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# U.S., Libyan forces now at standoff

(continued from page 1)

that specified any Libyan plane or boat approaching them in the gulf was to be considered hostile.

"But there have been no new incidents to report; no hostile action from the Libyans," he said. "U.S. forces have remained outside Libyan territorial waters, but have continued to operate in the gulf itself."

When it announced the latest exercise — the fifth off Libya's coast since January — the Pentagon set a deadline of April 1 for completing the maneuvers. Sources who requested anonymity said Wednesday the U.S. vessels would almost surely be withdrawn earlier as long as Libya did not mount any further attacks.

Sims said, "We have demonstrated that we have the right to operate in international waters. You have to do that periodically. There's nothing unusual about a freedom-of-navigation exercise. What is unusual is that Mr. Khadafy chose to react to it with force."

Sims, in assessing the military situation, refused to say how close American planes were flying to the Libyan coast. On Monday and Tuesday, he said no planes had come closer than 40 miles to land.

There were some indications the Navy jets might not be flying as deeply into the gulf as they had done earlier. Sims, when asked if the radar facilities around the missile battery at Sirte had been repaired and returned to service, refused to answer directly.

Pentagon sources, meantime, said the Navy had three combat ships still steaming in the Gulf of Sidra — the cruiser Ticonderoga and destroyers Scott and Caron — but that the carriers Coral Sea, Saratoga and America remained at stations well to the north in the Mediterranean.

The return of relative calm to the region occurred as Khadafy de-

clared it was "a time of war." The U.S. government, fearing terrorist reprisals by the Libyans, tightened security at government buildings in the United States and at embassy buildings abroad.

Libya's official radio called for Arab suicide squads to attack U.S. embassies and other interests worldwide, exhorting the "Arab nation" to be transformed "in its entirety into suicide squads and into human bombs, missiles and aircraft to deter and resist terrorism and destroy it for good."

State Department spokesman Redman called the situation "potentially dangerous" and said Americans abroad were being advised to be careful.

Redman denied a New York Times report that the U.S. naval forces were sent into the gulf as a way of showing Khadafy that terrorism would not be tolerated.

Rather, he said, the maneuvers were intended "to demonstrate, once again, we do not accept the Khadafy regime's claims" to the waterway.

In Moscow, Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev sharply criticized the United States for its armed clashes with Libya, and proposed opening talks on withdrawing all U.S. and Soviet warships from the Mediterranean.

At a Kremlin banquet for Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid, Gorbachev said the Soviet Union has to permanently base ships in the Mediterranean only because of the U.S. presence there.

In his first public comment on the confrontation, Gorbachev said: "The imperial bandit face of neoglobalist policy has become clearly visible in the past few days. The day before yesterday, American weapons were used against independent and sovereign Libya. Now, the U.S.A. is not stinting words to justify that act of aggression."

# Sources say Sandinistas trapped near border

(continued from page 1)

defeated the proposal by a 222-210 vote last Thursday.

Reagan approved \$20 million in emergency aid to Honduras on Tuesday to help it cope with the reported incursion.

American officials said the helicopters were ferrying about 500 to 600 Honduran soldiers to the salient in four Huey and 10 Chinook helicopters of U.S. Task Force Bravo. The task force of about 1,200 men is

permanently based at Palmerola, a Honduran base about 60 miles southwest of Tegucigalpa.

A U.S. Embassy officer in Tegucigalpa, also speaking on condition of anonymity, said the American helicopters were unarmed and would drop the Honduran soldiers at what he called a secure landing site at least 10 miles from the fighting.

The airlift represented an escalation of U.S. military involvement in Honduras, where U.S. forces hold

almost continuous joint training exercises with Honduran units.

White House spokesman Larry Speakes said in Washington, "There are reports of Sandinista troop reinforcements on the Nicaraguan side of the border with Honduras and there is a question of what their intent is. One of the goals that the Hondurans have is to head off any further Sandinista troop incursions."

In Tegucigalpa, however, sources close to the situation said there was

no evidence of Sandinista reinforcements gathering on the Nicaraguan border.

The Honduran troops were said to take up positions near where Clayton Sandinistas were said to be trying to get out of the salient, the American officials said.

Informed sources said about 200 men, elements of three Sandinista battalions, attacked a Contra training camp 12 miles inside Honduras before dawn Sunday in four separate assaults.

# Senate looks for compromise

(continued from page 1)

by the White House "to magnify the whole incident" involving the purported Nicaraguan incursion into Honduras.

Dole, who has said he wants a vote on the issue this week, actively sought a compromise as a means of building a national consensus behind the president's Central American policies.

Dole said reports of the Nicaraguan raid had transformed the atmosphere of the Senate debate and called for a strong vote for aid to the Contras "to send a message to Managua" that Reagan has a united Senate behind him.

Senate Minority Leader Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., in an effort to en-

courage negotiations, had sought a number of changes in the Reagan plan that calls for providing the Contras \$70 million in weapons and \$30 million in logistical support.

Byrd's proposals were built around Reagan's pledge not to send the Contra rebels "offensive" weapons during a 90-day period in which the administration would seek to engage Nicaragua's Sandinista government in negotiations.

Byrd and most Senate Democrats had sought to keep pressure on the administration by insisting on a second vote to approve the aid after the expiration of the 90-day period. That vote would enable either the House or the Senate to block weapons shipments to the Contras.

# Government files suit against contractor

(continued from page 1)

The anti-aircraft gun was built at General Dynamics' Pomona, Calif., division.

By the time the contract was seven months old, the Army had spent more than \$1.8 billion on the weapon, called the Division Air Defense Gun and also known as the Sgt. York anti-aircraft gun. Assistant Attorney General Richard K. Willard said the suit, which does not state the amount of money believed to be involved, seeks damages under the False

Claims Act and under common law theories of fraud, breach of contract, unjust enrichment and payment by mistake.

The gun was intended to be a relatively simple weapon developed to meet the Army's need for a way to protect tanks and infantry against low-flying planes and helicopters.

General Dynamics is one of the nation's biggest defense contractors, building Navy submarines, F-16 jet fighters for the Air Force, M-1 tanks for the Army and missiles and other systems.

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