



Chad France's problem

By CHRISTINE MANUEL

The importance of the war in Chad has risen to international heights, yet few people know where the nation is or why it is at war. The central African country is about twice the size of Texas, but has fewer than 5 million people; now its 18-year-old civil war is scary enough to have both the United States and France worried. The war is threatening the entire stability of Central Africa.

France, which colonized Chad in 1900, has sent in troops and arms. The United States is doing what it should — staying out. No U.S. troops have been sent, but the Reagan administration has given Chad \$25 million in aid.

Since gaining its independence from France in 1960, Chad has been in a civil war, with the Muslims of the North fighting the Christians and animists of the South. The war has been interrupted by short-lasting peace treaties and troop withdrawals, but the country has almost always been at war.

Enter the unpredictable dictator of Libya, Col. Moammar Khadafy. In 1981, Khadafy tried to annex Chad, but international pressure made him back down. Now the crazed leader of Libya is trying to take Chad by force using Soviet weapons and Chadian rebels headed by former Chad President Goukouni Weddeye.

The current president of Chad, Hissene Habre, was once allied with Weddeye but a split between the men came in the '70s. Now the pro-West Habre and the Libyan-backed Weddeye are in the international limelight as France and Khadafy take sides.

Should the United States enter militarily to stymie a possible threat to Central African stability?

No, the responsibility of aiding Chad, one of the poorest nations in the world, rests on the shoulders of France. When France gave Chad independence, it failed to leave behind a stable form of government. Since then Chad has been entangled in a power struggle for the last two decades. (This type of power struggle also occurred in another former French colony, Vietnam.)

But what are the stakes in Chad? For Khadafy, taking the nation would mean the beginning of his ultimate dream — a united, Muslim Africa with him as leader. For the United States, there are no immediate threats to security. But if Chad were to fall, loyal U.S. allies Sudan (which borders Chad) and Egypt (which borders Libya) would be in danger. For France, keeping Chad as an economic resource means minerals, namely uranium, and the security of its other African trading partners.

In addition, a Khadafy victory in Chad could cause a ripple effect throughout Africa. The Libya leader's power could multiply, and Western Europe would have much to lose. Many of Western Europe's major markets are in Africa. For example, France deals heavily with its former colonies, including Cameroon and the Central African Republic, which border Chad. Also bordering Chad is oil-rich Nigeria, which much of Europe depends on for fuel. Thus France has great economic interest in the region. And with the French franc weakening against other world currencies, the French cannot afford to lose their established markets.

This is the third time the French had had to intervene in Chad, one of their 20 former African colonies. But the French have returned in style, many of them familiar with the landscape and people of the dry, parched nation. Many of Chad's people feel better knowing that the French are there.

But the Socialist government of France is wary of policing its former colonies. President Francois Mitterand had campaigned as a non-interventionist but at President Reagan's prodding, has approved aid to Chad. But Mitterand still sees the conflict in Chad as a "messy, no-win war in one of the world's poorest countries," said one French correspondent. And the French had doubted that Khadafy has the economic means to continue the fight in Chad.

But that skepticism was disproven with the fall of Faya-Largeau, the major town of northern Chad, to Libyan-backed rebels. If France hopes to keep its economic ties with its mineral-rich former colonies, it must stop Khadafy from advancing further.

And it is essential that France take the lead. If the United States were to enter the war with personnel, the small clash could easily turn into an East-West confrontation, since the Libyan forces are armed to the hilt with Soviet weapons. The United States has nothing to gain from intervening except casualties. We did not contribute to Chad's instability, and we do not stand to lose vital markets as the French do.

So for now, Americans should simply sit and wait. We can only hope that the French, who have now sent the needed aircraft that could turn the rebels back, can thwart Khadafy's effort to take Chad. Americans will see that national pride and economic necessities will convince the French that defeating Khadafy in Chad is essential.

Christine Manuel, a junior journalism and political science major from Fayetteville, is state and national editor of The Daily Tar Heel.

Town and gown

By KAREN FISHER

Two weeks ago, you could get a parking place anywhere on Franklin Street. You could get into Darryl's on a Friday night without waiting in line, and you could walk through the middle of campus without dodging frisbees.

On Aug. 21, all that changed. Cars were bumper-to-bumper on Franklin Street, police directed traffic, and signs everywhere told weary parents to park anywhere but here.

"Every year our population booms around the last week in August," said Master Officer Gregg Jarvis of the Chapel Hill Police Department. The number of people more than doubles, with students and professors returning from summer vacation and sabbaticals, he said.

For Chapel Hill residents, the change is quite dramatic. In the span of a week, Chapel Hill transforms from a quiet, spacious town to a center of student activity.

One would expect a bit of resentment from the townspeople. Chapel Hill is, after all, their home — not just for a few semesters, but often for a lifetime. And conflicts do arise — usually over noise or heavy alcohol consumption.

But Jarvis described the problems as "a bit of annoyance" and nothing more. For the most part town and gown get along splendidly.

"Overall, I think everybody's glad to see (students) back. It kind of livens them up when fall season gets

here," Jarvis said. "For those who have lived here for awhile, they get used to it."

