

Central Intelligence Agency



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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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LIBYA: What if Qadhafi is Ousted?

Summary

Qadhafi's removal would result in an intense--and possibly bloody--power struggle among several competing factions. The most likely outcome would be a regime that curtailed Libya's worldwide support for revolutionary causes but remained opposed to many US policies in the Middle East and Africa. Its receptivity to developing a more constructive relationship with Washington would be tempered at least initially by the need to dispel the inevitable suspicions at home and abroad that the US put it in power. A less likely scenario involves an extremist-dominated government that could become an even greater threat to US interests than the Qadhafi regime. Such extremists would be more willing than Qadhafi to target US personnel and facilities directly in terrorist operations. Although the extremists are opposed to Soviet ideology, they might feel compelled to try to obtain Moscow's protection if they perceived themselves under strong US pressure. In return, Moscow might demand increased access to Libyan air and naval facilities and push Tripoli to adopt policies in support of Soviet objectives in the Middle East and elsewhere.

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We judge that Qadhafi's prospects for survival are poorer now than at any time since he came to power 16 years ago.

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economic policies, economic constraints imposed by the soft oil market, and wasteful spending in support of radical causes worldwide are seriously eroding the relatively high standard of living that once was regarded by most Libyans as among the principal fruits of Qadhafi's revolution. These developments, in our view, combined with widely resented abuses of power by Qadhafi's extremist supporters, are creating the political climate that encourages plotting by Qadhafi's many opponents and increases their chances of penetrating his elaborate security network. [redacted]

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The Key Players

In our judgment, four key groups have the capability of deposing Qadhafi. These groups include:

--Qadhafi's relatives and fellow tribesmen, assigned to Libya's most important military and security posts, who are concerned that his declining political fortunes threaten their predominant position in Libya. [redacted]

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[redacted] Qadhafi's fellow tribesmen have been advising him over the past two years to curtail his revolutionary programs as a means of rebuilding his popular support and preserving their position.

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--Libyan nationalists in the armed forces, who would be motivated by their loss of political influence to the revolutionary committees and their resentment at Qadhafi's establishment of a Peoples Militia as a counterweight.

[redacted] the nationalists also oppose many of Qadhafi's aggressive foreign policies which, in their view, are unrelated to Libyan interests.

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--Exiled Libyan dissidents, who oppose Qadhafi because his revolution has deprived them of their wealth, status, and political influence in Libya. Their first attempt in May 1984 to establish a network inside Libya capable of attacking Qadhafi demonstrated their growing determination to try to exploit his domestic difficulties.

--Fanatics in the revolutionary committees, who might depose Qadhafi in opposition to one of his periodic tactical shifts toward moderation or to prevent him from curbing their influence. [redacted]

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Qadhafi already has gone out of his way to justify to the ideologues his appearance of moderation in the pursuit of radical objectives. [redacted]

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Instability Ahead

None of these groups appears to us to have the strength to quickly consolidate its position on its own, even in the event of a pre-emptive move by one of them. The Qadhaafa tribe is relatively small and would need to coopt its rivals or to expand

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its base of support to maintain control. There are also indications of personal rivalries over assuming Qadhafi's mantle, which would seriously weaken the Qadhaafa's ability to carry the day. Qadhafi's extensive security precautions militate against a coup by nationalist military officers that would immediately eliminate Qadhafi's tribesmen or the revolutionary committees as political actors. Libyan exiles have been unable to build an extensive reliable support network inside the country because of long absence from Libya. The revolutionary committees would likely encounter deep-rooted popular resentment over their role in orchestrating Qadhafi's brutal efforts over the past 10 years to suppress dissent. [REDACTED]

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In our view, these weaknesses portend instability in the immediate post-Qadhafi period. Available evidence does not indicate anyone of Qadhafi's stature able and in a position to take control. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Even some form of collegial rule involving elements from all four factions would only serve as a facade for intense behind the scenes maneuvering. [REDACTED]

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The radicals and the exiles would be in the worst position to survive such infighting, in our view. Available evidence indicates that the revolutionary committees have insufficient arms, equipment, and training to maintain power by oppression. Even lining up behind their titular chief, Qadhafi's deputy Abd al-Salam Jallud, is unlikely to generate much popular support because his longstanding reputation for corruption and debauchery would make him a political liability. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] exiles' popular support within Libya is limited, and we believe that only a successful attack on Qadhafi would provide the exiles the leverage needed to have a significant role in a post Qadhafi regime. [REDACTED]

