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**Background Notes to a Letter from Benghazi by William Shepherd**


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**From:** William Shepherd <[shepherd@cesc.net](mailto:shepherd@cesc.net)>  
**Date:** December 26, 2011  
**Subject:** Naom Chomsky & the NATO Invasion of Libya

In the end I decided not to post my *Letter from Benghazi* at the end of August, in part because I was picking up conflicting signals from my research and found it difficult to figure out what was really going on...and subsequent events have shown my caution to be prudent which is perhaps why I have some sympathy with Chomsky and his Stage 1 and Stage 2 analysis of events.



**From:** William Shepherd  
**To:** [Malcolm Treacher](mailto:Malcolm.Treacher)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 25 August 2011,  
**Subject:** False Flags

Malcolm

The oil-rich Libyan economy was run with imported labour...some of it from the Indian sub-continent. So maybe they just grabbed a flag off the kitchen wall and ran out onto the street...on the other hand...anyway...attached are three one-page sceptical articles...from the US, UK & Italy...and an 8-page selection from (principally) the French press. The UK jingoist press (and the BBC) are an embarrassment.

William Shepherd

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:** BBC Caught Showing FAKE FOOTAGE – That is the Indian Flag!!!  
**Date:** Thu, 25 Aug 2011 17:04:03 +0100  
**From:** malc <[malcolmskylark@talktalk.net](mailto:malcolmskylark@talktalk.net)>  
**To:** [hugochavez@activist.com](mailto:hugochavez@activist.com)

<http://inquiringminds.cc/already-posted-today-but-hey-the-people-need-to-know-busted-bbc-caught-showing-fake-footage-of-green-sq-lybia-that-is-the-indian-flag-steve-b>

**From the Berlin Conference of 1884 to the London Conference of 2011 by Brian Becker**Article nr. 76384 sent on 31-mar-2011 03:34 ECT at [www.uruknet.info?p=76384](http://www.uruknet.info?p=76384); published on [PSLweb](http://PSLweb) on March 30, 2011

The leaders of 14 capitalist powers in Europe plus the United States met for a conference in Berlin 126 years ago to decide how all of Africa's land and vast resources would be divided as colonies and zones of control among themselves. No Africans were invited to the conference.



European colonies in Africa, 1913

Belgium	Germany	Spain	France
Great Britain	Italy	Portugal	Independent

The 1884 *Conference of Berlin*, more than any other single event, became emblematic of the dynamic transformation of capitalism into a system of global imperialism.

By 1902, 90 percent of Africa's territory was under European control. African self-governance was wiped off the map in most of the continent. Only Ethiopia remained an independent state. Liberia was technically independent too, but it was in fact under the control of the United States.

The *Scramble for Africa* by Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, the US and the other capitalist powers was essential for the growth and enrichment of the modern-day capitalist class, which included the owners of the biggest banks, syndicates and monopolies.

Africa was plundered and looted and, as a result, the western capitalists entered the 20th century with the largest fortunes in the history of the human race.

One cannot help but think about the *Berlin Conference of 1884* when analyzing the *London Conference of 2011* that took place on March 29. It was convened by the same imperialist governments that took part in the 1884 meeting. Africans were invited this time, but the *African Union* refused to attend. Almost all African nations were absent. Only Tunisia and Morocco sent representatives.

Although China, Russia, India and Pakistan decided not to attend the *London Conference* on Libya, the *Washington Post's* front page headline reads, "World leaders indicate military campaign will continue until his [Gaddafi] ouster." The *Post* suggests that 'leaders' of the world met together and decided to keep bombing the country until they crush the current government and replace it with one that they find acceptable to imperialism.

It is hard to beat that for imperial arrogance. The great thinkers at the *Washington Post* declare who the 'world leaders' are, even though most of Africa, China, Russia and India are absent and, in fact, oppose the brutal bombing of Libya that is designed to eliminate its sovereignty.

So as to avoid the impression that we are making an exact analogy between the *Berlin Conference of 1884* and the one that took place on March 29, it is worth recognizing that some things have changed since 1884. The imperialists who met in Berlin, for instance, did not have to waste any time pretending to care about the human rights of Africans or democracy in Africa. The bankers and corporate tycoons in the 19th century could speak bluntly about their 'vital interests' as nothing other than naked colonial ambitions to loot Africa's territories, resources and labor. They did not have too much concern about 'public opinion' back in 1884.

That is a definite difference. Public proclamations by imperialist governments today have to pledge that they have no imperial or material incentive when they invade, bomb and occupy countries, and that their motives are pure - saving lives and promoting freedom. In the case of Libya, they are moved by the need 'to protect civilian lives'.

Another primary difference is the emergence of neocolonialism as a replacement for the old colonialism. The anti-colonial uprisings in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s of the peoples of Africa, Asia and the Middle East coincided with the weakening of Britain, France and the rest of European capitalist powers as a consequence of the destruction wrought from *World War II*. While the imperialist powers tried to suppress the anti-colonial movements, those resisting colonialism received material support from the USSR, China, North Korea, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and later Cuba. Formal independence was achieved by the former colonies.

Libya had been a colony of Italy and was occupied by British and French forces in 1942. The *United Nations* declared Libya to be an independent country in 1951 under the leadership of a hereditary monarch. The monarchy was overthrown by a military coup, led by Gaddafi, in 1969.

Libya has Africa's largest oil reserves. It is also part of the oil-rich Middle East, which US imperialism considers to be a pivotal region that requires the exercise of colonial-type control. That is what *Secretary of Defense* Robert

Gates means when he repeats every few hours on television that Libya is being bombed because the region represents a ‘vital interest’ of the United States.

