 pilots. Small numbers of Italian, French, and Yugoslav instructors were also introduced for training.

Military Cooperation with the Soviet Union

Because of Libya's forcing the evacuation from Libya of British and United States military personnel in 1970, the Libyans were rebuffed in a renewed effort to obtain military equipment from the West, except for limited British help with the developing navy. Therefore, Libya turned elsewhere for aid. In December 1974, Libya disclosed a large-scale arms purchase agreement with the Soviet Union, involving Tu-22 bombers, MiG-23 fighters, helicopters, T–62 tanks, and antitank and antiaircraft missiles. A second agreement in May 1975 heralded an even greater flow of Soviet arms and military advisers to Libya throughout the 1970s. Included in the agreement were submarines, of which a total of six were eventually transferred. Subsequent agreements followed in 1977, 1978, and 1980. The value of these transactions was estimated at over US$20 billion between 1973 and 1985.

The new round of arms purchases in 1978, precipitated by the clashes with Egypt in the preceding year, included the MiG-25 Foxbat in its fighter, reconnaissance, and training configurations. This sale to Libya was the first recorded time the Soviet Union furnished the MiG-25 to any country not participating in the Warsaw Pact. Deliveries of sophisticated military hardware were accompanied by Soviet and East European technicians estimated by the United States Department of State to have numbered 2,600 in 1984. In late 1985, these technicians were augmented by a considerable number of specialists to install and help operate the new

SA–5 missiles. Approximately 7,600 Libyan military personnel had received training in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe by 1984.

Deliveries of modern Soviet armaments continued during the early 1980s, although they tapered off markedly between 1983 (US$2.9 billion) and 1985 (US$1.3 billion), according to estimates compiled by ACDA. Libya was the first non-Warsaw Pact recipient of Haze antisubmarine helicopters. Natya-class minesweepers and Nanuchka-class fast-missile corvettes helped expand the navy. The three batteries of SA–5 missile launchers, including early warning and surveillance radar, delivered toward the close of 1985 failed in their purpose of deterring maneuvers by United States naval elements in the Gulf of Sidra. Nonetheless, when Jallud visited Moscow several months later, it was officially announced that the Soviets had agreed to a new request for aid. Included were an improved version of the SA–5, new monitoring and early warning radar, antijamming devices, Mi-24 helicopters, and additional gunboats and fighter planes. By early 1987, major arms shipments reportedly had been cut off, either because of Qadhafi's failure to make promised oil deliveries or because of Soviet disillusionment over Libyan performance against United States planes and the abandonment of vast amounts of modern equipment in Chad.

The massive Libyan purchases brought the Soviet Union economic gains and enabled the Soviets to extend their strategic influence farther into the Mediterranean while appearing to reward the anti-imperialist and Arab unity stance of the Libyan regime. Nevertheless, Qadhafi's increasingly undependable behavior, his estrangement from other Arab and African nations, and his setbacks in employing modern Soviet weaponry apparently made the Soviets skeptical of Qadhafi and reluctant to be closely identified with him. Although in 1984 the two countries issued a joint declaration in principle to enter into a treaty of friendship and cooperation and confirmed their intention in 1986, such an agreement, which would obligate the Soviet Union to come to Qadhafi's aid if attacked, had not been concluded by early 1987.

As of early 1987, Qadhafi had refrained from granting the Soviets permanent shore facilities or air bases on Libyan territory. However, Soviet combatant ships had paid frequent port calls, and antisubmarine planes of the Soviet naval aviation branch had occasionally been rotated to Libyan airfields.

Western Restrictions on Arms Transactions

Libya's radicalism, its reckless ventures beyond its borders, and its links to terrorists caused among Western countries a growing reluctance to supply Libya with lethal equipment, a reluctance

A Soviet-supplied Su-22 fighter of the Libyan Air Force
Courtesy United States Department of Defense

amounting to formal or de facto embargoes by most Western arms manufacturers. A policy of refusing to ship arms to Libya was reaffirmed in the Tokyo Declaration on International Terrorism in May 1986, signed by the governments of Canada, West Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Britain, and the United States. Libya has nonetheless continued to look to non-Soviet suppliers, turning to such peripheral sources as Yugoslavia, Greece, and Brazil.

United States restrictions on military sales date from the mid-1970s when the delivery of eight C–130 Lockheed cargo planes ordered in 1972 was blocked out of fear that they would be used for military ventures in Uganda. In 1978 spare parts were banned for the C–130s Libya already had on hand, and an export license was refused for two Boeing 727s. Qadhafi angrily rejected accusations against Libya of supporting international terrorism, describing the American attitude as "both puerile and unworthy of a great power." He denied that Libya financed terrorism and asserted that the aircraft carriers of the United States Sixth Fleet were engaged in "terrorism" by their very presence in the Mediterranean. Having initially rejected a permit for the export of 400 trucks manufactured by the Oshkosh Company, the United States government relented after receiving written guarantees that the trucks would be used solely for agricultural purposes. However, upon their delivery in 1979, the trucks were converted to military transporters by Canadian mechanics using Austrian equipment.

After Libya canceled the treaties with Britain and the United States, France became its main alternative arms supplier. Support for the Mirage fighters by Dassault, a French manufacturer, consisted of both pilot and ground crew training in Libya and France and periodic major overhauls of planes at the Dassault plant. However, the strained relations between the two countries over Chad brought an end to this support. Reportedly, France held discussions concerning the more advanced Mirage 2000 in return for Libyan compliance with its 1983 withdrawal agreement from Chad, but Libya's continued involvement there ruled out any sale. The only major French arms transfer was the US$600 million sale of ten Combattante fast-attack craft with missiles, the last of which was delivered in 1984 under a contract negotiated six years earlier.

Libya was involved in a series of significant transactions with Italy in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1978 the Italian aircraft company Siai-Marchetti secured a contract to supply SF–260 light aircraft intended for training and reconnaissance. The G–222 military transport plane assembled by Aeritalia was also supplied to the Libyans. The Italian firm of Oto Melara received orders for a large number of Palmaria 155mm self-propelled howitzers. Over a three-year period, a complete renovation of a British-built frigate was carried out in a Genoa shipyard. Four corvettes of the Assad type were contracted for in 1974, but the last of these vessels was not delivered until 1982. Both the frigate and the corvettes were fitted with Otomat missiles.

An arms-supply relationship with Brazil began in 1977 with a Libyan order for several hundred armored cars at a cost of over US$100 million. A contract in 1981 for US$250 million covered purchases of additional armored cars, rockets, bombs, and missile launchers. Negotiations were interrupted after Brazil's 1983 seizure of four transiting Libyan aircraft loaded with weapons for Nicaragua. Resumption of negotiations in 1986 was expected to lead to Brazilian sale of EMB–312 Tucano trainer aircraft, EMB–121 Xingu transports, and additional Cascavel and Urutu armored vehicles.

In late 1985, Libya signed an agreement with Greece covering the sale of US$500 million in equipment, including the Artemis-30 antiaircraft gun and the Steyr armored personnel carrier, manufactured in Greece under license from Austria. Yugoslavia was reported to be supplying a number of Galeb jet trainer aircraft in addition to those already in service, as well as Koncar-class missile boats to be armed with Soviet-designed Styx missiles.

