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The Royal Institute of International Affairs

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Source: *The World Today*, Vol. 29, No. 9 (Sep., 1973), pp. 398-408

Published by: Royal Institute of International Affairs

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40394723>

Accessed: 28-03-2019 15:12 UTC

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Qaddafi and Libya

ANTHONY McDERMOTT

Oil and personal magnetism are the strongest assets of the Libyan leader, who wants to push the Arab world further on the revolutionary road mapped out by Nasser; but he lacks political experience and his arrogance has antagonized even friends and allies.

COLONEL QADDAFI'S proud boast to Egyptians is that the Libyan revolution 'began where yours ended and is a continuation of Gamal Abdel-Nasser's revolution'.¹ His beliefs, methods, and aspirations all coincide with Nasser's own statement:

I do not know why I always imagine that in this region there is a role wandering about in search of an actor to play it. And I do not know why this role, tired of roaming about in this vast region, should at last settle down, exhausted and weary, on our frontiers, beckoning us to assume it as nobody else can do so. Let me hasten to say that this is not a role of leadership. It is a role of interaction and experimentation with all these factors, a role for us to harness the powerful energy latent in every part of this vast region and carry out experiments with that tremendous force to enable it to play a decisive part in ameliorating the future of humanity.²

Nasserite inspiration was fundamental to Qaddafi's revolutionary development. It started early, during the last days of primary school and the beginning of his secondary education.³ The source was direct. Qaddafi has been described as one who 'grew up with a radio, tuned to Cairo, jammed into one ear. . . It would be hard to overrate the formative effect of Cairo's "Voice of the Arabs" on countless youngsters of Qaddafi's generation'.⁴

Additional factors have made Qaddafi's revolution different from Egypt's, and specifically Libyan. Libya obtained independence in 1951, mostly through the machinery of the UN, and because the larger powers

¹ Associated Press, 28 June 1973.

² *The Philosophy of the Revolution* (Cairo, The National Publishing House, 1954), p. 53, with introduction by Dorothy Thompson.

³ Personal interview in Tripoli on 15 May 1973.

⁴ Patrick Seale and Maureen McConville, *The Hilton Assignment* (London, Temple Smith, 1973), p. 104.

Mr McDermott writes on Middle and Far Eastern affairs in *The Guardian*.

wanted it: in consequence, she experienced full emancipation only with Qaddafi's coup on 1 September 1969. He and his fellow officers thus approached many Arab and world problems as if they were unprecedented phenomena. It has been observed that 'Libya's young army government is pronouncing prescriptions for the Arab world already considered unworkable and outworn. There is an eerie sense of contemporary problems given previous solutions; of newcomers rushing in where more experienced partisans have learned not to tread; of policies discovered for the first time in a region where they have already run their course . . . this . . . accounts for the most prominent characteristic of the young Libyan regime: its sense of compelling anachronism.'⁵ Nasser reportedly remarked to Qaddafi about the latter's Third International Theory that there was no need to invent electricity as it had already been invented; the need was merely to use it.⁶

The primacy of Islam

From this position of isolation, the Arab defeat in the six-day war was felt by Qaddafi more strongly than if Libya had been directly involved. Qaddafi has taken this defeat as a symptom of the Arab world's debility. He feels that its lack of unity and the concern of individual States with their own problems caused the loss of Palestine and distract attention from regaining it. For him, therefore, Arab unity based on Islam—not talk about UN resolution 242 or negotiations—must be the winning formula. Qaddafi's interpretation of Islam is as austere and fundamentalist as the Sanussi version, which from the middle of the nineteenth century motivated the royal family until it was ousted from power in 1969. Thus Qaddafi has had reinstated, at least in theory, the *sharia* as the sole source of law, and other traditions such as the *zakat* (an alms tax), hand-cutting for thieves, and the banning of alcohol.

As with nearly every trait of Nasser's revolution, Qaddafi has carried these main points of reference—revolution, Islam, and Arab unity—further than before. Islam becomes a regenerative force for the whole world, not just for Muslims. The Koran is 'an unchangeable truth', rendering the theories of Galileo and Darwin obscure.⁷ It combines all the Holy Books, and the Prophet Mohammed is a prophet not only for the Arabs, but for humanity at large.⁸ Qaddafi sees parallels with the generals of Mohammed in the seventh century. On 15 April, when he announced the popular revolution, he told the Libyans that they could make their nation resume its role in the civilization of mankind by returning to the

⁵ Ruth First, *Libya: The Elusive Revolution* (London, Penguin, forthcoming).