The *London Conference* is under the domination of the imperialists and former colonial powers. They want to install a puppet government in Tripoli or, as an alternative, partition the country and create client or puppet government that would rule over Benghazi and the oil-rich eastern territory of Libya. The new military leader of Libya’s rebel forces just arrived in Benghazi after having spent the past two decades in suburban Virginia, according to a March 26 *McClatchy Newspapers* report. The United States, Britain and France have spent over \$600 million dropping bombs and missiles on Libya in just the past week. But they do not expect, if victorious, to necessarily become the colonial power on the ground. The exercise of their control would likely take a different form.

*Classic colonialism* featured the acquisition of the formal state power, and with it the formal and legal administrative and military obligations that belong to government. The indigenous population provides personnel, administrators, bureaucrats and soldiers under the command of the hierarchal authority of the colonizers. *Classic colonialism* also featured the complete control and direction of the indigenous economy by the colonizing entity for the purpose of acquiring natural resources, cheap labor and access to markets for the industrial and commercial capitalist interests of the colonizer. This characteristic is equally present in both *classic* and *neocolonialism*.

Kwame Nkrumah, the first president and prime minister of Ghana, and a leader of the *Pan-African* movement, described the features of what he called *neocolonialism*: “The essence of *neocolonialism* is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.” Nkrumah prophetically described the many variants of the new colonialism, but placed the primacy of economic penetration as the ‘normal’ and central method whereby the old colonial powers retain control over the former colonies.

“The methods and form of this direction can take various shapes. For example, in an extreme case the troops of the imperial power may garrison the territory of the neo-colonial State and control the government of it. More often, however, neo-colonialist control is exercised through economic or monetary means.”

Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown in a *CIA*-backed military coup in 1965 while he was on a state visit to China and North Vietnam. Nkrumah was a *Marxist* and a *Pan-Africanist*. A founder of the *Organization of African Unity (OAU)*, Nkrumah was the recipient in 1963 of the *Lenin Peace Prize*, the Soviet Union’s version of the *Nobel Peace Prize*. When he was ousted by a *CIA*-backed military coup, all of the imperialist governments of the west were jubilant. So much for their embrace of democracy.

The bombing war against Libya today should be condemned without hesitation by all progressive people. This is a rich man’s war. The global imperialist order that took shape in the 1880s and continues today is the greatest violator of human rights everywhere and the US government is, in the salient words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today.”

### **A Jewish Connection**

first published on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 in *Private Eye* Number 1285

Panicked by press exposure of their deals with Middle Eastern tyrannies, British universities are resorting to the traditional tactic of the censorious: the libel writ. Professor Michael Brown, vice-chancellor of Liverpool’s *John Moore’s University*, is suing Tory MP Robert Halfon for writing on his blog that the former poly had ‘prostituted itself’ by pocketing Colonel Gaddafi’s ‘blood money’. The university says it was encouraged to take the Libyan shilling by the government, which wants everyone to forget that it was appeasing Colonel Gaddafi until only a few weeks ago. And in any case it was training medical staff, not torturers.

In normal circumstances the threat of a hugely expensive case would have made the MP back down. But Halfon, whose family was driven out of Libya when the anti-Semitic Gaddafi targeted Libya’s Jews in 1968, is fighting back. In a defence lodged at the high court on Friday, his lawyers point out that Britain is a free country where robust language is permitted. When Halfon said that Brown was ‘prostituting’ himself he was not suggesting the professor had been soliciting on the streets of Tripoli, just that he had demeaned his institution.

More pertinently, all the universities who took Libyan gold must have assumed that the regime would never fall, and records showing whether or not the medical service was complicit in the mistreatment of dissident prisoners would never be released. By the time the case comes to court, that assumption may look rather foolish.

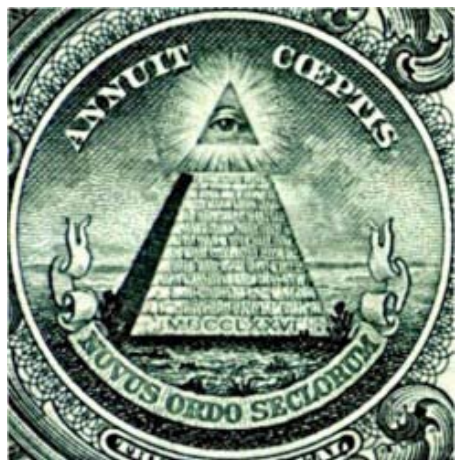
### **Libyan Rebels Establish New Central Bank**

First published on March 29, 2011 at [worldtruthtoday.com](http://worldtruthtoday.com) [1]

The rebels in Libya are in the middle of a life or death civil war and Gaddafi is still in power. Yet somehow the Libyan rebels have had enough time to establish a new *Central Bank of Libya* and form a new national oil company. Perhaps when this conflict is over those rebels can become time management consultants. They sure do get a lot done. What a skilled bunch of rebels – they can fight a war during the day and draw up a new central bank

and a new national oil company at night without any outside help whatsoever. If only the rest of us were so versatile!

But isn't forming a central bank something that could be done after the civil war is over? According to *Bloomberg* [2], the *Transitional National Council* has "designated the *Central Bank of Benghazi* as a monetary authority competent in monetary policies in Libya and the appointment of a governor to the *Central Bank of Libya*, with a temporary headquarters in Benghazi." Apparently someone felt that it was very important to get pesky matters such as control of the banks and control of the money supply out of the way even before a new government is formed.



Of course it is probably safe to assume that the new *Central Bank of Libya* will be 100% owned and 100% controlled by the newly liberated people of Libya, isn't it?

Most people don't realize that the previous *Central Bank of Libya* was 100% state owned. *The Central Bank of Libya (CBL)* is 100% state owned and represents the monetary authority in The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and enjoys the status of autonomous corporate body. The law establishing the CBL stipulates that the objectives of the central bank shall be to maintain monetary stability in Libya and to promote the sustained growth of the economy in

accordance with the general economic policy of the state.