The Search for Nuclear Technology

In 1975 Libya had ratified the United Nations (UN) Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty signed by the Idris regime in 1969. In 1980 an agreement was reached with the International Atomic Energy Agency placing all of Libya's nuclear installations under international inspection. Despite these steps, in the mid- and late 1970s, Qadhafi repeatedly proclaimed his country's determination to acquire nuclear weapons, primarily because he was convinced that his archenemy, Israel, had achieved such a military capability.

Qadhafi sought help in obtaining nuclear technology from a number of countries, including the People's Republic of China. Among these efforts, the cooperation with Pakistan launched in 1977 seemed for a time to be producing material results. Libya appeared to be providing financial assistance and, later, deliveries of uranium "yellow cake" originating in Niger in the hope of eventually being compensated by weapons from Pakistan. However, in an interview with an Indian newspaper in March 1986, Qadhafi declared that Libya would never help Pakistan acquire an atomic bomb. He said: "We consider nuclear weapons production a great mistake against humanity."

A 10-megawatt nuclear research reactor supplied by the Soviet Union in 1979 was installed at a research center at Tajura near Tripoli staffed by 750 Libyan specialists and technicians. Many students were sent abroad; a group of 200 was studying in the United States until early 1983 when the United States proscribed training Libyans in nuclear science. Libya planned to buy a power station from the Soviet Union, but, dissatisfied with the technology involved, negotiated with the Belgian firm of Belgonucléaire to take over the engineering contract and supply much of the needed equipment. After the United States objected, fearing use of the equipment in weapons development, Belgium decided in 1984 to refuse the US$1 billion contract. Shortly thereafter, Moscow's commitment to construct an 880-megawatt power station to be located in the Surt region was reaffirmed. It was to cost over US$4 billion, with repayment to stretch over 15 to 18 years.

Libya had a theoretical capability of delivering nuclear weapons in the form of Scud and FROG missiles and missiles delivered by medium-range Tu–22 bombers. Suspicions that Libya was seeking to acquire a medium-range missile capability were aroused in 1980 when it was revealed that the West German firm, Orbital Transport-und-Raketen Aktiengesellschaft (OTRAG), had built a rocket-testing base in the Libyan desert. OTRAG, which had earlier been forced to give up a testing site in Zaire, claimed that it was working on a nonmilitary rocket to enable Third World countries to launch satellites cheaply.

Arms Production and Military Cooperation

During the 1970s some efforts were launched toward greater self-reliance in military matériel, but little has resulted from these initiatives. Although Libya has supplied weapons and equipment to other governments in direct pursuit of its foreign policy, these weapons have been from Soviet-supplied stocks in the vast Libyan inventory. In 1978 Yugoslavia agreed to build a large plant in Libya to manufacture ammunition and spare parts for Soviet weapons. In early 1987, the extent to which this commitment was implemented was unknown, but even repair and maintenance workshops have remained wholly inadequate to service the Soviet-supplied equipment and must be operated largely by foreign technicians. A plan to assemble in Libya some of the SF-260 training planes acquired from Italy did not materialize. Consequently, Libya's manufacturing capacity remains limited to the production of basic quartermaster items, uniforms, and some small arms and ammunition.

In addition to supplying arms to dissident and rebel forces in several countries of Africa and other parts of the world, Libya assisted friendly regimes with surplus equipment, but generally not on a consistent or long-term basis. In the two years after the Tripartite Agreement was signed with Ethiopia and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) in August 1981, Libyan aid to Ethiopia in the form of weapons and financial backing amounted to half of all Libya's international aid. Libya and Syria have somewhat parallel aims in the Middle East, and Libya has financed much of Syria's arms acquired directly from the Soviet Union. Among African nations, Benin and Ghana have been recipients of weapons and matériel, in part in recognition for voting with Libya in international forums and in part because Libya has been permitted to use them as transit and recruitment points for its activities in other countries of Africa.

In late 1984, a five-year cooperation agreement was entered into with Malta under which Libya was to provide a military training team and helicopters and would consign some of its naval units for maintenance in Maltese shipyards. A military agreement was also concluded with Sudan in 1985 after the government of Jaafar an Numayri was overthrown by a group less hostile to Libya. Libya pledged to supply a quantity of trucks, trailers, and spares for Soviet equipment already in the Sudanese inventory. In return, the Libyans reportedly were permitted to set up a base in the western region of Darfur where several hundred Libyan troops joined with Chadian insurgents fighting to topple the Chadian government. Although Sudan later claimed that it was severing these new ties with Libya, as of late 1986 Libya reportedly had not fully evacuated Sudanese territory.

In spite of Libya's and Iran's differing goals and mutual suspicions, Libya supported the Iranian Revolution and, unlike other Arab regimes (apart from Syria), backed Iran in its war against Iraq. Qadhafi has provided the Tehran government with T-55 tanks, antitank and antiaircraft artillery, ammunition, and Scud missiles.

International Terrorism and Support for Insurgent Groups

Since Qadhafi's rise to power, Libya has chronically employed terrorism and revolutionary groups as primary instruments for fulfilling its international ambitions. The main targets of terrorist activity have been Libyan dissidents living abroad and prominent political figures of moderate Arab and African countries. Qadhafi has openly declared that "the Revolution has destroyed those who oppose it inside the country and now it must pursue the rest abroad." A concerted drive to assassinate anti-Qadhafi exiles resulted in the murder of eleven Libyan dissidents in 1980 and 1981. A further five attacks were sponsored by Libya in 1985. Plots were allegedly uncovered against President Habré of Chad in 1984 and President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire in 1985. Earlier, there was evidence that Libyan agents had targeted Arab moderates, including Presidents Anwar Sadat and Husni Mubarak of Egypt, Jaafar an Numayri of Sudan, Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia, King Hussein of Jordan, and King Hassan II of Morocco.

Qadhafi has endeavored to undermine moderate Arab governments judged not to be militant enough in their attitude toward Israel or to be too closely tied to the West. Sudan under Numayri was a priority target because it cooperated with the West and with Egypt. Arms and funds were funneled to Sudanese rebels based in Ethiopia in their guerrilla warfare against the central government. In early 1983, Libya was accused of having masterminded a coup attempt that miscarried badly. The coup plan called for Libyan planes to bomb public buildings in the capital of Khartoum while dissidents took over the center of the city. When the plan became known and Egyptian and United States aircraft were deployed at Numayri's request, Qadhafi called a halt to the operation. However, in 1984, a plane believed to be Libyan attempted to destroy a radio station at Umm Durman, Sudan, that was broadcasting condemnations of Qadhafi's policies.

Since late 1980, Qadhafi has aided the Somali National Salvation Front, an insurgent group operating out of Ethiopia. He has kindled unrest in North Africa in the case of Algeria by providing money and a base to dissidents, such as former president Ahmed Ben Bella, and in Tunisia by recruiting dissidents from the large numbers of Tunisian workers in Libya to conduct raids and sabotage.

In addition to repeated interventions in Chad in his efforts to impose a leadership that would be amenable to Libyan influence, Qadhafi has been accused of providing arms and training to Tuareg tribesmen at a camp at Sabha. His goal has been to stir up the Tuareg into demanding a union carved out of existing Sahelian states, a union that would be under Libyan influence.

