



Libya: One Quagmire Too Far?

We've heard those kinds of assurances many times before. Think: "cake walk"; "Mission accomplished!"; "They'll welcome us as saviors"; "We'll be in and out in no time." But, our involvement in the no-fly enforcement doesn't have to lead to U.S. troops on the ground in Tripoli to be monumentally, or even fatally, dangerous.

How many quagmires can the United States step into and still survive? And how do we calculate and define "survival"?

The most immediate calculations usually deal with considering the economic and military costs: Can our economy sustain the trillion-dollar costs of multiple wars and can our overstretched armed forces sustain multiple global engagements while still providing for our national security?



Those are critically important considerations. We are trillions of dollars in debt and deep in a recession. We are bogged down in two "hot" wars in Iraq and Afghanistan-Pakistan and have hundreds of thousands of troops spread across the globe, [stationed in more than 100 countries](#).

Equally important are matters concerning just how long any vestiges of our limited constitutional republic will remain under the conditions of a permanent warfare state. The White House (under both Republicans and Democrats) has become more and more habituated to engaging in military ventures without a congressional declaration of war, as required by our Constitution. And Congress and the American people have become inured to these usurpations, accepting them almost without question, as long as they are couched in the Orwellian appeals to "support the troops," "support democracy," and "fight terrorism." Our constitutional limitations on the central government are being sucked down into the quagmires along with our economy and our military. If not reversed we will soon have no protections against omnipotent government at home, at which point any dangers posed by al-Qaeda, the Taliban, or any other terrorists would be incredibly miniscule by comparison.

As usual, one of the few sane voices in Congress challenging this headlong rush toward disaster is Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas), [who went to the floor of the House on March 11](#), to speak out against the illegal, immoral, unconstitutional, and economically suicidal proposal to engage the U.S. military in support of this UN Security Council objective.

A few other voices of opposition have been raised. Pat Buchanan wrote on March 14:

To establish a secure no-fly zone, we would have to bomb radar installations, anti-aircraft batteries, missile sites and airfields, and destroy the Libyan air force on the ground, to keep the skies secure for U.S. pilots.

These would be acts of war against a nation that has not attacked us. Where do we get the legal



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and moral right to do this? Has Congress, which alone has the power to declare war, authorized Barack Obama to attack Libya?

“The president may respond to an attack on American territory or U.S. citizens,” Buchanan noted, “but Libya has not done that since Lockerbie, more than two decades ago. Since that atrocity, George W. Bush and Condi Rice welcomed Gadhafi in from the cold, after he paid \$10 million in blood money to the families of each of the Lockerbie victims.” But Congress seems determined to ignore its constitutional responsibility to rein in the executive branch’s dangerous and promiscuous abuse of the power of the sword.

As Buchanan remarked:

Last week, the Senate whistled through a nonbinding resolution urging the creation of a no-fly zone. Call it the Sidra Gulf resolution.

But what are U.S. senators doing issuing blank checks for war eight years after George W. Bush cashed the last one to commit the historic blunder of invading Iraq? Do these people learn at all from history?

That war cost the Republican Party the Congress in 2006 and presidency in 2008. Far worse, it cost the country 40,000 dead and wounded, a trillion dollars, and the respect of hundreds of millions of Arabs and Muslims who saw the war as an imperial attempt to crush a nation that had done nothing to the United States.

Following in the footsteps of his intrepid father, Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) also has dared to speak out against the looming folly of stepping into the Libyan quagmire. He was quoted in the *Washington Post* on March 17:

“I have great sympathy for people that are involved in that war there,” Paul said in response to a question on Libya at a news conference on the federal budget. “We’re involved in two wars right now, and I don’t think we really need to be involved in a third war. I do think the questions of war are the most important decisions we make as a country and as representatives, and that needs to be something that is considered and voted on in the Senate and the House. I tell people I won’t vote to go to war unless I’m ready to go or send my kids.”

Leon T. Hadar, a research fellow at the Cato Institute, argues, in a March 16 [op-ed](#) for the *Christian Science Monitor*, that we should leave intervention in Libya to the Europeans; it’s their neighborhood and we already have more than enough on our plate. Hadar writes:

As the United States continues to waste limited resources in the Middle East, Europe free-rides on American policy in the region. The Europeans benefit from the US political-military role without contributing much in return, monetarily or militarily. As a debt-laden American economy teeters on a cliff, many governments in Europe enjoy the benefits of low defense budgets and massive welfare states....

The United States should tell the Europeans to put their money — and their troops, if necessary — where their strategic interests lie.

Dr. Ivan Eland at the Independent Institute [warned](#):

Unbelievably, after experiencing 10 years of quagmire in Afghanistan and Iraq, the American foreign policy establishment is now clamoring for the institution of a no-fly zone in Libya. Luminaries on both the Left and the Right have endorsed the concept: for example, Senators John Kerry, Joe Lieberman,



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and John McCain. Even though the U.S. military would have to first attack Libyan radars, air defenses, runways, aircraft, and command, control, and communication facilities, John Kerry argued that a no-fly zone was not a military operation. Traditionally, the foreign policy elites of declining empires have never accepted the need to retrench overseas before it was too late. The U.S. establishment hasn't either.

