

## Libya: Distractions and Diversions: the ‘Rebels’ become the West’s ‘Democratic’ Torch-bearers

By [William Bowles](#)

Global Research, April 06, 2011

[Strategic Culture Foundation](#) 6 April 2011

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

“This is pure hypocrisy and demagoguery, they are already giving weapons to the rebels, and not only that: they are interfering in the struggle of the Libyan people,” he said, adding that this action is against international law and the United Nations Charter.” — Miguel D’Escoto

One thing should surely be clear and that is the pivotal role played by the corporate/state media in selling the Libyan ‘no-fly zone’ and the subsequent invasion by the Empire, albeit by first ‘softening up the enemy’ and then as illegal arms supplier. Thus the ‘rebels’, about whom absolutely nothing is known, become the West’s ‘democratic’ torch-bearers and all pretence at it being some kind of ‘humanitarian intervention’, is dropped.

But in spite of the all-embracing media barrage it didn’t take long for the real story behind the ‘rebels’ to emerge.

Today as Colonel Haftar finally returns to the battlefields of North Africa with the objective of toppling Gaddafi, his former co-conspirator from Libya’s 1969 coup, he may stand as the best liaison for the United States and allied NATO forces in dealing with Libya’s unruly rebels. — [‘Rebel army chief is veteran Gaddafi foe-think-tank’](#), Reuters news service, 1 April, 2011

What’s so incredible about the power of the media to transform reality for us is best illustrated by the fact that the political elite knew what the ‘no-fly zone’ really meant, that it was an act of war, the media just omitted this particular detail from its coverage, or rather it relegated it to a footnote, just as it did with the way it presented the illegal invasion of Iraq to the public. Crimes become ‘omissions’ and ‘errors’ and finally ‘historical’ footnotes.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton told the House Foreign Affairs Committee on Tuesday that the Obama administration knew that the Libyan opposition was eager to be seen as doing this by themselves on behalf of the Libyan people that there not be outside intervention by any external force. [Libyan Rebels Said to Debate Seeking U.N. Airstrikes](#), New York Times, 2 March, 2011



Gaddafi of course, is just one of a whole slew of stereotypes that can be conveniently pulled out of storage as and when necessary and used to dehumanize and transform into the 'other' without missing a beat (no images in the MSM of Gaddafi hugging Blair or hanging out with [Berlusconi](#)). Reality gets literally 'boilerplated' by an all-embracing electronic media where rumour /disinformation becomes reality as it is wrapped around the planet 24/7.

The media is so central to our passive social existence that it seems like a force of nature. It's as if we have always had our reality mediated for us by an 'unseen hand' that allegedly works on our behalf, tailoring our reality from day-to-day to suit the circumstances. Definitions mutate endlessly, thus what is 'democratic' one day becomes a dictatorship the next or simply disappears from the 'news' entirely.

So intertwined are the state and the MSM that it's now impossible to see any kind of separation between the two. Working in concert, they reinforce the central message. One need only look at the titles that 'news' stories on Libya from the MSM to get a taste of how the war is presented. Thus we have the BBC's intimate look at how we kill Libyans.

'The BBC's Tim Willcox takes a look at a tank destroyed in recent air strikes near the Libyan town of Ajdabiya.' — [VIDEO: How air strikes destroy Libyan tanks](#)', BBC Website, 4 April 2011



War transformed into 'infotainment' achieves two things: one it dehumanizes the process of killing and two, the

war is a good excuse for a dollop of good old patriotic jingoism about about 'our brave boys (and girls)' firing missiles from virtually impregnable positions in the sky or at sea at yet another bunch of (insert country name) sitting ducks. Mr Wilcox positively revels in his description of exactly how whatever it was that destroyed the tank, works.

There is no doubt that from the inception of the Libyan insurrection a carefully crafted script was set in motion, the media being the primary conduit through which the insurrection would unfold. Media mantras eg, 'no-fly-zone' replaced declaring war on Libya, the justification being yet another mantra, 'humanitarian intervention'. After all, how would it have gone down with the public if the BBC broadcast the passing of UN Resolution 1973 as 'UN declares illegal war on Libya'? But that's the reality whereby the UN has become nothing more than a rubber stamp for the Empire to do as it pleases.[1]

By diverting our attention away from the other, even more embarrassing events eg, Bahrain, Yemen, Egypt, Fukushima, the economic crisis et al, the MSM performs its allotted task of insulating us from the reality of the world Capital has created (and is busy destroying).

I'll admit, it's complicated for Western lefties to see things clearly, immersed as we are in the Empire's seductive embrace. Hence the confusion surrounding Libya but at least it does one thing namely it's now possible to see who the real anti-imperialists are. But will the left get it? Apparently not as this headline from the usually quite perceptive Australian Greenleft Weekly demonstrates:

Against Gaddafi & against NATO bombing of Libya — [Greenleft](#) 4 April, 2011

But if you think the left have a problem, check out the Empire's as the 'humanitarian intervention' is revealed for what it is, a ruthless, fascistic land grab. And the MSM is forced to confront the collapse of its propaganda war as it asks the question; what now? Do we supply weapons and if we do, that means putting troops on the ground, which is an unprovoked invasion of a sovereign state. It's not legal and who are these 'rebels' anyway? The BBC describes them as a 'rag-tag' bunch (thus no doubt deserving of our 'assistance').

So what now? Direct intervention on the ground with troops, armor and heavy weapons is just not on, it's a step too far- for our domestic populations that is. Better the covert approach and as we know military 'advisors' have been on the ground for weeks, if not months and are now actively involved in knocking some order into the BBC's 'rag-tag' bunch of rebels. But of course this could change especially if the rebels still can't overthrow Gaddafi even with the Empire's direct military support (something we were misinformed that the 'no-fly zone' would do).

The failure of the rebels to overthrow Gaddafi and now the Empire's dilemma may in part be the result of it believing its own propaganda, a tendency that Goebbels warned against when telling the Big Lie. Whatever, it's left the Empire with a real dilemma.

But wait... the French are bombing the Ivory coast- as well. Time to move on, media-wise... especially as the public are, in spite of everything that's been thrown at them, wising up even if it's only because of the 💎3 million a day it's reckoned to be costing us to engage in Britain's favourite pastime; waging war on the planet.

## Note

1. Back on 5 March I [referred](#) to the two rumours that set up Libya for a fall but especially the 'African mercenaries' fabrication that did so much to justify the invasion. Wayne Madsen's [story](#) elaborates on the involvement of the CIA and the Israelis in creating these fabrications that were created to justify yet another Imperial damn war.

The original source of this article is [Strategic Culture Foundation](#)  
Copyright © [William Bowles](#), [Strategic Culture Foundation](#), 2011

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [William Bowles](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)  
[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)