Since the old *Central Bank of Libya* was state owned, it was essentially under the control of Gaddafi [3]. But now that Libya is going to be "free", the new *Central Bank of Libya* will be run by Libyans and solely for the benefit of Libyans, right?

Of course it is probably safe to assume that will be the case with the new national oil company as well, isn't it? Over the past couple of years, Gaddafi had threatened to nationalize the oil industry in Libya and kick western oil companies out of the country, but now Libya will be 'free', the people of Libya will be able to work hand in hand with 'big oil' and this will create a better Libya for everyone. Right? Of course oil had absolutely nothing to do with why the U.S. "inva—" (scratch that) "initiated a kinetic humanitarian liberty action" in Libya.

When Barack Obama looked straight into the camera and told the American people that the war in Libya is in the 'strategic interest' [4] of the United States, surely he was not referring to oil. After all, war for oil was a 'Bush thing', right? The Democrats voted for Obama to end wars like this, right? Surely no prominent Democrats will publicly support this war in Libya, right? Surely Barack Obama will end the bombing of Libya if the international community begins to object, right?

Obama won a *Nobel Peace Prize*. He wouldn't deeply upset the other major powers on the globe and bring us closer to World War III, would he? Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has loudly denounced 'coalition strikes on columns of Gaddafi's forces' [5] and he believes that the US has badly violated the terms of the UN Security Council resolution... "We consider that intervention by the coalition in what is essentially an internal civil war is not sanctioned by the U.N. Security Council resolution."

So to cool off rising tensions with the rest of the world, Obama is going to call off the air strikes, right? Well, considering the fact that Obama has such vast foreign policy experience we should all be able to rest easy knowing that Obama will understand exactly what to do.

Meanwhile, the rebels seem to be getting the hang of international trade already. They have even signed an oil deal with Qatar! Rebel "spokesman" Ali Tarhouni has announced that oil exports to Qatar will begin in 'less than a week'. Who knew that the rag tag group of rebels in Libya were also masters of banking and international trade? We sure do live in a strange world. Tonight, Barack Obama told the American people the following: "Some nations may be able to turn a blind eye to atrocities in other countries. The United States of America is different." So now we are going to police all of the atrocities in all of the other countries around the globe?

The last time I checked, the government was gunning down protesters in Syria. Is it time to start warming up the Tomahawks? Or do we reserve 'humanitarian interventions' only for those nations that have a lot of oil? In fact, atrocities are currently being committed all over Africa and in about a dozen different nations in the Middle East. Should we institute a draft so that we will have enough young men and women to police the world with? We all have to be ready to serve our country, right?

The world is becoming a smaller place every day, and you never know where US 'strategic interests' are going to be threatened next. The rest of the world understands that we know best, right? Of course the rest of the world can surely see our good intentions in Libya, can't they? Tensions with Russia, China and the rest of the Arab world are certainly going to subside after they all see how selfless our 'humanitarian intervention' has been in Libya, don't you think?

In all seriousness, we now live in a world where nothing is stable anymore. Wars and revolutions are breaking out all over the globe, unprecedented natural disasters are happening with alarming frequency and the global economy is on the verge of total collapse. By interfering in Libya, we are just making things worse. Gaddafi is certainly a horrible dictator, but this was a fight for the Libyan people to sort out. We promised the rest of the world that we were only going to be setting up a 'no fly zone'. By violating the terms of the *UN Security Council* resolution, we have shown other nations that we cannot be trusted and by our actions we have increased tensions all over the globe.

## References

- [1] [Wow That Was Fast! Libyan Rebels Have Already Established A New Central Bank Of Libya](#)
- [2] [Libya Central Bank governor flees](#)
- [3] <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-03-21/libyan-rebel-council-sets-up-oil-company-to-replace-qaddafi-s.html>
- [4] [http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2011-03-29-analysis29\\_ST\\_N.htm?csp=34news](http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2011-03-29-analysis29_ST_N.htm?csp=34news)
- [5] <http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E72R0EL20110328?sp=true>

## No Flying Tonight

first published on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 in *Private Eye* Number 1285

The speed with which France sent combat aircraft to enforce the UK's no-fly zone against Colonel Gaddafi was matched only by the swiftness of French defence companies to try to sell him aircraft in the first place. Under a 'memorandum of understanding' signed in 2007, France secured an agreement with the Libyan leader to flog him €4.5 billion worth of arms, including the first foreign sales of the *Rafale* fighter – the same fighter now being used by French pilots to destroy Gaddafi's dwindling assets.

In 2007 Charles Edelstenne, president of *Dassault Aviation*, was delighted and optimistic. His company had been having difficulty winning any foreign orders at all for the *Rafale*, and all that was set to change. "The government's signed a memorandum of understanding and that includes the opening of negotiations about the Libyan government buying 14 *Rafale* planes. This has been approved by Muammar Gaddafi," he told Reuters. "The number of 14 is fixed, now we need to negotiate the price...the contract clauses, the payment conditions."

Negotiations continued and *Rafales* flew over Libya in 2009 at Gaddafi's aviation exhibition arms fair *LAVEX*. Libyan officials were treated to a lavish series of encouragements to sign a deal. The head of President Nicholas Sarkozy's personal staff, Benedict Puga, even headed a delegation to clinch the deal last year, with Gaddafi promising to sign before the beginning of Ramadan on 11 August. Alas, before the sale could be finalized, Libya found Russia's arms salesmen more, ahem, lavishly persuasive, and opted to buy *Sukhois* and *MiGs* instead.

