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London Institute of South Asia (LISA)

It is a fact that we need to have independent, honest and truthful voices and reliable sources of information. The most commonly read material comes from the main stream media, that are overwhelmingly rich and powerful. By and large they serve the powerful vested interests and elite individuals or groups of individual that own them.

LISA Journal is an alternative source of news. We aim to be a voice of truth endeavoring to minimize and undo propaganda/disinformation of the main stream media. We are a non-profit organization independent of any government, NGO or philanthropic foundations. We are committed to justice and fair play.

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EDITORIAL

Fourth War Theatre

This is not a humanitarian operation. The war on Libya has opened up a new regional war theatre. There are three distinct war theatres in the Middle East Central Asian region; Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq. What is unfolding is a fourth US-NATO War Theatre in North Africa, with the risk of escalation. These four war theatres are functionally related, they are part of an integrated US-NATO military agenda.

In the words of Michel Chossudovsky the Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization it is the largest military underrating since the invasion of Iraq. The bombing of Libya has been on the drawing board of the Pentagon for several years as confirmed by former NATO commander General Wesley Clark. Operation 'Odyssey Dawn' is acknowledged as the "biggest Western military intervention in the Arab world since the invasion of Iraq began exactly eight years ago."

A military operation of this size and magnitude, involving the active participation of several NATO member and partner countries is never improvised. Operation 'Odyssey Dawn' was in the advanced stages of military planning prior to the protest movement in Egypt and Tunisia. Public opinion was led to believe that the protest movement had spread spontaneously from Tunisia and Egypt to Libya.

It is apparent that the armed insurgency in Eastern Libya is directly supported by foreign powers. The western leaders and media make no bones about it. Rebel forces in Benghazi immediately hoisted the red, black and green banner with the crescent and star: the flag of the monarchy of King Idris, which symbolized the rule of the former colonial powers.

The insurrection was also planned and coordinated with the timing of the military operation. It had been carefully planned months ahead of the protest movement, as part of a covert operation. US, British Special Forces were reported to be on the ground "helping the opposition" right from the outset. What we are dealing with is a military roadmap, a timeline of carefully planned military and intelligence events.

This war is part of the battle for oil. Libya is among the World's largest oil economies with approximately 3.5% of global oil reserves, more than twice

those of the US. The underlying objective is to gain control over Libya's oil and gas reserves under the disguise of a humanitarian intervention.

The geopolitical and economic implications of a US-NATO led military intervention directed against Libya are far reaching.

So far, the bombing campaign has resulted in countless civilian casualties, which are either categorized by the media as "collateral damage" or blamed on the Libyan armed forces. In a bitter irony, the UN Security Council Resolution 1973 grants NATO a mandate "to protect civilians"

Afghanistan

Americans goals have shifted many times in Afghanistan. It seems they have now settled on war aims: Reduce the Taliban so that Afghan forces can deal with them, hopefully by 2014.

What are the prospects of achieving this goal? Richard Holbrooke had said late last year late last year, that Taliban had matched General David Petraeus "surge for surge." Its tactics and organization have become much more sophisticated, and more importantly, it has wrapped itself in the flag of national resistance to foreigners, rather than religious extremism. It has made impressive gains in northern Afghanistan, far away from its traditional bases in the south and east along the Pakistan border.

The gain that the US military keeps trumpeting about in Afghanistan from time to time is its control in some areas. This is rather deceptive and can be misleading because the superior military forces can always control a given (limited) area for a given period of time. In guerrilla warfare it is normal that you fade away when faced with superior forces having superior firepower. The real problem for the US is how to create something lasting and that has not been achieved to date. In our assessment there is not any province or district that can stand up after Americans leave. On this front there is little sign of progress. The problems of massive corruption, governmental inefficiencies and alarming rate desertions of Afghan forces continue to drag down hopes for a successful counterinsurgency strategy.

America is currently relying heavily on training the Afghan army and police to take over security. Serious training, however, began only a year ago, but desertions of over 35% percent makes it unlikely that the Kabul government alone will be able to take on the Taliban by 2014. Given how long it takes to build a competent army, especially in a population that is 80 percent illiterate and tribal; the odds are that Americans will be engaged in combat well beyond 2014.

American people are tired of this never-ending war and so will force American politicians to end it as a price for their re-election. Afghani and Pakistani people are sick and tired of this futile war that has turned their countries into a bloody battleground. Despite the "best laid plans", hopes, dreams, and predictions for success laid out by US generals, there are insurmountable odds to finding a winnable solution. The exit strategy relying on military alternatives to see a stable Afghanistan by training and funding Afghan National Security Forces is flawed and misconceived.

Many believe that Pakistan Chief of the Army General Kiyani's letter to president Obama delivered last year is by far the best way forward to get us all out of this nasty quagmire. The bottom line is there cannot be any meaningful solution without talking to all factions of Taliban.

However, even after/should that handover to the Afghans occur by 2014, the international community is still going to be asked to "foot the bill" for all Afghan security forces for decades to come....because there is NO WAY the Afghans will be able to afford to pay for that force on their own. And, if the international community backs off that perpetual funding requirement, there is a better than even chance the armed Afghan security forces will return to manning illegal checkpoints, theft, extortion, etc. to obtain the monies they need to support themselves and their families; essentially returning to the types of "warlord thuggery" that helped stoke the flames behind the initial Taliban rise to power in the mid- to late- 1990s.

The other factor is that unpopularity of the Afghan government and hatred for occupying foreign troops convince enough Afghans to support the Taliban to make the country ungovernable, as the mujahedeen did to the Soviets?

World Water Day

March 22 was designated World Water Day in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro to raise awareness about the importance of preserving global water resources.

“World Water Day is a great day to raise awareness about water issues in South Asia. Unless all nations of the region join hands and fight for water justice through peaceful means, this region is awaiting catastrophes of horrendous proportions. We have consistently maintained that water issue between India and Pakistan is a time bomb that needs to be addressed immediately, seriously and in earnest. In our view water issue in South Asia relegates the issue of Kashmir to a second position. US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations issued a report, *projecting*

likely wars in South Asia between two water scarce countries; Pakistan and India. The Senate report entitled, “*Avoiding Water Wars*” in South and Central Asia, indicate that, each water dam or water storage by India on the Western rivers; exclusively dedicated for Pakistan would have long-term affect on Pakistani agrarian economy.

The report absolutely clarifies that; “The cumulative effect of these projects could give India the ability to store enough water to limit the supply to Pakistan at crucial moments in the growing season.” Out of over a hundred of the large and small water dams and reservoirs, being built by India on the western rivers, over 30 projects are nearing completion and are likely to cause serious water shortages for Pakistan, a lower riparian country. It is commonly believed that water sharing compels the upper /lower riparian states to coordinate water distribution – so “water unites.” Regrettably, instead of taking course of getting closer on account of water sharing issues, India and Pakistan are drifting in opposite directions of the “water divides.”

CIA Agents Licensed to Kill in Pakistan

A CIA maverick named Raymond Davis killed two young Pakistanis in Lahore in broad daylight. It was clear that Pakistan’s sovereignty is compromised that it is within the rules of engagement for CIA agents such as Davis that they are permitted to carry weapons in the Pakistan and can kill anyone with total impunity.

Questions were asked as to how Americans go equipped with the impedimenta of espionage unchallenged? How many such operatives are employed in Pakistan; who permitted them and why? Again no definitive answer has been forthcoming. The shambolic issuance of visas to Americans without any sort of background clearance was an invitation to abuse the system – which the Americans duly did.

The Davis affair was a textbook example of how not to conduct diplomacy and how not to conduct intelligence operations– by both sides, and neither Pakistan nor the Americans emerge with honour from this bizarre business. There must be a certain irony that both sides were apparently saved from further embarrassment by Sharia law, although whether either side will have learned a lesson remains to be seen. What we may see in the months is yet to unfold. But surely Pakistan now has a trust deficit of cosmic proportions — not just between the US and Pakistan but also between the people of Pakistan and ‘their’ state.

The UN: An Instrument of Western Aggression

Ghali Hassan

On 19 March the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) succumbed to the usual threats and coercions by the U.S. and voted to impose a “no-fly” zone and declare war on Libya on the pretext to “protect Libyan civilians” from violence. History shows that the UN does not have a record of protecting civilians, but a record of legitimising Western violence against civilians.

Just hours before the vote, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon urged council members to “take immediate action” to protect civilians in Libya. “In these circumstances, the loss of time means more loss of lives”, he warned. According to Mr. Ki-Moon's philosophy, the innocent women and children that are killed on a daily basis in Afghanistan, Palestine, Bahrain, and Yemen have no lives, and thus deserve no UN protection. Promoted by Western media and think-tanks as the face of the “International Community”, the UN is a façade used to justify and cover-up U.S. and Western-sponsored terrorism masquerading as “military humanism” or “humanitarian intervention”.

As usual, the lies to justify another Western aggression are spreading fast. “Legally, morally, politically, and militarily [the intervention in Libya] has only one justification: protecting the country's people from the kind of murderous harm that Gaddafi inflicted on unarmed protesters four weeks ago, has continued to apply to those who oppose him in the areas he controls, and has promised to inflict on anyone against him should his forces recapture Benghazi and other rebel ground”, wrote Gareth Evan, former Australian foreign minister and an old imperialist ranting mouthpiece. In his so-called “responsibility-to-protect (R2P)” concept, Evan excluded defenceless Palestinian, Afghani, and Iraqi civilians because he believes they are governed by pro-Western murderous thugs and therefore considered safe.

Resolution 1973 is a fraud designed to legitimise Western military intervention on the side of an armed resurrection by a U.S.-sponsored militia that is rightly described as a “mixed bag” of terrorists and extremists, including “al-Qaeda” mercenaries with strong ties to the CIA and the British intelligence.

The “rebels” are financed and armed with modern U.S. weapons through the regimes of Egypt and Saudi Arabia. If the UN is really interested in protecting civilians, it should implement resolutions to protect the civilian populations in Gaza, Afghanistan, Iraq, Bahrain, Yemen, Ivory Coast, and elsewhere.

Within hours of the imposition of UN Resolution (1973), Libyan state TV claimed 6 people had been killed and 150 people wounded in the first wave of attacks by French, British, and U.S. forces – what Libyan TV called “victims of the crusader – colonialist aggression”. A *Reuter's* correspondent saw a total of at least 14 dead on Sunday around bombed out vehicles on an east Libyan road, allegedly belonging to the Libyan army. The road between Benghazi and Ajdabiyah was a scene of devastation and dozens of burned out vehicles, according to Reuters. On 24 March, Reuters reported (quoting Libyan officials), that “the civilian death toll from five days of coalition air strikes had reached almost 100 and accused Western governments of fighting on the side of the rebels”. In addition, vital civilian facilities, including three hospitals have been attacked.

Like the aggression against Iraq, the first target was al-Qadhfi compound, hundreds of miles away from the areas supposed to be “protected” by the Resolution. For nearly a week, the U.S., France, and Britain have been attacking Libya with 162 Tomahawk cruise missiles, B-2 stealth bombers, F-15 and F-16 fighter jets, even when Libya announced a cease-fire. It is evident that the use of disproportionate violence and the targeting of Libyan civilian and military facilities has nothing to do with protecting civilians and is exceeding the boundaries of the fraudulent UN Resolution 1973. “Whatever else [al-Qadhafi] has done, he has undoubtedly forced [the UN], the CIA and U.S.-NATO to drop the pleasant mask of youthful idealism and human rights, revealing a hideous visage of Predator drones, terror bombing, widespread slaughter, and colonialist arrogance underneath”, writes Webster Tarpley.

Meanwhile, France which lost all influence it had in North Africa after the collapse of the Tunisian and Egyptian, dictatorships is flexing its muscles in Libya. French war planes have been involved in attacks on civilian infrastructure, including civilian aircrafts on the ground at Misrata Airport. France, of course, is the mother of all violent hypocrites. In North Africa, France is responsible for the death of millions of North Africans, including one million Algerian Muslims. Furthermore, French Zionist President, Nicolas Sarkozy, won the Presidency on a racist anti-Muslim immigration (mostly from North Africa) election platform. Hence, Sarkozy's “humanitarian intervention” is a fraud. The Turkish daily *Today's Zaman* (25 March 2011) reported that, “Turkish leaders have publicly criticized

France for 'turning the operation into a show of force' and questioned French motives in the operation, voicing suspicion that some partners seeking to act outside NATO have their eyes on Libya's mineral wealth".

The violation of the UN Charter – which forbids any armed intervention in civil conflicts within a member nation – by unprovoked aggression against the sovereign nation of Libya and the indiscriminate killing of civilians by Western governments, forced some nations who voted for the war to have second thoughts. The shameful Chinese and Russian governments – who could have vetoed the UN Resolution – are now calling for an “immediate cease fire and resolve the issue through peaceful means”. They know very well that their false propaganda is worthless and outright cowardice ranting. “The resolution is defective and flawed,” said Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. “It allows everything. It resembles mediaeval calls for crusades”, Putin added. It is too late for the Libyan civilians, Mr. Putin.

President Barack Obama and his imperialist vassals alleged that the vote to take military action against Libya was a unanimous vote and that the Arab League was overwhelmingly in favour of attacking Libya. In reality, only ten pro-U.S. countries, including Colombia, Gabon, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, and South Africa, voted for the Resolution. The majority of the world's nations, including 53 African Union (AU) nations, are against the aggression. The Arab League is a broken fig leaf. Ten of the Arab League's 22 nations boycotted the meeting. Algeria and Syria voted against a “no-fly” zone and military action against Libya. Colonel Muammar al-Qadhafi is hated by the despots of the artificial regimes of the Gulf who voted for the aggression. For the Arab despots, it is a golden opportunity to divert public attention away from the uprising against their own illegitimate dictatorships. Indeed, it was after the UNSC voted to impose a “no-fly” zone on Libya, and as the U.S.-Western attacks against Libya began, the pro-Western despotic Arab regimes escalated their crackdown on peaceful legitimate popular demonstrators.

A few days after the attacks on Libya, the Secretary General of the League of Despots is backpedalling as if he hasn't been serving despots for forty years. “What we want is the protection of civilians and not the shelling of more civilians”, said Amr Moussa. Everyone knows what a “no-fly” zone means. It means an act of aggression that includes fighter jets flying at high altitudes and dropping bombs and missiles on everything that moves, including women children and domestic animals, even civilian aircraft are not allowed to fly. The UN's ranting about protecting civilians is false and wicked propaganda. Those who supported Resolution 1973 need to go back and review the history of the UN's imperialist role in Iraq.

On 02 August 1990, the UNSC passed a resolution (Resolution 660) calling on Iraq to withdraw its forces from Kuwait. Despite Iraq's and other nations' efforts to end the crisis peacefully, the U.S. insisted and pushed for war. The war was sold to the public with a fabricated horror story in which Iraqi troops were accused of throwing Kuwaiti babies out of hospital incubators. The attacks on Iraq were indiscriminate and criminal. More than 200,000 Iraqis were killed and the country was left in ruins. After the war the US and Britain refused to lift the sanctions. As sanctions went on, the U.S. and its vassals, Britain in particular, continued to shift the goal posts and pass more UN resolutions "to protect" the Iraqi people. For more than two decades, Iraq and the Iraqi people were subjected to a criminal UN-sponsored reign of terror, even by the Nazis' standards. Resolution 660 mutated into an infanticide tool by which more than 500,000 children under the age of 5 lost their lives because the Anglo-American fascists denied them drinking water and vital medical supplies. Asked whether this was worth the death of half a million children, Madeleine Albright – who is a Jew and claims to be a "Nazi holocaust" survivor – replied: "We think the price is worth it".

According to John Mueller and Karl Mueller, the brutal and inhumane sanctions against the Iraqi people have caused far more deaths over time than the combined use of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons in the two world wars (*Foreign Affairs* , May/June 1999). "It was the U.S. – and the U.S. alone – that ensured that this human damage would be, massive and indiscriminate", writes Joy Gordon, a professor at Fairfield University. (Joy Gordon, *Invisible War: The United States and the Iraq Sanctions*, Harvard, 2010). The real aim was to destroy Iraq as a nation and prepare the ground for U.S. military invasion and occupation.

In 2003, with the helping hand of the UN (providing legitimacy), the U.S. and its most criminal vassals (the 'Coalition of the Willing') embarked on a campaign of lies and false propaganda to justify the invasion and occupation of Iraq. Iraq was defenceless, but the Iraqi people showed heroic resistance against a super fascist power. It is estimated (the most accurate estimate to date) that more than 1.3 million Iraqis, mostly women and children, were killed as a consequence of the U.S. invasion and ongoing murderous occupation. It was a premeditated and unprovoked supreme international crime, "differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole". Iraq as a modern nation was destroyed and turned into a divided poor nation.

The war propaganda campaign today to justify the UN-sponsored aggression against Libya is a carbon copy of the vicious war campaign against Iraq in 1990. Colonel al-Qadhafi has suddenly become Saddam. The UN and the U.S. have a "moral responsibility" to intervene to stop al-Qadhafi "killing

his own people”. Al-Qadhafi, who has recently cooperated with the U.S. and most Western governments, is portrayed as a “brutal dictator” and a “threat” to U.S.-Israel Zionist interests. Some U.S. Congressmen have accused al-Qadhafi of possessing “weapons of mass destruction”. It is important to remember that neither Iraq nor Libya has attacked or threatened the U.S. Like the war on Iraq, the war on Libya is an illegal act of aggression. The only difference is the U.S. President is an African American and his victims are Africans. In 2 years as U.S. President, Obama has killed and caused the death of far more civilians than al-Qadhafi has in 42 years.

The idea that the U.S. and its Western allies have a “moral responsibility” to protect civilians with brown skin is a naive and distorted idea. In reality, civilians have always been a deliberate target of the U.S. terror. The U.S. and its western allies have killed more civilians than any nation in the history of mankind. In recent time, the U.S. has killed more civilians than the Nazis. Violence and racism form the foundations of the Anglo-American and French societies. With wars and mayhem perpetuated by the U.S. government around the world, one expects a serious and massive anti-war movement in the U.S. To the contrary, most Americans do not care and would be happy if the rest of the world did not exist.

By using the UN, the U.S. and its allies are able to manipulate the public in their favour and support the aggression. Their aim is imperialist and devoid of any “humanitarian” justification. “Partition and dismemberment of countries with independent governments has been a strategy that the U.S., British, and French governments employed in the Kurdish region of Iraq after the 1991 war, in Yugoslavia in the mid-1990's, and recently in Sudan, which until January was Africa's largest country”, writes Brian Becker, the National Coordinator of A.N.S.W.E.R Coalition.

