

U.S. launches airstrikes targeting Islamic State militants in Libya

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States launched multiple airstrikes against Islamic State militants in Libya on Monday, opening a new, more persistent front against the group at the request of the United Nations-backed government, Libyan and U.S. officials said.

Fayez Serraj, the head of Libya’s U.N.-brokered presidency council, said in a televised statement that American warplanes attacked the IS bastion of Sirte on the Mediterranean in northern Libya. No U.S. ground forces will be deployed, he said.

The precision strikes, which targeted an Islamic State tank and vehicles, come amid growing concerns about the group’s increased threat to Europe and its ability to inspire attacks across the region, even though its numbers have been shrinking because of attacks from local forces and allied international troops.

“The presidency council, as the general army commander, has made a request for direct U.S. support to carry out specific airstrikes,” Serraj said. “The first strikes started today in positions in Sirte, causing major casualties.”

The strikes mark the start of a more intense American role in the fight against IS in Libya, as the U.S. steps in to assist the fragile, U.N.-backed government. They were the first strikes by the U.S. on the group in Libya since February, and they are expected to continue. But officials said they expect the air campaign will last weeks, not months.

Obama’s authorization for action in Sirte covers strikes, intelligence and surveillance, but not ground operations, according to a White House official, who wasn’t authorized to speak publicly about the strikes and requested anonymity.

Serraj said his government is joining the coalition against IS, adding, “This is the time for the international community to live up to its promises to the Libyan people.”

He also noted that the strikes will not go beyond Sirte and its surroundings. He said any other foreign intervention is not allowed without coordination.

His warning comes after several French commandos were killed fighting Islamic State militants. U.S., French, British and Italian special operations forces and military experts have been assisting Libyan troops fighting IS militants in eastern and western Libya.

Pentagon press secretary Peter Cook said President Barack Obama authorized the strikes following a recommendation from Defense Secretary Ash Carter and Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Cook told reporters that U.S. Africa Command will coordinate any strikes with the Libyans and that the new air campaign will last as long as the Libyans request assistance to eliminate IS from Sirte. The U.S. is also providing airborne surveillance and intelligence. And a small team of U.S. special operations forces is in an operations center in Libya — outside of Sirte — to help coordinate the airstrikes, according to U.S. officials who were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly so spoke anonymously.

Mohammed al-Ghasri, the commander of a pro-government militia, said his forces gave target coordinates of Islamic State positions to the U.S.

While there are no U.S. ground forces being used in connection with the latest strikes, Cook would not comment on whether other American special operations forces are currently in Libya. They have been routinely moving in and out of the country, meeting with Libyan groups.

U.S. officials earlier this year estimated there were as many as 6,000 Islamic State insurgents in Libya, including some who have abandoned Syria. But in recent months, officials say, their numbers in Libya have dropped and the group is weakening there

under pressure from local militias and the U.N.-brokered government.

Two weeks ago, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Islamic State fighters in Libya are facing the “distinct possibility” of defeat in their last stronghold.

And Dunford estimated in mid-July that there were only a few hundred militants still inside Sirte, which the group has used as a headquarters.

“I don’t think there is any doubt that the Islamic State in Libya is weaker than it was some months ago,” said Dunford, adding, “They’ve suffered significant casualties in and around the Benghazi area.”

PERS: New rates in September

Continued from 1A

the problem in the long term.

“It’s a systemic problem,” he said. “Everything is predicated on a linear 7.5 percent investment return, and that has not been sustainable. It’s a whole different paradigm to what we’ve been used to in the past.”

The shortfall leaves school districts facing a \$335 million increase in costs next biennium, which some Republican lawmakers have equated to hiring 2,000 new teachers.

“Unsustainable and escalating PERS costs will not lead to reducing class sizes, adding school days, or making our communities safer,” Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferris said in a news

release sent out Friday. “We need fair and constitutional PERS solutions that reduce costs, ensure the long-term stability of the system to protect retirees, and allow for investments in education.”

State agencies will see their PERS bill increase by \$260 million, and other public employers will have \$290 million in new expenses.

Republican lawmakers have compiled a list of money-saving pension reforms, but Gov. Kate Brown and Democratic lawmakers did not take up any of the proposals in the 2015 legislative session or this year’s short session.

The PERS Board will send employers their new rates in September. The rates will take effect July 1, 2017.

ACCIDENT: Hospital released Harris Monday

Continued from 1A

Health District, which provides ambulance service to the Helix area. Harris said their wives are good friends. He also remembered the accident was on Saturday because emergency workers kept asking if he knew the day.

The ambulance took Harris to Providence St. Mary Medical Center, Walla Walla, then a helicopter flew him to Sacred Heart Medical Center, Spokane. He said the hospital was releasing him Monday, but first an orthopedic surgeon

who is an expert in facial reconstruction would change the dressing on his left ear and consult with him. Harris said he would return to the Spokane hospital for surgery next week.

He also said he met Simer about a month ago and the two were coworkers but had not had the time to get to know one another.

Rowan said the sheriff’s office continues to investigate the incident.