⁶ Mohammed Hasanein Heykal in *al-Ahram*, 6 July 1973, recorded by Cairo Radio, the BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (SWB) ME/4342, 10 July 1973.

⁷ Press conference in Tripoli on 13 May 1973 and *The Guardian*, 23 May 1973.

⁸ Qaddafi's speech at the opening of the Euro-Arab Youth Conference in Tripoli on 14 May 1973.

course of the pioneers of Islam, who from being small warring tribes became a mighty power from the Sind to the Atlantic Ocean.⁹ At the same time, through the popular revolution, he has pushed socialism further. The resulting effect is a paradox. His policies often smack of the extreme Left of the Arab national movement, although he rejects that movement's secularism.¹⁰

In *The Philosophy of the Revolution* Nasser wrote of three circles of influence—Arab, Islamic, and African.¹¹ Both Nasser and Qaddafi have adopted strong positions against imperialism and in favour of non-alignment (Qaddafi more recklessly so with his backing of General Amin in Uganda, for example). But his priorities differ from those of Nasser. To Nasser and Egypt, the Arab circle was the most important, followed in order by the African and the Islamic; 'Islam is an immensely important element in both Arab nationalism and Nasser's outlook, but pan-Islam, in the sense of the unity of all the predominantly Muslim countries, is not'.¹² For Qaddafi, Islam comes first, followed by the Arab and African circles.

There are other important differences. Nasser's revolution was born in a comparatively poor country, but one which had an established middle class of some sophistication, and a tradition of institutions. Qaddafi's revolutionary inheritance came in a country on the path to stupendous wealth through oil. This oil gave Qaddafi an additional international circle of influence, and, by being able to supply and withdraw funds, his position in the Arab world was further strengthened. But the social conditions in Libya were backward. Qaddafi himself was born in Sirte, in the desert area stretching to the coastline between Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, to a family he claims still lives in a tent. He spent his formative years in Sebha in the Fezzan. This background accentuates the gap between ancient and modern: 'It is this same haphazard experience of an imposed history that makes the timelessness of the Koran seem appropriate still more. To a Bedouin society thrust into the oil technology age there seems little strange about applying the precepts of seventh-century Arabia to modern issues. Economic change has been imposed on the society from the outside; where most skilled manpower and virtually all expertise is imported, local society can absorb the benefits of the oil economy without having to change greatly in itself.'¹³

Libya's policies are often unquestioningly pro-Islamic without much allowance for the subtleties of local problems. The Muslims of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago in the south Philippines receive aid because they

⁹ BBC SWB ME/4273, 17 April 1973.

¹⁰ Tom Little, 'The Libyan Enigma', *Middle East International*, June 1972, pp. 12-15.

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 51 ff.

¹² Peter Mansfield, *Nasser's Egypt* (London, Penguin, 1969), pp. 246-7.

¹³ First, *op. cit.*

are being attacked by Christian forces, but no reference is made to the important land ownership issue in the problems between the two sides. The dominance of Christian Maronites in Lebanon has been denounced without understanding of the sectarian balance—in Qaddafi's terms this is an anomaly—within a not wholly Muslim Arab State. African countries are seen as extending the area of operations against Israel, largely through Muslim links, and against the former colonial powers. Thus in relations with Chad, Libya has moved from supporting the Muslim Toubbou tribes in the north rebelling against President Tombalbaye to renewing diplomatic relations in April 1972. Chad broke off relations with Israel in November 1972. Together with Saudi Arabia, Libya has helped to bring about a break between Congo-Brazzaville, Niger, Uganda, and Mali on the one hand and Israel on the other. The despatch by air of troops and arms in September 1972 to General Amin followed Uganda's break with Israel and the expulsion of the Asians (which Qaddafi saw as resembling the expulsion of Libya's Italians, and therefore as a fitting anti-British move). The troops were to head off a supposed invasion from Nyerere's Tanzania. Wealth permits Libya to undertake such risky operations and to weather criticism. But such policies can backfire. The attempt last May to have the headquarters of the OAU moved from Ethiopia to Egypt, because of the former's links with Israel, raised questions about the extent to which the Arab countries use that organization solely for Arab purposes. It also made more difficult Egypt's efforts to gain diplomatic support against Israel.