Under al-Qadhafi, Libya is one of the most advanced developing countries, ranked 53 (the highest of any country in Africa) on the UN Human Development Index (HDI) – which measures life expectancy, education, and living conditions. Libya ranks ahead of Russia (65), Ukraine (69), Brazil (73), Venezuela (73) and Tunisia (81). Libya has a medium-high per capita income of 12,000, six times greater than that of Egypt.

The real and illegal objectives of Western imperialists is not only to destroy decades-long development, prosperity and stability (i.e., regime change), but also to control and plunder Libya's national resources, including oil and gas. “Even as the Libyan war just gets underway, the economic war over Libya's treasures has already begun”, writes Eric Reguly (*Globe and Mail*, 23 March 2011).

The UN was established to promote and maintain worldwide peace. The UN is in no position to legalise war. Judged by its past actions, “the UN rarely represented the true and peaceful interests of people everywhere but stood largely under the sway of the U.S. and its allies”, writes Victor Grossman (Berlin *Bulletin*, No. 22, 21 March 2011).

On 23 September 2008, an accord signed between the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and then NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop-Scheffer was described by former UN Assistant Secretary General, Hans von Sponeck, as “incompatible with UN Charter” and poses “serious threat to world peace” and stability. Hence, the UN is an instrument of U.S.-NATO providing legitimacy to justify Western aggression.

The UN-sponsored Western aggression against Libya is an illegal act of aggression and must stop to abort the creation of another humanitarian catastrophe. Peoples around the world expect the UN to abide by its neutral Charter and stop being complicit in Western violence against civilians in member nations.

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Confront the Empire

Arundhati Roy

"Our strategy should be not only to confront empire, but to lay siege to it. To deprive it of oxygen. To shame it. To mock it. With our art, our music, our literature, our stubbornness, our joy, our brilliance, our sheer relentlessness – and our ability to tell our own stories. Stories that are different from the ones we're being brainwashed to believe.

The corporate revolution will collapse if we refuse to buy what they are selling – their ideas, their version of history, their wars, their weapons, their notion of inevitability. Remember this: We be many and they be few. They need us more than we need them. Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing."

Arundhati Roy (War Talk)

Adivasis of Assam

Glasson Dungdung

Introduction:

The Adivasis of Assam, whose ancestors had settled down in the land 'around 150 years ago' after they were forcefully brought from the states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, West Bengal and Orissa, have been facing state sponsored crimes since independence of India. They had been enjoying their rights and privileges before there were states called 'India' or 'Assam'.

State sponsored crimes against the Adivasis began with the enforcement of the Indian constitution, which denied them their status as "Scheduled Tribe" though they had been enjoying the same right during British rule. Thus, their identity was either confined to the tea-leaf, which they plucked, or as outsider (migrant) labourers. Consequently, inhuman treatment was perpetrated on them by the state as well as non-state actors. The ethnic cleansing of 1996-98, Beltola incident of 2007 and force eviction of 2010 are classic examples of state sponsored crimes against Adivasis of Assam.

In fact, the state, whose prime responsibility is to protect and ensure the rights of everyone guaranteed by the Indian Constitution, has not only failed to meet its responsibilities - it has been discriminating against, exploiting and torturing the Adivasis of Assam. Ironically, the Forest Department has been carrying on eviction processes in Assam even after the enforcement of the Forest Rights Act 2006, which recognizes the rights of Adivasis over 'the forests and forest lands' from where they ensure their livelihood.

This paper examines the ground realities of state sponsored crimes against the Adivasis residing in Lungsung forest areas of Assam.

1. Crime against the Adivasis:

Lungsung forest block of Kokrajhar district falls under the Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD) of Assam, and is an abode of the Adivasis. They have been living in the vicinity 'much earlier than 1965'. However, the forest department claims that the Adivasis have encroached the forest, which is highly bio-diverse, and therefore they must be evicted from the vicinity. But the fact is that no such forest exists anymore in the vicinity where the Adivasis have been living for years. Despite that, the forest department launched an eviction move and had deployed the forest

protection force for evicting the Adivasis located in the Lungsung forest areas.

In this process, the forest protection force burnt 59 villages on October 30-31, 2010 and 8 villages were burnt again on November 22, 2010. Houses, clothes, and stored food grains were burnt down to ashes. In the move not a single house was spared. Consequently, 7013 Adivasis including 3869 adults and 3144 minors belonging to 1267 families were affected and out of them 3330 are males and 3683 are females (see Annexure-I). 2 year-old boy Mangal Hembrom died after struggling between life and death for more than 2 months as he was half burnt during the eviction process. 40 people who were leading the protests against the eviction were arrested, and later 7 of them (students) were released and the remaining 33 men were sent to Kokrajhar jail. However, after intervention they were also released.

State sponsored crimes against the Adivasis of Assam had begun in ‘1950 by denying them the status of Scheduled Tribe (ST) in the Constitution of India’ [5]. However, crimes were meted out to the Adivasis on a large scale since ‘1996 in forms of ethnic cleansing, where 10,000 Adivasis had been killed, thousands of them were injured and more than 200,000 were made homeless and compelled to live in the relief camps for more than 15 years’.

Similarly, on November 24, 2007, about ‘5000 Adivasis comprising of men, women and children were attacked in Beltola of Guwahati while they were attending a peaceful procession in demand of Schedule Tribe ‘status’. They were attacked by the local people of Beltola including shopkeepers. Consequently ‘300 Adivasis were brutally wounded, hit by bamboos, iron rods and bricks. More than one dead, women were raped and a teenage girl Laxmi Oraon was stripped, chased and kicked’. ‘The police either remained mute spectators or joined the crowd in brutality’. However, instead of protecting the Adivasis, the government justified the brutalities and laid the blame on the Adivasis organizations.

It has also been intensifying crimes against them by carrying on eviction moves. According to the Executive Member of the Bodo Territorial Council, Santoshius Kujur, “The forest department will continue the eviction process once the Assembly Election is over in the month of April 2011”. If this is true, there would be a gross violation of human rights committed by the government.

2. Pathetic conditions of Relief and Rehabilitation:

The victims of Lungsung incident are living in appalling conditions. The government has not provided them anything in the name of relief and rehabilitation. After the incident, the Agriculture Minister, Mrs. Protima

Rani Brahma, visited the Lungsung forest areas and promised the victims that relief material would be provided. But the promised has remained unfulfilled.

Ironically, the government put a condition to the victims that if they were ready to desert their villages, they would be given the relief materials. However, the government does not promise them their rehabilitation even if they desert the vicinity. The question is - do they have right to food, clothing and shelter?

Meanwhile, some relief and rehabilitation work has been done by the NGOs, civil society and local community based organizations. The victims have been given eatables, utensils, clothes, medicines and tarpaulins but those are not enough.

Presently, the most of the victim families are bound to live either under the open sky or tarpaulin covered small huts, which can be again burnt by the forest protection forces during their eviction move. The unseasonal rain also adds salt to their wounds. The state does not bother to provide relief and rehabilitation to the victims. Similar kind of treatment was given to the victims of the 1996-98 ethnic cleansings too. They are still living in relief camps. They were not rehabilitated in their original villages properly. Their lands had been captured by the Bodos and not yet returned to them. In fact the government is not interested in addressing the issues of Adivasis at all.

3. Denial of Identity, Rights and Justice to Adivasis:

Historically, the Adivasis were brought to the state of Assam in three different circumstances. Firstly, the 'Adivasis in general and Santals in particulars were brought to Assam for their resettlement after the Santal Revolt of 1855'. They were settled down especially in the 'western part, now in the north-west of Kokrajhar district. This settlement is recorded as in the year 1881'. Secondly, in '1880 the tea industry grew very fast, numbers of tea gardens were started. As a result, there was scarcity of labourers in Assam therefore the planters appointed agents and sent them to different places for recruitment of labourers'. Thus, the Adivasis were 'coerced, kidnapped and incited to come to Assam, live and work under appalling conditions'. Thirdly, large scale land alienation for the development projects also pushed the Adivasis into Assam in search of livelihood, as there were many job opportunities in the tea gardens of Assam. Thus the Adivasis settled down in the state of Assam. Over a period of time, they also cleared the bushes and made cultivable land.

However, these 'Adivasis were enjoying the Scheduled Tribe (ST) status during the British rules but when the Indian constitution was enacted, they

were de-scheduled and considered as outsiders as then the Chief Minister of Assam opposed the scheduling of the Adivasis of Assam'. Whereas, the same ethnic groups enjoy the status of Scheduled Tribe (ST), rights and privileges in their parental states i.e. Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Bengal and Orissa, they are denied the same in the state of Assam. The government merely recognizes them as either tea or ex-tea tribe and the people of Assam called them coolies, Bengali or labourers in a derogatory tone. This is a classic example of discrimination against Adivasis by the government.

The Adivasis are discriminated against at every level, which is, of course, a crime. For example, in '1974 the government evicted the people but after strong people's resistance the government had promised them to give land entitlements'. At that time, Samar Brahma was the forest minister and as per his promise he started the process of land allocation in phased manner. However, he gave land to the 'Bodos and some other communities. With his expulsion the process of land allocation also stopped'. Thus, the Adivasis were betrayed. Similarly, according to the Forest Rights Act 2006, the Adivasis are entitled to claim their rights on the forest land which they possess before December 13, 2005. However, the Adivasis of Assam are denied their rights under the FRA as well. In fact, the 'Adivasis have been living in Lungsung Forest areas much earlier than 1965' but they were not given rights and entitlement on the forest lands which they have been cultivating for decades.

4. Right to Education is denied:

The right to education is a fundamental right of every child. Therefore, the state is obliged to provide 'free and compulsory education to the all children between the ages of 6 to 14 years'. However, the government has been denying these rights to the Adivasis children of Assam, and especially the children living in the Lungsung Forest areas. The forest department has burnt down 10 schools, including 8 primary schools run under the Sara Sikhs Abhiyan (SSA) Mission and 2 private schools, during the eviction move, where the children were getting education and mid-day-meal as well. As a result, the children are being deprived of their right to education. Presently, a few schools have resumed classes under the open sky.

There are also practices of discrimination prevailing in schools, especially in the areas of tea estates. The schools are named as 'Labourers' school. For example, the name of a primary school situated at Senglijan is written on the sign board as "Senglijan Bouna Prathmik Vidhyalay (Senglijan Labour Primary School).

There is high dropout of children in class 8th and the reason behind this is that the parents can't afford to send their children to school due to lack of money and awareness as well. Secondly, the quality of education is very poor, and doesn't help them in getting jobs. It's very difficult to get a graduate in many villages with quality education. If one sees the literacy rate of Adivasis, it is 'merely 27.12 percent whereas the total literacy rate of Assam is 64.28 percent'. Indeed, there is a clear division in the schooling system of Assam. The poor children go to the government or tea estate runs schools and there are public schools for elite children. Consequently, the inequality is growing day by day. However, the state seems to be reluctant in bridging the gap.

5. Livelihood Crisis:

The Adivasis of Assam have very limited livelihood options. A majority of them rely on the tea industry and the rest of them secure livelihood from farming. However, the wage of tea labourers is very low. They are paid 'merely Rs.66 per day' which is even lower than minimum wage of Assam which is Rs.100 for unskilled, Rs.110 for semi-skilled and Rs.120 for skilled labourer. The victims of Lungsung forest are even facing more livelihood crisis as their food grains were burnt and harvests were destroyed during the eviction move.

Similarly, the 'Adivasis' lands were captured by the Bodos during the ethnic cleansing in 1996-98 and they didn't get it back', which put them in livelihood crisis. Consequently, the Adivasis started migrating to the metro cities and other states in search of livelihood. The youth who migrate to the metro cities like Delhi and Mumbai, work as domestic servants and labourers. There are also cases of trafficking of huge numbers of women and children

6. Destruction of tradition, Custom, Culture, Religion and Self Governance:

The Adivasis are known for 'their unique tradition, custom, culture, religion and self governance'. However, they are bound to be alienated from their tradition, custom, culture, religion and self governance system. For example, the Mundas have lost their traditional self governance system and been ruled under the system of tea estates and religions, whereas the Santals, are still governed by their traditional self governance system. Most of the Adivasis have adopted other religions, though in practice they still observe Adivasis festivals like Karma, Sarhul, Baha Parab, etc. Most of the Adivasis speak in their mother tongues, perform their traditional folk dances and live in community, which is the strength of the Adivasis way of life. Their food habits almost remain the same.

Conclusion:

Indeed, the history of Assam suggests that the ‘government was the problem not the solution’ for the Adivasis of Assam. State sponsored crimes against the Adivasis must come to an end. The Indian State has promised to right the historic wrongs through the Forest Rights Act 2006, and therefore the victims of Lungsung forest must be given relief and rehabilitation package along with entitlement to the land they have been cultivating for years. The forest villages should be converted into revenue villages and basic facilities should be made available including drinking water, sanitation, health facilities, road, electricity, etc. The Assam government seems to be either a mute spectator or supporter of the perpetrators. Consequently, the perpetrators roam freely after committing heinous crime against the Adivasis. They must be brought to justice. The Adivasis of Assam should be recognized as Scheduled Tribe (ST) and included in the constitution of India and provided preventive and protective measures without any discrimination.

In fact, a law should be enforced to end discrimination against the Adivasis in Assam, where they are treated as outsiders and called by derogatory names i.e. coolie-Bengali, etc. though they have been living in the vicinity for more than 150 years and many of them are first settlers of the land. The minimum wages in tea gardens should be increased from Rs. 66 to 200 for unskilled and Rs. 300 for the skilled labourers. The living conditions of Adivasis living in the tea estate is pathetic and they do not have basic facilities i.e. drinking water, health facilities, sanitation, etc. For ensuring the right to education of the children, there is a need to provide quality education to the children. There are more than 7,000,000 Adivasis’ living in Assam who are not recognized as Scheduled Tribe precisely because of political reasons. The state must protect and ensure the rights of the Adivasis of Assam.

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Generating Rights Awareness: Kashmir

Naveed Qazi

All human beings are entitled to freedom to practice their rights. Logic and reasoning demand human rights. God has given us an inalienable gift of conscience to alleviate sufferings of each other in the spirit of brotherhood. For this to happen, showing evidence of moral and intellectual advancement is priority which is only achievable through the awareness of rights.

Rights are self evident and universal. If we want a world where human rights abuses are consigned to history, then it is up to all people, as individuals, communities and nations to be vigilant, and knowledgeable about human rights. Learning about human rights is the first step towards their recognition. Thus as members of a civilized society, we must be able to make fine distinctions between what we want and the panaceas of societal complexities which eradicate emancipation of individuals in the society we live.

The absolute operations of world human rights activism got its scope during the era of world war, the political and economic corruption faced by major economies of the world during the Great Depression, authoritarian land reforms in Europe and the militant uprisings in Latin America, Africa and South Asia. The events which took place not only paved the way forward for rights dissents but also raised sympathies for progressive realization of these rights, especially in poorer countries and conflict zones. Thus to transform our lives in the pursuit of happiness, freedom, equality, justice and peace, we as Kashmiris, need a proper education & awareness of rights which will provide a common standard of achievement and a social development for effective recognition.

Kashmiris need to make best efforts in interpreting the essence of rights and their meaning. Valuable insights and education on rights is the best protection against their violations. It also helps in the process of accommodating each other's viewpoints and helps in attaining a goal of a pluralistic society. Our youth has a substantial platform for launching dissents which was not possible for the youth two decades ago. World should face a culture of dissent from articulate individuals, with a distinct mindset, having a spirit of change and a scope to revolutionize the pertaining social dynamics. In context to that, a well informed Kashmiri generation will likely be secure decision makers of the future and that effective transformation will be vital to uplift our societal standards.

To institutionalize and facilitate rights, trends of launching opinions on social networking portals, blogging, media debates, discourse events, constructive street demonstrations, petitions have been used as some eminent forms of protests against government policies, various social, economic and religious cacophonies around the world. Education and application of such tools and practices in our society is the need of the hour, especially in debased political circumstances, to address any grievances or to register any form of evolutionary platform to eradicate misconceptions and corruption. As responsible decision makers of our society, these effective means of expression and need for awareness is necessary for Kashmiris to manumit themselves as creditworthy advocates of just causes and opinions.

All human beings are entitled to rights to recognize inherent dignity and protection for human life. Human rights are respectable and recognizable norms which provide impunity from social and political abuses. They facilitate obligations and responsibilities. The definition of human rights has been subjected to an intense philosophical debate. Its scope recognizes both natural and legal rights, recognizable in the context of international humanitarian laws. Through the advent of intellectual, political and social activism, the need for human rights has strengthened in importance, thus paving a way for its codification into legal statutory bodies.

A human right, in terms of legality, is recognized as a constitutional right for the citizen of a particular country. They form a fundamental structure of a society. They create reciprocal rights and duties. Retrospection of human rights in the light of legality is important because it helps in creating a collective moral body and helps in creating a sovereign power by determining its legislation.

Under the context of internationalism, legal rights have been enshrined for a cause to disseminate and expound education to the world public, without any inherent bias towards any political country or institutions. The most popular of them include The Human Rights Charter, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Economic & Political Rights & International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights. The power engulfed in these global expressions of rights aims to expel disregard for human life, economic prosperity and contempt for cultural statuses across the world. For Kashmir, a proper and insightful knowledge of these conventions is incredibly important to outcast any misleading persuasions. Some of the internationally recognized rights found in the common speech of public include right to life, right to liberty, right of a free trial and right to education. However, in recent developments of global politics, the basis of legality of both international and national laws has met with contradictions.

For example, Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declares all people of the world have a right to choose their own nationality or Article 20 which favours a peaceful assembly of protest, but this article comes to a compromise when a state through force, objects to a secessionist encouraging area in their country, and follows a codified legal philosophy of its own drafted constitution. This case favours the latter, especially to countries, who have not signed The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But these developments have been refuted by world activists, nevertheless, due to lack of respect to international norms.

In Kashmir, due to increasing record of abuses and absence of a United Nations Truth Commission, respectable international humanitarian organizations like Amnesty International & Human Rights Watch has been a halting consequence in the field of human rights protectionism and education. Thus in filling this much needed gap, the revolution of discourse, mass events and educative campaigns through free lance organizations can provide the social solution in any tormented crises. It will also lessen the trait of scepticism and moral criticism when activists can provide a visionary introspection for the future generations.

Naveed Qazi is an avid blogger based in Srinagar, and he has been writing for several local and international journals like Open Democracy, Comment Factory and Muslim Institute London. He also is the convenor of the intellectualism activism group, Insights: Kashmir.