Libya has contributed to Niger's fears by its annexation of a strip of territory on Niger's northern border and its backing of a coup attempt against the president of Niger in 1976. Relations with other African countries—including Senegal, Gambia, Togo, Burkina Faso, and Zaire—have been embittered by Qadhafi's plotting and support for radical dissidents.

Beginning in the 1980s, Qadhafi extended his activities into Latin America and Asia. Arms and money allegedly have been made available to insurgents in Guatemala and El Salvador, as well as to the M-19 terrorist group in Colombia. In South Asia, Libya has been involved with opponents of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi governments and in Southeast Asia has provided help to Muslim minorities, notably the Moro separatists on Mindanao in the Philippines.

In the Middle East, Qadhafi has been motivated by the aim of destroying Israel and of punishing those Arab elements willing to compromise in the interest of regional peace. The smaller, more radical factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) have received training and arms from Libya as well as financing for their activities. According to the United States Department of State, Libya's contribution in 1981 alone amounted to nearly US$100 million. In 1985 attention was focused on Qadhafi's links with the Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal Organization, more formally known as the Fatah Revolutionary Council, and with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. The Abu Nidal Organization was believed responsible for the shooting of the Israeli ambassador in London, the hijacking of an Egyptian airliner, and attacks on the El Al and Trans World Airlines ticket counters at the Rome and Vienna airports. The Department of State charged that millions of dollars in Libyan funds had gone to the Abu Nidal Organization, that its top figures were resident in Libya, and that

Workers load a surface-to-air missile onto a transporter

Libya had provided training and travel documents to its teams mounting terrorist attacks. Although other Middle Eastern states such as Syria and Iran remained involved in terrorism, the Department of State maintained that Libya had become the most active, especially against American and European travelers.

The affinity of Qadhafi for the Abu Nidal Organization and other radical Palestinian factions is explained by the bitter enmity they share for the main Arafat wing of the PLO, and by their rejection of any form of negotiations with Israel. Terrorist attacks of the kind they have successfully launched serve Qadhafi's purpose by further elevating tensions in the Middle East and blighting the prospects of peace initiatives.

Public Order and Internal Security

The Police System

Throughout its pre-Revolutionary history, the mission and operating concepts underlying the Libyan police system were the same as those in many other Muslim societies. The traditional concept of police or *shurtah* was a broad one. Because the *shurtah* were used from time to time by the government in power to undertake new conquests, security force commanders often had full-sized armies at their disposal. Domestically, however, the *shurtah* were primarily responsible for suppressing dissidence and insurrections as well as performing other internal security duties. The latter duties typically embraced the kinds of administrative and judicial functions often required of urban and rural police, such as the prevention of crime, investigation and arrest of criminals, and maintenance of public order. Some of these concepts have survived in present-day Libya; others have been altered in response to the changing needs of the society.

Shortly after the 1969 coup, military officers were temporarily integrated into key police positions to guard against a countercoup. A complete reorganization of the police followed over the next three years. An early step in the process of stripping the police of paramilitary status was the consolidation of the regional police forces into a unified organization under the Ministry of Interior. In 1971 new separate agencies to handle civil defense and fire protection were provided for by law. Ministerial decrees established other units, such as the Central Traffic Department, the Central Department for Criminal Investigation, the Arab International Criminal Police Bureau, the Ports Security Department, the Identity Investigation, and the Police Training Department. A special police law promulgated by the RCC in January 1972 spelled out the new functions of the police force, which was formally redesignated the Police at the Service of the People and the Revolution. The police were specifically charged with responsibility for "the administration of prisons, civil defense activities, passport and nationality affairs, identity card affairs, and other functions set forth by laws and regulations."

Individual police units were under the jurisdiction of regional security directorates throughout the country, with primary responsibility for enforcing the laws and administering the police falling under the minister of interior and his deputy. A special Police Affairs Council—composed of the deputy minister as chairman, the directors of the central police department, the regional chiefs, and a legal adviser—was empowered to coordinate activities of various police branches and to issue decrees on police matters.

Police ranks followed closely those of the armed forces. An officer candidate had to be a Libyan citizen at least twenty years of age, of good conduct and behavior, in good physical condition, and not married to a foreigner. He also had to be a graduate of the police academy. Police work was considered a prestigious occupation, and its attractive working conditions and benefits reportedly produced well-qualified applicants who underwent stiff competition for vacancies. However, standards may have deteriorated as more lucrative opportunities in the oil industry and in government became available for those with sufficient education.

In a counterpart to the media attacks on the professional military in 1983, the official Libyan press targeted the police as lacking revolutionary zeal. The press demanded greater direct responsibility for the masses in protecting the people's security. Articles recalled that the police were descended from the mobile forces of the Idris regime, headed by "fascist, bourgeois officers" who had suppressed all manifestations of discontent with the royalist system. Police officials were accused of engaging in licentious behavior, of drinking liquor, and of carrying on illegal businesses. They were charged with being "feudalistic" in their behavior, of being ill educated because many lacked a high-school diploma, and often unfit for duty because of advancing age.

Declaring that "security is the responsibility of the people as a whole in the same way as the defense of the homeland is," Qadhafi announced in 1985 that the police would henceforward be known as the People's Security Force. Whether this name change accomplished much seemed doubtful; the official press complained that all that had happened was that signs over the police stations now read "People's Security Station."

Incidence of Crime

The Qadhafi regime has regarded crime as an anomaly in conflict with its revolutionary goals inasmuch as all Libyans are expected to contribute to the common good of society and its social, political, and economic advancement. During an earlier phase of his rule, Qadhafi deplored a pattern of increasingly unlawful behavior that included an unacceptable incidence of theft, violence, and traffic accidents. He had hoped to follow the British model of police officers enforcing public order with "a notebook, a pencil or a map to guide people, but not a gun or a stick." Instead, he lamented, he was obliged to depend on an armed police force because "the Third World will need another 500 years to understand that a policeman, even unarmed, must be respected."

Because meaningful data had not been available for many years, no up-to-date assessment of the extent and nature of criminal activity could be made in 1987. When last reported, statistics showed a high incidence of property theft and relatively fewer violent crimes, such as rape, manslaughter, and murder. A significant number of convictions were under the category of "crimes against freedom, honor, and the public," which could range from public drunkenness to student demonstrations and more serious political offenses. To judge from reports in the official press in the mid-1980s, the nation's economic strains were reflected in a growing number of cases of smuggling, illegal deposit of money abroad, bribery, and misappropriation of funds by public officials.

Corruption in government has been an abiding concern. In 1975 a tough new law made the acceptance of a bribe by a public official punishable by up to ten years in prison plus fines set at twice the amount of the bribe. A person proffering a bribe could receive up to five years in prison plus fines of up to LD500. According to press reports, verdicts handed down by people's courts involved relatively moderate jail sentences of one to two years but harsh fines of LD50,000 and more. An official found guilty of paying unearned overtime salaries to relatives and friends, however, was condemned to a ten-year prison term.

