

# U.S. Experts Caught Off Base in Libya

By Jack Anderson

The military coup in Libya, which deposed kindly, 79-year-old King Idris while he was out of the country taking treatment for his arthritis, caught the State Department completely by surprise.

A crisis meeting of experts on Libya, including the new Ambassador to Libya, Joseph Palmer II, was hastily summoned behind closed doors. They had all thought the revolutionaries would have had the decency to wait until the old king's death before staging their coup.

The experts immediately called for a list of the junta members to find out who was running the country. As they went over the names one by one, they were dismayed not to find a single name they recognized. It looked as if the U.S. would be dealing with a government of complete strangers.

Then a late arrival wandered into the room and glanced at the list of names.

"I thought this was a meeting on Libya," he said. "What are you doing with the Cabinet list for South Yemen?"