Who Cares about Kashmir

After her 11 days tour of four Indian states and Indian Occupied Kashmir, Ms. Margaret Sekaggya, the United Nations (UN) special rapporteur on human rights defenders, emphasized India to repeal the barbaric laws, given to its security forces in Kashmir. She address a news conference in New Delhi on January 20, 2011, seriously objecting to the laws, giving Indian security forces, wide-ranging powers of arrest, illegal detention and torture to the people of this heavenly state. The UN human rights defender particularly mentioned that, during her visit to the occupied state of Jammu and Kashmir, she learnt through the grieved families about the "killing, torture, ill-treatment, disappearances, threats, arbitrarily arrests and detention," of their loves one by Indian security forces.

Today, once again, the world body (UNO), feels that, "The Armed Forces Special Powers Act and the Public Safety Act should be repealed, and application of other security laws which adversely affect the work of human rights defenders should be reviewed." Indeed, it is high time that, India should listen to the global voices on its grass human rights violations in its occupied portion of Kashmir and give Kashmiris, their right of self-determination.
(Editor)

Pakistani Intelligence and the CIA: Mutual Distrust and Suspicion

Scott Stewart

This article presents an American perspective of CIA operations in Pakistan. It is apparent that Americans consider it as their right to protect its perceived national interests by using all fair or foul means. It assumes that weaker nations have no right to guard their sovereignty and national dignity.

This struggle between the CIA and ISI is a conundrum rooted in the conflict between the vital interests of two nations and it will not be solved easily. While the struggle has been brought to the public's attention by the Davis case, this case is really just a minor symptom of a far deeper conflict.

On March 1, U.S. diplomatic sources reportedly told Dawn News that a proposed exchange with the Pakistani government of U.S. citizen *Raymond Davis* for Pakistani citizen *Aafia Siddiqui* was not going to happen. Davis is a contract security officer working for the CIA who was arrested by Pakistani police on Jan. 27 following an incident in which he shot two men who allegedly pointed a pistol at him in an apparent robbery attempt. Siddiqui was arrested by the Afghan National Police in Afghanistan in 2008 on suspicion of being linked to al Qaeda.

During Siddiqui's interrogation at a police station, she reportedly grabbed a weapon from one of her interrogators and opened fire on the American team sent to debrief her. Siddiqui was wounded in the exchange of fire and taken to Bagram air base for treatment. After her recovery, she was transported to the United States and charged in U.S. District Court in New York with armed assault and the attempted murder of U.S. government employees. Siddiqui was convicted in February 2010 and sentenced in September 2010 to 86 years in prison.

Highlighting the differences in circumstances between these two cases, it was not difficult to see why the U.S. government did not agree to such an exchange. Siddique had been arrested by the local authorities and was being questioned, while Davis was accosted on the street by armed men and thought he was being robbed. His case has served to exacerbate a growing rift between the CIA and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence directorate (ISI).

Pakistan has proved to be a very dangerous country for both ISI and CIA officers. Because of this environment, it is necessary for intelligence officers to have security — especially when they are conducting meetings with terrorist sources — and for security officers to protect American officials. Due to the heavy security demands in high-threat countries like Pakistan, the U.S. government has been forced to rely on contract security officers like Davis. It is important to recognize, however, that the Davis case is not really the cause of the current tensions between the Americans and Pakistanis. There are far deeper issues causing the rift.

Operating in Pakistan:

Pakistan has been a dangerous place for American diplomats and intelligence officers for many years now. Since September 2001 there have been attacks against U.S. diplomatic missions and motorcades as well as hotels and restaurants frequented by Americans who were in Pakistan on official business. Militants responsible for the *attack on the Islamabad Marriott* in September 2008 referred to the hotel as a “nest of spies.” At least 10 Americans in Pakistan on official business have been killed as a result of these attacks, and many more have been wounded.

Militants in Pakistan have also specifically targeted the CIA. This was clearly illustrated by a December 2009 *attack against the CIA base in Khost, Afghanistan*, in which the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), led by Hakeemullah Mehsud, used a Jordanian suicide operative to devastating effect. The CIA thought the operative had been turned and was working for Jordanian intelligence to collect intelligence on al Qaeda leaders hiding in Pakistan. The attack killed four CIA officers and three CIA security contractors. Additionally, in March 2008, four FBI special agents were injured in a bomb attack as they ate at an Italian restaurant in Islamabad.

Pakistani intelligence and security agencies have been targeted with far more vigour than the Americans. This is due to the fact that they are seen as cooperating with the United States but also because there are more of them and their facilities are relatively soft targets compared to U.S. diplomatic facilities in Pakistan. Militants have conducted dozens of major attacks directed against Pakistani security and intelligence targets such as the *headquarters of the Pakistani army* in Rawalpindi, the *ISI provincial headquarters* in Lahore and the *Federal Investigative Agency (FIA) and police academies* in Lahore.

In addition to these high-profile attacks against facilities, scores of military officers, frontier corps officers, ISI officers, senior policemen and FIA

agents have been assassinated. Other government figures have also been targeted for assassination. As this analysis was being written, a Pakistani federal minister was assassinated near his Islamabad home.

Because of this dangerous security environment, it is not at all surprising that American government officials living and working in Pakistan are provided with enhanced security to keep them safe. And enhanced security measures require a lot of security officers, especially when you have a large number of American officials travelling away from secure facilities to attend meetings and other functions. This demand for security officers is even greater when enhanced security is required in several countries at the same time and for a prolonged period of time.

This is what is happening today in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The demand for protective officers has far surpassed the personnel available to the organizations that provide security for American officials such as the State Department's Diplomatic Security Service and the CIA's Office of Security. In order to provide adequate security for American officials in high-threat posts, these agencies are relying on contractors provided by large companies like Blackwater/Xe, DynCorp and Triple Canopy and on individual contract security officers hired on personal-services contracts. This reliance on security contractors has been building over the past several years and is now a fact of life at many U.S. embassies.

Using contract security officers allows these agencies not only to quickly ramp up their capabilities without actually increasing their authorized headcount but also to quickly cut personnel when they hit the next *lull in the security-funding cycle*. It is far easier to terminate contractors than it is to fire full-time government employees.

CIA Operations in Pakistan

There is another factor at play: demographics. Most CIA case officers (like most foreign-service officers) are Caucasian products of very good universities. They tend to look like Bob Baer and Valerie Plame. They stick out when they walk down the street in places like Peshawar or Lahore. They do not blend into the crowd, are easily identified by hostile surveillance and are therefore vulnerable to attack. Because of this, they need trained professional security officers to watch out for them and keep them safe.

This is doubly true if the case officer is meeting with a source who has terrorist connections. As seen in the Khost attack discussed above, and reinforced by scores of incidents over the years, such sources can be treacherous and meeting such people can be highly dangerous. As a result, it

is pretty much standard procedure for any intelligence officer meeting a terrorism source to have heavy security for the meeting. Even FBI and British MI5 officers meeting terrorism sources domestically employ heavy security for such meetings because of the potential danger to the agents.

Since the 9/11 attacks, the primary intelligence collection requirement for every CIA station and base in the world has been to hunt down Osama bin Laden and the al Qaeda leadership. This requirement has been emphasized even more for the CIA officers stationed in Pakistan, the country where bin Laden and company are believed to be hiding. This emphasis was redoubled with the change of U.S. administrations and President Barack Obama's renewed focus on Pakistan and eliminating the al Qaeda leadership. The Obama administration's approach of dramatically increasing strikes with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) required an increase in targeting intelligence, which comes mostly from human sources and not signals intelligence or imagery. *Identifying and tracking an al Qaeda suspect* amid the hostile population and unforgiving terrain of the Pakistani border areas also requires human sources to direct intelligence assets toward a target.

This increased human intelligence-gathering effort inside Pakistan has created friction between the CIA and the ISI. First, it is highly likely that much of the intelligence used to target militants with UAV strikes in the FATA area comes from the ISI — especially intelligence pertaining to militant groups like the TTP that have attacked the ISI and the Pakistani government itself (though, as would be expected, the CIA is doing its best to develop independent sources as well). The ISI has a great deal to gain by strikes against groups it sees as posing a threat to Pakistan, and the fact that the U.S. government is conducting such strikes provides the ISI a degree of plausible deniability and political cover.

However, it is well known that the *ISI has long had ties to militant groups*. The ISI's fostering of surrogate militants to serve its strategic interests in Kashmir and Afghanistan played a critical role in the *rise of transnational jihadism* (and this was even aided with U.S. funding in some cases). Indeed, as we've previously discussed, the ISI would like to *retain control of its militant proxies in Afghanistan* to ensure that Pakistan does not end up with a hostile regime in Afghanistan following the U.S. withdrawal from the country. This is quite a rational desire when one considers *Pakistan's geopolitical situation*.

Because of this, the ISI has been playing a kind of a double game with the CIA. It has been forthcoming with intelligence pertaining to militants it views as threats to the Pakistani regime while refusing to share information pertaining to groups it hopes to use as levers in Afghanistan (or against

India). Of course, the ability of the ISI to control these groups and not get burned by them again is very much a subject of debate, but at least some ISI leaders appear to believe they can keep at least some of their surrogate militants under control.

There are many in Washington who believe the ISI knows the location of high-value al Qaeda targets and senior members of organizations like the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network, which are responsible for many of the attacks against U.S. troops in Afghanistan. This belief that the ISI is holding back intelligence compels the CIA to run unilateral intelligence operations (meaning operations it does not tell the ISI about). Many of these unilateral operations likely involve the recruitment of Pakistani government officials, including members of the ISI. Naturally, the ISI is not happy with these intelligence operations, and the result is the mistrust and tension we see between the ISI and the CIA.

It is important to remember that in the intelligence world there is no such thing as a friendly intelligence service. While services will cooperate on issues of mutual interest, they will always serve their own national interests first, even when that places them at odds with an intelligence service they are coordinating with.

Such competing national interests are at the heart of the current tension between the CIA and the ISI. At present, the CIA is fixated on finding and destroying the last vestiges of al Qaeda and crippling militant groups in Pakistan that are attacking U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

The Americans can always leave Afghanistan; if anarchy and chaos take hold there, it is not likely to have a huge impact on the United States. However, the ISI knows that after the United States withdraws from Afghanistan it will be stuck with the problem of Afghanistan. It is on the ISI's doorstep, and it does not have the luxury of being able to withdraw from the region and the conflict. The ISI believes that it will be left to deal with the mess created by the United States. It is in Pakistan's national interest to try to control the shape of Afghanistan after the U.S. withdrawal, and that means using militant proxies like Pakistan did after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989.

U.S. And NATO Escalate World's Deadliest War On Both Sides Of Afghan-Pakistani Border

Rick Rozoff

The United States and its military allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have entered the third month of war in Afghanistan this year, which President Barack Obama in December of 2009 announced as the year in which American and other foreign occupation forces would be reduced preparatory to their full withdrawal.

Within months of the U.S. head of state's claim, the commander-in-chief had over 90,000 troops in the conquered country and currently there are 60,000 more from some fifty other nations serving in NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The total number exceeds that of any foreign military force ever before stationed in Afghanistan. The presence of American and allied troops, beginning as it did on October 7, 2001, is the longest in the Asian nation's history, with U.S. forces already in the country for several months longer than Soviet troops were stationed there from late 1979 until early 1989.

Since Obama's pledge that U.S. and NATO troop strength would be reduced this year – not a firm deadline but an evasion, a self-serving lie designed to take the sting out of the announcement of increased troop deployments, one the international community, self-styled and genuine, chose to take at face value – the world's only ongoing war of occupation has stretched into not only the longest armed conflict in Afghanistan's history but also in that of the U.S.

In the same interim several new force contributors like Armenia, Bahrain, Colombia, Egypt, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Montenegro, Mongolia, South Korea (which had withdrawn an earlier contingent in 2007) and Tonga were recruited to provide troops to serve under NATO's Afghan command, to which the overwhelming majority of American troops are now also assigned, and to be initiated into 21st century warfare under the control of the West.

Last year marked the largest amount of U.S. and ISAF deaths in the war that is now in its eleventh calendar year, as well as the most Afghan government troop and police fatalities, the highest number of reported insurgent deaths

and the most civilians slain in the nearly decade-long war. 712 foreign soldiers and almost 10,000 Afghans were killed in 2010.

To the east of Afghanistan, unmanned aerial vehicle (drone) missile attacks conducted by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency killed in the neighbourhood of 1,000 people in Pakistan last year, the most in any year since the cowardly targeted assassinations and concomitant civilian “collateral damage” were begun in 2004 and almost half of the total dead for the entire period.

As last year wound down, bombing, strafing and other air attacks launched by the U.S. and NATO increased in intensity, with October registering the highest monthly number of air combat missions, over 1,000, of the war to date.

The Pentagon has ordered a record quantity of Predator, Reaper and other death-dealing drones for this year, beyond to the new “drawdown” date – 2014 – and for as far afterward as it chooses to continue and further escalate the war on both sides of the Afghan-Pakistani border.

On that score, the infinite plasticity of a final withdrawal date, U.S. Marine General James Mattis, the head of U.S. Central Command, stated last month that he was “militarily uncomfortable” with the 2014 deadline, [1] and Senator Joseph Lieberman said “it was unwise to set the beginning of any exit date.” [2]

In addition to unprecedented foreign troop numbers, air attacks and drone operations, head of U.S. Special Operations Command Admiral Eric Olson recently said of special forces operations, increasingly the ground combat emphasis for America’s counterinsurgency war in South Asia, that the demand for special operations forces in Afghanistan is “insatiable,” and: “As we have essentially doubled our force over the last nine years [and] tripled our budget over the last nine years, we have quadrupled our overseas deployments over the last nine years.” [3]

U.S.-selected and -protected Afghan President Hamid Karzai announced last month that Washington intends to establish permanent military bases in his nation – a development that was evident to many almost a decade ago – and “The bases would enable US troops to remain in the area beyond the planned transfer of security responsibility from US and NATO troops to Afghan forces by end of 2014....” [4]

The military installations to be retained, added and expanded would include the Bagram, Kandahar and Shindand air bases in the north, south and west of the nation from which the Pentagon could conduct surveillance and combat operations not only in Afghanistan but throughout the region.

Afghans are not to be spared another decade – or generation or more – of Western military occupation and attacks of the sort that occurred on February 17 in the eastern province of Kunar.

A week after the event, an Afghan government investigation determined that NATO air strikes targeted civilians in a village in the province, killing over five dozen people including 50 women and children, among them 19 females from seven months to 18 years of age. 21 teenage boys and 15 elderly men were also slain. [5]

The head of the government delegation appointed to conduct the probe stated:

“After four days of discussions and interviews with tribal leaders, security officials and other civilians, we found that 65 civilians were killed by NATO missiles in the Ghazi Abad district of Kunar province.” [6]

In the week between the slaughter and the release of the report documenting its details, a NATO attack in the province of Nangarhar “hit a house, killing a couple and their four children,” according to a spokesman for the province’s governor. [7]

During the same period the U.S. was occupied in killing people on the Pakistani side of the border. Drone missile attacks were launched near Miranshah, the administrative headquarters of North Waziristan in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. A local security official told the news media that “three missiles were fired at a residential compound in Dattakhel Mohammedkhel,” resulting in five people being killed in an “attack which completely demolished [their] house.”

The same source added, “the identity of those killed could not be ascertained.” Another local official described what has become the typical modus operandi of the murderous CIA missile strikes when he detailed that “two people were killed when a missile strike from another drone hit a vehicle proceeding towards the house that was targeted earlier.” [8]

The day before, February 20, the U.S. also attacked a village in South Waziristan, killing six people and wounding several others.

According to a Pakistani news source which placed the death toll for the other attack at eight, “The two attacks by the US drones in the Pakistani tribal areas were the first ones after the arrest of CIA spy Raymond Davis for killing two Pakistanis in Lahore.” [9]

Regarding the strike in South Waziristan, it was reported that the “identity of the slain people could not be ascertained, but local tribesmen claimed all of them were tribal people.”

And in reference to the attacks in North Waziristan:

“Villagers and official sources said 10 US spy planes were seen hovering over various villages in Mir Ali and Miramshah throughout the day on Monday [February 21]. According to villagers in Mir Ali, the drones fired four missiles and hit two rooms and a car parked inside [a] mud house.

“The villagers claimed all the victims were local tribal people and had no affiliation with militants. They said the injured people were rushed to a nearby hospital in the town of Mir Ali, where doctors said the condition of some of them was critical. The tribesmen who pulled out bodies from the debris of the house said the bodies of the majority of the slain people were mutilated beyond recognition.”

According to a local tribesman, “The Americans don’t care for others and they will continue killing us.” [10]

American and NATO war deaths in Afghanistan are at 71 so far this year, before the spring fighting season has begun, but Afghan and Pakistani civilian deaths exceed those of Western belligerents.

Earlier last month NATO and Afghan government forces shelled a Pakistani military post in North Waziristan, killing a soldier and wounding seven more.

A local news source said some of the injured were in critical condition and that “Pakistani forces returned the fire with artillery and rocket launchers and targeted the NATO and Afghan forces’ positions across the border.”

“Soon after the shelling, NATO helicopters intruded into Pakistan airspace and kept flying for some time over the area....Some reports said NATO jet fighters also violated the Pakistani airspace in the border area....Later in the evening, five mortar shells fired by NATO forces landed in the Saidgi locality in Ghulam Khan Tehsil.” [11]

Two days later, February 4, NATO renewed the bombardment and “Shelling from across the Durand Line continued unabated as 22 more mortar shells fired by NATO and Afghan forces from Afghanistan’s territory fell in North Waziristan,” with shells landing in populated areas of the agency. [12]

The deadly attack by NATO against Pakistani military targets was not the first such incident and will not be the last. On September 30 of 2010 NATO helicopter gunships attacked a security post in the Upper Kurram Agency in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, killing three Pakistani soldiers and reducing the fort to rubble in the third violation of the nation's airspace in a week.

Two fixed-wing NATO aircraft accompanied the helicopters, which launched two attacks over four hours apart. "According to local people, the dead and injured had suffered severe burn injuries."

In a strike in the same agency three days before, "NATO claimed killing six insurgents and injuring eight others while local people contradicted the claim and said those killed were Muqbal tribesmen." [13] of Balochistan when "NATO warplanes and helicopter gunships entered up to 15 kilometres inside Pakistani airspace." [14]

By November NATO attack helicopters had, in addition to conducting strikes in the tribal belt, "violated Pakistani airspace, defying the integrity and sovereignty of Pakistan, over half a dozen times in...northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and southwest Balochistan provinces...." [15]

Not only has the U.S. killed over 2,000 people with drone missile strikes in North and South Waziristan, but over the last five months NATO has slain several Pakistani military personnel, extending the war into a nation with a population of 170 million and nuclear weapons. While most of the world's attention is concentrated on events in North Africa, the West is steadily and inexorably intensifying the longest, largest and most lethal war on the planet.