Arab unity, anti-colonialism, and oil policies

In his Arab circle, Qaddafi sees Libya's role in specific terms. He has compared Libya's pan-Arab activities with the success of Prussia and Piedmont in uniting Germany and Italy.¹⁴ Qaddafi is prepared to provoke disruption on the scale of China's civil war to obtain Arab unity.¹⁵ But this unity must be on his terms, and, since April this year, this means popular revolution. Speaking to law students in Benghazi on 28 April, Qaddafi said he wanted them to work at this revolution so that regimes elsewhere would not be able to restrain it; their work was to be put at the disposal of the rest of the Arab world.¹⁶ But membership of his Arab circle is conditional. Monarchies such as Jordan and Morocco are excluded. Countries like Sudan are criticized for staying away from union, after Qaddafi's help in keeping President Numeiri in power following the attempted Communist coup of July 1971. Numeiri's concern with

¹⁴ At an ASU conference held from 28 March to 8 April 1972, quoted in 'Libya's "Prussian" role in the Drive for Arab Unity' by Ricardo Nizza in *New Middle East*, June 1972, pp. 4-7.

¹⁵ See speech to students at the University of Libya in Benghazi on 5 March 1973, quoted in *Le Monde*, 9 March 1973.

¹⁶ BBC SWB ME/4283, 1 May 1973.

his southern problem is taken as being specifically at the expense of Arab unity. Communists in Aden and Iraq are mistrusted, and those who fail to give unstinting help to the right (non-Communist) Palestinians are rejected or criticized. In this latter category fall Jordan and Lebanon, but Egypt and Syria have also been attacked for being too exclusively concerned with regaining their lost territories. In November last year, Qaddafi prevailed on the two Yemens—one a traditional, the other a Marxist regime—to undertake improbable steps towards union; so far, however, only committee meetings have taken place.

Qaddafi's outer circle of Arab activities has left its mark on regional alliances. The signature with Egypt and Sudan on 27 December 1969 of the Tripoli Charter indicated a shift away from the Maghreb. This was confirmed by Libya's announcement on 9 March 1970 that she would not be represented at the meeting of Maghreb economic ministers. Both Boumedienne and Bourguiba have fended off suggestions of union, while cooperating with Libya on many economic levels. Bourguiba in particular is apprehensive about the shifts of power which Libya has effected, and has said that he would seek a defence treaty with Algeria in the event of union between Egypt and Libya.¹⁷ The radios of Morocco and Libya have waged a war of abuse since Qaddafi prematurely rejoiced over the unsuccessful coup against King Hassan in July 1971. It has been suggested convincingly, however, that a combination of the pressures of local politics and Qaddafi's goadings has brought Hassan to despatch two shiploads of armoured vehicles and troops to Syria, to announce the 'moroccanization' of remaining foreign-owned land and businesses, and to adopt militant attitudes towards Spain over Spanish Sahara, while at the same time extending Morocco's territorial fishing limits from twelve to seventy miles.¹⁸ Within the Federation of Arab Republics, which Syria joined in place of Sudan in November 1970, Libya once used to criticize her partners for taking bilateral decisions.¹⁹ But while Egypt and Syria used to act as a brake on Qaddafi, Syria now finds and keeps herself apart. The ever-present risk of Qaddafi's policies is that they may cause Libya to be isolated rather than to be the centre of Arab activity.

In the international circle, Libya's policies are motivated primarily against what she sees as new or old-fashioned colonial situations. Thus the British and Americans were expelled from their Libyan bases in March and June 1970, and the Italians a few months later. Active operations have involved arms for the IRA (the Irish crisis is seen as *divia* retaliation and retribution²⁰) and financial and political support for Malta during her negotiations in 1971–2 with Britain over military bases. Predictably, Qaddafi has his own theory for the non-aligned world—the

¹⁷ *Le Monde*, 30 June 1973.

¹⁸ *The Washington Post*, 4 June 1973.

¹⁹ *al-fundi*, the Libyan army newspaper, 16 October 1971.

²⁰ Press conference in Tripoli on 13 May 1973.

Third International Theory, so called in contrast to Capitalism and Communism, both of which he rejects outright. 'The third world,' Qaddafi has explained,²¹ 'lacks a theory . . . to guide it so that it may not remain torn apart between the ideologies of the East and the West. For this reason we have come forward with the proposition that Islam is the right theory, that it can provide guidance to the world as a whole.' In practice it amounts to an Islamic reincarnation of the spirit of Bandung of 1955.