Fast forward to today, and with Gaddafi once more a pariah, France has forgotten all about the *Rafale* deal. This might have been bad news for *Dassault* employees and shareholders. But the story has a happy ending. The success of the *Rafale* in its attacks on its erstwhile potential customer could not have been better timed. Sarkozy's early decision to enforce the no-fly zone ensured that the *Rafale* was the first aircraft to enter unfriendly Libyan airspace. Television pictures of *Rafales* bombing pro-Gaddafi forces interrupted a *Ministry of Defence* press conference, much to the amusement of assembled hacks, leading one to suggest to a colleague from *Le Figaro* that the timing was no coincidence.

## Libyan Oil

<http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com/archives/shaken-10-economic-disasters-which-threaten-to-rip-world-financial-markets-to-shreds>

Do you think that the international community would be intervening in Libya if they did not have a lot of oil? If you actually believe that, you might want to review the last few decades of African history. Millions upon millions of Africans have been slaughtered by incredibly repressive regimes and the "international community" did next to nothing about it. But Libya is different.

Libya is the largest producer of oil in Africa. Apparently the revolution in Libya was not going the way it was supposed to, so the U.S. and Europe are stepping in. Gaddafi is vowing that this will be a 'long war', but the truth is that his forces don't stand a chance against NATO. Initially we were told that NATO would just be setting up a 'no fly zone', but there have already been reports of Libyan tank columns being assaulted and there has even been an air strike on Gaddafi's personal compound in Tripoli. So since when did a 'no fly zone' include an attempt to kill a foreign head of state?

Let there be no mistake - the moment that the first Tomahawk cruise missiles were launched the United States declared war on Libya. Already the Arab League, India, China and Russia have all objected to how this operation is being carried out and they are alarmed about the reports of civilian casualties. Tensions around the globe are rising once again, and that is not a good thing for the world economy.

On a side note, does anyone recall anyone in the Obama administration even stopping for a moment to consider whether or not they should consult the US Congress before starting another war? The US Constitution specifically requires the approval of the Congress before we go to war. But very few people seem to care too much about what

the US Constitution says these days. In any event, the flow of oil out of Libya is likely to be reduced for an extended period of time now, and that is not going to be good for a deeply struggling global economy.

### Is Libya Going To Boot U.S. Oil Companies? by Christopher Helman

[http://www.forbes.com/2009/01/22/libya-gaddafi-oil-biz-energy-cx\\_ch\\_0122libya.html](http://www.forbes.com/2009/01/22/libya-gaddafi-oil-biz-energy-cx_ch_0122libya.html)

First published in Forbes Magazine on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009

On Wednesday Libya's President Muammar Gaddafi made a bad week for *ConocoPhillips* even worse. Talking with *Georgetown University* students via satellite, he said, according to *Reuters*, that oil prices (\$43/barrel Wednesday) were 'unbearable' and that Libyan oil "maybe should be owned by national companies or the public sector at this point, in order to control the oil prices, the oil production or maybe to stop it." "We may refuse to sell it at this very low price," he added.

*ConocoPhillips* operates the *Waha concession*, Libya's biggest collection of fields, producing some 300,000 barrels of oil per day. It's unknown how much *Waha* production was affected by Gaddafi's order last month to reduce Libyan oil production by 270,000 bpd to 1.4 million bpd. Last Friday the company pre-announced write-downs of \$34 billion, 1,400 layoffs and a sad sack 30% reserve replacement rate for 2008. No better time to bury bad news than the Friday before the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday and Barack Obama's inauguration. By the time *ConocoPhillips* officially releases fourth-quarter results Jan. 28, investors might be less fixated on the mistakes of the past and more worried about the risks of the future in Libya.

### Libya's Russian Connection

[http://www.forbes.com/2009/01/22/libya-gaddafi-oil-biz-energy-cx\\_ch\\_0122libya.html](http://www.forbes.com/2009/01/22/libya-gaddafi-oil-biz-energy-cx_ch_0122libya.html)

First published in Forbes Magazine on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009

Is Libya about to take the lead of its friends in Venezuela and Russia and launch a new round of energy-sector nationalism? The thought sends a shiver through the collective spines of *ConocoPhillips*, *Marathon Oil*, *Occidental Petroleum*, *Amerada Hess* and *Royal Dutch Shell*. All have made massive new investments in Libya since Gaddafi renounced his nuclear weapons program, made reparations for past terrorist activities like the Lockerbie jetliner bombing and returned to the fold of seemingly responsible nations.

Libyan newspapers have been actively discussing nationalization in recent weeks as a response to crude prices plunging 75% from last year's highs. "We are facing a difficult situation. We hope that the prices will go up again, say \$100 a barrel, so that this idea would be discarded, to stop this idea of calling for nationalization," Gaddafi said Wednesday.

*Conoco* was an original member, with *Marathon* and *Hess*, of the so-called *Oasis* group that discovered some of Libya's most prolific oil fields back in the 1960s and operated there until the enactment of U.S. sanctions in 1986. In 2005 the trio agreed to pay Libya \$1.8 billion to get back in to the *Waha concession*, comprised of a \$1.3 billion fee and \$500 million for improvements Libya's national oil company had made in their absence. They got a 25-year lease and 40% collective stake in fields that produce on the order of 250,000 barrels a day, with ample opportunities for further development.

For its share, some 48,000 bpd (2% of the company's total daily output), *ConocoPhillips* forked over more than \$700 million. It expects to amortize that investment over decades. But if Gaddafi takes his cues from buddies Vladimir Putin and Hugo Chavez and moves to dilute western oil companies' stakes, *ConocoPhillips* might soon have to add Libya to its list of write-downs (which included the \$7.2 billion impairment in value of its 20% stake in Russia's *Lukoil* and \$25.4 billion of goodwill, most tied to the 2006 acquisition of *Burlington Resources*).