Notes

- 1) Reuters, February 2, 2011
- 2) New York Times, February 6, 2011
- 3) U.S. Department of Defense, February 8, 2011
- 4) Deutsche Presse-Agentur, February 8, 2011
- 5) Deutsche Presse-Agentur, February 27, 2011
- 6) Ibid
- 7) Deutsche Presse-Agentur, February 21, 2011
- 8) RTT News, February 24, 2011
- 9) The News International, February 22, 2011
- 10) Ibid
- 11) The News International, February 3, 2011
- 12) The News International, February 6, 2011
- 13) DawnNews, October 6, 2010
- 14) Asian News International, October 19, 2010
- 15) Xinhua News Agency, November 28, 2011

India Must Free Binayak Sen Immediately

Subhankar Banerjee

In 1970 Howard Zinn began his now-famous speech “The Problem is Civil Obedience” with these words: “I start from the supposition that the world is topsy-turvy, that things are all wrong, that the wrong people are in jail and the wrong people are out of jail, that the wrong people are in power and the wrong people are out of power, that the wealth is distributed in this country and the world in such a way as not simply to require small reform but to require a drastic reallocation of wealth.”

Those words are as close to the truth as we will get to what’s happening today.

In India, internationally recognized physician-humanitarian Dr. Binayak Sen is in jail with a lifetime sentence, and in the US, young climate change activist Tim DeChristopher was convicted and may end up in jail for ten years.

Late last year, I visited my family in India. On December 24 we watched with horror on TV channels and read newspaper articles with dismay that Dr. Binayak Sen has been convicted with sedition charges. My dad was outraged; my mom was outraged; my sister and brother-in-law were outraged; my brother was outraged; and I was outraged.

Some of you may know about him but others might be curious: who is Binayak Sen?

The Physician and His Humanism:

As we struggle to fight for “public health for all” in the US, including for the 45 million underprivileged members of our communities, you might perhaps appreciate a brief trajectory of Binayak and his wife Dr. Ilina Sen’s life.

In 1972 Binayak Sen received, first a MBBS, and then in 1976 a MD in paediatrics, both from the prestigious Christian Medical College in Vellore, India. He then joined as a faculty member in the Centre for Social Medicine and Community Health at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, one of India’s most well known universities.

After two years of academic career, Dr. Sen began his life-long work to serve the poorest of the poor with both his medical service as well as various innovative initiatives. He moved from New Delhi to Hisangabad in the state of Madhya Pradesh to work at the Friends Rural Centre, a community based health centre. There, he worked for two years on the diagnosis and treatment of Tuberculosis, as well as to understand the socio-economic causes of the disease. He also joined the recently formed Medico Friend Circle, a national group of socially conscious individuals who recognized that the, “existing system of health care is not geared towards the needs of the majority of the people: the poor.”

In 1981 he moved to Dalli Rajahara in the state of Chhattisgarh. There, in 1983 he worked with mine workers and fellow physicians to set up the Shaheed Hospital that continues to provide low-cost medical care to mine workers and Adivasis (tribal people) of the nearby region.

In 1987 Sen left Dalli Rajahara and settled in the village of Bagrumnala. He was appointed a member of the advisory group on Health Care Sector reforms in the state government of Chhattisgarh. He helped develop the Mitandin programme that became the role model for the National Rural Health Mission. It’s a great irony that the same state government has now put him behind bars, for life.

In Bagrumnala, Binayak and his wife Ilina began to develop models of primary health care. They founded Rupantar, a non-governmental organization whose mission is to train and deploy community health workers across 20 villages. Here are few words from an article published in the Deccan Chronicle (May 27, 2009): “Ghasia Ram Netam, a health worker with Rupantar, the NGO founded by the Sens, introduced himself as the first tribal youth in his village to be trained as a laboratory technician. Every week, before he was arrested [in 2007], Dr. Sen used to visit the village clinic. ... This timely diagnosis [at the makeshift laboratory in the clinic] and immediate referral to district hospital saved many tribals from certain death. The nearest government-run primary health centre is seven km away and the doctor is frequently absent—an old, familiar story.”

In the late 90s Binayak Sen was as an advisor to the Jan Swasthya Sahyog—a community health clinic providing low-cost health care to the rural poor in the Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh. If you have nine minutes, you will see in a wonderfully produced video about this health clinic that the work of Binayak and Ilina Sen has inspired next generation of doctors.

In her recently published book, “A Doctor to Defend—the Binayak Sen Story,” author Minnie Vaid points out that Binayak Sen’s generous heart

reached out beyond the underprivileged Adivasis of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, to also the minority Muslims of India. Here is such a story from the book as recounted by journalist–activist Mahtab Alam, “Binayak Sen was travelling in a second class compartment in a train to Purulia in 1993 along with his friend Dr. Yogesh Jain, when someone came and asked him, ‘Maulana ji, kya time hua hai?’ [Mr. Maulana, what time is it?] It might sound funny but his growing a beard like a Maulana was a well thought out act. Dr. Yogesh tells the author [Minnie Vaid] that when he asked Binayak why he had grown a beard, Binayak replied, “(I) wanted to see what it means to be insecure, to know how it feels to be a minority in one’s own country.” He was inspired by the book *Black Like Me*. Adivasis, Hindus and Muslims lovingly know him as the “doctor with a beard.”

The Human Rights Activist and the Charges against Him:

On May 14, 2007, Binayak Sen was arrested in Bilaspur under the provisions of the Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act and the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act—two draconian laws. The allegation claimed that while Dr. Sen was treating and visiting imprisoned *Maoist leader Narayan Sanyal*, he had taken letters from Sanyal and delivered them to businessman Piyush Guha, who supposedly would pass them onto the Maoist underground. The state has not been able to provide any evidence that validates their claim. The Hindustan Times reported (December 24, 2010) the charges against him were: *“Treason; criminal conspiracy; sedition, anti-national activities and making war against the nation; knowingly using the proceeds of terrorism; links with the Maoists.”*

Only a paranoiac and ultra-nationalist state ready to serve the wishes of wealthy industrialists can imprison Dr. Binayak Sen with those preposterous charges.

In addition to being a physician and humanitarian, Binayak Sen is also a dedicated human rights activist. Since 1981 he has been a member of Peoples’ Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), an organization devoted to the preservation of constitutional civil liberties and human rights. He is currently the President of the Chhattisgarh state unit, and Vice President of its National body.

Here are Binayak Sen’s own words about Narayan Sanyal: “I have been concerned with the rights of prisoners in my capacity as a Human Rights worker and was approached by the family of Mr. Narayan Sanyal to look after his health and well being after he was brought to Raipur jail in 2006. My first visit to him in jail was in the company of his family and lawyer. Subsequently, I obtained permission from the police authorities for visiting him in jail, and visited him several times, each time applying to do so in my

capacity as a PUCL office bearer. ... I played a role in facilitating his surgery and kept his family informed about the process. During this period there was considerable correspondence between the prisoner's family, jail administration and medical authorities, of which copies were marked to me."

Now, let me share a few words about Binayak Sen's work that has great implications for ecology, climate change, natural resource, indigenous human rights and neo-liberalism that gets little attention in the mainstream media, but perhaps the main reason why he is in jail today. You see, all the focus is on such words as "Maoists" and "sedition." In the US we have a similar situation: to tarnish one's reputation, the right wing only has to brand him/her as a "Communist"—the rest will be taken care of by the Fox News.

The OtherIndia.org reports, *"While they [Adivasis] are extremely poor, their land is extremely rich, both in terms of minerals and forests. ... Development, and the lust for mineral wealth, is destroying the environment and shattering the lives of indigenous tribals. ... These [mining] operations use enormous quantities of water, which is a scarce commodity in Chhattisgarh, and also destroys the environment. ... In a situation where the state claims rights to the land and the people who live on that land are treated as peripheral to the national economy, a mass base of the Maoists challenging this status quo forms a threat to the state's plans for heavy industry and profits in this region."*

So how much mineral is there in Chhattisgarh to create all these commotion? Here are the estimates presented by the Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board: *35 billion tonnes of coal; 2.34 billion tonnes of iron ore; 3.58 billion tonnes lime stone; 606 million tonnes of dolomite; 96 million tonnes of bauxite; and 29 million tonnes of cassiterite.* Almost all of India's coal deposit is in Chhattisgarh and two other states. If that's not enough to lure the profiteers, there is more, Chhattisgarh has diamond, too.

In 2005 the state of Chhattisgarh set up a vigilante army called *Salwa Judum* to counter the Maoists and forcibly take away lands from the Adivasis. Binayak Sen has to say this about Salwa Judum: "In Chhattisgarh, the PUCL has been in the forefront of exposing the atrocities of the police. ... The PUCL has acted as a whistleblower in the matter of exposing the true nature of the Salwa Judum. ... an investigation led by the PUCL and involving several other Human Rights organizations revealed that it was in reality a state sponsored and state funded as well as completely unaccountable vigilante force, to which arms were provided by the government. The activities of the Salwa Judum have led to the emptying of more than 600

villages, and the forced displacement of over 60,000 people. Concerns regarding the activities of the Salwa Judum have been expressed by several independent organizations including the National Human Rights Commission.”

This sentiment is shared by Frazer Mascarenhas, principal of St. Xavier’s College in Mumbai in an article published in *The Times of India* (February 19, 2011): “Dr. Sen exposed how the objective of the State–sponsored Salwa Judum was to uproot the tribal population, so that their villages could be handed over to industrialists for the vulgar profit of a few that we sometimes call ‘development’. That made him the enemy of the local Government.”

On November 29, 2010 as the United Nations Climate Change Conference COP16 opened in Cancún, Mexico, I published a widely circulated essay titled, “Cancún Opens for GREEN Business But REDD Will Destroy Indigenous Forest Cultures.” I wrote about how the Global North—governments, the UN, and powerful fossil fuel and mineral corporations with support from influential environmental NGOs are converging on a plan to take away the last remaining forests from the indigenous communities in the Global South and sell it back to the polluters—all in the name of solving the climate change crisis, that the developed countries created in the first place.

Can we think of Binayak Sen’s work also as a resistance to the global ecological looting taking place right now in front of our collective eyes?

Dr. Sen ended his recent court testimony with these words: “I am being made an example of by the state government of Chhattisgarh as a warning to others not to expose the patent trampling of human rights taking place in the state. Documents have been fabricated by the police and false witnesses introduced in order to falsely implicate me.”

Binayak Sen’s work hasn’t gone unnoticed either by his country or the world. In 2004 he received the Paul Harrison Award for a lifetime of service to the rural poor from his alma mater, the Christian Medical College. In 2007 he received the R.R. Keithan Gold Medal Award by The Indian Academy of Social Sciences (ISSA) for “his outstanding contribution to the advancement of science of Nature–Man–Society and his honest and sincere application for the improvement of quality of life of the poor, the downtrodden and the oppressed people of Chhattisgarh.” In 2008, the Global Health Council in Washington, DC honoured him with the Jonathan Mann Award for Global Health and Human Rights, while he was still incarcerated. On a letter dated May 9 2008, twenty–two Nobel laureates from around the

world urged that, “Dr. Sen be freed from incarceration on humanitarian grounds to receive his award and to continue his important medical work.” No such permission was granted to him. Dr. Sen is the first south Asian to receive this prestigious award—he sat in his jail cell with the news.

What can we learn from Binayak Sen’s activism? For protests to have any teeth we must also be willing to sacrifice, something. In most cases we’re too polite, either with our words or with our civil disobedience actions—you see, we’re civilized. We join a rally and come back home to a warm meal and a warm bath—nothing is lost but not much is gained either. Those who sacrifice, however, are often punished, but sometimes get rewarded, too.

The Global Protests and Our Demand:

Since Binayak Sen was put in jail in 2007 there have been hundreds of rallies across the world demanding his release. The Indian Supreme Court eventually intervened and Dr. Sen was granted bail on May 25 2009, after being in prison for two years. In an op-ed published in Deccan Chronicle journalist Antara Dev Sen wrote (May 28, 2009), “It took two years of sustained shaming to get Dr. Binayak Sen out on bail. The state had been stoutly ignoring the worldwide chorus of appeals and angry protests since the doctor and civil rights activist’s arrest on flimsy charges back in May 2007.”

After a dragged out prosecution, a trial court in Raipur, Chhattisgarh convicted Binayak Sen on December 24, 2010 with a lifetime sentence and charged him with conspiring to commit sedition. Since this devastating news, in the last two months protests took place in: Amherst, Austin, Bangalore, Bhopal, Boston, Chandigarh, Chennai, Dallas, Delhi, Houston, Hyderabad, Indore, Ithaca, Jaipur, Kolkata, London, Los Angeles, Lucknow, Minneapolis, Mumbai, New York, Patna, Pune, Salem, San Francisco, Seattle, Sitapur, Sonebhadra, Vadodara, Vancouver, Varanasi, Washington, and other cities, towns and villages. I’ve put together a small album of photos from these protests that you can see here. The first photo includes Binayak Sen’s mother Anusuya Sen in the center of the frame during a recent rally in Kolkata, the city of my youth.

On January 8, 2011 Nobel laureate economist–philosopher Amartya Sen of Harvard University said in New Delhi, “Even if he did pass [on] the letters, it does not seem to be material of which [allegations of] sedition can be made. In his own writings, Binayak Sen has said that violence is not prudential. He was against sedition and I am amazed by the nature of this decision.”

Binayak Sen however, is not the first person to be charged with this maximum punishment. Mahatma Gandhi was also charged with conspiring to commit sedition. Gandhi **admitted his charges and said**, "... to preach disaffection towards the existing system of government has become almost a passion with me. ... The only course open to you ... is ... either to resign your post or inflict on me the severest penalty." In 1922 Gandhi was sentenced to six years in prison.

In an interview published on February 14, 2011, Binayak Sen's wife Dr. Iliana Sen—well-known social activist and feminist scholar, who currently heads the Department of Women's Studies at the Mahatma Gandhi University in Wardha said, "I have only seen him once, on the 27th. As a convicted prisoner, he has fewer rights, and can have visitors only once in 15 days. I was told that he is in a maximum-security cell. This is a small courtyard with five cells (cages with iron grills like in the older zoos), in which Binayak, Piyush, Sanyal and three others are kept. ... I do not know the legality of this but know that this kind of treatment for a prolonged period can drive one to insanity. The jail superintendent refused to discuss prison conditions with us, and said they would be having a meeting to discuss how the enemies of the state were to be kept."

In January Amartya Sen organized another letter campaign, this time with 39 other Nobel laureates from around the world to demand immediate release of Binayak Sen. I'm sharing with you verbatim parts of their letter published in *The Hindu* (February 9, 2011): "Several months after voicing our concern about Dr. Sen's detention, one of us travelled to Chhattisgarh; met government officials; consulted Dr. Sen's family, lawyers, and colleagues; visited his remote clinic to learn more about his selfless work with the Adivasis; and, after a few days and many hours spent waiting in the Raipur prison yard, finally met with Dr. Sen himself in the presence of the prison warden.

We have seen that Dr. Sen is an exceptional, courageous, and selfless colleague, dedicated to helping those in India who are least able to help themselves. Yet his recompense has been two years in prison under difficult conditions, a blatantly unfair trial lasting two years in the so-called 'Fast Track' Sessions Court, an unjust conviction of sedition and conspiracy, and condemnation to life imprisonment.

We earnestly hope that our renewed appeal is heard. We know that there are leaders in India who have the power, humanity, patriotism, and decency to speak out against this injustice. We entreat those leaders to act now, to urge Dr. Sen's immediate release on bail, and insist that this time his appeal is heard without delay under the highest standards of Indian law." They ended

their letter with these words: “Surely, those who would see the largest democracy in the world survive and thrive can do no less at this crucial time for both Dr. Sen and for the future of justice in India.”

Amartya Sen is **hopeful**, “He [Binayak Sen] served a great cause and does serve and will serve. I hope this [his sentencing] is just an intermission, like an interval in a film and then the second part will begin.”

Irina Sen is **hopeful**, “I try to hope that I will live again with Binayak in my lifetime.”

On Friday March 11, the Supreme Court of India will hear the plea for admission of the petition. If it is admitted, actual bail hearing could begin in mid April.

India must unconditionally release Binayak Sen immediately and put an end to the great suffering that he and his wife have already endured since May 2007. Binayak Sen deserves a Nobel Peace Prize, not lifetime imprisonment as an enemy of India.

Subhankar Banerjee is founder of ClimateStoryTellers.org. He is an Indian born American photographer, writer and activist. Over the past decade he has been a leading international voice on issues of arctic conservation, indigenous human rights, and global warming, and over the past five years he has also been focusing on forest deaths from global warming. He received many awards, including Lannan Foundation Cultural Freedom Fellowship. Subhankar has been appointed Director's Visitor at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton for fall term 2011.

Rise of Hindu Terrorism

It's not Muslims, but Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) activists who planned and executed the bomb blasts at Malegaon in 2006, on the Samjhauta Express in 2007, in Ajmer Sharif in 2007 and Mecca Masjid in 2007,” confessed Swami Asemanand, the main accused of 2007 Samjhauta Express blast in front of a magistrate at a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court. Swami 42 page confession can be seen in India's Tehelka magazine.

How Turkey is Becoming the Next Big Thing

John Feffer

Here is the story of the rise of a Muslim nation to power and influence that debunks conventional wisdom that Islam is a brake not a source of impetus for prosperity and harmony. (Editor)

The future is no longer in plastics, as the businessman in the 1967 film *The Graduate* insisted. Rather, the future is in China. If a multinational corporation doesn't shoehorn China into its business plan, it courts the ridicule of its peers and the outrage of its shareholders. The language of choice for ambitious undergraduates is Mandarin. Apocalyptic futurologists are fixated on an eventual global war between China and the United States. China even occupies valuable real estate in the imaginations of our fabulists. Much of the action of Neal Stephenson's novel *The Diamond Age*, for example, takes place in a future neo-Confucian China, while the crew members of the space ship on the cult TV show *Firefly* mix Chinese curse words into their dialogue.

Why doesn't Turkey have a comparable grip on American visions of the future? Characters in science fiction novels don't speak Turkish. Turkish-language programs are as scarce as hen's teeth on college campuses. Turkey doesn't even qualify as part of everyone's favourite group of up-and-comers, that swinging BRIC quartet of Brazil, Russia, India, and China. Turkey remains stubbornly fixed in Western culture as a backward-looking land of *doner* kebabs, bazaars, and guest workers.

But take population out of the equation - an admittedly big variable -- and Turkey promptly becomes a likely candidate for future superpower. It possesses the 17th top economy in the world and, according to Goldman Sachs, has a good shot at breaking into the top 10 by 2050. Its economic muscle is also well defended: after decades of NATO assistance, the Turkish military is now a regional powerhouse.

