

Attack on Libya is West's response to Arab uprisings

Friday 1 April 2011, by [PILGER John](#), [SULEHRIA Farooq](#) (Date first published: 1 April 2011).

Where is the proof that Gaddafi was about to slaughter civilians? — Bedouin hyperbole is no proof. As Diana Johnstone has asked, why was no United Nations fact-finding mission sent to Libya to establish the truth before Sarkozy recognised a group led by Gaddafi's former right-hand man?

'If you support such a naked act of colonial intervention as the attack on Libya, you are not "progressive"; you are regressive,' says John Pilger. Filmmaker, journalist and writer, John Pilger hardly requires any introduction even in Pakistan.

Born in Sydney, Australia, Pilger in the early 1960s arrived in London. First, he freelanced, then joined Reuters, moving to the London Daily Mirror, and reported from all over the world, covering numerous wars, notably Vietnam. Moving to the United States, he reported the upheavals there in the late 1960s and 1970s. He was in the same room when Robert Kennedy, the presidential candidate, was assassinated in June 1968. His work in South East Asia produced a iconic issue of the London Mirror, devoted almost entirely to his world exclusive dispatches from Cambodia in the aftermath of Pol Pot's reign. The combined impact of his Mirror reports and his subsequent documentary, Year Zero: the Silent Death of Cambodia, raised almost \$50 million raised for the people of that stricken country. Similarly, his 1994 documentary and dispatches report from East Timor, where he travelled under cover, helped galvanise support for the East Timorese the under Indonesian occupation. His articles appear worldwide in newspapers as well as online. He writes a regular column for the New Statesman, London. His latest film is The War You Don't See (2010).

In an interview with *Viewpoint*, he says, "The attack on Libya, led by a French president whose policies towards North Africans has been openly racist, is the West's response to the uprising in the Arab world." Read on:

Farooq Sulehria - How do you see the No-Fly Zone established over Libya? Even left appears divided. Should this be opposed with an anti-imperialist point of view. Or was it a lesser evil to avert a massacre in Ben Ghazi?

John Pilger - There is no such thing as a "no fly zone". This is a euphemism for attacking a country you wish to control. The longest Anglo-American aerial bombardment since world war two was the "no fly zone" declared over Iraq during the 1990s. I personally saw the results, such as shepherds and their families blown to bits by marauding American fighter jets.

The "left" is deployed as a media term and often refers to those on the right who mask their aggressive liberalism with the respectability of humane politics. If you support such a naked act of colonial intervention as the attack on Libya, you are not "progressive"; you are regressive. The attack on Libya, led by a French president whose policies towards North Africans has been openly racist, is the West's response to the uprising in the Arab world. By dividing and controlling events in

Libya, even changing its regime, Europe and the US are hoping to achieve the opposite of people's liberation and send a loud message throughout the region, which contains the "stupendous prize" - oil. This is routine, understandable behaviour on their part; history suggests nothing less.

As for the "left" supporters of this adventure, they are the same people who supported the fraudulent attack on Serbia and the dismemberment of Yugoslavia, and the same people who supported the attack on Afghanistan. Where is the proof that Gaddafi was about to slaughter civilians? — Bedouin hyperbole is no proof. As Diana Johnstone has asked, why was no United Nations fact-finding mission sent to Libya to establish the truth before Sarkozy recognised a group led by Gaddafi's former right-hand man?

A section of the liberals, even some progressives, in Pakistan have been supportive of U.S. drones attacks in the country. They see it as an effective way to deal with the threat posed by Taliban. But certain other progressives in Pakistan see it as an escalation of Afghan war further destabilising the region. Your stand on U.S. droning of Pakistan?

Many liberals itch for war. They are not "progressive"; they are regressive. They are members of the war party, killing the innocent, deceiving the public at home.

The left-wing governments in Latin America as well as sections of left have been sympathetic to Iranian regime. What side of the fence one should be in case Green Movement revives in Iran as the region is in the grip of revolutions?

The Green movement often supports war. Look at the German Greens who are positively gung-ho for the current attack on Libya. The governments in Latin America you refer to don't "support" the Iranian regime. They deal with it, just as the West deals with unpleasant regimes. With its long experience of U.S. policies, Latin America understands the importance of "bogeymen" to Washington; Iran is a bogeyman because its Islamic revolution overthrew America's dictator, the Shah, and because the Iranian regime has since pursued policies independent of Washington - which of course is intolerable.

Similarly, Taliban in Afghanistan have been portrayed as 'liberation' forces even when many, perhaps a majority, in Afghanistan as well as Pakistan, see them as extremely oppressive force. It is feared that a liberation spearheaded by Taliban would entail a new slavery. Your comments.

I don't know anyone who sees the Taliban as liberators. They spearhead an Afghan resistance to the NATO invasion. When I was last in Afghanistan in 2003, the Taliban barely existed. They have grown in direct proportion to NATO's assault and atrocities, which is the classic pattern of a colonial war.

P.S.

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<http://www.viewpointonline.net/attack-on-libya-is-wests-response-to-arab-uprisings-john-pilger.html>

* Find more about John Pilger and his works at:
<http://www.johnpilger.com/>

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(www.internationalen.se). Before joining Internationalen, he worked for one year, 2006-07 at daily The News, Rawalpindi. Also, in Pakistan, he has worked with Lahore-based dailies, The Nation, The Frontier Post and Pakistan. He has MA in Mass Communication from Punjab University, Lahore. He also contributes for Znet and various left publications in Europe and Australia.