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Implications for the US

The most dangerous outcome from the standpoint of US interests would be the emergence of a regime dominated by revolutionary committee extremists. Such a government probably would be an even greater threat to US interests than Qadhafi. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] these fanatics are encouraging Qadhafi's use of terrorism and subversion and focus on undermining US interests. They almost certainly would exploit their positions in the government to support terrorism and subversion as foreign policy instruments. This would heighten the threat of direct Libyan involvement in terrorist operations against US personnel and facilities, particularly in the Middle East. Any US attempt to counter Libyan aggression, however, could push the regime into Soviet hands. This might open up additional opportunities for Moscow to obtain increased access to Libyan air and naval facilities and to promote a Libyan foreign

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[redacted]
policy that uses moderate tactics to undermine US interests. [redacted]
[redacted]

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In our judgment, any other regime--even one dominated by the Qadhafi clan--probably would want a more constructive relationship with Washington. We believe that such a new regime's focus on building popular support would require bringing order to Qadhafi's chaotic system of government, curtailing costly foreign adventures, and redressing popular socio-economic grievances. The need to promote and revise economic priorities would require the new government to improve its international image--particularly by reducing Libyan involvement in revolutionary causes worldwide--to facilitate access to Western consumer goods, technology, and managerial expertise. This almost certainly would involve approaches to the US. [redacted]

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At the same time such a regime probably would proceed cautiously to allay inevitable suspicions at home and abroad that the US "installed" it in power. Qadhafi's vitriolic 16-year attack on Western values and frequent references to the brutal Italian occupation of Libya during the early 1900s, ensures that no new leadership could survive without demonstrating its independence from Western influence. In addition, existing Islamic currents in Libya probably would reinforce the regime's determination to pursue a nonaligned foreign policy, particularly during a time of domestic political turmoil. Any emphasis by the regime on traditional Islamic values would be intended to build support among Libyans who inevitably would look to Islam to provide a sense of personal security in their daily lives. [redacted]
[redacted]

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In our view, the nonaligned and Islamic affinities of the new regime would result in continuing opposition to US-sponsored peace initiatives. Such a regime also probably would remain involved in areas where traditional Libyan political and economic interests are engaged, such as in Tunisia, Niger, Sudan, and Chad. [redacted]

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What Can the Soviets Do?

We doubt that Moscow could install a Marxist-oriented pro-Soviet regime without a greatly expanded Soviet military presence. Soviet advisers are too few and scattered to take control of the Libyan military and swing it into action. Moreover, widespread dissatisfaction in Libyan military circles with the quality of Soviet assistance is accompanied by general cultural alienation and ill-will resulting from a condescending attitude by Soviet advisers toward their Libyan students, [redacted]
[redacted]

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[redacted] although some East Germans have trained Libyan intelligence officers, Qadhafi's distrust of Moscow has prompted him to limit the involvement of Soviets and their East European allies with the intelligence services. [redacted]
[redacted]

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Moscow's capability to influence a Libyan succession would depend on which groups came to the fore. In any case, judgments about Moscow's influence are perforce speculative given the limited information on Soviet assets and inroads among the various Libyan groupings. Moscow's extensive and longstanding training of Libyan military personnel and their 1,500-2,000 man military advisory contingent in Libya point to greater Soviet influence with nationalist officers and Qadhaafa tribesmen in the armed forces and security services than with ideologues or exiles. This assessment is supported in part by [redacted]

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[redacted] the extremists dislike the Soviets and regard Marxism as an impediment to broader acceptance of Qadhafi's own "Green Book" revolutionary philosophy. [redacted]

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The Soviets at a minimum probably have used their extensive contacts in military circles to identify Libyan officers most likely to assume key political positions in a post-Qadhafi regime. Moscow thereby probably also has acquired potentially valuable information on these officers' views, leadership skills, and lifestyles to use in its efforts to develop a pro-Soviet faction within the armed forces. Such information, in conjunction with intelligence obtained from established agents the Soviets almost certainly have in place, could help them exploit political uncertainties resulting from Qadhafi's removal. Moscow could use its access to Libyan military personnel and facilities to warn the Libyan regime of a coup if the Soviets deemed a change in government against their interests. [redacted]

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Moscow's willingness to use whatever assets it has in Libya to influence the succession is another key unknown. The Soviets might adopt a wait-and-see approach, believing their interests would be preserved in any case by continued Libyan dependence on Soviet military assistance. To strengthen Moscow's hold on this dependency, the Soviets initially might offer additional weaponry to the new regime at concessional rates. The payoff of such an approach could be lessened, however, if, as we expect, West European governments--particularly the French--were willing to help reduce Libyan dependence on Moscow by supplying advanced arms. [redacted]

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On balance, we regard Soviet leverage as insufficient to deter any regime not comprising revolutionary committee fanatics from seeking improved relations with Washington. Instead, the new regime probably would try to play off Moscow and Washington in an attempt to maximize the military and economic benefits it needs to survive in power. [redacted]

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Profiles of Key Political Actors

Qadhafi's Relatives and Tribesmen

--Maj. Khalifa Hunaysh...commander Qadhafi's personal security force...a relative of Qadhafi's...has been active in Libyan campaigns to assassinate dissidents abroad...approves of Libya's present relations with the Soviet Union...adversary of 'Abd 'al-Salam Jallud...about 50.