Perhaps most importantly, Turkey occupies a vital crossroads between Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia. A predominantly Muslim democracy atop the ruins of Byzantium, it bridges the Islamic and Judeo-

Christian traditions, even as it sits perched at the nexus of energy politics. All roads once led to Rome; today all pipelines seem to lead to Turkey. If superpower status followed the rules of real estate -- location, location, location -- then Turkey would already be near the top of the heap.

As a quintessential rising middle power, Turkey no longer hesitates to put itself in the middle of major controversies. In the last month alone, Turkish mediation efforts nearly heralded a breakthrough in the Iran nuclear crisis, and Ankara supported the flotilla that recently tried to break Israel's blockade of Gaza. With these and other less high-profile interventions, Turkey has stepped out of the shadows and now threatens to settle into the prominent place on the world stage once held by its predecessor. In the seventeenth century, the Ottoman Empire was a force to be reckoned with, spreading through the Balkans to the gates of Vienna before devolving over the next 200 years into "the sick man of Europe."

Today, a dynamic neo-Ottoman spirit animates Turkey. Once rigidly secular, it has begun to fashion a moderate Islamic democracy. Once dominated by the military, it is in the process of containing the army within the rule of law. Once intolerant of ethnic diversity, it has begun to re-examine what it means to be Turkish. Once a sleepy economy, it is becoming a nation of Islamic Calvinists. Most critically of all, it is fashioning a new foreign policy. Having broken with its more than half-century-long subservience to the United States, it is now carving out a geopolitical role all its own.

The rise of Turkey has by no means been smooth. Secular Turks have been uncomfortable with recent more assertive expressions of Muslim identity, particularly when backed by state power. The country's Kurds are still second-class citizens, and although the military has lost some of its teeth, it still has a bite to go along with its bark.

Nonetheless, Turkey is remaking the politics of the Middle East and challenging Washington's traditional notion of itself as the mediator of last resort in the region. In the twenty-first century, the Turkish model of transitioning out of authoritarian rule while focusing on economic growth and conservative social values has considerable appeal to countries in the developing world. This "Ankara consensus" could someday compete favourably with Beijing's and Washington's versions of political and economic development. The Turkish model has, however, also spurred right-wing charges that a new Islamic fundamentalist threat is emerging on the edges of Europe. Neocon pundit Liz Cheney has even created a new version of George W. Bush's "axis of evil" in which Turkey, Iran, and Syria have become the dark trinity.

These are all signs that Turkey has indeed begun to wake from its centuries-long slumber. And when Turkey wakes, as Napoleon said of China, the world will shake.

Out of Ottomanism :

Constantinople was once an Orientalist's dream. In his otherwise perceptive 1877 guide to the city, the Italian author Edmondo de Amicis typically wrote that old Istanbul "is not a city; she neither labours, nor thinks, nor creates; civilization beats at her gates and assaults her in her streets, but she dreams and slumbers on in the shadow of her mosques, and takes no heed."

Turkey's first wake-up call came from Kemal Ataturk, the modernizing military officer from Salonika who created a new country out of the unpromising materials left behind by the collapsed Ottoman Empire. Decisively ending the caliphate in 1924, Ataturk patterned his new secular state on the French model: strong central power, a modern army, and a strict division between public and private spheres. This was no easy process: Ataturk brought Turkey kicking and screaming into the twentieth century. In many ways, that kicking and screaming continued throughout the rest of that century. The Turkish military never quite got used to civilian rule. It's seized power four times since 1960. In the 1980s and 1990s, Turkish security forces killed thousands of its own citizens in a dirty war against the Kurds and the Turkish left, and subjected many more to beatings, torture, and imprisonment. The country's leadership maintained a garrison mentality based on a fear that outsiders, aided by a fifth column, were bent on dismembering the country (as outside powers had indeed attempted to do in 1920 with the Treaty of Sèvres).

In the 1980s, however, economic globalization began to eat away at this garrison mentality as then-President Turgut Ozal attempted to reconnect Turkey to the world through export-oriented reforms and a policy of building economic bridges rather than erecting suspicious walls. During the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, for instance, Turkey refused to choose sides, remaining a friend to both countries

In the process, Istanbul was transformed. It became the centre of a labouring, thinking, and creating class that faced both westward toward Europe and the United States and eastward toward the Middle East and Central Asia. Even Central Anatolia and its key city, Kayseri, once considered a Turkish backwater, was emerging as a vital centre of manufacturing. "While Anatolia remains a socially conservative and religious society, it is also undergoing what some have called a 'Silent Islamic Reformation,'" went the European Stability Initiative's influential 2005 report on Turkey's new Islamic Calvinists. "Many of Kayseri's

business leaders even attribute their economic success to their ‘protestant work ethic.’”

By the 1990s, the “star of Islam” -- as *The Economist* dubbed Turkey -- had gone about as far as it could within the confines of the existing Ataturk model. In 1997, the military once again swatted aside the civilian leadership in a “stealth coup,” and the country seemed to be slipping back into aggressive paranoia. The Kurdish war flared; tensions with Russia over Chechnya rose; a war of words broke out with Greece over maritime territorial disputes. And Turkey nearly went to war with Syria for harbouring the Kurdish separatist leader Abdullah Ocalan.

But that stealth coup proved a last gasp attempt to place the un-containable new political and economic developments in Turkish society under tighter controls. Soon enough, the military gave way again and the Islam-influenced Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002, only enlarging its political base after the 2007 elections.

Zero Problems?

Throughout the twentieth century, geography had proved a liability for Turkey. It found itself beset on all sides by former Ottoman lands which held grudges against the successor state. The magic trick the AKP performed was to transform this liability into an asset. Turkey in the twenty-first century turned on the charm. Like China, it discovered the advantages of soft power and the inescapable virtues of a “soft rise” during an era of American military and economic dominance.

Led by Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, a former academic who provided a blueprint for the country’s new good-neighbour policy in his 2001 book *Strategic Depth*, Turkey pledged “zero problems with neighbours.” In foreign policy terminology, Davutoglu proposed the carving out of a Turkish sphere of influence via canny balance-of-power politics. Like China, it promised not to interfere in the domestic affairs of its partners. It also made a major effort to repair relations with those near at hand and struck new friendships with those far away. Indeed, like Beijing, Ankara has global aspirations.

Perhaps the most dramatic reversal in Turkish policy involves the Kurdish region of Iraq. The détente orchestrated by the AKP could be compared to President Richard Nixon’s startling policy of rapprochement with China in the 1970s, which rapidly turned an enemy into something like an ally. In March, Turkey sent its first diplomat to Arbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan, to staff a new consulate there. Today, as journalist Jonathan Head has written, “70% of investment and 80% of the products sold in the

Kurdish region [of Iraq] are Turkish.” Realizing that when U.S. troops leave Iraq, its Kurdish regions are bound to feel vulnerable and thus open to economic and political influence, Ankara established a “strategic cooperation council” to sort things out with the Iraqis in 2009, and this has served as a model for similar arrangements with Syria, Bulgaria, Greece, and Russia.

Détente with Iraqi Kurdistan has gone hand in hand with a relaxation of tensions between Ankara and its own Kurdish population with which it had been warring for decades. Until the early 1990s, the Turkish government pretended that the Kurdish language didn’t exist. Now, there is a new 24-hour Kurdish-language national TV station, and new faculty at Mardin Artuklu University will teach Kurdish. The government began to accept returning Kurdish refugees from northern Iraq, as well as a handful of Kurdish guerrillas from the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).

This hasn’t been an easy sell for Turkish nationalists. In December, a Turkish court banned the main Kurdish political party, and this spring the military launched repeated attacks against PKK targets inside Iraq. But the AKP is continuing to push reforms, including proposed changes in the country’s constitution that would allow military commanders for the first time to be tried in civilian court for any crimes they commit.

The elimination of this demonizing of “internal enemies” is crucial to the AKP’s project, helping as it does to reduce the military’s power in internal affairs. Reining in the military is a top objective for party leaders who believe it will strengthen political stability, improve prospects for future integration into the European Union (EU), and remove a powerful opponent to domestic reforms -- and to the party itself.

Only a little less startling than the government’s gestures toward the Kurds has been its program to transform Turkish-Greek relations. The two countries have long been at each other’s throats, their conflict over the divided island of Cyprus being only the most visible of their disagreements. The current Greek economic crisis, however, may prove a blessing in disguise when it comes to bilateral relations.

The Greek government -- its finances disastrous and economic pressure from the European Union mounting -- needs a way to make military budget reductions defensible. In May, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan visited Greece and, while signing 21 agreements on migration, environment, culture, and the like, began to explore the previously inconceivable possibility of mutual military reductions. "Both countries have huge defense

expenses,” Erdogan told Greek television, “and they will achieve a lot of savings this way.”

If Turkey manages a rapprochement with Armenia, it will achieve a diplomatic trifecta. The two countries disagree over the fate of the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, which is also at the centre of a dispute between Armenia and Turkish ally Azerbaijan. Complicating this territorial issue is a long-standing historical controversy. Armenia wants acknowledgement of the Ottoman Empire’s 1915 extermination campaign that killed more than a million Armenians. The Turkish government today disputes the numbers and refuses to recognize the killings as “genocide.” Nevertheless, Turkey and Armenia began direct negotiations last year to reopen their border and establish diplomatic relations. Although officially stalled, secret talks between the two are continuing.

Other diplomatic efforts are no less dramatic. When Bashar Assad arrived in Ankara in 2004, it was the first visit by a Syrian leader in 57 years. Meanwhile, Turkey has cemented its relations with Russia, remains close to Iran, and has reconnected to the Balkans. This charm offensive makes Chinese efforts in Asia look bumbling.

Mediation Central:

A friend to all sides, Turkey is offering its services as a diplomatic middleman, even in places where it was persona non grata not long ago. “Not many people would imagine that the Serbians would ask for the mediation of Turkey between different Bosniak groups in the Sandjak region of Serbia,” observes Sule Kut, a Balkans expert at Bilge University in Istanbul. “Turks were the bad guys in Serbian history. So what is happening? Turkey has established itself as a credible and powerful player in the region.”

It’s not just the Balkans. The new Turkey is establishing itself as Mediation Central. Teaming up with Brazil, Turkey fashioned a surprise compromise meant to head off confrontation with Iran over its nuclear program (which the Obama administration managed to shoot down). Along with Spain, it initiated the Alliance of Civilizations, a U.N. effort to bridge the divide between Islam and the West. It also tried to work its magic in negotiating an end to the blockade of Gaza, removing obstacles to the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq, bringing Syria and Israel together, resolving the brouhaha around the cartoon depiction of Mohammed, and hosting U.N. meetings on Somalia. “Zero problems with neighbours” is a great slogan. But it’s also a logical impossibility. Turkey can’t embrace Hamas without angering Egypt and Israel. It can move closer to Russia only at the potential expense of good relations with Georgia. Rapprochement with Armenia angers Azerbaijan.

Nor was Ankara's attempt to transcend zero-sum thinking an easy task during the "with us or against us" years of the Bush administration. In addition, there are the periodic tensions that arise around U.S. congressional resolutions on the Armenian genocide, still a touchy issue in Turkey. Washington has indicated its growing unhappiness with Turkey's increasingly active role in the Middle East, particularly its overtures to Syria. As a result, Turkey has had to finesse its relationship with the U.S. in order to remain a key NATO ally *and* a challenger to American power in the region.

As with China, the United States is willing to work with Turkey on some diplomatic issues even as it finds the country's growing influence in the region a problem. In turn, Ankara, like Beijing, is trying to figure out how it can best take advantage of the relative decline in U.S. global influence even as it works closely with Washington on an issue-by-issue basis.

The greatest challenge to Turkey's zero-problems paradigm, however, is its ever more troubled relationship with Israel. The U.S.-Turkey-Israel troika was once a solid verity of Middle Eastern politics. A considerable amount of bilateral trade, including military deals, has linked Turkey and Israel, and that trade increased dramatically during the AKP era.

But Israel's 2008 invasion of Gaza -- and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's subsequent excoriation of then-Israeli president Shimon Peres at the World Economic Forum in Davos -- began a process that is tearing these former allies apart, while boosting support for Turkey in the Arab world. In October, Turkey cancelled Israel's participation in a military exercise, throwing lucrative military contracts between the two countries in jeopardy. In the wake of the recent Gaza-aid debacle in international waters, the rift threatens to become irreparable. When Israeli commandos seized a flotilla of ships attempting to break the Gaza embargo, killing nine Turkish citizens, Turkey spoke of severing diplomatic relations.

With Israel increasingly isolated and American mediation efforts seriously compromised, only Turkey is emerging stronger from what can now only be seen as the beginning of a regional realignment of power. Once viewed with suspicion throughout the area where the Ottomans ruled, Turkey may now be the only power that has even a remote chance of one day brokering peace in the Middle East.

Return to Ottomanism?

Neo-Ottomanism is not exactly a popular phrase in Turkey today. The leadership in Ankara wants to be clear: they have no intention of projecting

imperial power or re-establishing the modern equivalent of the Ottoman caliphate. However, if you look at the friendships that Turkey has cultivated and the trade relations it has emphasized -- Syria, Armenia, Greece, Palestine, Iraq, Libya, and the Balkans -- you can see a map of the old Ottoman Empire reassembling itself.

In other words, just as the AKP has turned geography to its advantage, so it is transforming an imperial albatross into the goose that lays golden eggs (in the form of lucrative trade deals). In a similar way, China has tried to revive its old Sino centric imperial system without stirring up fears of the Chinese army marching into India or the Chinese navy taking over the South China Sea, even as it -- like Turkey -- also establishes friendly relations with old adversaries (including Russia).

Still, even this amiable version of neo-Ottomanism can raise hackles. "We want a new Balkan region based on political values, economic interdependence, and cooperation and cultural harmony," Foreign Minister Davutoglu said nostalgically at a conference in Sarajevo in October. "That is what the Ottoman Balkans was like. We shall revive such a Balkan region... The Ottoman centuries were a success story, and this should be revived." A furore followed among some Serb commentators, who viewed this romanticized version of history as evidence of a Turkish desire to islamicize the Balkans.

What Turkey means by its vision of Balkan harmony may prove critical in the context of European integration. The Ottomans and Western Europe fought a succession of wars over control of the Balkans. Today, the E.U. and Turkey compete for influence in the region, and much hangs on Turkey's prospects for joining the 27-member European organization. Although Turkey began the process of meeting requirements for joining the Union, the talks stalled long ago. In the meantime, some European leaders like French Prime Minister Nicholas Sarkozy have spoken out against Turkish membership, while the spread of Islamophobia throughout Europe has dimmed what enthusiasm may still exist for bringing Turkey on board.

In Turkey as well, public support for membership has declined from 70% in 2002 to just over 50% today. In fact, Turkey's turn toward the Middle East, Central Asia, and North Africa has in part been a reaction to the fading of the E.U. option. Fine, the Turks are saying, if you don't want us, we can play with others

Today, Turkey lacks energy wealth, but has worked assiduously to ensure that a maximum number of oil and natural gas pipelines flow through the country. Europe and the United States have funded a series of pipelines (like

the Nabucco pipeline from the Caspian Sea) that use Turkish territory to bypass Russia and lessen Moscow's ability to blackmail Western Europe by threatening to withhold energy supplies. Turkey hasn't stopped there, however. It negotiated directly with Russia for another set of pipelines -- the South Stream, which goes from Russia to Bulgaria through Turkish territorial waters, and the Samsun-Ceyhan pipeline that would transport Russian and Kazakh oil from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean through Turkey.

Turkey now relies on Russia for 60% of its energy imports and Iran for another 30%. In this sense, "zero problems with neighbours" could just as easily be understood as "zero problems with energy suppliers."

Turkey is also a builder. Of the top 225 international contractors, 35 are Turkish, second only to China. Like China, Turkey asks no difficult questions about the political environment in other countries, and so Turkish construction companies are building airports in Kurdistan and shopping malls in Libya. Despite political tensions, in 2009 they were even involved in nine projects worth more than \$60 million in Israel.

Finally, there is culture. Like the Confucian institutes China is establishing all over the world to spread its language, culture, and values, Turkey established the Yunus Emre Foundation in May 2009 to administer cultural centres in Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Egypt, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Israel. Turkish schools have sprung up in more than 80 countries. Turkish culture has also infiltrated Middle Eastern life through television, as Turkish soap operas spread the liberal cultural values of moderate Islam. "The Turkish soaps have been daring and candid when it comes to gender equality, premarital sex, infidelity, passionate love, and even children born out of wedlock," writes journalist Nadia Bilbassy-Charters.

Beyond Ottomanism :

Turkey's leaders may not themselves be comfortable with the neo-Ottoman label -- in part because their ambitions are actually much larger. Their developing version of a peaceful, trade-oriented *Pax Ottomanica* takes in Turkey's improved relations with sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Asia-Pacific. Turkey declared 2005 the "year of Africa" and accepted observer status in the African Union. In 2010, it has already opened eight embassies in African countries and plans to open another 11 next year.

At the pan-Islamic level -- and a Turk, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, now heads up the 57-member Organization of the Islamic Conference, the leading international voice of Islamic states -- Turkish leaders think in terms of the *ummah*, the global Muslim community. For some critics, Turkey's

Islamic character and its ruling Islam-influenced party -- as well as its recent attacks on Israel -- suggest that the country is on a mission to re-establish, if only informally, the Islamic caliphate. In the most extreme version of this argument, historian of the Middle East Bernard Lewis has argued that Turkey's fundamentalism will strengthen to such an extent that, in a decade's time, it will resemble Iran, even as the Islamic Republic moves in the opposite direction.

This is, however, a fundamental misunderstanding of the AKP and its intentions. Islamism has about as much influence in modern-day Turkey as communism does in China. In both cases, what matters most is not ideology, but the political power of the ruling parties. Economic growth, political stability, and soft-power diplomacy regularly trump ideological consistency. Turkey is becoming more nationalist and more assertive, and flexibility, not fundamentalism, has been the hallmark of its new foreign policy.

If the European Union accepts Turkey as a member, its economic dynamism and new credibility in the Muslim world could help jolt Europe out of its current sclerosis. Spurned by one or both, Turkey's global influence will still grow.

By all means, get that Lenovo computer, buy stock in Haier, and encourage your child to study Mandarin. China can't help but be a twenty-first-century superpower. But if you want to really be ahead of the curve, pay close attention to that vital crossroads between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean.

The Secret War on Terror

Baroness Manningham-Buller, who was head of MI5 from October 2002 to April 2007, said "I would hope that people are trying to do so... it's always better to talk to the people who are attacking you than attacking them, if you can. I would hope that people are trying to reach out to the Taliban, to people on the edges of Al Qaeda, to talk to them."