Libya's most successful operations internationally have been concerned with oil. In her own interests, she has succeeded in raising posted prices per barrel from US \$2.21 in September 1969 to \$4.582 at the time of writing, and her foreign currency reserves have risen from \$827.5 m. at the end of 1969 to \$2,730.4 m. in April 1973.²² But by good timing, by exploiting the low sulphur content of her oil and her geographical position, by imposing production cutbacks, and by picking off the independents like Occidental, Oasis, Bunker Hunt, and Amoseas, Libya has succeeded in obtaining as much for other oil-producing countries as for herself. She can claim credit for leading the way to the acceptance by OPEC at its Caracas meeting in December 1971 of resolution 120, calling for 55 per cent as the minimal acceptable share of profits. The Tripoli agreement of April 1971 on increased posted prices for countries exporting oil through the Mediterranean caused the Gulf producers to renegotiate their Teheran agreement of the previous February. In the drive for control of foreign oil companies, Algeria has led the way, but Libyan demands for 100 per cent control could again cause the Gulf States to renegotiate their 51 per cent agreement of October last year. Libya has yet to use oil heavily as a political weapon in the Middle East conflict. But BP was nationalized in December 1971 in reprisal for Britain's failure to prevent Iran occupying the Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa and the two Tumbs. Libya nationalized BP's partner in the Sarir field, Bunker Hunt, in June this year, partly as a result of prolonged and unsuccessful negotiations for 50-50 participation, but also, as Qaddafi said on 11 June, as a threat to US interests for their support of Israel and as 'a big, hard blow . . . on its cold, insolent face'.²³ On 12 August, 51 per cent of Occidental's assets were taken over, and on 1 September all remaining companies were similarly affected.

The popular revolution

Colonel Qaddafi has never appeared so restless and dissatisfied with both domestic and Arab developments as he has this year. Friends such as Egypt, Syria, and the Palestinians, and enemies such as Jordan, Morocco, and Lebanon, have all been reviled at one time or another. He

²¹ As footnote 8.

²² IMF statistics of June 1973.

²³ BBC SWB ME/4319, 13 June 1973.

has even praised the Israelis for their courage and lack of hesitation in 1967.²⁴ His sternest criticisms have been reserved for the Libyans themselves. When he announced the popular revolution at Zuwara on 15 April (the anniversary of the Prophet Mohammed's birthday), he accused them of being lazy, of wanting to remain eternal students, and of being reluctant to take up service in the armed services, factories, or remote villages. He told them: 'The revolutionary accomplishments you want to achieve are threatened if you continue on your present course.'²⁵

Part of Libya's lethargy is due to her starvation from politics. King Idris had spasmodically allowed a tame parliament to function until it was dissolved on 13 February 1965. But politics was largely the assertion of family, factional, tribal, and parochial interests. The Cabinet was the instrument of the palace. In the seventeen years of the monarchy there were eleven governments and over 200 ministers. Since Qaddafi came to power he has put forward ideas for a national assembly and popular organizations; he announced the formation of an Arab Socialist Union (ASU) on 11 June 1971, as the country's sole political organization, but it has performed as disappointingly as its Egyptian equivalent. Until he launched the people's committees on 16 April this year as the vehicle for his popular revolution, he had not succeeded in stimulating Libyan political life. The popular revolution contains five points²⁶: (i) a suspension of all current laws in favour of those governed by 'the full precepts of justice, the commandments of Islam, and the interests of the people'; (ii) a purge of 'deviationists', 'sick people' talking about Communism or atheism, or belonging to the Muslim Brethren²⁷; (iii) the arming of the people; (iv) a revolutionizing of the bureaucracy and a cleansing of the 'come-again-tomorrow' mentality; and (v) the setting in train of a cultural revolution. In a notably uncontrolled speech on 16 April outside the Aziziya Barracks, the Tripoli headquarters of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), Qaddafi officially launched the popular revolution with a call for the burning of all books not expressing Arabism, Islam, socialism, and progress. He announced that popular committees should be set up in villages, cities, educational institutions, harbours, airports, popular organizations, and businesses.²⁸

This peculiar technique shows the political path Qaddafi has chosen. His role is less that of a formal Head of State than of an Opposition leader, appealing direct to the people, against his RCC and Cabinet. He told a group of Libyan students on 4 August: 'I continue to work from a position of opposition in the RCC . . . to lead the masses to assume their right in power.'²⁹ His frequent resignations and withdrawals from poli-

²⁴ *al-Bayraq* (Beirut), 9 February 1973.

