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Military action not viewed as proper way to fight terrorism

By Julie Shippen
Of the Emerald

On Dec. 27, terrorist attacks at airports in Rome and Vienna killed 19 people, including five Americans, and wounded about 120.

The United States attributed the attacks to Palestine Liberation Organization faction leader Abu Nidal. U.S. officials hold Libyan leader Col. Moammar Khadafy responsible, however, claiming his regime harbored and supported Nidal.

Last week Reagan retaliated by freezing Libyan assets in the United States and ordering that all business dealings with Libya end by Feb. 1. In addition, Reagan has readied ships and planes for deployment to the Libyan region.

Meanwhile, Khadafy denies responsibility for the raids and has threatened to declare an "endless war" in the Middle East. In addition, he promised future acts of terrorism within American borders should the

Streetwise

United States retaliate on Libyan soil.

The Emerald interviewed students, faculty and area residents Friday, asking them if they felt the terrorist acts warranted military action by the United States against Libya.

Many were unsure as to what Reagan should do, but believed military action was too extreme.

Michael Vega, a sophomore in telecommunications and film, said she would support some form of action against Libya, such as a trade embargo, but would oppose U.S. military involvement — anywhere.

"I don't think anything should be handled militarily," Vega said. "I don't believe in the military."

"As far as military action goes, at this point I'm not sure. I know some action has to be taken to curb terrorism," said Doug Osterloh, a third year law student.

"I'm not sure that the economic sanctions that have been taken are going to stop anything," he added. "But on the same token, I'm not sure that military action is the proper channel."

Suzette Stephens, an undeclared freshman, agreed. "I don't really have that much of an opinion, but I don't think it should be handled militarily," Stephens said.

Galen Yip, a senior studying finance, marketing and Japanese, said Reagan needs more "quantitative" proof the Libyans were connected to or responsible for the attacks. If Reagan has proof, Yip said, he then should present it to the American public before taking military action.

"The first thing the government should do is disclose any evidence... that those terrorists are Libyans," he said. "What kind of evidence does he have? Were they trained in Libya? At least we should know why he does it," Yip said.



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— Severena Johnston

Some students believe military action will backfire on the United States.

"We're now being singled out by Libya. (Khadafy's) threatened us with terrorism in our own country," said sophomore Severena Johnston, a biology/chemistry major.

"(Reagan) is speaking too soon," she added. "If he doesn't watch out, he's going to get the whole country in trouble."

"I think we shouldn't be so vocal about it," said Peter Gordon, a sophomore in international studies. "Before we act, we should have the support of the international community."

"At the same time, we need to confront it somehow," Gordon added. "But we should do it quietly and with more support... and we should do something and get it over with."

Jerry Jaqua, coordinator of analytic systems for the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, agreed the matter should be handled with political finesse.

"It should be done diplomatically," Jaqua said. "Basically the idea is to get together at a high level and come to some kind of an understanding as to who is responsible. That's their only choice."



While not enthusiastic about the idea, some students do support military intervention though not for the same reason.

John Wolf, a senior in leisure studies, supports such action, which hopefully would "put an end to the attitude that killing is OK," he said.

"If (terrorism) is going to happen until somebody does something about it," Wolf said.

Hailu Regassa, a graduate teaching fellow in business, agrees.

"I don't think what they did is right. Any kind of terrorist act has to be circumvented," Regassa said. "The United States has an obligation to protect its citizens."

Matt Hughes, a former Northwest Christian College student who recently returned to Eugene from Seattle, said he fully supports military action.

"I really think we should take control of the situation," Hughes said. "We should put our foot down. I think we should flex our military muscles."

"The problem with retaliation against terrorist activity in Europe is the possibility of military escalation of many different countries — a global conflict could ensue," said Dave Peterson, a junior in political science. "Global conflict would most likely mean global destruction — nuclear war."

Monday, January 13, 1986