She also said the so-called 'War on Terror' could not be won 'in a military sense'. 'If we can get to a state where there are fewer attacks, less lethal attacks, fewer young people being drawn into this, less causes – resolution of the Palestinian question, less impetus for this activity, I think we can get to a stage where the threat is thus reduced.'

The documentary argues that the torture of terror suspects and the use of Guantanamo Bay for terrorist detainees have led to a propaganda victory for Al Qaeda.

Baroness Manningham-Buller made these comments in a television interview screened in a BBC2 documentary (Editor)

Dalit Capitalism and Pseudo Dalitism

Anand Teltumbde

In the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels had stated “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.” In capitalism this history comes alive in its pristine form through the contention of two antagonistic classes, bourgeois and proletarians. They prophesied that proletarians would emancipate themselves by intensifying class struggle so as to bring about revolutionary transformation into socialism. Alas, it did not occur to them that proletarians could themselves become bourgeoisie and subvert the history. Why slave had to wage uninterrupted fight against freemen, plebeian against patrician, serf against lord, oppressed against oppressor; they could have themselves become freeman, patrician, lord and oppressor and solved their problem. Indeed, why even struggle against Brahmanism as did Ambedkar; dalits could themselves become Brahmins and end the problem of castesim. The proposition may sound preposterous but then that is what is precisely suggested by a section of Dalits who have been propagating Dalit capitalism.

Deflecting Dalit Agenda:

If one looks at the profile of Dalits as the predominantly (81 percent) rural people, linked with land as landless labourers and marginal farmers with a small (19 percent) section living in urban areas, a large part of which lives in slums and works in informal sectors, one surely finds that the historical Dalit discourse revolving around reservation has always been unrelated with the majority of people, because it was articulated by upwardly mobile urbanite Dalits, who detested stereotypical Dalit description and aspired to see themselves as ‘arrived’. It is this section which has been having five star conferences and international conclaves and had even planned a Dalit Capitalism March in 2006 of 5000 Dalits in three piece suit and an umbrella in hand on the roads of Delhi to demonstrate their progress. It is a different matter; they could not do the latter. Since, globalization was opposed in the name of downtrodden; they tended to support it to stress their difference from the common stock. The concerted propaganda from them in favour of globalization and capitalism in various newspapers and even scholarly journal such as this one should be seen in this light.

It claimed how Dalits have prospered by migrating out of villages during the period of globalization. It is forgotten that Dalits, with little stake in village, have always been migrating out. As for the claim that they are better off today than before globalization (contrary to the tons of macro evidence), it suffers methodological fallacy basing itself on some superficial

observations. Secondly and more importantly, the state of Dalits, better or worse needs to be established in relation to that of non-Dalit population. The celebration of Dalit capitalists and their Chamber of Commerce on the basis of some hundred odd individuals (out of more than 17 crores) in businesses, the cumulative value of which may not even be a droplet in the corporate ocean will certainly elate the neoliberal propagandist but in itself it is not a great development. There have been such ‘capitalists’ and such ‘chambers’ many times before. Although, any achievement by Dalits may be laudable, when it is projected over the entire community overlooking its woes, it becomes seriously problematic.

Ambedkar on Capitalism:

In the Dalit universe, Ambedkar constitutes supreme ideological authority and hence he is invariably invoked by people in support of their viewpoint, particularly when it is unfamiliar. The protagonists of globalization had tried to show him as free-markets’ neoliberal and even gone to the extent of painting him as monetarist (monetarists are supposed to be the initiators of neoliberalism) to get him in support of their propaganda. In any case how many Dalits, even among the educated ones, knew what monetarism was? Ambedkar who publicly professed his opposition to capitalism throughout his life was thus wilfully distorted to be the supporter of ultra capitalism, which globalization is! Way back in 1938 Ambedkar, while addressing the railway workers in Manmad, had famously declared that the Untouchables had two enemies: Brahmanism and Capitalism. His first political party, the Independent Labour Party (ILP), was fashioned on the lines of British labour party, which followed the Fabian line of peaceful transition to socialism but abhorred capitalism. Ambedkar’s ILP was not only the first but true leftist party of India, the communist party then being the socialist block of the Congress, which had borrowed the moulds of class analysis that left caste, the pervasive reality of Indian life, out. ILP, on the other hand, demonstrated on road how to embed caste and class in people’s struggle.

Although, he had to dissolve ILP and form the Scheduled Caste Federation (SCF) in response to the Cripps Mission Report in 1942, his leftism and anti-capitalism remained unaffected. The States and Minorities, a memorandum submitted to the Constituent Assembly in 1947 on behalf of the SCF had proposed a radical model of state socialism, to guard against unbridled grid of capitalists. As an abiding lover of democracy, he termed capitalism “a dictatorship of private employer.” (17/1/381). Elsewhere he rationalized his choice saying that “capitalism appeals to the rich and does not appeal to the poor. On the contrary socialism appeals to the poor but does not appeal to the rich.” (5/444). In fact, even at the very fag end of his life, while explaining why he embraced Buddhism, his love for socialism (and hence hate for capitalism) comes out starkly. In his “Buddha or Karl

Marx” he comes closer to accept Marx but for his methods, which according to him were overcome in Buddhism.

Caste of Capital:

Capitalism emerged as a distinct mode of production from the ruins of feudalism, which was the system of preordained privileges. It came to India under colonial cover and did not have to contend with the feudal forces for its growth. It rather made skilful use of some of its components and let live others. For example the caste identities came handy to keep the working class divided. Still its advent and spread did impact the complexion of the castes which have internalized its accumulation logic. In that sense the general lament over Marx’s prophesy at the time of the introduction of railway network that it would entail collapse of castes is misplaced. The ritual aspects of castes did collapse among the dwija castes which adopted capitalism. These castes used their caste networks to mobilize investments, mop up credit, collect and conserve information and secure political patronage, which impelled some to characterize capital by their caste, such as Marwari, Gujarati, Kutchhi capital and so on.

The same phenomenon is noted in its pronounced form in relation to the successful entrepreneurship of the middle castes. During the early post-independence decades, these farming castes were hugely enriched by the Nehruvian modernist policies of land reforms, which were immediately followed by the green revolution. The surplus coming from capitalist agriculture found ways into capitalist enterprises, which prospered primarily using the caste resources. Tirupur, a world leader in the knitted garment industry, set up by the Gounders, a typical middle farming caste in Tamilnadu, is by now famous exemplifying caste as social capital. Gounders made use of their community and family network for mobilizing capital, credit, information and as a mechanism for enforcing contract far more cheaply than competitors. The same is true of the Nadar community in Virudhunagar area entrenched in the matches and printing industries as also of the Marwaris, Sindhis, Katchis, Patels, etc, who have global networks of their castes aiding their businesses.

While it is true that caste acts as social capital, in societies sans caste, other community ties have performed the same role. The real question is while capital is created using caste networks, can that be characterized as caste capital. Going by the logic of capitalism, the answer has to be in negative. The caste can obfuscate contradictions between capitalist and workers belonging to the same caste but cannot eliminate them, nor can they foil trans-caste formation of class of capitalists. As a matter of fact, capital does not have race, religion, caste, creed or even country. Capital has intrinsic

tendency towards globalization. Today, it comes out in its true character as global capital.

Dalits as Capitalists:

The Nehruvian modernist project spread capitalist relations in the countryside, and hugely empowered a section of middle castes economically and politically. As a fall out, the jajmani relations, which characterized village life for most parts of the country, were uprooted rendering Dalits hopelessly dependent upon middle caste farmers for their survival as wage labourers. As the villages were vacated by the upper caste landlords, the baton of Brahmanism also came into the hands of the middle castes, which in caste terms joined the dwija caste block, reducing the caste system to its classical divide: caste and non-caste or non-Dalits and Dalits. The contradiction between Dalits and these castes, mostly stemming from capitalist paradigm, however manifested into caste atrocities. Since mid-1980s, with elitist neoliberal policy thrust, they were further adversely impacted vis-à-vis others. The odds have thus multiplied against the vast majority (more than 90 percent) of Dalits, the caste being neatly intermingled with the modern secular institutions. In the face of this pathetic dalit reality, citing stray examples of Dalit petty capitalists as the marker of progress is nothing short of a cruel joke.

One fails to understand the real motive behind such projections. If it is to highlight the riches of Dalit individuals, such cases of individual richness existed even before. Somewhat inexplicable, but there have been Dalit individuals who were extremely rich even in colonial times. That did little difference to their status as Dalits, least to their community. If it is to underline the capability or merit of Dalits, it is a hackneyed statement. During the colonial times (and even before), Dalits have displayed ample entrepreneurial prowess by accepting new vocations, setting up petty businesses, or modernizing their caste vocations and made huge progress. In fact, the Dalit movement was actually the by-product of this process. If it is to praise the government for its policies of globalization, which appears to be the case in view of this section be labouring to show how Dalits made progress during globalization period, it would be condemnable as not only dishonesty but also as betrayal of Dalit interests. There have been a plenty of Dalit intellectuals seeking favours of ruling classes by singing praises of their policies. Let Dalit individuals become big bureaucrats, big bourgeoisie or any big gun, he or she cannot count much in the emancipation project of Dalit community, which lies only in thoroughgoing social transformation.

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Kashmir was never an integral part of India

Arundhati Roy

Even Indian government has accepted that in the UN. In 1947 we were told that India had become a sovereign nation, sovereign democracy but soon Indian military intervened. In Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Goa, Hyderabad, Junagarh and Punjab India always fought with the minorities.

This is the history of India. This is a historic meeting today in the heart of the capital of a hollow super power. Midnight of 1947 the country's imagination was fired by the spirit of independence. British drew the map and now the *Indian govt is behaving like a colonizing power.*

The elite accuse Naxalites of staging a protracted war. The govt relentlessly fights its own people for waging a war as in Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Goa, Hyderabad, Junagarh, Punjab, Kashmir always the minorities be it Muslims, Sikh, Christians, Tribal, Dalit, or Adivasis. One can imagine how to breathe through the barrel of AK-47. We are a slave economy which today is growing. This process has made 80% of this country's people live with Rs 20 a day. Is this the idea of justice? We are not aligned with all the struggle in the street it is idea for justice.

This is a part of transcript of Arundhati's speech on 21 October 2010 in Kashmir.

Words of Wisdom by Arundhati Roy

The only dream worth having is to dream that you will live while you are alive, and die only when you are dead. To love, to be loved. To never forget your own insignificance. To never get used to the unspeakable violence and vulgar disparity of the life around you. To seek joy in the saddest places. To pursue beauty to its lair. To never simplify what is complicated or complicate what is simple. To respect strength, never power. Above all to watch. To try and understand. To never look away.

India's Water Hegemony

Khalid Iqbal

Kofi Annan was a visionary Secretary General of the UN with special focus on water. He said, "... Fierce competition over fresh water may well become a source of conflict and wars in future... But the water problems of our world need not be only a cause of tension; they can also be a catalyst for cooperation...If we work together, a secure and sustainable water future can be ours".

With the climate change and diminishing water availability in the Middle East, Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, possibility of violent conflict between states is increasing. Water usage rights and obligations remain a hazy domain as there is no codified International law on water sharing. Though Helsinki Declaration, made an attempt towards this end, it failed to address the issue squarely. Hence, there is ample room for conflicting interpretations of treaties and norms pertaining to water sharing. As a consequence, Interstate and intrastate water conflicts are very common and are difficult to resolve. Most of these conflicts emerge out of distrust and lack of political will rather than water shortage and technical inadequacies.

Nine out of twelve basins which have been identified as high risk flow in Asia. South Asia has specially been identified as one of the most critical regions with respect to water. Per capita water availability in this region is amongst the lowest in the world; and it is under perpetual stress due to swelling population, rapid industrialization and speedy reclamation of land for agricultural purposes.

Pakistan is a single-river system country. India is an upper riparian to the Indus water system; and downstream is Pakistan with its predominantly agrarian economy. India has realized this weakness, hence it is mischievously trying to deny Pakistan's rightful share of water. Indians are attempting to reinterpret the settled terms and conditions of Indus Basin Water Treaty (IWT) to incrementally undermine the legitimate interests of Pakistan.

India has a history of lingering water disputes amongst its adjacent countries, now it is on its way to stir up similar feuds amongst the countries

of this region. Kabul River contributes 20% water to the Indus system. India is working on a number of projects in Afghanistan to reduce its flow into Pakistan. For example, construction of a dam on River Kabul for Kama Hydroelectric Project would curtail the annual flow to Pakistan by about 0.5MAF.

Senator John Kerry has recently released a US Senate report titled "Avoiding Water Wars" in South and Central Asia. It postulates that the Indus Water Treaty may fail to avert water wars between India and Pakistan. Report acknowledges that the dams India is building in occupied Kashmir will limit the supply of water to Pakistan at crucial moments in the sowing season. India is constructing 33 dams that are at various stages of completions, and cumulative effect of storing water for these dams would limit the supply to Pakistan. "Studies show that no single dam along the waters controlled by the Indus Waters Treaty will affect Pakistan's access to water, (but) the cumulative effect of these projects could give India the ability to store enough water to limit the supply to Pakistan at crucial moments in the sowing season," the report warns.

"This report highlights how water security is vital in achieving our (American) foreign policy and national security goals." said Senator John Kerry, while releasing the report. "Others question (is) whether the IWT can address India's growing use of the shared waters and Pakistan's increasing demand for these waters for agricultural purposes... A breakdown in the treaty's utility in resolving water conflicts could have serious ramifications for regional stability," the report cautions.

According to the report, the drive to meet energy demand through hydropower development is also occurring in India and Pakistan. This is particularly true with respect to India, which faces a rapidly expanding population, growing economy, and soaring energy needs. To meet growing demand and cope with increasing electricity shortages, Indian government has developed plans to expand power generation through construction of multi-purpose dams.

The number of dams under construction and their management is a source of significant bilateral tension. "Any perceived reduction in water flows magnifies this distrust, whether caused by India's activities in the Indus Basin or climate change" the report opines. Currently, the most controversial dam project is the proposed 330-megawatt dam on the Kishanganga River, a tributary of the Indus.

Surprisingly, the report has not presented any concrete solutions to the problems of lower riparian and has tried to strengthen the impression that

Indus Water Treaty has become redundant. The report seems to be more focused on how to coax Pakistan to succumb to India's ever increasing water requirement.

The report acknowledges that the IWT has maintained stability in the region over water for decades. But "experts question the treaty's long-term effectiveness in light of chronic tensions between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir region, where a significant portion of the Indus River's headwaters originate," the report adds. In fact, it is the responsibility of the international community to strengthen the treaty and urge India to honour its commitment under the treaty.

IWT is a robust treaty that has withstood the stress of two wars and a number of spells of dangerous brinkmanship. Treaty is based upon four cardinal principles. Firstly, it provides for sharing of water sources by giving exclusive rights of three eastern rivers to India and three western rivers of the Indus water system to Pakistan. Secondly, it lays down a mechanism to provide requisite financial support to assist Pakistan in making dams and canals to make up for the loss of its three eastern rivers. Thirdly, it provided for harnessing of hydroelectric potential of Pakistani rivers by India provided these dams are on the basis of run of the river and there are no storage, no diversion and no tunnelling. Fourthly, it provides for dispute resolution mechanism.

Unfortunately, India is defying all the four principles of agreement, with impunity. It is building a number of hydro electric power projects on Chenab and Jhelum rivers along with storage facilities. It is diverting Pakistan's water by making link canals and underground tunnels. In case of Baglihar dam, it is funnelling the water out on the plea that this is necessary to avoid sedimentation. Same is true for Kishanganga project.

India is required to release 16,000 cusec Chenab water to Pakistan whereas water flow at Head Marala has, at times, dipped to only 5,000 cusec because of Baglihar Dam's water storage facility. Another upcoming project on Chenab River is Bursar Dam, which will further reduce Chenab's water flow to Pakistan by as much as 2.2 million acre feet (MAF). Fourthly, the level of arbitration is intentionally raised by India from Indus commissioners' level to international arbitrators, just to up the ante. In case of Bhasha Dam India has registered its objection to the dam site on untenable grounds. Presumably RAW has done considerable investment to harden the attitude of anti-Kalabagh dam constituency.

American worry that breakdown of the IWT, for whatever reason, would threaten their foreign policy objectives in the region is not misplaced. America has strategic interests in the region, and enjoys good relations with

India and Pakistan. It needs to convince India to give up the violation of IWT for lasting peace in the region. Moreover, the US senate needs to carry out a supplementary study focusing on finding viable solutions to the problems of lower riparian countries.

Obama Raises American Hypocrisy to A Higher Level

Paul Craig Roberts

Obama's speech showed a person more capable of Doublespeak and Doublethink than Big Brother and the denizens of George Orwell's 1984.

How does a person as totally absurd as Obama expect to be taken seriously?

What does the world think? Obama has been using air strikes and drones against civilians in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and probably Somalia. In his March 28 speech, Obama justified his air strikes against Libya on the grounds that the embattled ruler, Qadhafi, was using air strikes to put down a rebellion.

Qadhafi has been a black hat for as long as I can remember. If we believe the adage that "where there is smoke there is fire," Qadhafi is probably not a nice fellow. However, there is no doubt whatsoever that the current US president and the predecessor Bush/Cheney regime have murdered many times more people in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia than Qadhafi has murdered in Libya.

Moreover, Qadhafi is putting down a rebellion against state authority as presently constituted, but Obama and Bush/Cheney initiated wars of aggression based entirely on lies and deception. Yet Qadhafi is being demonized, and Bush/Cheney/Obama are sitting on their high horse draped in cloaks of morality. This from the Great Moral Leader who every day murders civilians in Afghanistan and Pakistan and Yemen and Somalia and now Libya and who turns a blind eye when "the great democracy in the Middle East," Israel, murders more Palestinians.

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A Road Map to Khalistan

Zaheerul Hassan

British left United India just after two years of culmination of World War-II but prior to their departure pushed the South Asian countries into number of conflicts due to their defective partition plan. Number of boundary disputes, identities issues, and water conflicts cropped up as result of faulty demarcation. India expectedly has proven to be the hub of all clashes. For examples as result of conspiracy between British rulers, Gandhi and Maharaja Hari Singh, India forcefully has landed her forces in Kashmir against the wishes of masses and later on Junagarh and Hyderabad states have also been captured by India. Similarly Muslims of East Bengal, Maoists of North West of India and the third largest community "Sikh" which is 77% of East (Indian) Punjab's population (now) have been denied from separates states. On the other hand British in 1948 made successful efforts to establish a separate state Israel for Jewish minority whose population was only 713, 000.