The three strongmen are proven comrades. Gaddafi has hosted Venezuelan President Chavez in Libya at least four times in recent years and in 2004 bestowed on Chavez his human rights award for 'fighting imperialism', (i.e., George W. Bush and *ExxonMobil*, among others). Putin, last April, made a state visit to Tripoli accompanied by *Gazprom* execs and a group from Italian energy company *ENI*. Putin forgave Gaddafi several billion dollars in Soviet era debt in exchange for Gaddafi agreeing to buy many more billions of weapons from Russia. *Gazprom* soon swapped *ENI's* stake in Libya's 100,000 bpd *Elephant field* for some arctic assets.

In October Russian warships stopped in Tripoli on their way to Venezuela. In November, Gaddafi made his first visit to Moscow since the Soviet era. Discussions with Putin and President Dimitri Medvedev reportedly involved visions of a gas cartel that would include Russia, Libya, Iran, Algeria and some Central Asian nations.

*Gazprom* is most interested in getting control of *ENI's Greenstream* natural gas pipeline, which runs 370 miles across the Mediterranean from Libya to Sicily, delivering as much as 1 billion cubic feet of gas a day. Just one more energy lever a Moscow-led gas cartel could use against Europe. There's little reason to believe that Gaddafi wouldn't selectively target U.S. oil company assets for partial nationalization. Though US oil companies lobbied *Congress* to have Libya excluded from a US terrorism compensation law, Libya ended up shelling out \$1.5 billion last October to settle all claims by US citizens for damages caused by past state terrorism.

There is little sign that Gaddafi has softened with age. His revolutionary zeal is alive and well. During the Q&A with *Georgetown* students yesterday, he showed the yawning gap between US and Libyan foreign policy: "Terrorism is a dwarf, not a giant. I think Osama bin Laden should be given a chance to reform and redirect his followers if he wants a dialogue." US oil companies should brace themselves to leave Libya yet again.

### **Time to End NATO's War in Libya by Dennis Kucinich**

This article was published at *Nation of Change* at: <http://www.nationofchange.org/time-end-NATOs-war-libya-1314027863>.

In March of this year, the US, France, Britain and their North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) allies launched military operations in Libya under the guise of a "humanitarian intervention". US diplomats and world leaders carelessly voiced unsubstantiated claims of an impending massacre in Benghazi. You hear no such appeals to humanity while NATO, in the name of the rebels (whoever they are), prepares to lay siege to Tripoli, a city of nearly 2 million people.

Libyan rebels are now advancing on the capital city of Tripoli with the aid of NATO strikes; this is sure to result in a real bloodbath, as opposed to the one that was conjured in Benghazi this past winter. NATO is assisting rebels who are blocking food, water and medical supplies from coming into the capital city, and is stopping those who need advanced medical care from travelling to Tunisia to access it. NATO is bombing power stations, creating blackouts, and using Apache helicopters to attack Libyan police checkpoints to clear roads for rebels to advance.

Regardless of whether Muammar Gaddafi is ousted in coming days, the war against Libya has seen countless violations of United Nations security council resolutions (UNSCRs) by NATO and UN member states. The funnelling of weapons (now being air-dropped) to Libyan rebels was, from the beginning of the conflict, in clear violation of UNSCR 1970. The use of military force on behalf of the rebels, in an attempt to impose regime change, has undermined international law and damaged the credibility of the United Nations. Countless innocent civilians have been killed, and NATO air strikes continue to place many at great risk.

So much for the humanitarian-inspired UNSCR 1973 as a means to protect civilians. The people of Libya cannot take another month of such humanitarian intervention. The leading donor nations of NATO - the US, France and Great Britain - have been free to prosecute war under the cloak of this faceless, bureaucratic, alphabet security agency, now multinational war machine, which can violate UN resolutions and kill innocent civilians with impunity. War crimes trials are only for losers. The prospective conquerors, the western powers and their rebel proxies, will then expect to be able to assert control over Libya's vast oil and natural gas reserves.

The US share of the war against Libya has probably exceeded the \$1bn mark. This extraordinary amount of money for an intervention that Americans were told would last "days not weeks" could only be explained by looking at the war as an investment, and at control over Libya's wealth as an opportunity to make a return on that investment. Cynical? Then tell me why else we are at war in Libya.

Viable peace proposals, such as the one put forward by the African Union (AU), have been quickly and summarily rejected. If there is going to be a peaceful resolution of the conflict, the US must work with and empower the AU to ensure regional security. The AU has proposed a peace plan that would facilitate an immediate ceasefire, the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid, a dialogue between the Transitional National Council and the Gaddafi government, and the suspension of NATO strikes.

The use of force and ultimatums has not worked. As the war enters its sixth month, it is time for the US president and secretary of state to clean up the mess they've created with this needless military intervention, and to work to seriously to bring about a negotiated end to this war.

In June, I proposed a peace plan (pdf) derived in part from the efforts of the AU. This plan calls for an immediate ceasefire and lays out the principles necessary to create a framework to achieve reconciliation and national unity in Libya by a meaningful process. In its June report on Libya, the International Crisis Group stated:

"A political breakthrough is by far the best way out of the costly situation created by the military impasse. This will require a ceasefire between the regime and the Transitional National Council, the deployment of a peacekeeping force to monitor and guarantee this under a UN mandate, and the immediate opening of serious negotiations between regime and opposition representatives to secure agreement on a peaceful transition to a new, more legitimate political order. NATO and those states supporting its military action should facilitate this development, not hinder it."

I have recently received several reports indicating that a settlement was close, only to be scuttled by state department officials. Given that the department of state seems to have taken a singular role in launching the US into this war, it is more than disconcerting to hear that the same agency has played a role in frustrating a resolution to this conflict. There are viable solutions to peacefully end the conflict, if there is a desire to do so.

Continued military action promotes a cycle of violence that will persist whether Colonel Gaddafi is ousted or not. On 19 March 2003, the United States pursued regime change in Iraq. Eight years later, we're still wondering why

the people of Iraq are not sufficiently grateful for our intervention, which has resulted in the death of over 1 million of their fellow countrymen and women. How can we expect this grim manifesto of interventionism to ever result in anything but tragedy? It's time to end the war against Libya.

