

Don't be fooled by western propaganda on Libya

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While the current international intervention in the Libyan civil war has failed to produce any tangible military victory, it has certainly served to illustrate the hypocrisy of U.S. foreign policy.

One has to wonder what is so special about the Libyan armed rebels that they would be granted support in the form of UN resolutions and NATO-enforced no-fly zones almost immediately after they took up arms against President Moammar Gadhafi, while unarmed protestors are gunned down by security forces in Bahrain, Yemen and Syria with virtual impunity from foreign pressure.

The blanket rationale for Canadian and allied pilots to bomb targets in Libya is that we are doing so to "protect civilians."

That argument for violent intervention in Libya was first floated by U.S. President Barack Obama and was subsequently championed to absurdity by war-mongering Canadian pundits.

The most ridiculous notion floated came from the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, which asserted that our fighter planes are protecting the "civilians who comprise the bulk of the rebel forces."

The most honest brokers on this whole muddled equation have been the Libyan rebels. While no clear leader of this rabble has emerged and no one has yet put forward any sort of rebel manifesto, those heavily armed fighters are not pretending to fight under any pro-democracy banner.

As for the composition of this rag-tag rebel army, there are growing reports that their ranks are salted with Islamic fundamentalists, hardened criminals and even human traffickers.

As there has been little proof provided to date that Gadhafi's forces have perpetrated any of the widespread massacres that have been allegedly committed, those who support the international intervention have settled on the round number of 20,000 as the estimated total number of Libyan civilians Gadhafi would have killed had we not started bombing in support of the rebels.

Using this totally arbitrary number of potential casualties, the pro-bombing lobby then recite in unison, "We can't just sit back and let another Rwanda happen!"

Of course, anyone familiar with the circumstances preceding the 1994 genocide in that central African nation will realize the stupidity of that argument. In the days leading up to the Hutu tribe engaging in the ruthless slaughter of their Tutsi neighbours, Canadian general and UN commander Romeo Dallaire had requested that his peacekeeping forces be allowed to conduct pre-emptive weapon seizures.

Dallaire had also requested that additional international military ground troops be deployed to provide a serious deterrent to the potential tribal violence.

Once the actual killing began, there was no request issued to impose a no-fly zone over Rwanda and no time wasted in establishing an arms embargo. The weapons, which included machetes and stones, were abundant and the notion of bombing the Rwandan jungle to "protect civilians" made no more sense than the current campaign to bomb the Libyan desert in pursuit of that same goal.

In other words, until there is a serious international commitment to deploy a large number of troops to enforce a ceasefire and disarm the Libyan combatants, all discussion of "protecting civilians" is utterly baseless.

In the limited campaign to date, NATO aircraft have already produced what is clinically referred to as victims of "collateral damage."

In one incident alone, some 13 rebel fighters were killed by an errant bomb. If we were officially allied with the rebels, this would have been deemed a "friendly fire" tragedy but since we are flying combat missions to "protect civilians" and the Libyan rebels are "civilians" with weapons, these deaths were listed as collateral damage.

Shortly after NATO blasted the rebels by mistake, these same rebels denounced the international air campaign. Ironically, it was not the fact that their own fighters had been victims that upset the rebels but rather the fact that NATO planes are not doing enough to help them win their war against Gadhafi.

So it would seem that this collection of brigands, thieves and cutthroats who have declared themselves rebels are more honest about their intentions than our own western leaders who would have you believe we are dropping bombs in the name of humanitarianism.

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