



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on April 18, 2011

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Libya-One Quagmire Too Far?

Is Libya one quagmire too far? The United Nations Security Council's passage of a resolution on March 17 imposing a no-fly zone over Libya is forcing us to confront the issue of imperial over-reach, a madness that has been the downfall of many a once-great nation. On March 19, President Obama committed U.S. naval and air assets to "playing a supportive role" to what is, ostensibly, a European-led military initiative. In a meeting at the White House before his public announcement of support for the UN actions, President Obama assured congressional leaders that our participation in the no-fly enforcement would not lead to the deployment of American troops on the ground in Libya.



AP Images

We've heard those kinds of assurances many times before. Think: "Iraq will be a 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 we have hundreds of thousands of troops spread across the globe, stationed in more than 100 countries.

Equally important, however, are matters concerning just how long any tattered 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, almost accepting them 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 possible dangers posed by al-Qaeda, the Taliban, or any other terrorists would be infinitesimal by comparison.

As usual, one of the few sane voices in Congress challenging this mad rush toward disaster is Rep. Ron



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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.

Rep. Paul also set forth his opposition to the Libyan fiasco in his March 14 *Texas Straight Talk* column, wherein he noted:

This week I will introduce a concurrent resolution in the House to remind my colleagues and the administration that Congress alone, not the president, decides when to go to war. It is alarming how casually the administration talks about initiating acts of war, as though Article 1 Section 8 of the Constitution does not exist. Frankly, it is not up to the President whether or not we intervene in Libya, or set up “no-fly” zones, or send troops. At least, it is not if we follow the Constitution. Even by the loose standards of the War Powers Resolution, which cedes far too much power to the president, he would have no authority to engage in hostilities because we have not been attacked — not by Gaddafi, and not by the rebels. This is not our fight. If the administration wants to make it our fight, let them make their case before Congress and put it to a vote. I would strongly oppose such a measure, but that is the proper way to proceed.

All of Dr. Ron Paul’s Congressional colleagues have taken the same oath to the same U.S. Constitution, but there is a major contrast between him and most of them: He reads and understands the Constitution, and (judging by his long record of words, actions, and votes) takes absolutely seriously his oath to uphold and defend it.

Back in 2007, when he was still a Senator, Barack Obama was severe in his chastisement of President Bush’s usurpation of the war powers. Senator Obama declared:

The President does not have power under the Constitution to unilaterally authorize a military attack in a situation that does not involve stopping an actual or imminent threat to the nation.

Senator Obama was right then; President Obama is wrong now. The same can be said for Hillary Clinton, who as a U.S. Senator condemned President Bush’s saber-rattling toward Iran and insisted that the President could not go to war without authorization from Congress. As Obama’s Secretary of State, however, she has led the charge for war in Libya by executive ukase. Ditto for Vice President Joe Biden, who as Senator Biden knew no equal in his efforts to subject President George W. Bush’s war-making tendencies to the congressional restraints imposed by the Constitution. Now he cheers on an illegal, unconstitutional war.

A few of the usual voices of the far Left have sounded off in opposition to the Libyan misadventure: Michael Moore, and Representatives Jerrold Nadler, Dennis Kucinich, Maxine Waters, Sheila Jackson Lee, and Barbara Lee. Far too few voices of opposition have been raised on the Right, but a few have joined Ron Paul in putting forth moral, constitutional, and practical objections to our intervention in yet another foreign quarrel. Pat Buchanan wrote in his March 14 column:

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.



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

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, 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.



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Globalist Warmongers

What Dr. Eland, 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) who have 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 deplores. 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 through op-eds, articles and television commentaries. As, for instance, we see with articles by Elliott Abrams (CFR) in the *Wall Street Journal* (“Our Bargain with the New Gadhafi”) and the *Weekly Standard* (“Obama’s Pathetic Response to Libya”), and by Max Boot, a senior fellow in national security studies at the CFR, in the *Wall Street Journal* (“It’s Not Too Late to Save Libya”).

Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich (CFR), a regular commentator on the Fox networks, was one of the neoconservative voices castigating Obama for “dithering” and failing to initiate military action against Gadhafi. Gingrich, for instance, during a March 8 interview with Fox’s Greta Van Susteren, chastised the Obama administration for ineptitude and vacillation on Libya. Asked what he would do if he were President, Gingrich said he would go to war “this evening” with Libya. As with Saddam Hussein, Gadhafi’s bona fides as a dictator were cited as justification for the President to unilaterally, without a declaration of war from Congress, commit our nation to war.

“This is a moment to get rid of him. Do it. Get it over with,” Gingrich declared.

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 was tasked, along



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with Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz, 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 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; Bad Luck for the rest of us who are working to preserve and restore our Constitution, sovereignty, and independence.

According to Edward Luck, as reported in a March 15 article in the *Christian Science Monitor*, the Libyan situation is a serendipitous development that is reestablishing the UN’s “relevance” and 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.”

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.” Our new war in Libya is a dangerous trap. Every American concerned about our nation’s survival should besiege his members of Congress to join Rep. Ron Paul and Senator Rand Paul in extricating our forces from this quagmire —



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and then to do the same in bringing home our forces from the near decade-long sinkholes in Afghanistan and Iraq.



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