

# The Shape of Things to Come in Libya

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There is another rush to war in Libya. Driven by US public alarmism over ISIS, and fronted by Italy, we are now being told by the Italian Defence Minister that [war is coming before spring](#):

“We cannot imagine waiting until spring while the situation in Libya is still frozen. Efforts to resolve the Libyan crisis must be coordinated internationally...it is impossible for the international intervention to wait until the upcoming spring”.

Canada is being sleep-walked into rejoining another round of war in Libya, with a Defence Minister making strikingly oblique statements about Canada learning from its experience in Afghanistan—as if that were a measure of *success*—while not learning anything about Canada’s last military aggression against Libya. As if to add to the prevailing official dismissal of reality and history, Italy’s Defence Minister openly declares that the West needs to obtain a formal invitation—from the government the West manufactured and is trying to install in Libya—“to avoid fuelling ‘jihadist propaganda’ of yet another ‘Western invasion’”. The result is that three governments are simultaneously claiming the right to represent Libyans, except that one of them—the newest—is not even based in Libya, was manufactured by the UN, and is being [imposed in a rush under the threat of international sanctions](#). Lost on the EU, the UN, NATO, and the US is the very basic fact that any agreement produced under duress, is not an agreement.

Good science fiction almost makes you believe the story is true; here, instead, we are being told up front that the soon to be official story is false from the start, and is mandated merely as propaganda.

## **The United Airmen Impose New Order on Libya**

[“Science Fiction Changes the World for the Better”](#)—this is Rule #1 in a list of helpful tips for aspiring science fiction writers. “We live in a Science Fiction world,” we are told, with an added comment by Ray Bradbury: “Anything you dream is fiction, and anything you accomplish is science, the whole history of mankind is nothing but science fiction”. Rule #7 fits into this approach: “Science Fiction is Real”. It is not meant to be fantasy—it must be “plausible, realistic, possible and yes, it has to be real,” at least possible in some alternate world (which significantly widens the realm of the possible, making it limitless). Allegedly, as Rule #3 maintains, “good science fiction” is supposed to be “good science”. Good science should not be “mythical, magical or religious”. There seems to be a determined clinging to realism in these rules of fiction. In the fictions about Libyan politics spun by the US, NATO allies, and the UN—imposed as virtual reality (a third Libyan “national” government, installed undemocratically by the democracy-promoting UN, and based in Tunisia)—one has to ask: is it all just bad science fiction? It is difficult to argue that what follows is

an example of “good science” in Western policy-making on Libya, but it certainly is saturated with fiction, with pure faith and wishful thinking masquerading as intelligent decision-making and practical action. However, if anyone thinks this new round of intervention is “good science,” then they are probably conditioned by what is in fact good science fiction, without understanding it.

Here we are dealing with a particular type of science fiction: *social science* fiction. I think it is an important subject of study, especially because in the US it seems that the only time that imperialism is conceptually grasped, is when it is deflected into films about alien invasions. In other words, the aliens shown in the standard alien invasion/abduction film, are a symbolic representation of US imperialists—it will be denied that Good Americans are anything like that, and the overt denial mixed with tacit agreement becomes science fiction. As a non-US cinema spectator, when I see films about aliens, I see them as coming from the US, I see reenactments of everything US troops have done in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and so on: family members abducted at night, tortured or simply disappeared forever; homes penetrated by beams of light and shaken by thunderous noise; mysterious flying objects with overwhelming firepower; imperious alien commanders with instructions on how we will submit or die—I could continue.

The current “plan” for Libya is much like the old plan. Libya is a case where past intervention begets new intervention, but is even subject to the same form of intervention: a new Libya, dropped onto the country from the sky. The first time I encountered this notion of social engineering via a foreign air force, was in a science fiction film from 1936, *Things to Come*, based on the novel by H.G. Wells (*The Shape of Things to Come*). The film appeared to be chillingly prescient, as if predicting WWII and the bombing of London, to come a few years later. In the film we are shown a nation devastated by war, broken down into a caricature of the stone age, which is suddenly visited one day by an alien-like being flying a plane, in a world where planes had long ceased to fly. Here is an extract from the [movie script](#) (with the accompanying video clip; the full movie is on [YouTube](#)).

First, the newly arrived visitor from the sky (actually, from Basra of all places) declares in one of many speeches:

“Everywhere we find these little semi-military upstarts robbing and fighting. That’s what endless warfare has led to—brigandage. What else could happen? But we, who are all that are left of the old **engineers and mechanics**...have **pledged ourselves to salvage the world. We have the airways**—or what’s left of them. **We have the seas. And we have ideas in common. The brotherhood of efficiency...the freemasonry of science.** We’re **the last trustees of civilization** when everything else has failed”.