Criminal Justice System

The Libyan system of criminal justice has been heavily influenced by Islamic law, particularly since Qadhafi's proclamation of the Popular Revolution on April 15, 1973. On that date, the Libyan leader announced that all existing laws formulated by the monarchy were to be replaced by the sharia, the sacred law of Islam. Some amendments to bring the criminal code into conformity with Islam had been made before this proclamation. In October 1972, the government enacted a law providing for the amputation of the right hands of convicted thieves. (As a modern note to this traditional Islamic punishment, the government gave assurances that amputation would be performed at a hospital under sanitary conditions with an anesthetic.) In practice, this penalty has not been commonly imposed.

Qadhafi's proclamation involved a reorientation of Libya's entire criminal code, because, according to the 1954 code, no act was a crime unless defined as such by law. Yet the code also specified that nothing in the criminal code affected the individual rights provided for in Islamic sharia. The two provisions were basically incompatible because the 1954 code identified crimes in decreasing order of seriousness as felonies, misdemeanors, and contraventions, assigning maximum sentences to each, whereas under the sharia an act could be—depending upon the circumstances—mandatory, commendable, permissible, reprehensible, or forbidden.

Efforts to align the criminal code's three categories of offense with the five classifications embodied in the sharia involved Libyan legal and religious scholars in an extensive and slow-moving process to minimize the obvious contradictions in the two systems. Changes in the code's provisions were announced from time to time, but the basic philosophical issues had not been completely resolved by 1973.

Amendments to the criminal code after 1973 addressed both moral issues related to Islamic beliefs and purely secular matters, notably those concerning state security. In official legal announcements in 1973 and 1974, lashings and imprisonment of adulterers, imprisonment of homosexuals for up to five years, and floggings for those transgressing the fast of Ramadan were issued as laws "in line with positive Islamic legislation." Another law provided forty lashes for any Muslim who drank or served alcoholic beverages. For alcoholic-related offenses, non-Muslims could receive fines or imprisonment, and fines and jail terms were set for possession of or trafficking in liquor.

In August 1975, following a major coup attempt, the criminal code was further revised to strengthen state security. Such actions as "scheming" with foreigners to harm Libya's military or political position, facilitating war against the state, revealing state or defense secrets, infiltration into military reservations, and possession of means of espionage were made subject to harsh penalties, including life imprisonment and hanging. Punishments for public servants were stiffer than for ordinary citizens.

An increasing number of acts have brought the threat of execution. A 1975 law provided that membership in a political party opposing the principles of the 1969 Revolution could result in death. In 1977 economic crimes, such as damaging oil installations or stockpiles of basic commodities, were added. Qadhafi's repeated calls for abolition of the death sentence have not been translated into legislative action.

The Libyan criminal justice system under the Qadhafi-led government has been characterized by many repressive features. Victims reported torture and beatings during interrogation as a matter of practice, and long jail sentences for political nonconformity. Other irregularities included bypassing the regular court system by special tribunals and holding show trials. The international human rights organization, Amnesty International, has repeatedly reported evidence of grave violations of civil rights and of Libyan law. Most of Amnesty International's inquiries and appeals to Libya to free political prisoners, to abandon torture to extract confessions, and to commute death penalties have gone unanswered.

An account by Amnesty International in 1977 cited twenty-six executions (the first death penalties that had been carried out in twenty-three years), large numbers of Libyans who had been held in detention for up to four years without court action, trials that were ''anything but fair and impartial,'' and defendants who were deprived of their basic legal rights under Libyan law. When it was pointed out to Libyan authorities that they were failing to conform to UN agreements Libya had ratified—the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights—the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs replied that there were currently no political prisoners in Libyan prisons and that all means of defense and safeguards of justice were provided for accused persons. In 1978 Amnesty International asserted that the people's court system violated the UN agreements because the courts were composed largely of government representatives rather than members of an impartial judiciary. Moreover, all trials in people's courts were held in secret and no appeals were permitted.

A further report by Amnesty International described a new series of breaches of judicial norms between 1982 and 1984. It cited the trial in 1982 of twenty-five individuals on charges of membership in an illegal organization (the Baath—Arab Socialist Resurrection—Party). The accused were acquitted because their confessions were obtained through torture. In violation of Libyan law, they were retried in 1983 before a revolutionary court headed by a captain in the special security branch and received severe sentences, including death penalties in three cases. In 1984, eight people were hanged publicly following decisions of basic people's congresses in their localities that they were members of the Muslim Brotherhood, an international Islamic movement banned by Qadhafi as an illegal political party. In the same year, two students were hanged before thousands of their fellow students at Al Fatah University in Tripoli. No explanation was given of the charges or of the judicial proceedings, although the students were possibly tried before the student revolutionary committee. Amnesty International has been unsuccessful in gaining its representatives admission to trials and has not received replies to most of its inquiries and appeals.

The penal system was a responsibility of the Secretariat of Interior and was administered by a department of the police administration. Three institutions—the Central Prison at Tripoli, Kuwayfiyah Prison at Benghazi, and Jdeida Prison outside Tripoli—were known to exist, and smaller facilities in less populated centers were assumed to be part of the system. Qadhafi granted permission for visits by Amnesty International to several prisons in the late 1970s, but the necessary arrangements were never made by Libyan authorities. Subsequent efforts to inspect living conditions of political prisoners have been unsuccessful.

According to a report submitted by Libya to the UN, the prison system was reorganized under Law No. 47 in 1975. According to the report, the thrust of this law was to change the prisons from institutions of "punishment and terror" to ones where inmates were afforded education and training as part of a program to rehabilitate offenders. The law envisaged a series of increasingly less restrictive penal facilities in which inmates could earn moves upward through a hierarchy of prisons by good behavior and an appropriate attitude. As of 1987 the extent to which these objectives had been realized had not been made public.

State of Internal Security

In the late 1980s, many segments of Libyan society deeply resented the authoritarian nature of the Libyan government under Qadhafi. The extent of silent opposition could not be assessed with certainty but has been estimated at more than 50 percent by outside observers. Dissent was hard to measure because all news media were strictly controlled to serve as instruments of the state, and no forms of association were permitted without the endorsement of the regime. Citizens were fearful of voicing discontent or uttering critical opinions that might be reported by a widespread informer network. Punishment for open dissent was arbitrary and could be extraordinarily severe.

Internal security mechanisms reaching into every corner of Libyan society, and fears of harsh retribution have successfully prevented antipathy to Qadhafi's actions from reaching a stage of public demonstrations or open questioning. As many as 50,000 Libyans—mostly from the more prosperous classes—have taken up residence abroad, but the opposition groups that have sprung up among the exiles have not presented a convincing threat to the regime (see The Opposition to Qadhafi, ch. 4).

Numerous attempts have been launched to overturn Qadhafi's rule. In most instances, these attempts have originated among military officers who have access to weapons and the necessary communications and organizational networks. In no case, however, did they appear to come near to achieving their goal. The effectiveness of the internal security apparatus and the infiltration of officers loyal to Qadhafi have frustrated most plots before they could develop sufficiently to have a chance of success.

Among the reported coup attempts, possibly the most widespread was uncovered among disaffected officers of the RCC in 1975. A large number of personnel were tried in secret by a military court, with many sentenced to death and hundreds condemned to long prison terms. An undisclosed number of officers and civilians were arrested in an abortive coup in January 1983; five officers were executed, including the deputy commander of the People's Militia. A coup attempt, reportedly involving bloody fighting in front of the fortified barracks where Qadhafi resides in a Tripoli suburb, occurred in May 1984. According to the United States Department of State, over 5,000 were arrested, many tortured, and perhaps more than 100 executed. A leading opposition group, the National Front for the Salvation of Libya, took credit for this failed operation, although Qadhafi blamed the Muslim Brotherhood.

