

End the bombing of Libya

Courtenay Barnett

An open letter to [Professor Juan Cole](#)

As a professor and an influential voice on the internet, I am appealing to you to stop supporting, be it implicitly or explicitly, the criminal bombardment of the Libyan people by the US/NATO attacks.

The facts, and my opinion, based on same, are these:-

The state of Libya and its political position vis-a- vis rebellion

1. Libya is a tribal society and there is a measure of dissent in the East, and more particularly around the hub of Benghazi.

2. This is not the same kind of 'Arab spring' as one has witnessed in Tunisia or in Egypt. The US lent its support to the leaders of Tunisia and Egypt up to the very end then at the last moment professed to welcome the people's change. In Libya it has been about 2 months of bombardment, and internally it must by now be clear that Gadaffi has significant support amongst his people, for clearly with an extension of another 3 months of planned bombings, NATO must admit that Gadaffi does have strong internal support amongst his people that compels this long extension. One can contrast the use of force by CIA supported "rebels" versus the ground swell of popular support that in a short time, without arms, toppled the leadership in Tunisia and Egypt.

The legal aspects

3. Resolution 1973 is a lawfully passed UN Resolution for the imposition of a no-fly zone. It does not however extend to, nor lawfully sanction, the assassination attempts upon Gadaffi (cf. point 2 above – for that the failure so far to dislodge Gadaffi and effect regime change – explains this illegality). The efforts at regime change are under international law – illegal.

4. President Obama has circumvented US domestic law, by reference to the statutory stipulations of the War Powers Act.

5. Should the people of Harlem take up arms in rebellion against the US government, and seek to separate itself from the continental US (cf. Waco) – what would one have the established government do – accede or resist?

The economic dimension

6. It is an odd peace-keeping and humanitarian mission that sees a sovereign country's assets frozen in the billions, while a faction of the country's population takes up arms against the leader and commandeers oil and sells on the international market, a portion of the country's assists – its oil.

How does one establish a central bank, where a minority faction of the Libyan population, assisted by external interests, and yet pretend that somehow there is majority widespread dissent?

The political dimension

7. The African Union is the legitimate voice within Africa and internationally, to broker a peace-deal between the warring factions. The sooner that this is accomplished the better for the saving of civilian lives across Libya:-

See: <http://rt.com/news/nato-admits-civilian-deaths/>

The moral dimension

8. Using the fig-leaf of Resolution 1973 to cover the war of aggression being waged cannot be supported. There is a difference between having war planes police designated territorial areas to enforce a no-fly zone. That policing activity as sanctioned by the United Nations is a far cry removed from showering down "shock and awe" upon the people of Libya in an effort to create sufficient chaos in Libya to effect regime change.

9. Again, stalling for time to effect more bombardment, and NATO turning its back on the entreaties of the AU to broker a peace-deal is nothing short of amoral.

10. Having witnessed the lies that led to the war in Iraq; the pretext of a humanitarian mission to assist the Iraqi people; the utter destruction of Iraq with sanctions and bombs and the killing or deaths of some one million Iraqis arising from the occupation – what can you now convince sentient beings about, with this latest repeat of the slaughter in Libya – orchestrated by the same powers?

I commend my ten (10) points to you for a revising and re-think about where truths, rights and justice really reside in this bloody conflict in Libya.
Professor – to call NATO’S opportunist war of aggression anything less than by its true name – illegal – is to embrace a narrative from the West that wholly lacks credibility.

Respectfully,

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