The visitor is then ushered in to be interrogated by the local warlord, the boss, when this exchange ensues:

*Visitor*: “Well, what do you want to see me about?”

—Warlord: “Who are you? Do you know this country’s at war?”

*Visitor*: “At war? Still at it, eh? We must clean that up.”

—Warlord: “What do you mean ‘we must clean that up’? War’s war. Who are you, I say?”

*Visitor*: “The law. Law and sanity.”

—Warlord: “I am the law here!”

*Visitor*: “I said: ‘law and sanity?’”

—Warlord: “Where do you come from? Who are you?”

*Visitor*: “**Wings Over the World.**”

—Warlord: “Well, you know, you can’t come into a country like this in this fashion.”

*Visitor*: “I’m here. Do you mind if I sit down?”

—Walord: “And now, for the fourth time, who are you?”

*Visitor*: “I tell you, ‘Wings Over the World.’”

—Walord: “That’s nothing. What government are you under?”

*Visitor*: “Common sense. I belong to World Communications. We just run ourselves.”

—Walord: “Eh? You’ll run into trouble if you try and land here in wartime. What’s the game?”

*Visitor*: “Order and trade.”

—Walord: “Trade, eh?”

Later on, a dispute over sovereignty and the new world order erupts between the two speakers:

*Visitor*: “...our new order has an objection to private aeroplanes.”

—Walord: “The impudence! I’m not talking about private aeroplanes. Our aeroplanes are public aeroplanes. This is an independent sovereign state at war. I know nothing about any old order. I’m the chief here...and I’m not taking any orders, old or new, from you.”

And while the visitor first proclaimed his order to be one *against war*, he is fairly quick to re-endorse war to conquer the recalcitrant savages:

—Walord: “This is an independent sovereign state.”

*Visitor*: “Yes, we must talk about that.”

—Walord: “We don’t discuss it.”

*Visitor*: “We don’t approve of independent sovereign states.”

—Walord: “You don’t approve?”

*Visitor*: “We mean to stop them.”

—Walord: “That’s war.”

*Visitor*: “If you will.”

Further on, Wings Over the World announces that he is a member of the “United Airmen”: “**The new world of united airmen will finish you**”.

H.G. Wells has produced “good science fiction” here, predicting not just the coming of WWII, but the coming of an age of a neoliberal and self-described civilizing reconquest. The warlord can be taken as a representative of one of Libya’s numerous ruling militias. The visitor from the sky, Mr. Wings Over the World, is a composite of the the US Air Force, NATO, the EU, the UN, and humanitarian imperialists. *Wings Over the World* in our time, the *United Airmen* of the film, dispel with sovereign independence—they mean to make war to end war, in the notorious circular logic of the humanitarian imperialists with their moral dualism. They will clean up the world, and impose order and *trade*, the rule of law and science. These are self-identified saviours, trustees of civilization, Freemasons of science, the bringers of efficiency, who own the skies and indeed “world communications”. It’s as if H.G. Wells was scripting the American Exceptionalism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the neoliberal New American Century. And this is what is being played out with Libya, against these “semi-military upstarts” who are nothing more than brigands, who are not entitled to airplanes of their own (thus the UN arms embargo remains in place, at least on paper).

## Alpha and Omega in Libya

For Libya “the apocalypse” is not science fiction, it is not an imaginary future. It is a real, dystopian present. That all of us in the West to varying degrees helped to doom Libya by interfering in Libya, should teach us that we are not, and never have been, mere innocent spectators to an unfolding drama of ancient, local blood feuds, “tribalism,” or religious conflict. Now that would be very poor science fiction when it cannot even grasp or represent our recent past, let alone prognosticate about the future. Unfortunately, Western “pundits” have visions of the future while suffering from short-term memory loss, and they thus usually airbrush AFRICOM and NATO, along with the EU, out of the picture. “We liberated Libya,” they seem to claim, “while Libyans de-liberated themselves”. What is promoted in public as smart analysis, would fail an undergraduate social science course for creating a false argument based on a phony portrayal.