²⁵ As footnote 9.

²⁶ Taken from *Popular Revolution and the People's Responsibilities* (Libyan General Administration for Information, 1973).

²⁷ As footnote 9.

²⁸ BBC SWB ME/4274, 16 April 1973.

²⁹ BBC SWB ME/4368, 9 August 1973.

tical life must be seen in this context.³⁰ They are in part attempts to shock the Libyans into a realization of the fate of the revolution without him unless they make some effort themselves, and in part to underline his position outside formal government. His contacts with the people are singular too. His regime has been described as having 'organized a sort of permanent "happening", which is at the same time a form of "pedagogy"'³¹ in teach-in seminars with intellectuals, the police, the ASU, and even with foreign journalists. In these he tries to encourage debate between the platform and the floor. 'It is during these popular sessions,' an observer has noted, 'generally televised for successive days, that Brother Colonel can be seen at his most magnetic, tireless, and obdurate. From him comes an inexhaustible flow, didactic, at times incoherent, peppered with snatches of half-formed opinions, cryptic self-spun philosophy, inaccurate or partial information, admonitions, confidences, some sound common sense and as much prejudice. Few of his speeches do not contain the germ of at least one sound idea—but often only the germ . . . and little of its real content.'³²

The popular revolution, now represented by 2,000 committees whose formation was to end on 15 August, is more tightly controlled by Qaddafi and the RCC than rhetoric suggests. The practical performance of these committees has varied, with the greatest success recorded in the universities. A number of academics and businessmen have been dismissed on request. According to *The Times* of 28 June, thousands of other senior employees have been dismissed, demoted, transferred, suspended, and in some cases promoted. The committees have annulled certain laws, but this situation has not been tested in the courts, and remains under the close watch of the RCC. The public has not been armed on the scale claimed. Forty-five days' training for popular groups has been instituted, but only the Popular Resistance Forces outside the police and the members of the armed forces carry arms. There have been some unverifiable reports about the ceremonial burning of old regime books. From libraries and bookshops works on Communism, crime, and the social services have been weeded out. Proscribed authors include Sartre, Baudelaire, Ezra Pound, Graham Greene, Henry James, and D. H. Lawrence. The radio and television stations have also been taken over by popular committees. But Qaddafi has in every case taken care to see that the popular revolution with its potential for chaos has not got out of hand. Indeed, there are signs that the committees may assume some institutional shape.³³

³⁰ In *Le Monde*, 22–23 August 1973, it was estimated that, including the recent resignation on 11 July, Qaddafi had withdrawn or resigned five times since coming to power.

³¹ *Le Monde*, 18 April 1973.

³² First, *op. cit.*

³³ The Libyan News Agency reported on 23 April a broadcast of the previous day by the Secretary-General of the ASU, Bashir Hawadi. He advocated a frame-

There have been real political benefits for Qaddafi from his revolution. By initiating it before the proposed union with Egypt, he intended that Libya, as a dynamic rather than a docile force, should have more influence. It has distracted public attention away from the union, which is basically unpopular. It has also been useful for removing, partly through the secret police and partly through recommendations by the people's committees, between 800 and 1,000 opponents of the regime, including businessmen, government employees, former ministers, and members of the trade unions and former prominent families. Politically, they have ranged from Communists and Ba'athists to members of the Muslim Brethren and the Islamic Liberation Party. Nearly all are educated and some belonged to the embryonic opposition against King Idris. Qaddafi has rejected them because of their potential ability to organize themselves politically. Instead, he has sought, and obtained, support from the intellectuals of tomorrow—the students.

Union with Egypt

Since the start of the popular revolution, Arab unity has changed for Qaddafi from being solely the solution to Arab problems to becoming the means for spreading his revolution throughout the Arab world. It is clear from his tactics towards Egypt that he is prepared to go to any lengths to get union on his terms. During an eighteen-day visit to Cairo, which ended on 9 July, he failed to persuade the Government, journalists, members of the ASU and People's Assembly, and the feminist organization that his terms and theories were valuable. He barely concealed his contempt for Egyptian society. He told journalists that Egypt needed more democracy and freedom of thought and action. He accused the Egyptians of drunkenness. In his speech on 23 July—the anniversary of Nasser's coup in 1952—he claimed to have a recording of Nasser saying that Egypt needed a cultural revolution which he would initiate one day.³⁴ He berated Sadat's Government for its police surveillance, censorship, purges, corruption, bureaucracy, bribery, and nepotism. Qaddafi clearly thinks that for its survival the Nasserite revolution needs to be transferred for nurturing in the Libyan social and political greenhouse, before being planted back in Egypt and the rest of the Arab world.

