

Libyan diplomat speaks

Last week the Sun's foreign affairs specialist Eric Margolis had an exclusive interview with Dr. Ali Treiki, Libya's senior diplomat, UN ambassador and recent foreign minister. Following are excerpts:

Q: Is Libya sponsoring terrorist attacks in Europe?

A: No, absolutely not. Libya is opposed to terrorism. But we will attack U.S. military bases or other bases used to attack Libya.

Q: How can you maintain that Libyans have not attacked civilian targets when there is a clear record of such attacks? What about the shooting of a British policewoman in London, for example?

A: We have not attacked any European civilians. The shots in London were fired from outside the embassy. We have also suffered from terrorism, don't forget. Libyan ambassadors in Rome and Beirut have been murdered. Other Libyan diplomats have been shot in Spain, Pakistan and Italy. None of the people who did this have been caught.

Q: Was Libya involved in the famous Berlin disco bombing?

A: No, no.

Q: The U.S. says it has "irrefutable proof" from radio intercepts that Libya was involved.

A: Nonsense. Do you think that if we did the bombing we would be so stupid as to talk about it on the radio? We know the Americans monitor all our communications and can break our codes. Why don't the Americans show their "evidence" to the world? We challenge them. They don't, because they do not have any.

Q: Why then did the U.S. attack Libya?

A: Because of Reagan's "Vietnam" complex, his determination to win a military victory for America. To please the arms industry and the Israel lobby.

Q: These are not sufficient reasons for starting a war.

A: Reagan was also trying to attack the Soviet Union indirectly by picking on the easy target of Libya. Unlike Syria, we are not under a Soviet military umbrella. By attacking small nations like Libya and Nicaragua, Reagan is trying to hurt the Soviets without running any risk.

Q: Do you think the U.S. air strikes were aimed at killing Col. Khadafy?

A: Absolutely. We are convinced that President Reagan personally ordered the assassination of Col. Khadafy. The Pentagon would never have dared to try to kill him without previous approval from the president.

Q: Do you think the U.S. will try again?

A: Probably. America is hated across the

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Mideast. It has no friends left in the Arab world. America is striking out at us in frustration for its policy failures in the Mideast. We are a scapegoat.

Q: What about Libyan threats against American civilians?

A: These are propaganda. There are thousands of American and Canadian workers in Libya. Why would we have to go to Europe to attack Americans? Not one of them has been touched or even insulted by Libyans — unlike the way Japanese were treated in North America after Pearl Harbor.

Q: Who is spreading such "propaganda"?

A: Our enemies, particularly Israel's Mossad, our Arab enemies and the U.S. Remember the case of the famous Libyan "hitmen" in Washington that never existed? A Lebanese duped the Americans with this wild story and got \$500,000 from them — then he disappeared.

Q: Where are the terrorists coming from?

A: Mainly from the homeless Palestinians in Lebanon. We support most Palestinian groups as legitimate freedom fighters but there are also many real terrorists who are beyond anyone's control. They are driven to madness by seeing their homes taken away by Israel, by being bombed by the Israelis and the Americans.

Q: Are you justifying such horrors as the Rome airport massacre?

A: No, but these people are desperate. They are demanding that the world pay attention to their problems.

Q: Do you fund Abu Nidal (the terrorist accused of the Rome airport attack)?

A: No, but we have had him as our guest.

Q: Who funds him?

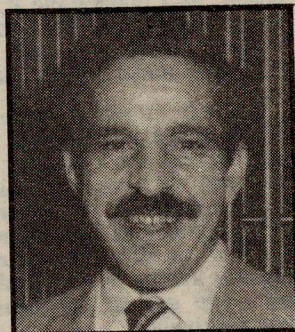
A: A leading Arab state now closely allied to the United States (name given off the record). Other groups your media calls terrorists are funded by Algeria, Iran, Syria, China and Eastern Europe.

Q: Is the U.S. continuing to mount covert action against Libya?

A: Yes. When Gen. Nimieri's regime was overthrown in Sudan last year, the Sudanese showed us secret camps where the CIA was training anti-Libyan exile groups. The CIA has staged many attempts to kill Col. Khadafy in recent years, some from Tunisia. The U.S. has also been unsuccessfully trying to get Egypt to invade Libya.

Q: What will Libya do if the U.S. continues its air strikes?

A: The Soviets would like very much to have air and naval bases in Libya. Until now, we have refused to consider this. If the U.S. keeps attacking us, we may offer the Soviets bases and seek closer military co-operation with them.



**ALI TREIKI
Gives Libyan view**