In *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* (1970), we are shown the ruins of a cathedral in the devastated “forbidden zone,” inhabited by mutated humans with telepathic powers in a post-apocalyptic future. In the cathedral, what appears to be a nuclear bomb is erected at an altar. The bomb is the object of worship and is hailed as the “divine bomb”—this is the “alpha and omega” bomb that is also referred to as a “doomsday bomb” in the movie. What is striking is the recurring motif of the glorification of the air-dropped “solution”. While not suggesting that the West plans to “nuke” Libya—the faith in solutions dropped from the sky is nevertheless both science fiction and a key theme in current public talk of renewed air attacks against Libyan targets, most notably Sirte, Gaddafi’s hometown, the site of the greatest destruction suffered by any urban area in the 2011 war, and now the so-called capital of ISIS in Libya.

There is then this negative relationship between “good science fiction” and “bad policy/practice”. Good science fiction of a futuristic bent might predict key aspects of the future by intuiting where present trends are leading us, but it is clearly not meant as a script to be followed. Understanding a warning means *not* doing what you are being warned against. Bad policy and practice, contrasted with science fiction, says “I will get burned if I play with fire, and therefore I will play with fire”. It thus validates science fiction, by doing what one should not: acting out our lines according to what is written in science fiction tales. **What the West is bringing to Libya, yet again, is more social science fiction-based policy and practice, with a persistent wrong-headed and obstinate refusal to understand the invalidity of unsustainable, exogenous impositions.** They simply will not listen. They will line up “Libya experts” for UN or EU policy consultations, who are carefully chosen from a population of prestigious repeaters. What follows is predictable: more of the same. Far from “globalization” bringing about increased global cultural consciousness and inter-cultural communication, it has in fact been marked by an entrenchment of the most abysmal ignorance, conceit, and regressive universalism, with a relentless desire to destroy difference in order to impose control through sameness.

## Options Include: Airstrikes

[Options](#) being considered by the US government include “airstrikes, commando raids or advising vetted Libyan militias on the ground, as Special Operations forces are doing now in eastern Syria. Covert CIA paramilitary missions are also being considered”. The US might attack an unspecified wide range of targets, and could deploy “[teams of commandos to work with Libyan fighters who promise to support a new Libyan government](#)”—that is, using military coercion to forcibly create a political “reality” on the ground. The US claims there would be no troops on the ground—or “boots” as it calls them, sometimes referred to as “combat troops”—but then we read that this “would most likely be a [Special Operations war](#)”. In fact, the Pentagon has already confirmed that as

of late January “a small number of [US] military personnel” are [already on the ground](#) in Libya, “to engage in conversations with local forces to get a clearer picture of exactly what’s happening there”.

Italy is working with France, the UK, and the US in preparing military action—once it receives an official “[invitation](#)” from the science fiction “government” that they helped to fabricate and install. Italy’s Ministry of Defence ordered the [deployment](#) of four AMX fighter aircraft and one Predator drone to its Birgi base near Trapani, Sicily, in building preparation for intervention in Libya.

The UK’s Royal Air Force has already openly [resumed airstrikes](#) against Libya, after [months](#) of signalling it would take such action, and with limited public debate ensuing. Meanwhile, British military sources briefed the media on the fact that, “[US and British Special Forces were in Libya](#) gathering intelligence to prepare for a possible deployment of up to 6,000 US and European troops”. Other sources say that UK special forces troops are in Libya in preparation for a major offensive: “they’re said to be preparing to spearhead an operation involving 1,000 British infantrymen, who’ll be sent there early this year to help train and support Libyan forces...the offensive will involve about [6,000 coalition soldiers and marines](#), with SAS troops working alongside Libyan forces to advise them on ‘battle-space management’”. The [6,000 US and European soldiers and marines](#) will be led by Italian forces, and supported mainly by Britain and France, other sources suggested. The interventionists have learned from 2011 that the only time major advances were secured on the ground was once British SAS, US CIA, Western mercenaries, and Qatari and Sudanese troops were deployed, with hundreds of Qatari troops on the front lines in what some still amusingly call a “domestic conflict” and “local civil war”.

## More Science Fiction: Interventionist Non-Interventionism

And yet the UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Philip Hammond, claimed that the UK has ruled out sending British “[combat troops](#)” to Libya. This is part of a familiar, if tiresome, repetition of the semantic games played by politicians (aspiring to become science fiction writers perhaps). “Special Forces” are *special*, hence not those ordinary combat troops. Invasions are thus not invasions. [Interventions are not interventions](#) as long as “boots” remain in the air, or are covert boots. Military bases are not bases if they do not feature a shopping mall; otherwise they are just installations. War is not war when it is “kinetic force”. It is transparent silliness, deployed to confuse those who are still uninformed or willing to believe. The idea is to thwart intelligence, not just by insulting it, but by shifting the potential for meaning into a dead zone of euphemisms that sound like they were lifted from the imaginary talk of aliens in a science fiction novel.