The more recent approaches towards union between Egypt and Libya have been very different. Qaddafi has never defined union, apart from saying that it is necessary and should be total and immediate. He appears not to be bothered by the technical details, and dismisses the problems of

work for the committees matching the different levels of local government and barred committees from ministries and the private sector. The latter injunction has been ignored.

³⁴ From the text of the speech in *al-Fajr al-Yadid*, 24 July 1973, and extracts in BBC SWB ME/4355, 25 July 1973.

development plans, budgets, central banks and currency as administrative matters to be dealt with in joint committees.³⁵ By contrast, Egypt, mindful of the union with Syria which broke up in 1961, has pressed that union should be by stages, with respect for laws and institutions, for local social, geographical, and political characteristics, and not on the basis of emotionalism.³⁶ During his Cairo visit in July, Qaddafi put his name to a form of union by stages after attending a discordant meeting of the Egyptian Cabinet. But on his return to Libya, his response was to despatch the motorized cavalcade of 40,000 Libyans demanding instant and total union; the Egyptian Government succeeded in heading off this direct pressure. With the notable exception of Heykal,³⁷ the Egyptians tend to show more support for Qaddafi's criticism of their country than for union with Libya. Personally, Qaddafi is also a popular figure.

The visit to Tripoli by an Egyptian delegation, led by the Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Abdel-Qadir Hatem, between 5 and 9 August appears to have persuaded Qaddafi, untypically, to yield and accept a gradual form of union. The Libyan leader, however, made one more effort to get his way, by arriving unexpectedly in Cairo on 25 August. Significantly, Sadat was away—on a secret visit to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Syria—in an attempt to coordinate the policy of using oil as a weapon in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and to build up the 'eastern front' against Israel by closer contacts with Jordan. It was also a hint that Sadat had friends other than Qaddafi to whom he could turn. When he returned to Cairo on 27 August for talks with Qaddafi, a break appears to have been only narrowly avoided. On 29 August, Cairo Radio announced an agreement containing thirteen articles on 'the birth of a new unified Arab State'. In fact, it represented something less than that and a compromise in Sadat's favour. The unified political command, consisting of Sadat and Qaddafi, would continue its functions until the union was complete. Instead of the promised referenda on 1 September, a constituent assembly composed of fifty members of Egypt's People's Assembly, and of fifty members of Libya's Popular Committees, was to be appointed on that date. The assembly's task was to nominate a president and to draw up a constitution. No timetable was given for the assembly's work or for a referendum. A degree of integration was to come about from 1 September through the exchange of 'ministers of unity' (High-Commissioners of a sort); through the use of an Egyptian-Libyan dinar as a unit of accounting

³⁵ As footnote 20.

³⁶ Three versions were proposed (the texts are in *al-Ahram* of 19 July and *The Egyptian Gazette* of 20 July): full union by stages, a centralized federal system, and a mixture of the two leading to full union. Qaddafi and Sadat put their names to an amended version of the first, which provided for a plebiscite and the constitutional proclamation of unity on 1 September, but which would effectively extend preparations for union indefinitely.

³⁷ Particularly in interviews with Agence France Presse on 26 July 1973, *Le Figaro*, 31 July 1973, and articles in *al-Ahram* on 6 and 13 July 1973.

between the two countries; and through the establishment of a joint economic planning council and a customs-free zone between them. But about the only concession to Qaddafi's original aspirations was verbal. The statement said: 'The Arab nation, while announcing the birth of the new State, looks forward to resuming its role in guiding man's progress on the basis of the principles and values of Arab culture, which offered and still offer the world a philosophy distinct from the materialist theories that divide it today.' It has clearly been an education for Qaddafi in the intricate realities of inter-Arab politics. But it is hard to believe that he will remain content to let progress towards union mark time. He is unlikely to be satisfied with developing his pan-Arab Islamic revolution in Libya alone, without trying through some idiosyncratic political move to export it again—back to the country it came from in a different form twenty-one years ago, and with the help of the Nasserites he sees waiting for it.