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**FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE**


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seized Libya in 1911; during World War II, Allied forces took over. The British granted the United Kingdom of Libya its independence in 1951.

The 1959 discovery of oil soon made Libya rich. But the aging King Idris failed to solidify his political support. On September 1, 1969, the 27-year-old Qaddafi led a successful and bloodless coup.

Qaddafi, Schumacher says, represented "a muddled mix of Nasserist nationalism, Western anarcho-syndicalism, and Bedouin desert egalitarianism." The colonel championed his Third International Theory as an alternative to capitalism and communism; his unique program calls for the abolition of government, private profit, and mandatory schooling.

Life under Qaddafi, however, has not been easy.

Slumping oil revenues (from \$22 billion in 1980 to \$5 billion in 1986) have forced Tripoli to trim government salaries and welfare payments, and cancel housing and road projects. Ordinary Libyans wait in long lines to buy groceries and other consumer goods.

Qaddafi has angered army officers by freezing promotions, ending housing and travel privileges, and favoring the civilian militia of his "revolutionary committees." In November 1985, one prominent Qaddafi critic, Colonel Hassan Ishkal, was mysteriously slain.

The Reagan administration wants to undercut Soviet influence in Libya. Moscow sells arms to Tripoli, and between 2,000 and 3,000 Soviet military advisers are now deployed with the Libyan armed forces.

What should Washington do? Nothing, says Schumacher. U.S. threats could convince the colonel to give the Soviets what they have long wanted: a naval base on the Mediterranean's southern shore. Besides, Qaddafi's own bumbling may soon destroy his corrupt regime.

### *Poison Gas*

"Chemical Weapons: Restoring the Taboo" by  
Kenneth Adelman, in *Orbis* (Fall 1986), 3508  
Market St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

For years, the West's peace activists have not let anyone forget the horrors of nuclear war. But the worldwide taboo against chemical weapons, warns Adelman, director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, is fading.

Indeed, the development and combat use of poison gas is spreading. In 1963, just five nations, including the Soviet Union and the United States, owned chemical weapons. Fifteen states—including Iraq, Libya, Syria, and North Korea—do so today. Since the late 1970s, the Vietnamese have reportedly employed "yellow rain" against guerrillas in Laos and Kampuchea. The Soviets have used it on rebels in Afghanistan. Iraqi troops have unleashed nerve gas against Iranian forces.

Western nations have long condemned chemical warfare. The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 bound signatories to "abstain from the diffusion of asphyxiating or deleterious gas." Yet World War I saw Germany introduce chlorine gas at the battle of Ypres in April 1915. The Allies would soon retaliate in kind. Being gassed was an experience that British war poet Wilfred Owen would never forget:

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Gas! Gas! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling,  
 Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;  
 But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
 And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime . . .

During World War II all major powers owned large stocks of chemical weapons. But gas never saw battlefield use. Why? Each belligerent, Adelman says, was afraid that the foe would retaliate. In 1972, the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union signed the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention—which prohibited the development, production, and stockpiling of those arms. But Moscow, notes Adelman, has never agreed to on-site inspections to verify compliance. Now the Soviets own “a large, modern, and growing stock of nerve [gas] and other lethal agents,” and have trained some 80,000 troops to use them.

To deter the Soviets, the Reagan administration will begin building “binary” chemical munitions (which become lethal only when their separate gases are combined, after the containers are air-dropped or fired by artillery) this year.

Adelman favors a verifiable ban on possession of chemical weapons, because history, he says, shows that possession leads to use.

*Micromanaging*

“Initiative in the U.S. Soldier” by Lynn W. Kaufman, in *Military Review* (Nov. 1986), Fort Leavenworth, Kans. 66027.

According to a 1985 survey, nearly half of the service’s general officers believe that “senior Army leaders behave too much like corporate executives and not enough like warriors.” Many also agree that “the bold, original, creative officer cannot survive in today’s army.”

Indeed, the U.S. armed forces, says Army captain Kaufman, suffer from chronic overmanagement. Senior military commanders discourage their subordinates from taking risks and making their own decisions by trying to exercise too much control.

The U.S. Army has long been afflicted by a “herd instinct.” During World War II, battlefield leaders rarely made their own tactical decisions without checking first with higher-ups. Their German counterparts, by contrast, were expected to take independent action. The Wehrmacht employed *Auftragstaktik*, a “mission-oriented command system,” under which senior commanders assigned field subordinates a task and let them decide how to carry it out.

Micromanagement also hurt the army in Vietnam. Unit leaders, says Kaufman, showed a “reluctance to maneuver when in contact with the enemy.” Indeed, “the company commander on the ground,” he writes, quoting General David Palmer, could often observe, orbiting in various helicopters above him, “his battalion commander, brigade commander, assistant division commander, division commander, and even his field force commander,” all ready to intervene by radio in the ongoing battle.

Army enlisted men often lack the information they need to do a better