**Financial Heist of the Century: Confiscating Libya's Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWF) By Manlio Dinucci**<sup>1</sup>  
*Global Research, April 24, 2011; Il Manifesto (translated from Italian) - 2011-04-22*

The objective of the war against Libya is not just its oil reserves (now estimated at 60 billion barrels), which are the greatest in Africa and whose extraction costs are among the lowest in the world, nor the natural gas reserves of which are estimated at about 1,500 billion cubic meters. In the crosshairs of "willing" of the operation "Unified Protector" there are sovereign wealth funds, capital that the Libyan state has invested abroad.

The Libyan Investment Authority (LIA) manages sovereign wealth funds estimated at about \$70 billion U.S., rising to more than \$150 billion if you include foreign investments of the Central Bank and other bodies. But it might be more. Even if they are lower than those of Saudi Arabia or Kuwait, Libyan sovereign wealth funds have been characterized by their rapid growth. When LIA was established in 2006, it had \$40 billion at its disposal. In just five years, LIA has invested over one hundred companies in North Africa, Asia, Europe, the U.S. and South America: holding, banking, real estate, industries, oil companies and others.

In Italy, the main Libyan investments are those in *UniCredit Bank* (of which *LIA* and the *Libyan Central Bank* hold 7.5 percent), *Finmeccanica* (2 percent) and *ENI* (1 percent), these and other investments (including 7.5 percent of the *Juventus Football Club*) have a significance not as much economically (they amount to some \$5.4 billion) as politically.

Libya, after Washington removed it from the blacklist of "rogue states," has sought to carve out a space at the international level focusing on "diplomacy of sovereign wealth funds." Once the U.S. and the EU lifted the embargo in 2004 and the big oil companies returned to the country, Tripoli was able to maintain a trade surplus of about \$30 billion per year which was used largely to make foreign investments. The management of sovereign funds has however created a new mechanism of power and corruption in the hands of ministers and senior officials, which probably in part escaped the control of the Gadhafi himself: This is confirmed by the fact that, in 2009, he proposed that the 30 billion in oil revenues go "directly to the Libyan people." *[This is the thing about Khadafi – he really does support the welfare of the Libyan population. Sigh. Why the quotation marks?]* This aggravated the fractures within the Libyan government.

U.S. and European ruling circles *[damn right]* focused on these funds, so that before carrying out a military attack on Libya to get their hands on its energy wealth, they took over the Libyan sovereign wealth funds. Facilitating this operation is the representative of the Libyan Investment Authority, Mohamed Layas himself: as revealed in a cable published by WikiLeaks. On January 20 Layas informed the U.S. ambassador in Tripoli that LIA had deposited \$32 billion in U.S. banks. Five weeks later, on February 28, the U.S. Treasury "froze" these accounts. According to official statements, this is "the largest sum ever blocked in the United States," which Washington held "in trust for the future of Libya." *[- after the end of the embargo?! I can't believe I'm living through these times! Everything is unimaginable. Whatever happened to our hopes for a world of sanity and kindness?]* It will in fact serve as an injection of capital into the U.S. economy, which is more and more in debt. A few days later, the EU "froze" around 45 billion Euros of Libyan funds.

The assault on the Libyan sovereign wealth funds will have a particularly strong impact in Africa. There, the Libyan Arab African Investment Company had invested in over 25 countries, 22 of them in sub-Saharan Africa, and was planning to increase the investments over the next five years, especially in mining, manufacturing, tourism and telecommunications. The Libyan investments have been crucial in the implementation of the first telecommunications satellite Rascom (Regional African Satellite Communications Organization), which entered into orbit in August 2010, allowing African countries to begin to become independent from the U.S. and European satellite networks, with an annual savings of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Even more important were the Libyan investment in the implementation of three financial institutions launched by the African Union: the African Investment Bank, based in Tripoli, the African Monetary Fund, based in Yaoundé (Cameroon), the African Central Bank, with Based in Abuja (Nigeria). The development of these bodies would enable African countries to escape the control of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, tools of neo-colonial domination, and would mark the end of the CFA franc, the currency that 14 former French colonies are forced to use. Freezing Libyan funds deals a strong blow to the entire project. The weapons used by "the willing" are not only those in the military action called "Unified Protector."

<sup>1</sup> Bracketed [ ] comments in *blue and in italics* have been added to the original text [Ed].



**Libya's imperial hijacking is a threat to the Arab revolution by Seumas Milne <sup>2</sup>**

[guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk), Wednesday 24 August 2011 22.00 BST © 2011 Guardian News and Media Limited or its affiliated companies. Only when those who fought Gaddafi force NATO to leave will Libyans be able to take control of their country.

They don't give up. For the third time in a decade, British and US forces have played the decisive role in the overthrow of an Arab or Muslim regime. As rebel forces pressed home their advantage across Libya under continuing NATO air support, politicians in London and Paris preened themselves on their role as the midwives of a "new Libya".

It's all supposed to be different this time, of course. The lessons of the west's blood-drenched occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan are said to have been learned: no boots on the ground, UN backing, proper planning and Libyans in the lead. But the echoes of Baghdad and, even more, Kabul have been eerie - and not only in the made-for-TV images of the sacking of compounds and smashing of statues, or the street banners hailing NATO leaders.

