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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

1 APR 1981

Honorable William Clark
Deputy Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Office of the Secretary of Defense 5 USC 552
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS +
Date: 04 DEC 2008 Authority: EO 13526
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MDR: 19 -M- 0006

Dear Bill,

(S) With reference to the SIG on Libya March 26, and the draft memorandum to the President on this subject, we believe the following approach should be taken:

- The US should start with those measures which will serve to strengthen our ability to take forceful action later on, while minimizing risks of Libyan retaliatory measures at this time. At this stage we are still too vulnerable on many fronts to risk a more forceful encounter with Libya.
- We should plan and design, however, a more ambitious Libya policy that could be initiated later on when our assets and liabilities are more advantageously positioned.
- This means we should now start all the measures listed on page 4 and establish an early deadline for their completion. Two items ought to be added to this list:
 - (1) Contingency planning to cope with a Soviet move to man the Soviet equipment stored in Libya or another sudden introduction of foreign personnel to help Libya exploit its excess equipment. This contingency is particularly important in connection with a possible Egyptian/Libyan conflict.
 - (2) An assessment of the US internal vulnerability to terrorist activity that might be triggered in the event of a crisis with Libya.
- We should wait, on the other hand, with most of the measures listed on pages 2 and 3, in particular:

LIBYA

1 APR 81

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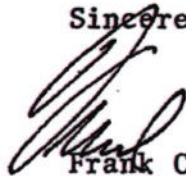
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- Unless there is an urgent reason to close the Libyan "People's Bureau," we seem to gain nothing by doing it now.
- We should postpone the Sixth Fleet exercise until mid-June (pending a precise feasibility response from USCINCEUR) when we ought to be better prepared for a more vigorous and far-reaching assertion of our navigation and overflight rights.
- The focusing of public opinion on Libyan excesses might more usefully be done in a low-key fashion now, lest we be talking loudly while we still lack a big stick.
- Approaching selected European and regional friends seems premature until we know precisely what kind of support we want to elicit. At the same time it is our view that the Secretary of State, when meeting with President Sadat on his trip next week, may want to keep in mind the military risks for Egypt in the event of a premature conflict with Libya. The military balance between Libya and Egypt is not necessarily in Egypt's favor. It depends considerably on the contingencies and possibilities for outside support.

(S) Since there are still basic differences regarding our proposed approach to Libya, I recommend that the draft memorandum to the President be referred back to the appropriate IG; then when a new draft is worked out it can be reviewed by the SIG. I would be happy to discuss this with you further, or you may wish to have Walt Stoessel call Fred Ikle.

Sincerely,



Frank C. Carlucci

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