Another reported plot in March 1985 was said to have been foiled when it was infiltrated by persons loyal to Qadhafi. Some sixty military officers, disgruntled over the country's economic mismanagement and extravagance, were said to have been arrested.

A further instance of disaffection occurred in November 1985. Colonel Hassan Ishkal, a senior officer and military governor of Surt, was reportedly summarily executed after being summoned to Qadhafi's headquarters. It was believed that he had broken with Qadhafi over the interference of revolutionary guards in the military and over Qadhafi's adventurist foreign policies.

Because of these coup attempts, protective security surrounding Qadhafi was carried to unusual lengths. His travel plans were concealed and changed abruptly, his patterns of residence were disguised, and he moved about in a heavily armored convoy. His personal bodyguard was composed of a Presidential Guard, drawn from his own tribal group. Moreover, there were reports that Qadhafi constantly moved senior military officers from one command to another so that no officer could develop a unified command capable of threatening the regime.

The major instrument used by Qadhafi to detect and avert coup attempts was an extensive internal security apparatus. As of early 1987, details of the salient features of the security organization were generally lacking. The system installed in the early 1970s with Egyptian help was modeled on its Egyptian counterpart and was once described as ''composed of several overlapping but autonomously directed intelligence machines.'' As it further evolved, internal security functioned on several levels, beginning with Qadhafi's personal bodyguard unit (reportedly given technical assistance by East German advisers). The secret service and, at a lower level, the police were constantly on the alert for suspicious conduct, as were the revolutionary committees and the basic people's congresses. The committees constituted an effective informer network and may also act independently of other security agencies when authorized and encouraged by Qadhafi. This multilayered complex assured tight control over the activity of individuals in virtually every community.

* * *

Although published data on the Libyan armed forces is limited and often contradictory, some details can be found in the article on Libya by Gwynne Dyer in the compendium *World Armies.* Additionally, assessments of Libyan military capabilities in relation to other armies of the Middle East are available in *The Middle East Military Balance* (ed. Mark Heller). A number of aspects of the role of military power in Qadhafi's regime are treated in Richard B. Parker's *North Africa: Regional Tensions and Strategic Concerns.* Reports by the United States Department of State, *The Libyan Problem* (1983) and *Libya Under Qadhafi: A Pattern of Aggression* (1986) summarize much of what is known of Libya's attempts to subvert other governments, to assassinate its opponents in exile, and to support international terrorism. Libyan relations with the Soviet Union are analyzed in Lisa Anderson's ''Qadhafi and the Kremlin.'' Events in Chad and other developments involving the Libyan military are reviewed in the monthly *Africa Research Bulletin* and in *Keesing's Contemporary Archives.* (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Appendix

Table

1 Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors
2 Educational Enrollment, Selected Academic Years, 1975–86
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Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters	0.04	inches
Centimeters	0.39	inches
Meters	3.3	feet
Kilometers	0.62	miles
Hectares (10,000 m²)	2.47	acres
Square kilometers	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters	35.3	cubic feet
Liters	0.26	gallons
Kilograms	2.2	pounds
Metric tons	0.98	long tons
	1.1	short tons
	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius (Centigrade)	9 divide by 5 and add 32	degrees Fahrenheit

Table 2. *Educational Enrollment, Selected Academic Years, 1975–86*

Level	1975–76		1980–81		1982–83		1985–86	
	All Students	Females	All Students	Females	All Students	Females	All Students	Females
Primary	556,169	256,065	662,843	314,570	721,710	341,979	774,000	n.a.
Secondary	166,122	55,722	296,197	118,953	420,000	n.a.	271,000	n.a.
General secondary	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	88,000	n.a.
Technical education	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	26,000	n.a.
Teachers institutes	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	35,000	n.a.
University and institutions of higher education	13,427	2,358	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	37,000	n.a.
Total	735,718	314,145	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1,245,508 [1,2]	575,024[3]

n.a.—not available.

[1] Includes 15,000 children enrolled in kindergarten.

[2] Figures may not add to total because of rounding.

[3] Only gross figures available.

Source: Based on information from United Nations, *Statistical Yearbook, 1983–84,* New York, 1986, Tables 55, 56, and 57; and *Az Zahf al Akhdar,* Tripoli, September 1, 1986, Joint Publications Research Service, *Near East South/Asia Reports,* NEA-86-145, November 28, 1986, 44.

Table 3. Number of Teachers, Selected Academic Years, 1975–86

Level	1975–76		1980–81		1982–83		1985–86	
	All Students	Females	All Students	Females	All Students	Females	All Students	Females
Primary	24,331	7,086	36,591	17,160	42,696	22,627	n.a.	
Secondary	11,819	n.a.	24,323	5,750	30,673	8,483	n.a.	
University and equivalent institutions	951	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	
Total	37,101	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	79,043 *	

n.a.—not available.
* Only gross figures available.

Source: Based on information from United Nations, *Statistical Yearbook, 1983–84,* New York, 1986, Tables 55, 56, and 57, and *Az Zahf al Akhdar,* Tripoli, September 1, 1986, Joint Publications Research Service, *Near East/South Asia Reports,* NEA-86-145, November 28, 1986, 44.

Table 4. Economically Active Population by Sector of Employment, 1984

Sector	Number Employed	Percentage
Construction	197,000	21.2
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	171,500	18.5
Transportation and communications	80,000	8.6
Industry	69,000	7.4
Commerce, banking, and insurance	68,000	7.3
Public administration	60,000	6.5
Public utilities	22,500	2.4
Oil and gas, mining	19,000	2.0
Other [1]	240,000	25.9
Total	927,000	100.0 [2]
Total (Libyans)	664,000	71.6
Total (Non-Libyans)	263,000	28.4

[1] Includes education and health.

[2] Figures may not add to total because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from Central Bank of Libya, *Annual Report, 1984.* Tripoli, n.d., 39.

Table 5. Allocations of Development Plans, 1976–80 and 1981–85 (value in millions of Libyan dinars) [1]

Sector	1976–80 Value	1976–80 Percentage	1981–85 Value	1981–85 Percentage
Agriculture	1,476	16.0	3,100	17.9
Industry (light and heavy)	1,205	13.0	4,008	23.1
Public works [2]	1,131	12.2	3,305	19.1
Transportation and communications	930	10.0	2,204	12.7
Education	522	5.6	100	0.6
Health	276	3.0	621	3.6
Other	3,710	40.1	3,952	22.9
Total	9,250	100.0 [3]	17,290	100.0 [3]

[1] For value of the Libyan dinar—see Glossary.

[2] Figure for 1981–85 includes all allocations for utilities and electricity.

[3] Percentages may not add to total because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from Stace Birks and Clive Sinclair, "Libya: Problems of a Rentier State," in Richard Lawless and Allan Findlay, eds., *North Africa: Contemporary Politics and Economic Development,* New York, 1984, 243; and from Central Bank of Libya, *Annual Report, 1984,* Tripoli, n.d., 55, 60.

