



INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

This is on attached

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C-121/62

I-35021/82

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

THROUGH: UNDERSECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY

SUBJECT: National Security Council Meeting, 21 January on Libya (U) - INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

An agenda item scheduled for the 21 January NSC Meeting is Libya. Liaison with the NSC staff indicates that this will be an informational item providing a status report to the President, with no decisions being requested. Nonetheless, the President may ask whether another Sidra-type exercise should be undertaken. Factors which bear on this:

- By mid-February the only US citizens remaining in Libya will be some 100-300 hard core who will not voluntarily withdraw.
- USCINCEUR has proposed a Freedom of Navigation exercise in the Libyan area for the near term.
- SIXTHFLEET will be conducting a National Week exercise shortly (3 CV in the Mediterranean thru 29 Jan, 2 until 3 Feb, then 1 CV for several months).
- Recent assassination attempts on Qadhafi may indicate tensions in Libya which our pressure may invigorate or accelerate.

On the other side of the ledger, there are several serious reasons to demur from additional steps at this time:

- Unilateral US action without consultation with our moderate Arab friends may severely strain our attempts to maintain a healthy dialogue with them.
- The gains from a conflict such as occurred in August are small when compared with the loss which would occur if US lives or aircraft were lost. We have shown our inclination and ability to operate anywhere; to continue to do so invites charges of overplaying or bullying.
- There are indications from many of our Arab friends that the phenomena that has been examined before is actually taking place, i.e., the US is promoting Qadhafi to hero status by our actions.

A second issue is that of a total U.S. import/export embargo. Your staff favors it.

Coordination JCS *Deaton*

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