As in Afghanistan in 2001, the western powers have taken sides in a civil war, relying on air power and special forces to turn the tide against an unpopular authoritarian regime. *[What proof that regime is unpopular?]*

In Libya, the basis for foreign military intervention has been the claim that Muammar Gaddafi's forces were about to carry out a massacre of civilians in Benghazi after he threatened to hunt down armed rebels "house to house". Violent repression was certainly meted out against a popular uprising, *[how popular?? What like the CONTRAS were popular you mean? Who's paying the "rebels"??]* but once insurrection had morphed into war there's little evidence that the regime's troops were in a position to overrun an armed and hostile city of 700,000 people. And reports from Amnesty and Human Rights Watch have since *cast serious doubt on a string of war atrocity stories used to justify NATO bombing.*

But they helped deliver UN resolution 1973, authorising "all necessary means" to protect Libyan civilians. That has since been used as NATO's fig leaf to justify the onslaught against Gaddafi and deliver regime change from the air. And while the western powers claimed to be saving lives, thousands have died on the ground - including uncounted numbers of civilians killed by NATO's own air attacks, such as the 85 reported incinerated near Zlitan earlier this month.

If stopping the killing had been the real aim, *NATO states would have backed a ceasefire and a negotiated settlement, rather than repeatedly vetoing both.* Instead, after having lost serious strategic ground in the Arab revolutions, the Libyan war offered the US, Britain and France a chance to put themselves at the heart of the process while bringing to heel an unreliable *[= read unloyal]* state with *the largest oil reserves in Africa.*

None of that means the euphoria on the streets of Libyan cities at the fall of a regime long decayed into dynastic despotism isn't entirely genuine. *[Spin spins spin]* Or that the rebels who fought their way across the country haven't made heavy sacrifices for a victory they regard as their own - let alone that Libyans were incapable of bringing down the Gaddafi regime by themselves. *[? what? Either they are popular and have the people behind them or they don't, come on. Or if it's even stevens' in which case how can rebels represent the majority? What right has nato to take sides?]*

But the facts are unavoidable. Without the 20,000 air sorties, arms supplies and logistical support of the most powerful states in the world, they would not be calling the shots in Tripoli today. The assault on the capital was supported by the heaviest NATO bombardment to date. Western intelligence and special forces have been on the ground for months - in mockery of the UN - training, planning and coordinating rebel operations.

It was the leading NATO states that championed and funded the Transitional National Council - including members with longstanding CIA and MI6 links - and officials from NATO states who drew up the stabilization plan now being implemented on the ground. *[Oh yeah, the rebels are such genuine representatives of the people... that's why so many of them were heard speaking Hebrew to each other]*

However glad people are to see the fall of the Gaddafi clan, it's clear that such intimate involvement of the US and the former colonial powers taints and undermines the legitimacy of Libya's transformation. *[DUH]* They will expect a payback for their investment in the Libyan war: in oil and commercial deals, political support and perhaps even the return of western military bases. *[This is what their hate for Khadafi is all about. Western power hates Khadafi = western media writes that the Libyan people hate Khadafi, unlike other Arab regimes Khadafi actually spent money on welfare benefits and infrastructure which has given Libya 50 years of prosperity] ...*

The British government's refusal to rule out sending troops to take part in a "stabilisation operation" is an ominous sign of where Libya may be heading. And if Libyans end up with the kind of democracy foisted on Iraq and Afghanistan, courtesy of their western advisers, that will be no liberation at all.

<sup>2</sup> Bracketed [ ] comments in *blue and in italics* have been added to the original text [Ed].

Beyond Libya, the apparent success of NATO's operation has given an unwelcome boost to the doctrine of pick-and-choose liberal [\[liberal?\]](#) interventionism, just as its dangers had come to be recognised in the wake of the disasters of the war on terror. That matters in the Middle East now more than ever.

Since the Arab revolution dispatched two western-backed dictators in quick succession at the start of the year, there has been a three-pronged drive by the west to bring it under control. *[To bring what under control – this is bad writing, guess he means the Arab revolution? Can't anyone name the suspicious fact that the one dictator who holds out is the one genuinely popularist “dictator” who surprise surprise is not backed by the west?]* In Egypt, US and Saudi money has been poured in to suborn it. In Bahrain, conservative Gulf states have been given support to crush the uprising by force. And in Libya, the western powers have attempted to hijack it, while channeling covert support to the brutally repressed opposition in Syria. *[ = CONTRAS all over again.]*

There are many in the region who now hope the fall of Gaddafi will give new momentum to the stalled Arab awakening, bringing down another autocrat, perhaps in Yemen. But the risk could instead be that it sends a message that regimes can only now be dispatched with the armed support of Washington, London and Paris - available in the most select circumstances.

NATO's intervention in Libya is a threat to the Arab revolution, but the forces that have been unleashed in the region won't be turned back so easily. Many of those who have fought for power in Libya, including Islamists, clearly won't accept the dispensation that's been prepared for them. But only when NATO and its bagmen are forced to leave Libya can Libyans truly take control of their own country.



*the original french version was published on 16 march, three days before the military strikes against libya*

**Middle East: Obama's counter-revolution by Thierry Meyssan | 29 March 2011** After some hesitation over how to respond to the Arab revolutions, the Obama administration has opted for the strong-arm solution to rescue those vassals which can still be salvaged. As in the past, the task of leading the counter-revolution devolved upon Saudi Arabia. Riyadh imposed its Libyan pawns on the international community to the detriment of the insurgents and later trampled over Bahrain, drowning the popular uprising in blood.

#### **APPRAISAL PRIOR TO COUNTRY UPRISING**

**Yemen: Behind Al-Qaeda Scenarios, an unfolding stealth agenda by F. William Engdahl | 28 March 2011** On December 25 US authorities arrested a Nigerian named Abdulmutallab aboard a Northwest Airlines flight from Amsterdam to Detroit on charges of having tried to blow up the plane with smuggled explosives. Since then reports have been broadcast from CNN, the New York Times and other sources that he was “suspected” of having been trained in Yemen for his terror mission. What the world has been subjected to since is the emergence of a new target for the US ‘War on Terror,’ namely a desolate state on the Arabian Peninsula, Yemen. A closer look at the background suggests the (...)