Table 6. Gross Domestic Product by Sector, 1978–84 (in percentages)

Sector	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Agriculture	2	2	2	2	3	3	4
Construction	12	10	9	10	13	11	11
Electricity, gas, and water	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
Oil and gas, mining	52	60	65	54	49	47	40
Public service and administration	8	7	5	7	9	10	12
Transportation and communications	5	4	3	4	5	5	5
Other, including manufacturing	18	15	13	20	17	20	26
Total	100 *	100 *	100 *	100 *	100 *	100 *	100 *

* Percentages may not add to total because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from Central Bank of Libya, *Annual Report, 1984,* Tripoli, n.d., 31.

Table 7. Production of Selected Agricultural Commodities, 1981–84

Commodity	Unit	1981	1982	1983	1984 *
Barley	thousands of metric tons	120.0	99.6	202.4	86.9
Beans	-do-	7.0	7.0	8.4	9.5
Eggs	millions	290.0	320.0	547.8	614.0
Fruits	thousands of metric tons	195.0	730.9	781.4	819.9
Meat	-do-	66.0	68.0	93.3	103.5
Milk	-do-	112.0	115.2	139.8	145.0
Olives	-do-	155.3	138.1	147.9	148.9
Tobacco	thousands of kilograms	487.8	329.5	487.5	n.a.
Vegetables	thousands of metric tons	739.8	730.9	781.4	819.9
Wheat	-do-	123.1	183.4	208.9	183.6

n.a.—not available.
* Preliminary figures.

Source: Based on information from Central Bank of Libya, *Annual Report, 1984,* Tripoli, n.d., 33.

Table 8. Balance of Payments
(in millions of United States dollars)[1]

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Current account (excluding exceptional financing)								
Export of goods[2]	9,900	15,981	21,919	14,731	13,701	12,348	11,028	10,345
Import of goods[2]	-5,764	-8,647	-10,368	-14,563	-10,976	-8,978	-8,464	-5,705
Merchandise trade balance	4,136	7,334	11,551	168	2,725	3,370	2,564	4,640
Other goods, services, income (incl. shipping) net	-2,348	-2,660	-2,204	-2,485	-2,611	-2,911	-2,767	-1,983
Private transfers	-972	-859	-1,089	-1,570	-1,597	-2,045	-1,240	-767
Official transfers	-78	-43	-46	-76	-78	-58	-81	n.a.
Current account balance	738	3,772	8,214	-3,963	-1,560	-1,643	-1,524	1,890
Capital account								
Long-term capital	-1,068	-930	-1,372	-1,724	-282	-557	-218	-316
(of which direct investment)	-720	-609	-1,136	-769	-411	-327	-18	-316
Short-term capital	-236	-369	-331	1,203	-331	658	404	-90
Counterpart items (incl. valuation changes in reserves)	-179	-189	-335	-678	56	-54	-241	-64
Liabilities on foreign reserves	-101	n.a.	n.a.	9	-12	-8	n.a.	n.a.
Errors and omissions	47	-253	-104	-329	172	-236	-6	850
Total capital account	-1,179	-1,363	-1,472	-879	-397	-197	-61	-380
Total changes in reserves[3]	-442	-2,409	-6,742	4,842	1,957	1,841	1,586	-2,270

n.a.—not available.

[1] Converted from International Monetary Fund Special Drawing Rights (SDRs).

[2] Free on board.

[3] Because of rounding, total changes in reserves plus total capital account may not equal current account balance.

Source: Based on information from International Monetary Fund, *International Financial Statistics, 1987,* Washington, 1987, 457.

Table 9. Direction of Trade, 1978–84
(in percentages)

Country	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Exports							
Britain	1.7	1.1	0.4	0.9	4.2	2.8	2.1
France	3.6	3.6	2.7	2.8	4.0	6.9	8.1
Italy	16.2	18.5	15.3	18.5	19.4	21.8	27.5
Spain	6.3	4.8	5.1	7.4	7.6	7.9	10.5
Turkey	2.0	1.3	1.5	4.4	5.8	6.5	6.6
United States	37.5	33.5	33.0	30.3	3.5	0.0	0.0
West Germany	16.0	18.3	19.1	18.3	20.9	20.0	21.8
Other	16.7	18.9	22.9	17.4	34.6	34.1	23.4
Total exports	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Imports							
Britain	7.1	7.4	7.5	6.8	6.2	4.6	4.1
France	8.3	9.0	7.5	6.5	5.7	3.7	2.6
Italy	24.1	26.6	28.6	30.6	28.8	23.4	20.6
Japan	7.5	7.5	5.9	7.6	3.8	3.8	2.6
United States	6.3	6.5	5.7	5.8	4.0	2.1	2.5
West Germany	12.8	16.3	14.1	10.6	15.8	9.4	10.0
Other	33.9	26.7	30.7	32.1	35.7	53.0	57.6
Total imports	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: Based on information from The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Economic Review of Libya,* London, 1983; The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Economic Review of Libya,* London, 1985; and Middle East Economic Digest, *Quarterly Economic Review of Libya, Tunisia, Malta: Annual Supplement 1984,* London, 1984.

Table 10. Major Army Equipment, 1986

Type	Estimated number in Inventory	Country of Origin
Tanks		
T-54 (100mm gun)	n.a.	Soviet Union
T-55 (100mm gun)	2,200	-do-
T-62 (115mm gun)	n.a.	-do-
T-72 (120mm gun)	160	-do-
Armored Vehicles		
BRDM-2 reconnaissance	250	-do-
BMP personnel carrier	800	-do-
BTR-50/-60 personnel carrier	700	-do-
OT-62/-64 personnel carrier	400	Brazil
EE-9 reconnaissance	n.a.	-do-
EE-11 personnel carrier	100	-do-
Howitzers and Guns		
D-74 122mm field gun	60	Soviet Union
M-46 130mm field gun	360	-do-
M-101 105mm howitzer	60	United States
M-1938, D-30 122mm howitzer	330	Soviet Union
M-1974 122mm howitzer, self-propelled	120	-do-
M-1973 152mm howitzer, self-propelled	48	-do-
Palmaris 155mm howitzer, self-propelled	200	Italy
Mortars		
81mm, 120mm, 160mm, 240mm	450	various
Multiple Rocket Launchers		
BM-21/RM-70 122mm	n.a.	n.a.
M-51 130mm	600	Soviet Union
Surface-to-Surface Missiles		
FROG-7	48	-do-
Scud-B	70	-do-
Antitank Guided Missiles		
Vigilant	n.a.	Britain
Milan	3,000	France
AT-3 Sagger	n.a.	Soviet Union
Surface-to-Air Missiles		
SA-7	n.a.	-do-
Crotale	n.a.	France

n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1986-1987,* London, 1986, 103.

Table 11. Major Navy Equipment, 1986

Type	Number in Inventory	Country of Origin
Frigates		
Vosper with Otomat and Aspide missiles	1	Britain
Koni-class with SS-N-2C missiles	1	Soviet Union
Submarines		
Foxtrot class	6	-do-
Mala class submersible	2	Yugoslavia
Corvettes		
Wadi/Assad class with Otomat missiles	4	Italy
Nanuchka II with SS-N-2C missiles	3	Soviet Union
Fast-Attack Craft		
La Combattante II with Otomat missiles	9	France
Osa II with Styx missiles	12	Soviet Union
Susah class	3	Britain
Coastal Patrol Boats		
Gharyan and Benina classes	8	-do-
Landing Ships		
PS-700	2	France
Polnochniy	3	Poland
Minesweepers		
Natya	7	Soviet Union

Source: Based on information from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1986-1987,* London, 1986, 103.