Contact Phil Wright at [pwright@eastoregonian.com](mailto:pwright@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0833.



it's just better

SAFeway 

clip or CLICK! just for U

Valid 8/2/16 thru 8/9/16

\$10 OFF

\$50 or more\*

Save on your next grocery purchase of \$50 or more\* with your Safeway Club Card and this Savings Award.

\*Use this Savings Award on any shopping trip you choose at any Oregon Safeway store and S.W. Washington stores serving Clark, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Skamania, Walla Walla and Klickitat counties by 8/9/16. This \$10.00 Savings Award excludes purchases of Alcoholic Beverages, Fluid Dairy Products, Tobacco, US Postage Stamps, Trimet Bus/Commuter Passes, Money Orders, Container Deposits, Lottery, Gift Cards, Gift Certificates Sales, All Pharmacy Prescription Purchases, Safeway Club Savings, Safeway Store Coupons and Sales Tax. One Savings Award redeemable per household. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED. Online and in-store prices, discounts, and offers may differ.



SAFeway 

clip or CLICK! just for U

Valid 8/3/16 thru 8/9/16



Limit 2

Value Corner Milk

1-gallon. Whole, 2%, 1% or Non-Fat.

1.99 ea

WITH CARD AND COUPON



0 00000 77005 7

This coupon must be presented at time of purchase. Offer Valid with Card and Coupon. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED. Coupon valid thru 8/9/16.

SAFeway 

clip or CLICK! just for U

Valid 8/3/16 thru 8/9/16



Limit 4

OvenJoy Bread

22-oz. White or Wheat. Selected varieties.

99¢ ea

WITH CARD AND COUPON



0 00000 77108 5

This coupon must be presented at time of purchase. Offer Valid with Card and Coupon. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED. Coupon valid thru 8/9/16.

SAFeway 

clip or CLICK! just for U

Valid 8/3/16 thru 8/9/16



Limit 12

Lucerne® Yogurt

6-oz. Selected varieties.

4 \$1 for 1

WITH CARD AND COUPON



0 00000 77359 1

This coupon must be presented at time of purchase. Offer Valid with Card and Coupon. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED. Coupon valid thru 8/9/16.

SAFeway 

clip or CLICK! just for U

Valid 8/3/16 thru 8/9/16



USDA CHOICE

USDA Choice Beef Petite Sirloin Steaks

3.49 lb

WITH CARD AND COUPON



0 00000 77411 6

This coupon must be presented at time of purchase. Offer Valid with Card and Coupon. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED. Coupon valid thru 8/9/16.

SAFeway 

clip or CLICK! just for U

Valid 8/3/16 thru 8/9/16



LOCAL

Oregon Grown Blueberries

18-oz.

2.99 ea

WITH CARD AND COUPON



0 00000 77378 2

This coupon must be presented at time of purchase. Offer Valid with Card and Coupon. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED. Coupon valid thru 8/9/16.

SAFeway 

clip or CLICK! just for U

Valid 8/3/16 thru 8/9/16



Chicken Dinner Deal

Your choice of 8-piece Chicken or whole Rotisserie Chicken, your choice of 1-lb. Potato Salad, Macaroni Salad, Cole Slaw or Potato Wedges and 4 Kings Hawaiian Rolls.

7.99 ea

WITH CARD AND COUPON



0 00000 77221 1

This coupon must be presented at time of purchase. Offer Valid with Card and Coupon. COUPON CANNOT BE DOUBLED. Coupon valid thru 8/9/16.

Find over \$300

Sign up at [safeway.com](http://safeway.com) or download the Safeway App!

 Get free offers and personalized deals

 Add coupons online or with our App

 Create a digital shopping list

just for U

\*based on average daily value of offers available in Coupons & Deals





PLEASE GIVE

now through August 9th

Your in store donation supports the Harrington Family Foundation, providing scholarships for Oregon youth. Join us in investing in the future of our community.



For Kids



Joey Harrington  
Former Oregon Quarterback

Prices in this ad are effective 6 AM Wednesday, August 3, 2016 thru Tuesday, August 9, 2016 (unless otherwise noted) in all Safeway stores in Oregon and S.W. Washington stores serving Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Clark, Skamania, Walla Walla and Klickitat Counties. Items offered for sale are not available to other dealers or wholesalers. Sales of products containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine or phenylpropanolamine limited by law. Quantity rights reserved. SOME ADVERTISING ITEMS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL STORES. Some advertised prices may be even lower in some stores. On Buy One, Get One Free ("BOGO") offers, customer must purchase the first item to receive the second item free. BOGO offers are not 1/2 price sales. If only a single item purchased, the regular price applies. Manufacturers' coupons may be used on purchased items only — not on free items. Limit one coupon per purchased item. Customer will be responsible for tax and deposits as required by law on the purchased and free items. No liquor sales in excess of 52 gallons. No liquor sales for resale. Liquor sales at licensed Safeway stores only. © 2015 Safeway Inc. Availability of items may vary by store. Online and in-store prices, discounts and offers may differ.

PG 1,P1,P2  
080316\_PendletonEastOregonian\_8.725x17\_P1