The warped language is a cover for deeply confused thinking. Illogical contradictions abound. The dominant discourse now is that “Libya failed” because it was “neglected” by not being occupied by foreign armies, who could have “rebuilt” and “stabilized” Libya. The argument ignores the obvious cases of Iraq and Afghanistan—occupied by foreign armies that have served to escalate violence, social entropy, and the collapse of centralized government. *Clearly then it is not foreign military occupation which either builds or stabilizes nations.* This should be **Lesson #1**. Instead it remains the lesson never taught, and never learned, because the answer to this phony conundrum is that *intervention should be barred in the first place.* What is common to both Iraq and Libya is the recent history of US and NATO intervention.

In place of educating the public, the media in the US instead produces these dolled-up talking heads as “journalists” who ask safe, somewhat apologetic questions, with the voices of timid children. That is their sign to the rest of us of what “proper behaviour” ought to be—“press

conferences” thus double as training videos to resocialize us into the conventions of self-censorship and self-humiliation. They ask infantile questions that invert US imperialism into something about warm and nurturing protection: “Madame Secretary, let’s turn now to your plans to *keep America safe*”. Poor little unsafe America.

## **A Deaf Ear to Libyan Anti-Interventionism**

North America and Europe are dominated by mass surveillance states. We are told of how much of citizens’ data is harvested, of recorded telephone calls, archiving of emails, tracking behaviour online. Yet the principle that dominates is that the power elites only ever hear what they want to hear and what they are intellectually capable of processing. This should be **Lesson #2**. Deafness is institutionalized, rendering much of the surveillance irrelevant and immaterial, except as an excuse for swelling public budgets as a permanent corporate bailout for private intelligence firms and defence contractors.

Right now, the competing Libyan authorities are discovering what it meant to be Gaddafi: to demand an end to foreign intervention, to oppose foreign intervention, and to be brushed aside so that the phony voice of a foreign-created “legitimate” government can call for such intervention. The Libyan authorities of today are themselves an extension of 2011, when a small group of NATO states unilaterally determined who would be the “legitimate representative of all Libyans”—and we can see now, in the bright light of day, just how “legitimate” their “representation” really was. Now, it is their turn to be pushed aside.

[“No one is thinking about requesting foreign intervention at the moment,”](#) said Ibrahim Dabbashi, former defector in 2011 who has cemented his position as Libya’s UN ambassador. For well over a year now, current Libyan leaders and diplomats have been insisting that they are [against any further foreign intervention](#)—having discovered the value of non-intervention. What is an even greater irony is how in just over a year, the UN, Secretary of State Kerry, the EU and AFRICOM, have moved from avowed anti-interventionism to pro-intervention. When useful, Libyans are deemed incapable of ruling themselves—one of the classic arguments of colonial humanitarianism from centuries past. Other [Libyans have gone on record to oppose foreign intervention](#), not reversing their stance from a year ago like their presumed foreign allies have done. Ibrahim Bate el Mal, a spokesperson for the Misrata military council, is quoted as saying:

“The point is that on the one hand IS’s expansion is out of control, but on the other, the danger is that with a military intervention the situation could only get worse. This is the feeling of our people and of our troops.”

Outside Zliten’s police station, Basher Bernani, a member of the municipal council, said that most people were opposed to foreign intervention: “This situation can no longer be solved by air strikes. European [military action] is likely to make the situation worse and bring dozens of foreign fighters here”. In fact, in at least one recent documented instance, [US Special Forces](#) (seen below) have been detected, detained, and then [expelled by Libyan forces](#): “Libya’s air force said 20 US Special Forces troops arrived at Libya’s Wattiya airbase, but left soon after local commanders asked them to go because they had no permission to be at the base” ([also see photos here](#)).

The [government of Chad](#), which also opposed the 2011 US-led NATO military intervention, continues to oppose any new military intervention, for excellent reasons once again. Chad has signalled the prospect of ISIS combatants moving south into the Sahel as they reportedly begin to disperse from Sirte in anticipation of Western airstrikes. Niger’s government has echoed this worry.

Colonel Khassim Moussa, head of Chad's Special Antiterrorism Group, speaking of Chad's installation of checkpoints on its northern border to block the entry of ISIS fighters, bluntly stated that he expected NATO to help protect Chad's northern border: "[It's them who got involved in Libya, it's up to them to fix it](#)".

## A New World Recolonization

[Hillary Rodham Clinton](#), US Secretary of State, March 20, 2011, to Jeffrey D. Feltman:

"Can we get a statement from the Libyan opposition...w [with] thx [thanks] for helping them and request for their Arab brothers to help as well?"