--Ahmad Qadhafi al-Dam...a cousin of Qadhafi's...serves as Qadhafi's chief envoy abroad...involved in activities of Revolutionary Committees...extremely ambitious...desires to become more influential in domestic politics...sees Khalifa Hunaysh as an obstacle to his rise...about 33.

--Col. Hasan Muftab Ashkal...Committee in Sirte...a cousin of Qadhafi's...one of his closest and most trusted advisors...a troubleshooter, used by Qadhafi for a variety of tasks...one-time head of Qadhafi's personal security force disliked by career military officers...in his early 40's.

--Col. Mas'ud' Abd al-Hafiz...a cousin and possibly a brother-in-law of Qadhafi's...one of Qadhafi's most trusted military aides...generally assigned to key command positions...currently commander of Sebha Military District from which Libyan forces in Chad are directed...in his late 30's.

--Lt. 'Ali Kilani...maternal cousin of and personally close to Qadhafi...has trained youths in sabotage and assassination...led a hit team into Rome in July 1984; two months before an exile there helped coordinate forcible repatriation of exiles from Morocco during Tripoli's 14 month rapprochement with Rabat...a member of the of the Military Revolutionary Committee...about 29. [REDACTED]

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Nationalists in the Military

--Maj. Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi...Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces and head of Military Intelligence...revolutionary colleague of Qadhafi's...close to Mustafa Kharubi...dislikes 'Abd al-Salam Jallud...about 33.

--Brig. Gen. Mustafa Kharubi...Inspector General of the Armed Forces...revolutionary colleague of Qadhafi's...a critic of Qadhafi's foreign and campaign to murder dissidents in exile...dislikes 'Abd al-Salam Jallud...about 42. [REDACTED]

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Radicals and Ideologues

--Staff Maj. 'Abd al-Salam Jallud...defacto number-two man in regime...revolutionary colleague and ideological supporter of Qadhafi's...titular head of Revolutionary Committees Bureau, but extent of influence unclear...has many enemies within regime, but his administrative, diplomatic negotiating talents useful to Qadhafi...favors interference in US domestic policies and terrorism against US interests abroad...age 41.

--Lt. Col. Abdallah Hijazi...key member of the Military Revolutionary Committee, which monitors military for anti-Qadhafi activity...active in aiding foreign dissident groups and in 1984 assassination campaign against Libyan dissidents abroad...in his late 30's.

--Musa Kusa...Qadhafi's most committed supporter and devotee of his "Green Book" political theories...as Director of International Center for Revolution, coordinates Libyan propaganda efforts and liaison with leftist groups worldwide...favors violent elimination of opponents of the regime at home and abroad...responsible for supplying arms to foreign revolutionary movements, but opposes Marxist causes...age 37.

--Maj. Abdallah Sanussi...personally close to Qadhafi and a relative by marriage...involved in terrorism against exiles since 1980...has played a particularly active role in Libyan efforts to undermine the regime of former Sudanese President and to kill Chadian President Hadre...about 33.

--Maj Muhammad Majdub...fellow tribesman of Qadhafi's...defacto head of the Revolutionary Committees Bureau under Jallud...is a member of the People's Court that proposes death sentences for Libyan dissidents...probably responsible for several murders of exiles during 1979-80.

--Sa'id Rashid...civilian engineer...trained dissident Sudanese plotting to overthrow regime of former President Nimeiri...responsible for assassinations in Europe, and Africa...heavily involved in supervising training camps for foreign dissidents...also is chief security at Tripoli airport and a member of the People's Court that rules on death sentences for dissidents...age 36.

--'Izz al-Din Hinshari...civilian engineer...a principal revolutionary committee officer...heads the Central Operations Department of the Secretariat for External Security... also chief of immigration...about 33.

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Libyan Exiles

--Muhammah al-Muqaryaf...founder, secretary-general and spokesman for the oppositionist National Front for the Salvation of Libya...ordered operations that led to shootouts with security forces in two locations in Libya in May 1984...publicly seen as closely aligned with the West...supported by a variety of Arab states...an economist who served as Ambassador to India until his defection in mid-1980...in his mid-40's.

--'Abd al-Mun'im al-Huni... oppositionist in self-imposed exile in Cairo since August 1975...intelligent, shrewd, low keyed...respected by other oppositionist leaders... reportedly also enjoys support within and outside of the Armed Forces...former career military man...was one of the 12-member Revolutionary Command Council that overthrew the monarchy in 1969...about 42.

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