Sikhs and other deprived communities of India have started their struggles of independence to attain rights of self determination and to save their identities. Out of these, Kashmiri, Maoists and Sikhs are three ongoing major movements and the freedom fighters of these campaigns are continuously facing brutality of Indian Armed and Security Forces. Sikhs struggle for their independence and sovereign state has come on lime light once they were not given their due share in the legislations and employments and also been forbidden freely to perform their religious obligations. According to Sikh Encyclopaedia Barely 13.22 per cent of the population of pre Partition Punjab (1941 census), they were now 38.5 per cent of the combined population of the East Punjab and PEPSU (Patiala and East Punjab States Union).

In 1956, PEPSU was amalgamated with East Punjab to form a single state the Punjab. The formation of a Punjabi speaking Punjab in 1966 by separating some territories to form the new state of Haryana and the Union territory of Chandigarh, and transferring some others to Himachal Pradesh, the percentage of the Sikhs in the new state rose to 60.22 in the census of 1971, to 60.75 in 1981 and 62.95 in the 1991 census. The increase in numbers was reflected not only in a higher percentage in the Punjab, but also in India as a whole. The encyclopaedia further states that the proportion of Sikh population to that of India which was 1.47 per cent in 1941, rose to

1.72 in 1951, 1.78 in 1961, 1.89 in 1971 and 1.90 in 1981. The bulk of the Sikh population of India (77.9%) lives in the Punjab. Major Sikh concentrations outside Punjab are in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi, in that order. Within the Punjab, the Sikhs, by and large an agricultural community, are mostly settled in villages.

One of my reader Dr Awatar Singh Sekhon has written an article (SOVEREIGNTY AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE DARBAR SAHIB COMPLEX: SIKHS' HOLY AND HISTORIC HOMELAND) on the Sikh demand which seem to be quite genuine. He also emailed his article to me for my consumption. I decided to share the same with my readers' knowledge that how a third largest community of India thinks.

Dr. Awatar writes that, 'The Sikhs have been carrying out their "Struggle to Regain Their Sovereignty, Independence and Political Power, by peaceful means, since 14th March, 1849, and it will continue until the sovereignty is reclaimed successfully and their Sikh Nation, Punjab, liberated from the occupation of the Brahmins' autocracy/Zamhooriat/Zulamhooriat."

Until the Sovereignty is reclaimed, it is proposed that a radius of 30-mile be declared, from the focal point of Durbar Sahib Complex, as an independent zone of the Sikhs' holy and historic homeland, free from any personnel, armed forces, police, intelligence, finance, all sort of communications, administration, free from those agencies which have any connection with the Brahmins and pro-Brahmins of the alleged Indian democracy or those people which had been 'subservient' to the Afghans, Mughals, Sikhs, British, Portuguese and others [for more than 3,500 years] until the day the British India Empire transferred political power to the 'unelected' leadership of these 'subservient' Hindus, the Brahmin-Baniya clique.

The administration, management and control of the 30-mile radius of the Darbar Sahib Complex will be maintained by special forces - civil and armed - created by the Darbar Sahib Complex's force, to be known as the 'Sovereign Khalsa Force (SKF)', which will be working under the directions of the body elected by the Sarbat Khalsa Institution, in accordance with the Sikh Way of Life, Sikh Code of Conduct or Sikh Rahit Maryada. The proposed 30-mile radius of the Darbar Sahib Complex's Khalsa Zone is the pre-requisite of the Sovereignty of the Sikh Nation, Khalistan, Punjab or the Republic of Khalistan.

The proposal is made keeping in mind that a vast majority of the Sikhs, Sikh Diaspora, living in all continents, viz. North America, Europe, Australia, Far East, Africa and elsewhere, will not experience any difficulties and will not have to get the 'Brahmins autocracy's visa to visit the Darbar Sahib

Complex and other Gurdwaras of historic significance. The Sikhs would not like to have their passports made available to the agents of the Brahmins autocracy's missions merely for the 'visa' endorsement. Their travelling documents will be made available to only the 'employees of the Sovereign Khalsa Zone Forces (SKZF)'. Their wellbeing, after entering the SKZ, will be looked after and ensured by the SKZF. The administration of the SKZ will enter into the bilateral agreements to look after the interests of the SKZ as well as to address the international questions relating to the Sovereignty of the Darbar Sahib Complex Zone.

The Sarbat Khalsa administration will remove all jathedars/band leaders, employees of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee and Akali Dal (all factions), executives and members and those who collaborated with the Brahmins autocracy in "Operation Bluestar" of June, 1984, and thereafter, from their offices. The new members will be elected/nominated by consensus to the SGPC, Akali Dal and the Mukh-Sewadar of the Supreme Seat of the Sikh Polity, Akal Takht Sahib.

No jathedar, SGPC or Akali Dal executives will remain in their office, especially those who have been appointed by the Punjab and/or Brahmins autocracy's New Delhi administration. No one will dare to launch a military attack like the 'undeclared' war on the Sikh Nation in the form of a brutal military "Operation Bluestar" of June, 1984, and subsequent operations by the army and armed personnel of the alleged Indian democracy. The proposal is made to the Guru Khalsa Panth and the House of Baba Nanak in view of the following:-

(One) None of the Sikhs elected representatives has accepted/endorsed/signed the Indian Constitution 1950, which denies the Sikhs their 'Sikh Identity, see Article 25' (International Journal of Sikh Affairs 16(1), 2006©).

(Two) The Sikhs' struggle for Sovereignty, Independence and Political power include the Punjab of 15th August, 1947, partitioned by the British India Empire and not the one re-divided by Indira Gandhi in 1966.

(Three) The Sikh Nation's natural resources and their by-products will be the sole property of the Sikh Nation,

(Four). The western border of the SKZ will be looked after by the 'two' nations only, i. e the SKZF on behalf of the Sikh Nation and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

(Five) In view of the ‘genocides’ of the non-Hindu and non-Brahmin minorities, the Sikhs (1.2 to 3.2 million), Musalmaans (over 500,000), Christians (over 300,000), Dalits (tens of thousands), etc., since 15th August, 1947, and to preserve the sanctity, humiliation and dehumanization [being committed] by the Brahmins autocracy/Zamhooriat/Zulamhooriat alias the alleged Indian democracy is the prime cause to create a 30-mile radius from the focal point of Darbar Sahib Complex, Amritsar, the Sikh Nation, PUNJAB

(Six) No person like Sudarshan, Togadia and anti-Sikh forces man or personnel will dare to carry out their anti-Sikh and Hindu, Hindi, Hindutva propaganda.

(Seven) the Darbar Sahib Complex and the Sikhs’ holy and historic homeland are ‘not’ the property of the Brahmins autocracy. The Sikhs’ holy and historic Home lands belong to the Guru Khalsa Panth and the House of Baba Nanak Sahib, the founder of the Sikh Faith.

(Eight) The SKZF will ensure the protection of the worshipping institutions of non-Sikhs.

In short, era of democracy and globalization and it’s very difficult to keep the masses under one shelter on same piece of land without giving them their rights. In India the minorities are being victimized and dealt ruthlessly by non state actors, RAW and Armed Forces. On 18 December 2010, a team of CBI an elderly Bengali man Naba Kumar Sarkar, 59 — popularly known as Swami Aseemanand — from Tihar confessed in court of Delhi, that he remained in killing of Nine people in Mecca Masjid blast. He also unveiled that how a few Hindutva leaders, including himself, Sadhvi Pragya Thakur, Dayanand Pandey, Lt Col Shrikant Purohit and others in 2008 remained involved against the brutality of minorities.

Pakistan very rightly asked India to hand over investigation report of Samjota Express. World community should press India to handover Col Prohit to Pakistan for his trial since victims of the train still waiting for the justice. Sikhs, Kashmiris and Maoists would defiantly be soon successful in getting their independent states. Sikh should go for the road map which is laid down by their own comrades Dr. Awatar Singh for Sikh future sovereign state in East (India) Punjab.

Balochistan: Sifting facts from fiction

Mohammad Jamil

Recently, Waseem Altaf has written an article under the title 'Accession at gunpoint', which was carried among others by Viewpoint Online. And as the title suggests the author was convinced that Balochistan's accession was sought by Pakistan under duress.

The treatise is informative in many ways, but it is an amalgam of facts and fiction. He wrote: "During British Raj Balochistan did not enjoy the status of a province but comprised four princely states namely: Makran, Kharan, Lasbela and Kalat. The Khan of Kalat was the Head of the Confederacy. The northern areas of Balochistan including Bolan Pass, Quetta, Nushki and Naseerabad were leased out to Britain, which were later, named as British Balochistan. However, more importantly, the Khan had agreed with Jinnah that an understanding must be reached between Kalat and Pakistan on Defense, Foreign Affairs and Communications". It has to be mentioned that Khan of Kalat was head of a small tribe namely Brohi, who had assured that nobody would create problems for the British. Thus he was made head of the Confederacy by the British, which was more of a norm to extend its influence in the region and elsewhere.

There are many myths about Balochistan and the one of them is that Balochistan was never part of undivided India. Secondly, that it had a special status vis-à-vis other princely states of undivided India. The fact remains that at the time of partition, Viceroy Lord Mountbatten addressing the Durbar of princely states had declared that suzerainty of the Crown had ended and advised them to join India or Pakistan keeping in view the interests of the people and geographical contiguity. Though in the Partition Plan of 3rd June 1947, the principle of the division of the subcontinent was laid down that Muslim majority areas were to become Pakistan and Hindu majority would form India, yet Lord Mountbatten ignored this principle with regard to accession of more than 550 Princely States. Anyhow, it was nowhere mentioned that the princely states would sign treaties leaving Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications only with the dominion. The author went on to state: "On 15th of July 1947 Sir Geoffrey Prior wrote letters to Jam Sahab Lasbela and Nawab Sahab of Kharan communicating their subordinate status to the Khan of Kalat". Once suzerainty had ended,

Sir Geoffrey Prior had no business to tell Jam Sahab of Lasbela and Nawab of Kharan that they were under Khan of Kalat.

On August 15, 1947 when the British withdrew from India, the Khan of Kalat said in his speech: "I thank God that one aspiration, that is independence, has been achieved, but the other two, the enforcement of Shariah-i-Muhammadi and unification of Baloch people, remain to be fulfilled".

It is not difficult to infer from this statement that Baloch people were not supportive of Khan of Kalat and had a different perception, which was evidenced by Mekran, Kharan and Lasbela's decision of acceding to Pakistan.

Khan of Kalat being an intelligent man could visualize that with the coastal line states joining Pakistan, Kalat would become landlocked. He, therefore, perforce signed the accession. It is therefore wrong to say that Khan of Kalat was forced to sign the accession at gunpoint. Secondly, Khan of Kalat had no influence over the Pakhtun belt or British Balochistan, where the British had appointed commissioners and were running the areas under their administrative system. We once again wish to correct the perception of the author who wrote: "On 17th March 1948 the Government of Pakistan announced accession of Kharan and Lasbela. Similarly, Makran which was part of Kalat for 300 years was declared a separate state and annexed".

The fact is well-documented that Kharan, Lasbela and Mekran had applied for accession to Pakistan. Mir Habibullah Khan Ruler of Kharan had written to the Quaid that he had repudiated supremacy of Kalat, and vowed to accede to Pakistan. He said that before the British, Kharan was under the influence of Afghanistan. British had to pay Rs. 6000 per year until 15th August 1947 in lieu of the allowance it used to get from Afghanistan. It is an irrefragable fact that the British used to give stipends to sardars, but a major portion was given to the chieftains of the tribes. However, after independence, sardars wanted to pocket all perks and privileges and became owners of the resources without sharing them with their chieftains and tribals.

Sardar Akbar Bugti was one of the glaring examples of sardars who ruled roost in their areas; he wanted more than his share and wanted that all appointments in Sui Gas field be made on his behest. But Balochistan is a divided polity where Bugtis, Mengals and Marris dominate their areas, whereas in Pushtun belt they have no influence. This is borne out by the fact there is no insurgency in Pushtun and even Baloch areas under Magsis, Raisanis and some other Baloch denominations. Nevertheless, tribalism is firmly rooted in Balochistan, as ethnic and tribal identity is a potent force for

both individuals and groups in Balochistan with the result that there exists deep polarization among different groups. Each of these groups is based on different rules of social organization, which has left the province inexorably fragmented. But those who have not weaned off the poison of sham nationalism should take a look at the history of the Balkans, and the fate they met.

A couple of times Sardar Ataullah Mengal appeared in a television interview and to a question he said that America does not pay any attention, and if it helps Baloch can win independence. In fact, big powers and even countries of the region eye Balochistan because it is mineral-rich and strategically-located province. But it needs peace for creating climate conducive to investment and development, which would help improve the living conditions of the people of Balochistan. Through Balochistan package, the government has tried to address the concerns of people of Balochistan. Army's role in Balochistan's development is commendable.

There have been targeted killings of Punjabi settlers in Balochistan. Ethnic and Shia-Sunni fracas has shaken the erstwhile ethnic and sectarian harmony, as criminal gangs are stoking ethnic and sectarian divisions. Sardar Ataullah Mengal, Sardar Khair Bakhsh Marri and scions of late Akbar Bugti should try to safeguard the interests of Balochis but through democratic struggle, and help stop bloodshed. We also strongly urge the government that measures should be taken to address the grievances of the smaller provinces, and in this regard Punjab and Sindh should sacrifice for giving more than their share of Balochistan and NWFP with a view to improving their lives.

What Does It Mean To Be A Muslim In India Today?

Mahtab Alam

To be a Muslim in India today is to be encounter-able, to be constantly suspected of being a terrorist, to be illegally detainable and severely tortured, to have the possibility of being killed without being questioned; no matter if one is a believer, agnostic or an atheist. Carrying a Muslim name deserves and qualifies for the above treatment!

Mahtab Alam is a civil rights activist and independent journalist. He can be reached at [activist dot journalist at gmail dot com](mailto:activist_dot_journalist_at_gmail_dot_com)

Afghanistan: On Visiting an Unwinnable War

David Swanson

I'll be visiting my nation's longest war next week in Afghanistan, thanks to a wonderful organization called Voices for Creative Nonviolence which seeks to build friendship and understanding between countries. I'll be meeting with ordinary and prominent Afghans and reporting on what they think of their country's future -- often a more complex view than will fit into a television sound bite.

In preparation, I've been trying to ascertain what Americans think of Afghanistan. Two-thirds, the pollsters tell us, want to end the war and withdraw the U.S. military. But bigotry and potterymbarnism ("you broke it, you own it") are still alive and well. Humanitarian imperialism has been given a boost through the U.S. corporate media's presentation of the bombing of Libya. And alternative approaches to nations like Afghanistan, other than warfare or complete separation, are still little discussed. That Afghans need food and jobs far more desperately than they need pacification or secularization is almost unthinkable in the United States.

Johan Galtung, "the father of peace studies," travels the world, and lives in Norway, Japan, and here in Virginia. I asked him on Tuesday, after he spoke at the University of Virginia, what he expected for Afghanistan. His view is arguably more informed than most. He has discussed the situation with both members of the U.S. government and the Taliban.

Galtung maintains that the Taliban makes some demands that are quite reasonable: 1) no secularization, 2) no centralization of governance in Kabul, and 3) no foreign occupation. Galtung argues that Islamic culture includes no concept of genuine capitulation in war with infidels. And he says that the entire Muslim community of believers (over 1.5 billion people) is more relevant than the national boundaries imposed by the West. That is to say: Muslims who come to Afghanistan to help fight non-Muslim occupiers are not foreigners, but fellow Muslims.

Now, I like many things about secularization and religious freedom, as does Galtung. His point is that the Taliban does not want cultural changes imposed from without. A Muslim resistance can be at least temporarily beaten and a population devastated and even segregated, all of which has happened in Iraq. But Galtung's point is that resistance will still flare up

until a foreign empire departs, as the British and Soviet empires finally departed Afghanistan in the footsteps of others before them, and as the U.S. Empire will eventually depart Iraq and 150 other countries.

If Afghanistan is to have peace, Galtung believes, it will need a loose federation of governments within and a confederation of allied countries including countries like Pakistan.

This will have to be achieved by Afghans, not be imposed on them by us. Galtung says that when he tells members of the Taliban that women should be permitted equal access to education, they reply that they understand that but want to learn it from Muslims, from Tunisia, from Indonesia, from Turkey. They want changes to be justified through the interpretation of Koranic verses, not laid down by the tracks of NATO tanks.

Afghanistan is a very violent country, Galtung says, and peacekeeping forces will be needed for any transition to new systems of governance, but such forces must come from Muslim countries. Only that can bring about an independent and neutral Afghanistan whose people control their own resources and pipelines and livelihood.

The United States will never win in Afghanistan and never lose, Galtung concluded, but will simply become irrelevant. In this assessment I hear an echo of the legalistic argument that some of us have been making for much of the past decade: *you cannot win or lose an occupation or a crime; you can simply cease committing it.*

(David Swanson is the author of "War Is A Lie")

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Human Rights Watch has released an 81-page report that documents the situation on the border region, where both Bangladesh and India have deployed border guards to prevent infiltration, trafficking, and smuggling. They found numerous cases of indiscriminate use of force, arbitrary detention, torture, and killings by Indian security force.

The report is based on over 100 interviews with victims, witnesses, human rights defenders, journalists, and Border Security Force and Bangladesh Rifles' (BDR) members. This report documents a pattern of grave abuses by India's Border Security Force (BSF) against both Bangladeshi and Indian nationals in the border area along India's 2,000 kilometre long international frontier with Bangladesh in West Bengal state. The abuses include cases of indiscriminate killing and torture

Petroleum and Empire in North Africa. NATO Invasion of Libya Underway Muamar Gaddafi Accused of Genocide

Keith Harmon Snow

Are events unfolding in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt more about petro-terrorism or about freedom and democracy? How much oil is there in North Africa? Who is in control of that oil? What is the relationship between the West and Muamar Gaddafi? Is he really the terrorist we've all been led to believe he is? Who is the Libyan "opposition" and who are the "rebels" we read about? Amidst the full-court press of propaganda presented by the western media and State Department disinformation apparatus we find that Muamar Gaddafi is even accused of committing genocide against his own people. Are there double standards at work?