Globalist Warmongers

What Dr Eland, Dr. Hadar, Mr. Buchanan, Rep. Paul, and Sen. Paul left unsaid, and what few critics of the perpetual warfare state are willing to say, is that the push for a US-NATO-EU-UN military intervention in Libya is being dictated by the same high-level coterie of globalists at the [Council on Foreign Relations](#) (CFR) that has already entrapped us in our present quagmires and that are trying to drag us into a UN-run global government under a myriad of economic, security, social, and environmental pretexts.

Dr. Eland comes close in his references to "the foreign policy elites" and the "U.S. establishment," but won't actually name the organized forces that are driving the policies he deplors. These same CFR "foreign policy elites" have captured the executive branch of our government and the top leadership of both the Republican and Democratic parties.

Eland cites, for example the lineup of key players in the Senate in favor of Libyan intervention: "Senators John Kerry, Joe Lieberman, and John McCain." No surprise here. These Senators list themselves, respectively, as "Democrat," "Independent Democrat," and "Republican." However, their party labels are superfluous; there was virtually no doubt as to how they were going to come down on this issue. They are all not only members of the CFR, but more importantly have dependably voted and supported the CFR's internationalist, interventionist line for years.

Their CFR colleagues in government, media, and academia already had a huge leg up on the opposition, building bipartisan support for Libyan intervention through op-eds, articles, and television commentaries. As, for instance, we see with articles by CFR Senior Fellow for Middle East Studies Elliott Abrams [in the Wall Street Journal](#) and the [Weekly Standard](#), and by CFR Senior Fellow in National Security Studies Max Boot, [in the Wall Street Journal](#).

But the CFR does not rely simply on the power of persuasion of its propagandists; it knows it has to have actual boots on the ground, so to speak, especially at the State Department and the UN, where policies must be crafted and a show of "consensus" must be fabricated.

Thus it is that little-noticed CFR members such as Susan Rice, William Burns, Norton Schwartz, and Edward C. Luck come into play. [Susan Rice](#), President Obama's ambassador to the UN, has, of course, been playing a leading role in pushing the administration's CFR-directed Libya policy that has been crafted to look like a France/UN/EU-led operation — the better to allay Americans' concerns that we are being asked to carry the load for yet another phony "multi-national" force, as we prepare to jump into another quicksand hole. Among other things, Undersecretary of State [William Burns](#) (CFR) was tasked, along with Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. [Norton Schwartz](#) (CFR), with convincing members of Congress to support a UN-sponsored no-fly resolution against Libya.

UN-Luck-y Ties

And who is Edward C. Luck? He is the former longtime head of the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA), the premier CFR adjunct organization promoting U.S. support for the UN and all its programs and plans for "global governance." In February 2008 UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon



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[appointed Luck](#) as his Special Advisor.

Luck has been in the thick of the current UN-Libyan imbroglio. That's Good Luck for the internationalists, but Bad Luck for the rest of us who are working to preserve and restore our Constitution, sovereignty, and independence.

According to Edward Luck, in a March 15 article in the *Christian Science Monitor*, the Libyan situation is a serendipitous development that is reestablishing the UN's "relevance" as well as the "universal norms and standards that go to the heart of what the UN is about." The *Monitor* piece reports:

In the forefront of the push for a [UN] resolution is France. As rebels fighting Qaddafi's forces lose ground, retreating from their last stronghold west of Tripoli Tuesday, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said in a radio interview that had the international community acted last week, the rebels would be in a much stronger position.

But world leaders including President Obama are insisting that the response to Libya must be multilateral and come through international organizations....

Moreover, global political reaction to the uprisings in North Africa has emphasized universal values and human rights rather than countries' strategic interests mirroring traditional UN policy. For the moment, at least, the world seems to be moving toward the UN's view of things, and that has given the international organization a rising "relevance."

"It's true that Qaddafi's particularly egregious actions have spurred the international community in ways that another crisis might not have, and that has forged a unity in the organization that we don't see every day," says Edward Luck, senior vice president at the International Peace Institute in New York. "But we're also seeing the invoking of universal norms and standards that go to the heart of what the UN is about, and that's something you wouldn't have imagined even a few months ago."

It is true that most Americans would not have imagined this a few months ago, but Dr. Luck and his fellow globalist elites at the CFR certainly not only imagined it but also methodically planned the chessboard and moved the game pieces to bring it about.

Decades ago historians Charles Beard and Harry Elmer Barnes described and exposed this diabolical plan of the ruling CFR oligarchy to use "[perpetual war for perpetual peace](#)" to restructure global power arrangements and eviscerate the constitutional checks and balances that restrict their push for absolutism.

This process is being used, as the *Monitor* points out to move us "toward the UN's view of things" and, in Luck's terms, to foster adoption of the UN's "universal norms and standards." Intervention in Libya is a dangerous trap; members of Congress should join Rep. Ron Paul and Senator Rand Paul in opposing U.S. entry into this quagmire.

Photo of Moammar Gadhafi: AP Images

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