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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 12, 1986

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NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION  
DIRECTIVE NUMBER 224

COUNTER-TERRORIST OPERATIONS AGAINST LIBYA (TS)

Compelling evidence implicates Libya in numerous terrorist attacks over an extended period of time. Most recently the bombing in West Berlin on April 5, 1986 has been directly linked to the Libyan People's Bureau in East Berlin and the Libyan Government in Tripoli. We have further evidence that the Libyans have targetted U.S. citizens and interests for indiscriminate terrorist attacks aimed at killing the maximum number of innocent men, women, and children.



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The United States has pursued every public, diplomatic, and economic opportunity to persuade the Libyan leadership to stop these acts of aggression. Despite these measures, Libyan-directed and supported terrorist attacks continue to kill innocent Americans, and additional attacks are being planned for imminent execution. The United States must, therefore, take more forceful measures in self-defense to stop these attacks and to deter Libya and other states from supporting and directing international terrorism. We must demonstrate to the Libyan leadership that such criminal attacks cannot be conducted without consequence. (TS)

Because the evidence of Libyan complicity in the Berlin attack is so compelling and the information on future attacks is so threatening, I hereby direct that the United States take appropriate pre-emptive action, as permitted under international law, not later than dawn Tuesday, April 15, 1986. The objective of our action is to inflict serious damage to the infrastructure that Qadhafi uses to provide direction and support for global terrorism, while limiting the damage to those elements opposed to Qadhafi and his policies. Accordingly, the following actions recommended by the NSPG are directed:

- U.S. military units will move immediately to undertake air strikes at selected terrorist-related targets inside Libya. The Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will ensure that all possible measures are taken to preserve the security of these activities and reduce the possibility of disclosing our intentions to Libya or the Soviet Union. The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Director of Central Intelligence, will take U.S. military action to

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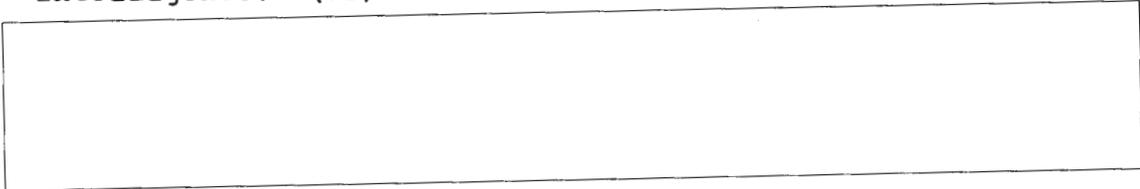
strike at targets which play a key role in Qadhafi's planning, direction, and support of international terrorism. They shall also plan for additional follow-up strikes in Libya should it become necessary to take further steps to deter Libyan acts of aggression. In planning and conducting these strikes, every effort will be made to avoid collateral damage and danger to civilians. While our initial strikes should not include Libyan economic targets, planning should proceed for subsequent action against the Libyan economic infrastructure should additional strikes become necessary. (TS)

-- Because of the threat of continued terrorist attacks and possible U.S. military response, the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall, until otherwise directed, ensure that two aircraft carrier battle groups remain in the Mediterranean Sea. (TS)

-- The Secretary of State, in concert with the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence, will contact Allies and other regional governments, as appropriate, to advise them of the degree of complicity by the Libyan Government in international terrorism. This shall include the dispatch of a Special Emissary to London, Paris, Bonn, Rome, Madrid, and Ottawa to meet with Heads of Government. In addition, foreign governments will be urged to support our efforts to isolate the Libyan regime in the world community. (TS)

-- The Department of State will prepare requisite diplomatic, legislative, and public affairs plans regarding this action. These will be implemented, as appropriate, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence. (TS)

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*Ronald Reagan*

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