From the Halls of Montezuma to the Shores of Tripoli

On September 1, 1969 the pro-western regime that had ruled in Libya was overthrown by Colonel Muamar Gaddafi and his officers. At the time, Libya was home to the largest US Air Base (Wheelus Air Base) in North Africa. Agreements between the USA and Libya signed in 1951 and 1954 granted the USAF the use of Wheelus Air Base and its El Watia gunnery range for gunnery and bombing training and for transport and bombing stopovers until 1971. During the Cold War the base was pivotal to expanding US military power under the Strategic Air Command, and an essential base for fighter and reconnaissance missions. The Pentagon also used the base -- and the remote Libyan desert -- for missile launch testing: the launch area was located 15 miles east of Tripoli. Considered a 'little America on the shores of the Mediterranean', the base housed some 4600 US military personnel until its evacuation in 1970

With the discovery of oil in Libya in 1959, a very poor desert country became a very rich little western protectorate. US and European companies had huge stakes in the extremely lucrative petroleum and banking sectors, but these were soon nationalized by Gaddafi. Thus Libya overnight joined the list of US 'enemy' or 'rogue' states that sought autonomy and self-determination outside the expanding sphere of western Empire. Further cementing western hatred of the new regime, Libya played a leading role of the 1973 oil embargo against the US and maintained cooperative relations with the Soviet Union. Gaddafi also reportedly channelled early oil wealth into national free health care and education.

Many of the concessions in Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt involve state-owned oil companies. The US/European/Israeli nexus seeks to dislodge state-ownership -- to whatever extent it actually exists -- and dislodge any Chinese workers or companies involved in the oil exploitation, and replace these with western companies and western agents.

At one time Gaddafi played around with Idi Amin, but his ties to other despots -- such as Tony Blair and George H. W. Bush -- are far more notable, though far less advertised. Remember that Gaddafi has served the prerogatives of imperialism for years, even while being presented as the world's premier terrorist.

The CIA has long wanted to eliminate and replace Muammar Gaddafi. President Reagan bombed Tripoli, killing Gaddafi's infant daughter: the United States bombing of Libya (code-named Operation El Dorado Canyon) comprised the joint USAF, Navy, and Marines air-strikes against Libya on April 15, 1986. The US CIA brought down the Lockerbie Pan Am 103 flight over Scotland in 1988 and blamed this on Gaddafi.

In recent years Gaddafi has played along with the western fiction of Al-Qaeda, though it seems likely that some of the true mercenaries in Libya today are 'Al-Qaeda' terrorists trained by the United States to serve US interests in places like Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and now Libya. However, the CIA has always had their sites on Gaddafi.

National front for the Salvation of Libya

In almost all western media accounts, the so-called "opposition" in Libya includes the unspecified, unnamed, unidentified "rebels" of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL). These are not innocent 'pro-democracy' protestors who began with a 'peaceful sit-in' as reported by the New York Times and uncritically repeated everywhere else.

In Libya today, there is no context or history to the NFSL 'rebels': they are categorically presented as the good guys, no matter that they seem to have appeared out of thin air. No one explains who these people are who are cited by the New York Times or CNN or Democracy Now as sources.

The NFSL was part of the National Conference for the Libyan Opposition held in London in 2005, and British resources are being used to support the NFSL and other 'opposition' in Libya. The NFSL was actually formed in October 1981 in Sudan under Colonel Jaafar Nimieri-- the US puppet dictator who was openly known to be a Central Intelligence Agency operative, and who ruled Sudan ruthlessly from 1977 to 1985. The NFSL held its national congress in the USA in July 2007. Reports of 'atrocities' and

civilian deaths are being channelled into the western press from operations in Washington DC, and the opposition FNSL is reportedly organizing resistance and military attacks from both inside and outside Libya.

Italy and France are also said to be backing these opposition groups, as the Italian and French oil companies AGIP and ELF and others seek to chop off and eat their pieces of the predatory pie. The US, Britain and Israel seek to insure control of the petroleum sector in advance of competitor corporations from other European countries.

National Endowment for (non) Democracy (NED)

A 'soft' intervention CIA front, the National Endowment for Democracy has been deeply involved in Libya along with the CIA fronted Freedom House (under their Blue Umbrella program and others). These entities have backed 'opposition', supported propaganda campaigns and so-called 'pro-democracy' movements, and are known to be involved with backing armed insurgents and interventions.

NED works its overt intelligence sector magic through four organizations under its (own) umbrella: National democratic Institute; International republican Institute, Centre for Private Enterprise and the AFL-CIO's American Centre for International Labour Solidarity. NED is closely aligned with US foreign policy interests and achieves its mission through the revolving doors between US Government and the NED Board of Directors.

Some of these NED directors include: former US Secretaries of State, Henry Kissinger (Nixon) and Madeleine Albright (Clinton), former US Secretary of Defence Frank Carlucci (Reagan), former National Security Council Chair Zbigniew Brzezinski (Carter), former NATO Supreme Allied Command in Europe, General Wesley K. Clark (Clinton), and the current head of the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz (George W. Bush).

Freedom House is supportive of NED programs but has been around since its creation by Eleanor Roosevelt and they have been very active against Libya. Freedom House is funded by, amongst others, UNILEVER Corporation, USAID, and the US Information Agency (USIA). Freedom House, in alliance with USIA, has provided covert and overt "Radio Free" disinformation programs all over the world since at least 1952: e.g. Radio Free Europe, Radio Free Asia.

Past and present Freedom House trustees include: former CIA director R. James Woosley; former national security adviser (at the time of the US invasion of Congo-Zaire) Anthony Lake; Harvard professor Samuel Huntington; UNILEVER executive Ned Bandler; CIA insider Andrew Young; former Joseph Mobutu confidant and national security insider

Jeanne J. Kirkpatrick; former NED director and International Crisis Group trustee Zbigniew Brzezinski; USAID intelligence operative J. Brian Atwood (USAID administrator who oversaw the US-backed genocide against millions of Hutu refugees in Zaire, 1996-1998) and many more.

Freedom House is also very likely affiliated with the phantom US Office of Strategic Information (OSI), formed after September 11, 2001. OSI is said to have been reorganized, with all its original functions reassigned to the Office of Global Communications, Information Awareness Office (IAO), and the newly reactivated Counter-Disinformation/Misinformation Team (Counter-Information Team). However, then Secretary of War Donald Rumsfeld issued statements affirming that the OSI's operations would continue.

Rogue State Painted with Blatant Propaganda

Here are some of the media's rallying cries making headlines everywhere the English language is used:

- * Gaddafi killing his own people!
- * West worried that Gaddafi may use Nerve Gas!
- * Heavy Weaponry Used Against Civilians!
- * Heavy Arms Used in Libyan Crackdown!
- * Gaddafi Committing Crimes against Humanity!

The death tolls in Iraq, Afghanistan and Congo -- by US/NATO/ISRAELI forces -- far surpass anything that might have occurred in Libya. Meanwhile, most 'news' on Libya is based on false accusations and false assertions -- such as the THREAT of nerve gas being used.

Muamar Gaddafi Sides with Empire:

"The fundamental problem and issue before the people in the region is that the US rulers seek imperial control and imposition of semi-colonial country-selling regimes; the more autocratic and brutal, the better from the point of the US imperialism that is unrelenting history," reports Ralph Schoenman, in 'US Imperialism Against Democratic ME'. "Every time the population is given the opportunity to shape its own destiny, to seek its national independence, to seek its own control over its own resources, to seek its own sovereignty and determination of its own future, that is incompatible with the US imperialism.

When Barack Obama was accepted by the US people as the new president, Gaddafi praised Obama and described Obama's White House housesit as "a victory against racism" and he urged the first Black U.S. president "to lead his country boldly and with integrity."

"The Black people's struggle has made tremendous advances against racism in America," Gaddafi said. "It was God who created colour. Today President Obama, son of a Kenyan father, a true son of Africa, has made it in the United States of America."

Pentagon Invasion Already Underway :

The US will use any propaganda necessary to whip up American fervour over Gaddafi and justify Pentagon or MI6 or NATO operations. US and British warships sit off the coast of Libya -- and they don't sit there idly. The imposition of a 'no-fly' zone means that US/NATO planes can do as they like, with the understanding that what we are really talking about are possible bombing and fighter sorties against Libya.

US troops have already moved ashore in Libya, joining the 'opposition' and 'rebel' forces in 'rebel' controlled territories. The US, France and Britain have already set up Bases in Libya.

US covert operatives have been on the ground for weeks, in not much longer, whether they have entered by sea (SEALS) or by way of Niger, where the US has openly published information about its covert operations. (See, for example, the travel logy reports by former U.S. Special Forces now 'journalist' Robert Kaplan in America's African Rifles a Pentagon massaged and approved propaganda feature in the pro-war Atlantic Monthly). Any opportunity to attack, destabilize, invade will be exploited by the Pentagon. Of course, as this is written the US media is preparing the ground for the English news consuming masses to see the Pentagon invasion as a "humanitarian" mission in Libya. *There is nothing humanitarian about the Pentagon, and there has never been.*

The Desert Mystic:

Libya is a country of approximately 6 million people, having a huge geographical area but low population density. Claims that Gaddafi has uplifted his people over the course of his 40 year dictatorship are false. Poverty is high throughout the country, and in Tripoli there are the obvious signs of capitalism: overcrowding, traffic, environmental pollution and destruction of nature. However, Gaddafi's "Green Book" -- if in fact it was written by him -- is worth reading. Had it been written by most anyone else who is opposed to the expansion of western empire with all its horrors, it would be more widely appreciated.

Gaddafi has funded Pan-African organizations and individuals, some of whom have very noble missions and serve to challenge the downtrodden, while he has also funded some armed factions involved in unjust wars or destabilizations. Gaddafi has funded Louis Farrakan and the Nation of

Islam. He has funded Jean Pierre Bemba and the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC), the rebellion also backed by Yoweri Museveni, responsible for a very definitive genocide in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Human Rights Watch has reported that international arms dealer Victor Bout illegally shipped weapons into Congo-Zaire, picking them up in Libya and delivering them to Rwandan Hutu forces. However, Human Rights Watch is deeply compromised when it comes to reporting and not reporting the facts - or selectively reporting them -- on Central Africa. If Gaddafi did supply or facilitate the provision of arms to Hutu insurgents in Congo, it may be one of the more reasonable actions he took: e.g. the Forces for the Democratic Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) are forever misaligned by the Pentagon and its propaganda minions precisely because they fought against the illegal invasion of Rwanda by Paul Kagame and Yoweri Museveni. Meanwhile, it is Rwanda, Uganda and their foreign multinational corporate allies that are responsible for the preponderance of killing in Central Africa (not the FDLR).

According to Amnesty International, another selective human rights organ serving western interests, Gaddafi also reportedly armed Sudanese in Darfur -- long before the current conflict began in 2003 -- to fight against western backed interventions in Chad and Sudan.

Gaddafi reportedly owns land in Zimbabwe and may flee there or to other countries where repressive control is maintained in service to western interests.

Muamar Gaddafi is/was the most recent chairman of the African Union, another elite organization designed to serve western exploitation -- or run by a cabal of thieves, at the very least, who all have the goods on each other, and so none will ever challenge the way things are -- while the people, the masses of Africa, everywhere suffer.

The African Union (AU) signed on with Washington for the devastating neo-liberal trade and tariffs agreement known euphemistically as the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The AU special report on genocide in Rwanda was a complete whitewash serving US/UK interests and protecting dictators Paul Kagame and Yoweri Museveni. The AU has also been slammed by African leaders for inaction and silence in various developments on the continent.

Former AU chairman have included some of Africa's most criminal dictators, such as Dennis Sassou Nguesso, who has reigned with absolute military brutality in the Republic of Congo for some 20 years (with a gap

from 1992-1997). Gabon's present ruler Albert-Bernard Bongo is the son-in-law of Dennis Sassou-Nguesso, and both have been sustained with millions of Elf petrol dollars (see, e.g., Keith Harmon Snow: *The Crimes of Bongo*). Sassou-Nguesso's elite Cobra militia were also trained by French advisers and, like Colonel Joseph Mobutu, Sassou-Nguesso relied on Israeli security and intelligence for protection

The AU's alliance with NATO began long ago, and it saw expanded joint military operations in Sudan, where the AU served as NATO's "African face" for US/UK and Israeli military interventions in the war for Darfur. For example, forces fighting for the NATO interests, commanded and commandeered under an AU banner, came from Paul Kagame's Rwanda Defense Forces (formerly called Rwandan Patriotic Front/Army) responsible for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity in Uganda, Rwanda, DR Congo and, then, Darfur. Rather than condemning western military expansion and different forms of AFRICOM or CIA-backed terrorism, for example, the AU backs the western war of annihilation in Somalia, involving Ugandan troops trained by US Special forces, and the Pentagon's expansion in Ethiopia, and support for dictator Meles Zenawi there. Ethiopia is the site of an ongoing genocide against the Annuak, Omo and Orono people -- and no one has reported the atrocities in the blood drenched oil-rich Ogaden basin there. What say the AU?

In *AFRICA: Global NATO Seeks to Recruit 50 New Military Partners*, journalist Rick Rozoff reports: "A recent article in Kenya's *Africa Review* cited sources in the African Union (AU) disclosing that the 28-member North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] is preparing to sign a military partnership treaty with the 53-nation AU." Rozoff explains that this is a likely manoeuvre against the spread of Chinese interests in the continent. According to Black Commentator editor Glen Ford, who travelled to Tripoli in 2008, Gaddafi on the Outs, the man who ruled this not-so-little North African dictatorship is about finished.

And Now, The Gaddafi Genocide:

Claims made by Libyan 'opposition' and reported in the western press that Gaddafi is committing genocide against his own people represent the height of western arrogance and hypocrisy. At this very moment the wars being prosecuted by the USA and its allies, including Japan, Europe, Israel, South Africa, Canada and Australia, far dwarf the 'atrocities' committed in Libya. While we have no credible reporting about who is killing, who is opposition, how many dead, etc., out of Libya, we have credible report after credible report establishing that the US and its allies have perpetrated massacres, tortures, and other atrocities, in the millions of people, in Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan - for a short list.

The claim of genocide here, akin to the one-sided charges against former Rwandan president Juvenal Habyarimana, or against Sudan's Omar al-Bashir, are one more clear example of the Politics of Genocide delineated in great detail by this writer and others. Reports in western media -- provided, again, by the FNSL and other western intelligence, covert operations or psychological operations flak organizations -- are filled with harsh language and characterizations not seen in reporting on or by western military campaigns. For example, in many western reports we can find, such as *Gruesome Footage Proves Libya Using Heavy Arms* makes claims that "newspapers obtained shocking footage of corpses with bodies blasted off and several torsos in Libyan hospitals."

So there are several torsos. That is not quite genocide. Where are the images? If such images of death and destruction do appear it will be in sharp contrast to the complete whiteout on dead bodies in the Pentagon's other theatres of war, in the eastern Congo or Somalia, or in Afghanistan.

Images of dead bodies can be produced and published but these are easily stripped of context. How do western audiences and propaganda consumers know that these are authentic and not recycled images of protests from Yemen or Bahrain dumped into the western press (with their willing acknowledgment) by Britain's MI-6, as has been alleged? Al-Jazeera shows its true western colours by not reporting much of anything, and that certainly not critical of western manipulation or involvement.

We saw the tactic of collecting dead bodies and skeletons used in Rwanda by the Pentagon's agents of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, and in Darfur and South Sudan, where journalist Nicholas Kristof produced some dead shrivelled bodies from some desert somewhere and claimed these were from the New York Times' Secret Genocide Archives. The atrocities were committed, we are told, by President Omar al-Bashir and the government of Sudan.

However, there is never any mention of US military involvement, mercenaries (Pacific Architects and Engineers, DynCorp, others) on the ground in Sudan. Dead men tell no tales, or dead women: these dead bodies are as likely dead from US or Israeli backed 'rebels' -- the Justice and Equality Movement or Sudan Liberation Army backed by the US, NATO, Israel and our puppet dictator in Uganda.

The double-standards and outright lies can be seen quickly, if one knows there are deeper truths, by examining propaganda produced by the

International Crisis Group, or such propaganda tracts as Smith College English teacher Eric Reeves' *A Long Day's Dying: Critical Moments in the Darfur Genocide* -- where there is not one reference to Ugandan dictator Yoweri Museveni and his Pentagon assisted backing of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), in South Sudan, and Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), in Darfur, in all of the 386 pages.

Western mercenaries that have been deeply involved, and remain so, in some of the world's bloodiest conflicts, in coup d'états, in massacres and other atrocities, include British mercenary Tony Buckingham -- whose mercenary past is legendary -- founder of Heritage Oil & Gas, a petroleum company linked by Buckingham to mercenary firms Branch Energy and Sandline International. Buckingham was also a partner in the infamous Executive Outcomes, with former British SAS soldier-of-misfortune Tim Spicer -- the recipient of massive Pentagon contracts in Iraq. Heritage director General Sir Michael Wilkes retired from the British Army in 1995 and is a former Middle East adviser to the British government and a member of the Army Board. Wilkes commanded Britain's Special Air Services (SAS) regiment and was director of Special Forces. Heritage Oil has exploited opportunities in Mali, Uganda, Republic of Congo, Oman and Iraq.

In short, almost everything in the western press on the crises in Libya is slanted by some faction, or interest, or it is tainted by western arrogance, or by anti-imperialist ideology (of 'solidarity'), even in the case of the alternative media. There is very little accurate reporting of any kind (but some good work linked or cited herein).

This report is just another incomplete picture of an incomplete puzzle -- but it seeks to penetrate through and expose the ongoing western media campaign for what it is: a psychological operation against the masses of earth's people who have not and do not benefit from the nasty policies and actions implemented to serve a very small and elite group of people. People wishing to support the legitimate grievances and actions for freedom and truth in Libya should challenge the western terrorist apparatus out of Washington, DC, Tel Aviv, Brussels, London and Ottawa.

Prayers for the true innocent civilians in Libya, and across the region.

Keith Harmon snow travelled to Tripoli, Libya in 2009 and stayed about 3 days while attending the "2009 International Conference of the Green Book supporters" as a member of the US Delegation invited by former U.S. Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney (D-GA).

One More War And Another Collective Silence

Pablo Ouziel's

So with Afghanistan flattened, with Iraq completely destroyed, with Pakistan being hit by drones, and with the people of Gaza forced to live in their open-air prison as millions of refugees from these war torn countries suffer the consequences of previous Western humanitarian missions, it would serve the western critical thinker well, to oppose any kind of military intervention, and to show serious scepticism towards the humanitarian and caring words stemming from the mouth of current Western government representatives.

Listening to the benevolent messages from people like Obama and Sarkozy, would seem ironically comical, if it were not for the dangerous quagmire in which we find ourselves. Yet, since while they continue to blurt out mighty words, which often invoke God, innocents die, this is no time for comedy. The time has come to break our silence and judge them and their allies for crimes against humanity. Only when we have wiped clean the blood spilled in the name of our false morality, by confronting the crimes committed in our name, might we find ourselves in a position from which to ethically judge the crimes of the foreign petty dictators our leaders often called friends