**Libyan War And Control Of The Mediterranean by Rick Rozoff | 26 March 2011** Had Muammar Gaddafi become too pesky for the likes of Nicolas Sarkozy and his Atlanticist partners, by standing in the way of their agenda for the domination of the Mediterranean sea region? France's direct role in nurturing the rebellion against the Libyan leader is no longer a secret. In this article, Rick Rozoff offers some additional pointers, and analyzes the Libyan war in the context of the advancing transformation of the Mediterranean into NATO's mare (...)

**French plans to topple Gaddafi on track since last November by Franco Bechis | 25 March 2011** According to right-wing Italian journalist Franco Bechis, plans to spark the Benghazi rebellion were initiated by French intelligence services in November 2010. As Miguel Martinez from the progressive ComeDonChisciotte website observes, these revelations which have the blessing of the Italian secret services should be interpreted as the sign of existing rivalries within the European capitalist camp. Voltaire Network wishes to point out that Paris promptly paired up with London in its scheme to overthrow Colonel Khadafi (Franco-British expeditionary force). This (...)

#### **HOW THE TINY KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN STRONG-ARMED THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES**

**The Pentagon and murder in Bahrain by Nick Turse | 24 March 2011** U.S. Defense Department documents, scrutinized by TomDispatch, reveal that as far back as the 1990s the United States has been supplying vast quantities of military equipment to Bahraini security forces, which have currently unleashed a bloody repression against thousands of peaceful demonstrators demanding an end to the corrupt Al-Khalifa dynasty.

#### **[Russian Ambassador in Libya tags Medvedev as traitor](#)**

Russian Ambassador to Tripoli Vladimir Chamov was relieved of his duties by President Medvedev. In a diplomatic cable, Chamov supposedly referred to Dmitry Medvedev as a (...)

#### **[Russia: Medvedev rebuts Putin over Libya](#)**

In a rare faceoff with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, President Dmitry Medvedev said on Monday he stood by Moscow's decision not to veto the UN Security Council (...)

#### **[Libya: mainstream media serving the war agenda?](#)**

According to Middle East expert, Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya, on 20 March 2011 Libyan sources reported: Italian POWs Captured Additional Coalition Jets Downed Qatar Joins (...)

**Libya, Africa and the Victorians by Nathaniel Manheru | 28 March 2011** Viewed from Sub-Saharan Africa, the war against Libya has a scent of déjà vu. According to influential Zimbabwean columnist Nathaniel Manheru, the colonial powers (joined by their former US and Canadian colonies, but let down by bankrupt Portugal) are reenacting the partition of Africa, each according

to her old habits. Meanwhile Gabon and Egypt, and especially Nigeria and Africa, which endorsed this new crime at the UN Security Council in breach of the African Union resolution, have lost the confidence of their African (...)

**Gaddafi's photo album: a festival of hypocrisy! 26 March 2011** What hypocrites! They now pretend they never even met me. After all we shared together .... they're bombing my country!

**Washington's precious catch: the oil and the bank accounts 28 March 2011** Plan to sabotage Bashar Al-Assad's reforms / The United States and the Arab revolutions / Saudi interference in Bahrain fuels sectarianism and hypocrisy behind Arab interference in Bahrain, especially that of Saudi Arabia.

**Obama's Administration leading the counter-revolution 21 March 2011** Abbas, the unity and the coming uprising / What is happening in Syria? / War in Libya / Syria gains stability as upheaval threatens its Middle East neighbors / An open conflict in Lebanon until 2013 / March 13 celebration / Election of Bishop Bechara al-Rahi as the new maronite patriarch / Discovery of Israeli spy system in South Lebanon / Coldness affecting American-Saudi relations fueled by Bahrain's crisis / The Saudi military interference in Bahrain, the issue of reform in Saudi Arabia and the Western position toward it / Did Gaddafi support Sarkozy to be elected (...)

#### [Remarks at National Defense University by Barack Obama on Libya](#)

Tonight, I'd like to update the American people on the international effort that we have led in Libya -- what we've done, what we plan to do, and why this matters to us. I want (...)

#### [Statement by Anders Fogh Rasmussen on Libya](#)

NATO Allies have decided to take on the whole military operation in Libya under the United Nations Security Council Resolution. Our goal is to protect civilians and (...)

#### [Barack Obama address on Libya](#)

Last week, when I ordered our armed forces to help protect the Libyan people from the brutality of Moammar Qaddafi, I pledged to keep the American people fully informed. (...)

#### [Council of European Union : conclusions on Libya and southern neighbourhood](#)

18. The European Council discussed the situation in Libya and endorsed the conclusions adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 21 March. Recalling its March 11 Declaration, (...)

#### [Statement by Anders Fogh Rasmussen on Libya no-fly zone](#)

NATO Allies have now decided to enforce the no-fly zone over Libya. We are taking action as part of the broad international effort to protect civilians against the attacks by (...)

#### [Statement by Anders Fogh Rasmussen on Libya arms embargo](#)

NATO has now decided to launch an operation to enforce the arms embargo against Libya. All Allies are committed to meet their responsibilities under the United Nations (...)

#### [Council of European Union \(Foreign Affairs\) : conclusions on Libya](#)

The Council adopted the following conclusions : "1. The Council expresses its concern at the present situation in Libya and condemns the gross and systematic violation of (...)

#### [Remarks by Dmitry Medvedev on the situation in Libya](#)

Dmitry Medvedev: I want to say a few words regarding the situation in Libya. The Russian Federation hoped from the start that Libya's internal problems could be settled through (...)

#### [Remarks by Vladimir Putin on the situation in Libya](#)

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin comments on the situation in Libya during a meeting with workers at the Votkinsk plant in Udmurtia « The Russian government is not involved in (...)