Table 12. Major Air Force Equipment, 1986

Type	Number in Inventory	Country of Origin
Bombers		
Tu-22 Blinder	7	Soviet Union
Interceptors		
Mirage F-1	32	France
MiG-23 Flogger	135	Soviet Union
MiG-25 Foxbat	55	-do-
Ground Attack		
Mirage 5	63	France
Mirage F-1	14	-do-
MiG-23 Flogger	54	Soviet Union
Su-20/-22 Fitter	50	-do-
Counterinsurgency		
J-1 Jastreb	30	Yugoslavia
Transport		
An-26 Curl	20	Soviet Union
Il-76 Candid	15	-do-
C-130H Hercules	7	United States
Boeing 707	2	-do-
C-140 Jetstar	2	-do-
G-222	17	Italy
Helicopters		
Mi-24 Hind	30	Soviet Union
Mi-14 Haze	30	-do-
SA-321 Super Frelon	8	France
CH-47C Chinook	19	United States
Mi-8 Hip	12	Soviet Union
AB-212	2	Italy
SA-316B Alouette III	10	France
AB-47	9	Italy
Trainers		
MiG-25 Foxbat	5	Soviet Union
MiG-23 Flogger	14	-do-
G-2 Galeb	61	Yugoslavia
L-39 Albatros	100	Czechoslovakia
SF-260	120	Italy
CM-170 Magister	12	France

Source: Based on information from International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1986-1987,* London, 1986, 103-104.

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Glossary

al—Arabic definite article "the"; connotes family or group to which an individual belongs or region of origin.

amir—Title of an independent chieftain. Literally, "commander." Also seen as *emir*.

Aouzou Strip—A rectangle of territory in northern Chad 100 kilometers wide and 1,000 kilometers long, paralleling Libya's southern border. Libya first occupied the strip in 1975 and annexed it in 1976. It is said to contain valuable minerals, including uranium.

ASU—Arab Socialist Union. The mass organization created in 1971 to provide a framework for popular participation and representation within the political system. Reorganized in 1975 to include the local-level Basic People's Congresses (BPCs) and the intermediate-level Municipal Popular Congresses (MPCs), both of which send delegates to the national General People's Congress (GPC—*q.v.*); organization was disbanded in January 1976. Not to be confused with the Egyptian political organization of the same name.

bani—Arabic for a tribe, people, or nation; plural of *ibn*, son of a person

baraka—Quality of blessedness or grace found characteristically in marabouts (*q.v.*) and other divinely favored persons. Also, charisma that endows the blessed with a special capacity to rule.

barrels per day—Production of crude oil and petroleum products is frequently measured in barrels per day and often abbreviated bpd or bd. A barrel is a volume measure of 42 United States gallons. Conversion of barrels to tons depends on the density of the specific product. About 7.3 barrels of average crude oil weigh one ton. Light products such as gasoline and kerosene would average close to eight barrels per ton.

Baathist—a member of the Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party, a pan-Arab party established in Damascus in the 1940s by Michel Aflaq and Salah ad Din al Bitar.

caliph—In Islamic tradition, the Prophet Muhammad's successor as spiritual and temporal leader of the Islamic community. Literally, "successor."

Cultural Revolution—The program proclaimed by Muammar al Qadhafi on April 15, 1973. Comprising five "points" or policies, it aimed at effacing foreign cultural influence and reviving Libya's Arab and Islamic heritage.

Cyrenaica—Largest of Libya's three historic regions, occupying the eastern half of the country. Name derived from the ancient Greek city-state, Cyrene; in Arabic known as Barqu.

dey—Originally a junior officer commanding a company of janissaries (*q.v.*). After 1611 the title of the head of government in Tripolitania (*q.v.*). Literally, "maternal uncle."

divan—Council of senior military officers during the Ottoman period.

Fezzan—One of Libya's three historic regions, located in the southwestern part of the country.

Free Officers Movement—Secret organization of junior Libyan army officers and enlisted men responsible for carrying out the September 1, 1969, coup against the monarchy.

FROLINAT—Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad (Front for the National Liberation of Chad). Muslim insurgent movement supported by Libya.

FY—fiscal year. Since 1974 the calendar year; before that date the fiscal year commenced on April 1.

GDP—Gross Domestic Product. A value measure of the flow of domestic goods and services produced by an economy over a period of time, such as a year. Only output values of goods for final consumption and investment are included because the values of primary and intermediate production are assumed to be included in final prices. GDP is sometimes aggregated and shown at market prices, meaning that indirect taxes and subsidies are included; when these have been eliminated, the result is GDP at factor cost. The word *gross* indicates that deductions for depreciation of physical assets have not been made. *See also GNP.*

General People's Committee—Name given the cabinet (formerly the Council of Ministers) in March 1977.

GNP—Gross National Product. The gross domestic product (*q.v.*) plus net income or loss stemming from transactions with foreign countries. GNP is the broadest measurement of the output of goods and services by an economy. It can be calculated at market prices, which include indirect taxes and subsidies. Because indirect taxes and subsidies are only transfer payments, GNP is often calculated at factor cost by removing indirect taxes and subsidies.

GPC—General People's Congress. Body combining executive and legislative functions that became the formal supreme organ of government in March 1977.

The Green Book—Muammar al Qadhafi's ideological testament, containing his political, economic, and social thought, revolutionary precepts, and definition of "Arab socialism." The first volume was published in 1975, the second in 1977, and the third in 1978.

habus—Islamic religious endowment or trust (usually real estate) used to support mosques, schools, and charitable works. Sometimes seen as *habous* or *hubus*; occurs as *waqf* outside the Maghrib (*q.v.*).

hadith—Literally, "speech, prophetic tradition." Islamic writings containing the sayings and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad as recalled by those who knew him during his life.

ibn—Literally, "son of"; used before or as part of proper name to indicate patrilineal descent. Also seen as *bin* or *ben*.

imam—In general, an Islamic leader who is a recognized authority on Islamic theology and law; also the prayer leader of a mosque. The term is used to designate the leader of the Islamic community in a particular locale.

IMF—International Monetary Fund. Established along with the World Bank (*q.v.*) in 1945, the IMF is a specialized agency affiliated with the United Nations and is responsible for stabilizing international exchange rates and payments. The main business of the IMF is the provision of loans to its members (including industrialized and developing countries) when they experience balance of payments difficulties. These loans frequently carry conditions that require substantial internal economic adjustments by the recipients, most of which are developing countries.

jamahiriya—Newly coined Arabic word having no official translation but unofficially translated to mean "state of the masses," "people's authority," or "people's power." On March 2, 1977, Libya officially became the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

janissaries—Members of an elite Ottoman military corps; in Tripolitania (*q.v.*), recruited from among Turkish peasants committed to a life of service. From the Turkish *yeniceri*, or "new soldier."

jihad—According to Islamic doctrine, the permanent struggle to establish the law of God on earth, often interpreted to mean "holy war."

khouloughlis—In Tripolitania (*q.v.*), a distinct caste of mixed Turkish and Arab parentage. Literally, "sons of servants" or "sons of slaves." Adjectival form is *khoulougli*. Various transliterations are found.

