

The War Against Libya

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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

A hearty group of protesters representing several community organizations showed up today to protest the vote of civil rights icon and Member of Congress from Atlanta, John Lewis, to continue funding for the bombing of Libya. The Congressman interrupted his schedule and heard the frustrations of his constituents who are outraged at the quiescence of Congress, the Congressional Black Caucus, and the Progressive Caucus in light of President Obama's policy to bomb Africa. As we were meeting with the Congressman, President Obama was addressing the country on national television defending his actions in Libya. The Congressman reiterated his antipathy to war by saying that "war is obsolete." The group asked the Congressman to be unequivocal in future votes and deny funding for President Obama's current wars.

Meanwhile, while we were meeting with Congressman Lewis, President Obama was speaking to the nation. Incredibly, the President demeaned national and Congressional concern for his war policy as "fuss" by saying, "A lot of this fuss is politics." I think those of us who want our country to work for peace should let this President know what "fuss" really looks like.

Below are my remarks at our event today and video will soon be on its way. Below that, see what the President calls "fuss." Our concern is a matter of life and death for the people of Libya who deserve to be able to exercise their rights without the shock and awe of NATO bombs and missiles.

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Cynthia McKinney

Remarks

Press Conference on War Against Libya

Atlanta, Georgia (in front of Congressman John Lewis's District Office)

29 June 2011

At a time when the American people have been asked to tighten their belts, teachers are receiving pink slips, the vital statistics of the American people reveal a health care crisis in the making, and the U.S. government is in serious threat of default, our President and Congress have decided that a new war, this time against the people of Libya, is appropriate. This comes at a time when the U.S., by one estimate, spends approximately \$3 billion per week for war against Iraq and Afghanistan. The President and Congress continue to fund the war against Libya despite the fact that Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced that the U.S. had no strategic interest in Libya; and despite the fact that the Senate Chairwoman of the Select Committee on Intelligence admits that the U.S. really does not

know who the “rebels” are; while the rebels themselves, according to a Telegraph report of 25 March 2011, admit that Al Qaeda elements are among their ranks. So while the apparatus of our government has been used for over ten years to inform the American people and the global community that Al Qaeda is an enemy of freedom-loving people all over the world, our President chooses to ally our military with none other than Al Qaeda elements in Libya and other people whom U.S. intelligence say they do not know.

Additionally, U.S. Admiral Locklear admitted to a Member of Congress that one of NATO’s missions was to assassinate Muammar Qaddafi. And, indeed, NATO bombs have killed Qaddafi’s son and three grandchildren, just as US bombs in 1986 killed his daughter. NATO bombs just recently killed the grandchildren of one of Qaddafi’s associates in a targeted assassination attempt. Targeted assassination is not within the scope of the United Nations Security Council Resolution and targeted assassination is against U.S. law, international law, international humanitarian law, and international human rights law. Targeted assassination is also a crime. We certainly cannot encourage others to abide by the law when we so openly break it.

While in Libya, I witnessed NATO’s targeting of civilians: NATO bombs and missiles landed in residential neighborhoods, hit schools, exploded near hospitals, destroyed parts of the public broadcasting infrastructure, and narrowly missed killing students at Al Fateh University. When civilians are targeted in war, or “low kinetic” activities, crimes are committed.

NATO practices in Libya are exactly like Israel’s practices in Gaza: fishermen are killed as they go about their fishing business, a naval blockade allows arms to flow to NATO’s Libyan allies, but stops food, fuel, and medicine from entering non-NATO ally-held areas. The entire population suffers as a result. Collective punishment is illegal when Israel practices it against the people of Gaza and collective punishment is illegal when NATO practices it.

NATO and hyperbolic press accounts have introduced a kind of race hatred that the Libyan people have been trying hard to erase. Approximately 50% of Libya looks like me. Innocent darker skinned Libyans have been targeted, tortured, harassed, and killed.

The people of Libya have the right to self-determination. They have a right to “resource nationalism.” They have a right to live in peace. They have a right to determine their future and they need not exercise their rights underneath the shock and awe of NATO bombs and missiles.

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