Frances Gardiner, a local resident who remembers when Franklin Street was a dirt road, has known both sides of Chapel Hill life. In 1906 she lived in the president's house with her father Frances Preston Venable. She remembers University receptions, small departmental parties, and a lot fewer students.

Things have changed in Chapel Hill. She no longer has to worry about getting her shoes muddy when it rains on Franklin Street, and the departments are now too large for intimate parties. But one thing has remained the same. "The University is (and always has been) the main thing," Gardiner said. Asked if she minded the noise and excitement that it imported every fall, she laughed. "Law no," she said. "That's what this place was made for."

David Frankstone, a local attorney, said he could go other places and make more money. He could also find better parking and less noise. But "there's something special about Chapel Hill," he said. "A little bit of magic. And it's the University community that makes Chapel Hill a nice place to live."

Jarvis said there is something exceptional about the university-town relationship in Chapel Hill. "We as a police department do so little," he said. "That the arrival of students 'necessitates so little extra work shows how the students blend in with the town.'"

However, though the students blend, they don't necessarily mix with Chapel Hill residents. "Generally, students, as in any socio-class pretty much stick to their own kind," Jarvis said.

Frankstone agreed. Students often "don't realize that there's a vital town group of business people out there making money and enjoying themselves."

The separation is not intentional, Jarvis said. "We encourage students to vote, to get involved in the environment of the town."

And some do. Several students are active in city government. A good many vote, a few serve on city committees and several are involved in public recreation activities. Students are little league coaches, Sunday school teachers, babysitters — typical small-town citizens.

Most Chapel Hill residents appreciate that. They don't seem to mind giving a student part of their town for four years. They don't mind that the babysitter they had last year will be graduating this year. Instead, they join in and enjoy the University spirit.

Take the basketball championship two years ago. "Very few small towns could handle a crowd of 35,000," Jarvis said. Yet, there were only two arrests during the post-game celebration, and those were for drinking and driving. "Town and gown just got together and had a great time."

"You get the feeling that the students know that they're not all the town is made of. They don't come (back to Chapel Hill) with a sense of 'it's time to take over the town again.' They are townspeople as well as students. They belong to the town — that is if they want to belong to it."

Karen Fisher, a senior journalism major from High Point, is features editor of The Daily Tar Heel.

Lending a helping hand

By KATHY HOPPER

Orientation week is a trying time for most freshmen. They explore new freedoms and try to adjust to a totally new environment. As an Orientation Counselor, I got an inside look at the excitement and frustration faced by freshmen.

The week involved a vast array of activities. By the end of the week I had carried four refrigerators up seven flights of stairs, judged a wet T-shirt contest and met people from both Boston, Mass and Bunn Level, N.C.

Moving freshmen into their rooms was the first obstacle. On Sunday, Aug. 20, things began to heat up — literally. A temperature of 100 degrees intensified all emotions. Wearing my new Orientation T-shirt, I reported to my unloading station.

There waited a freshman, all set to be

greeted by a friendly OC. "What floor do you need to go to," I politely asked.

"Ten," he replied while motioning a large semi-truck into the parking lot.

"Is everything in that truck yours?" I asked, freezing my smile.

"Not everything, but most of it is."

That was just the beginning of a long procession of vans, trucks and station wagons that carried freshmen, their belongings and their families. Talking with parents was the best part. My proudest moment was when one father told me that he was pleasantly surprised by being helped and said: "They never did this at the University of Virginia. This is really great."

Time moved slowly. Eventually 6 o'clock rolled around and it was time to meet with my Orientation group.

"Hi, my name is Kathy Hopper and I'm your OC," I said, trying not to coat on too much sugary enthusiasm.

Each one told his name, hometown and expected major.

"OK, we'll go on to dinner."

We began the long trek to Franklin Street. Spontaneous conversations replaced uneasy silence and anxiety faded to relaxation. Their awe-struck glances reminded me of how large the campus and Franklin Street can seem to a freshman.

Back in the dorm I met other freshmen and spent the night singing around the piano. There was also an impromptu slumber party in the air conditioned social lounge.

During a power outage in a thunderstorm, a freshman said she thought Southern boys were very different from more trendy northerners. "Down here they wear those boxer shorts."

She also Southern life was a slower pace and asked if the stereotype of the courteous Southern gentleman was true. I had no comment.

Another freshman complained about the attitude of an upperclassman. "He yelled at me for taking a short cut

through the grass, then began harassing me because I was a freshman. It was like I was a plebe at West Point."

Several freshmen came up and asked me for directions. I have heard more than one say, "This place is so big. I don't think I'll ever know my way around." I empathized with their problem or losing direction. Last year I had the same problem. Now there are even more buildings on campus than when I was a freshman.

Through my experiences as an OC I learned that freshmen need the support of upperclassmen. They are going through a very difficult time in their lives and the willing ear of an upperclassman is rarely turned down. Older students should empathize with freshmen and help them rather than put them down or forget about them.

Kathy Hopper, a sophomore English and journalism major from Greensboro, was an OC in Morrison and is a staff writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

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