LD—Libyan dinar. Unit of currency since September 1, 1971, replacing the Libyan pound. In mid-1987 LD1 was valued at US$3.16; reciprocal exchange rate approximately LD0.32 per

US$1. The rate of exchange has been stable since February 1973. The Libyan dinar is divided into 1,000 dirhams.

Maghrib—The western Islamic world (northwest Africa); distinguished from the Mashriq (*q.v.*), or eastern Islamic world (the Middle East). Traditionally includes Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripolitania (*q.v.*). Literally, "the time or place of the sunset—the west." For its Arab conquerors, the region was the "island of the west" (*jazirat al maghrib*), the land between the "sea of sand" (Sahara) and the Mediterranean Sea. Also transliterated as *Maghreb*.

Mahdi—According to Islamic tradition, the messianic guide who will rise up to lead the faithful to salvation in anticipation of the last day. Historically a religious leader who is recognized as the Mahdi of tradition by his followers and assumes a messianic role in order to unify Islam and institute a reign of virtue. Literally, the "enlightened" or "divinely guided one."

marabout—In North Africa a holy man and teacher venerated locally and believed to be touched by divine grace, or *baraka* (*q.v.*), which sometimes conferred the right to rule as well. Frequently called upon to arbitrate tribal disputes, the marabout was not usually a member of the ulama (*q.v.*). Transliteration of *al murabitun* (those who have made a religious retreat).

Mashriq—Eastern Islamic world, as distinct from the Maghrib (*q.v.*). Also transliterated as *Machrek*.

Mauretania—Classical name for ancient Berber kingdom in northwest Africa; name also of Roman province that succeeded it. Cited in some sources as Mauritania but not to be confused with the modern Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

medina—Arabic for town or city; used in North Africa to refer to the old center part of a city.

Moor—In Tripolitania (*q.v.*), an urban Arab during the dynastic and Ottoman periods. The term *Arab* was reserved specifically for the beduins.

Moorish—Refers specifically to the cultural attributes common to Muslim Spain and the Maghrib after the twelfth century.

moriscos—Spanish Muslims.

muhafazaat (sing., *muhafazah*)—Governorates into which Libya's three traditional regions were divided in 1963. Each was headed by a governor (*muhafiz*). The *muhafazaat* were abolished in 1975.

Muslim Brotherhood—A fundamentalist Sunni organization that has challenged secular governments, particularly in Egypt and Syria. Historically, it has used forced in pursuing Islamization but in the mid-1980s it participated in the political process in Egypt.

OAPEC—Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries. Coordinates petroleum policies of major oil-producing Arab states. In early 1987 membership included Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates.

OAU—Organization of African Unity. As of 1987, Libya was one of many African states belonging to the organization.

OPEC—Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Coordinates petroleum policies of thirteen major oil-producing countries. In early 1987 members included Algeria, Ecuador, Gabon, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela.

pasha—Ottoman provincial governor or military commander. In Tripolitania (*q.v.*), the title of the regent representing the sultan (*q.v.*).

POLISARIO—Frente Popular por la Liberación de Saguia el Hamra y Río de Oro (Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro). Western Sahara independence movement.

qadi (pl., qadis)—Islamic judge who presides over sharia (*q.v.*) court.

Quran—Islamic scriptures believed by Muslims to be God's (Allah's) revelation to the Prophet Muhammad. Derived from the Arabic verb *qaraa* (to recite or to read). Commonly written as *Koran*.

RCC—Revolutionary Command Council. Supreme organ of the revolutionary regime from September 1969 to 1977.

Revolutionary Committees—Unofficial watchdog organizations whose members tended to be zealots devoted to Muammar al Qadhafi and his teachings. First instituted in November 1977 to supervise the Basic People's Congresses and to fight bureaucracy, they have steadily grown more powerful. For example, their members play a large role in selecting delegates to the GPC (*q.v.*).

shahadah—Literally, "testimony." Islamic profession of faith: "There is no god but God (Allah), and Muhammad is His Prophet."

sharia—Traditional code of Islamic law, both civil and criminal, based in part on the Quran (*q.v.*). Also drawn from the hadith (*q.v.*); the consensus of Islamic belief (*ijma*; i.e., consensus of the authorities on a legal question); and analogy (*qiyas*; i.e., an elaboration of the intent of law).

shaykh—Tribal leader; also seen as *sheik* or *sheikh*.

Shia—The smaller of the two great divisions of Islam. Literally, ''party'' from *Shiat Ali* (Party of Ali). Adherents are referred to as Shias; adjectival form is Shia. According to the Shias, Islamic leadership should belong to a descendant of the House of Ali, not an elected caliph (*q.v.*)

shurfa (sing., *sharif*)—In strict usage, descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter, Fatima; broadly, persons or groups having noble status. Also transliterated as *ashraf*. Singular form is used as a title.

the Sudan—Geographical region stretching across Africa from Cape Verde on the Atlantic coast to the Red Sea between 8° and 16° north latitude; characterized by savanna and semiarid steppe. Term derived from Arabic *bilad as sudan* (literally, ''country of the blacks''). Not to be confused with the Republic of Sudan.

sultan—Title of the Almoravid, Hafsid, and Ottoman overlords of Libya. Secular title for a high Muslim ruler (*see also* caliph).

sunna—Body of customs and practices based on the Prophet Muhammad's words and deeds as found in the Quran (*q.v.*) and the hadith (*q.v.*), which serve as guides to proper behavior for Muslims.

Sunni—The larger of the two great divisions of Islam. The Sunni consider themselves the orthodox adherents of the sunna (*q.v.*).

suq—Traditional North African bazaarlike open-air market.

Third Universal Theory—Major tenet of Muammar al Qadhafi's revolutionary ideology, which purports to offer nonaligned states what is regarded as the Third World political, economic, and social alternatives to Western capitalism and East European communism. Frequently seen as the Third International Theory, or the Third Theory.

Tripolitania—Most populous of Libya's three historic regions, situated in the northwestern part of the country. Name derived from Tripolis (Three Cities).

ulama—Collective term for Muslim religious scholars (sing., *alim*) learned in the Quran (*q.v.*) and responsible for interpreting and elaborating on the sharia (*q.v.*). Derived from Arabic verb *alama* (to know).

World Bank—Informal name used to designate a group of three affiliated international institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The IBRD, established in 1945, has the primary purpose of providing loans to developing countries for productive projects. The IDA, a legally separate loan fund but administered by the staff of the IBRD, was set up in 1960 to furnish credits to the poorest devloping countries on much easier terms than those of conventional IBRD loans. The IFC, founded in 1956, supplements the activities of the IBRD through loans and assistance designed specifically to encourage the growth of productive private enterprises in the less developed countries. The president and certain senior officers of the IBRD hold the same positions in the IFC. The three institutions are owned by the governments of the countries that subscribe their capital. To participate in the World Bank group, member states must first belong to the International Monetary Fund (IMF—*q.v.*).

zawiya (pl. *zawaayaa*)—In North Africa, a lodge containing mosque and quarters for the brothers of a religious order.

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