



## [Ing] Libya: preparations for war

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ANGELES MAESTRO - LA HAINE :: 11/03/2011

The uprisings in Libya, coinciding with the struggles of other countries in North Africa and Western Asia respond to conditions similar to those of other countries but have very different consequences.

They are partly the result of a mass of people who have seen a serious deterioration in their living conditions in recent years that coincide with corruption and enrichment of cliques closely connected with those holding state power.

The anti-colonial struggle in 1969 overthrew the puppet monarch King Idris, nationalized the oil industry and the big businesses under control of U.S. and Britain and led to agrarian and industrial development which enabled a mitigation of social inequalities and allowed access for the population to housing, education and public health. It was not a socialist revolution but clearly placed Libya against imperialism and Zionism. Gadhafi was a prominent part of "axis of evil" and U.S. President Ronald Reagan ordered the bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi in 1986.

The situation changed dramatically beginning in the 1990s, when the government made a 180-degree turn and began to open the country to foreign penetration, especially after the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The major oil companies, mainly European, was to control increasing portions of the privatized oil and gas industries, above all, bowing to IMF demands, it eliminated subsidies on food, fuel began to reverse measures giving social protection.

While the people grew more and more impoverished, and corruption and nepotism spread, Gadhafi was received with great pomp by European governments and became an ally considered "a little eccentric." The eruption of popular anger thus has roots similar to those that led to the uprising in other Arab countries lead by corrupt governments whose leaders have implemented policies imposed by imperialism.

But there are other elements. Along with the conditions breeding legitimate outrage, it is necessary to examine who is leading the opposition. The fundamental political element is the National Conference of the Libyan Opposition made up of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), founded in 1981, funded by the CIA, with offices in Washington, with a military organization -- the Libyan National Army -- and the Libyan Constitutional Union (LCU), which is a monarchist organization that claims allegiance to King Idris. Both organizations immediately called for international intervention.

And the "international community" is responding. The immense wealth derived from the absolute control of the oil and gas, which until now the U.S. did not have access, are undoubtedly the goal of "humanitarian intervention." Such intervention is led by those who have been and are responsible the largest direct massacres and suffering perpetrated against the people.

The first thing voted on in the UN Security Council was sanctions against, like those that plagued the Iraqi people before the 2003 invasion, and it was the same CS that issued no complaint about the Israeli massacres in Gaza and Lebanon. And there is no doubt what is being prepared, given the evacuation of British and German civilians carried out by heavily armed warships, while the giant aircraft carrier USS Enterprise and the Sixth Fleet are headed for Libya. For its part, NATO is discussing the imposition of a no-fly zone and the establishment of military corridors from Egypt and Tunisia, which in addition will surround the oil and gas facilities and would put a jackboot on the necks of the people's longing for democracy and sovereignty.

While Sarkozy clamored for selective bombing to prevent Gadhafi from attacking his people with "chemical weapons," France and Britain, always an outpost of the U.S. position in Europe, have recognized yesterday (March 10) the Libyan National Transitional Council (LNCT), made up mainly of the LCU and NSFL with the goal of restoring the monarchy. This "provisional government" based in Benghazi is likewise calling for military intervention by NATO. Is it legitimate to make parallels between this "opposition" and the popular revolts in Tunisia, Egypt and other Arab countries? Has anyone heard these other rebellions ask for military intervention?

For if there is any doubt regarding the repeated request from the "provisional government" for military intervention, which is understandable in these times of heavy media lies, I can tell you something I experienced personally. While attending a preparatory meeting for an upcoming demonstration in solidarity with the uprising of the Arab peoples I demanded that we make it quite clear that the conveners stand strongly against any foreign intervention and would demand that the Spanish government not participate in any NATO action nor allow use of bases. The representative of Casa Libya said his organization follows the guidelines set by the provisional government calling for military intervention and that if the above proposal was accepted they would not subscribe to the Manifesto. The motion passed.

For anyone who makes the least effort to learn the facts, it is clear that the Libyan organizations named above are creatures of the CIA and/or an expression of a monarchy that owed its very existence to its submission to colonialism. This is nothing new. The same thing happened with the Iraqi opposition or with the local chieftains who do the dirty work and hope to take their lamentable share of power puffed up by the arms of the empire.

I have no doubt that among the rebels there are sectors of the Libyan people who reject foreign intervention and that, as in other Arab countries, are calling for democracy and social justice. When we hear their voices -- even if it is weak or hidden by propaganda -- it deserves the support and solidarity that the other Arab peoples' struggles are generating; But they must distinguished themselves clearly from those who are nothing more than the thugs of imperialism in Libya.

After considering what we know, what we have learned directly from their war propaganda, used as a pretext invented to slaughter and overthrow governments that do not submit to them, and to kill hundreds of thousands of people, can anyone believe that they are shedding tears for the suffering of any people, and even less can they believe that NATO, the greatest war machine of destruction, is preparing to carry out "humanitarian

interventions"?

Moreover, the intervention in Libya will serve perfectly as a "warning message" to the other Arab peoples. That and nothing else is the reading of the Arab League support for an attack on Libya: it would be the best gift they could make to the corrupt oil kingdoms who see their thrones shuddering under the assault of popular anger.

There can be no doubt: it is the Libyan people and the Arab peoples who have to decide on their governments in their legitimate struggle for democracy and sovereignty over their resources, which inevitably leads them to confront Zionism and imperialism.

Our duty is to make every effort to try to stop the criminal projects of imperialism, to defend the struggle for self determination and to prevent a single soldier or a single base from being used to attack any state.

As in Iraq, the central problem is not the individual role of Saddam or Gadhafi, but what role is played by the resources of their peoples in the plans of domination and plunder by the great powers. Now, as then: No to imperialist war!

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*Translated from Spanish by John Catalinotto*

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