RT, December 25, 2015:

"[Thanks for destroying our country](#)': Angry Libyans lash out at Obama's independence congratulations"

I began with a presentation and discussion of H.G. Wells' story, *The Shape of Things to Come*, and the movie script which adapted and modified the story. In the 1936 movie a character who calls himself "Wings Over the World," member of a body naming itself the "United Airmen," and who claims to be part of a government which he calls "World Communications," flies down to a destroyed city to announce to the wretched denizens *his* plans for *their* salvation. As the ultimate *globalist*, announcer of a new world order, he also strikes the pose of the humanitarian civilizer, come down to conquer the unruly natives, for their own good of course. There is no sense that he has anything to gain, apart from a highly contrived sense of his own superiority. This is a pretty picture, when compared to our world.

In our world, Mr. Wings Over the World is not removed as a party to the destruction. He does not, by pure happenstance, come upon devastation, as if he had been until then a remote spectator. In our world, Mr. Wings Over the World first drops the bombs that obliterate the nation-state, and then lands to make lofty speeches about our impending "transition". The United Airmen first bring chaos, and then pave it over with their self-serving plans. *Tabula rasa* is the new *terra nullius*, which is then the material and ideological base for a "new world order".

There is too much to support theses of "creative destruction" to pretend not to understand that *chaos is opportunity*. If you accept the premise that chaos is opportunity, then you must be prepared to admit the logical consequence: *that destruction may be deliberate*, a "failure" by design. The only "unintended consequences" or "blunders" here are in not correctly calculating or estimating how far things would get out of control, how many other parties would capitalize on chaos, and that rewards would not be instantly reaped. Otherwise, on the economic front, provoking the collapse of others affords opportunities for increased military spending, thus furnishing the "defence" industry with further contracts, which then provides their partners in government a "cut" in the form of campaign donations and eventual positions of employment—we should know a great deal about the military-industrial complex ([Eisenhower](#)) and the power elites ([Mills](#)) by now. On the political front, chaos visited on others lays them bare to our planning their future, thus forcibly opening them to investments of all sorts. Ideologically, the chaos of the other vindicates our own sense of self-worth as superior, helping to cement a domestic constituency of support after it has been flattered about its own virtues and rendered proud and confident, in themselves and in their leaders. Disunity abroad can be turned into a call for unity in the centre of empire, a call to show "leadership" and to

establish “order” in the name of “our vital national interests”. But others have to be rendered *interesting* first.

The recolonization thesis becomes evident in the defining speech heralding the “[new world order](#),” delivered by then US president George H.W. Bush in 1990. In that speech, when Bush himself repeatedly spoke of ushering in a “new world order” in the context of the US-led military assault on Iraq, he also made another curiously worded statement: “[We’re now in sight of a United Nations that performs as envisioned by its founders](#)”. When the United Nations was founded in 1945, in San Francisco, by a mere [50 states](#) (it now has [193 members](#)), most of those were European states and several of them were colonial powers. To *return* the UN to such roots, is to implicitly yearn for its colonial origins as an elite club (plus some fully Eurocentric-led Latin American states). What Bush is also reminding his listeners in 1990, was that the UN had been forced to surpass its headier days of anti-colonialism, of calls for a [New International Economic Order](#), and of a UNESCO devoted to bringing about a [New World Information and Communication Order](#) aimed at undoing US cultural imperialism—all of which provoked the righteous white anger of US presidents such as Reagan and GHW Bush. They railed against UNESCO, defunded it, and helped to quash its impact. This is the UN that is *now* performing as *originally* desired (see also Cammack, 2006).

## **Governments without Addresses, Addresses without Governments**

Speaking about Syria in August, 2011, US Secretary of State [Hillary Clinton encouraged the opposition to “get its act together,”](#) in an interview with CBS News. Clinton bemoaned the lack of an organized opposition for the US to support—which makes clear the order of things: *first* came US opposition to the Syrian state, and the intention to overthrow its government, and *second* came an organized opposition on the ground, not the reverse as the mainstream interventionist narrative would have it. Clinton then stated this:

“There is a lot of sort of beginning sprouts of such an opposition. [But there’s no address for the opposition.](#) There is no place that any of us who wish to assist can go”.

Here was a case of an address in search of a government, another way of forcing fiction to become reality.

Concerning Libya, the situation involves [a newly invented third government](#), in search of a Libyan address. Here I am speaking of the misnamed “Government of National Accord” (GNA), which is neither a government, nor was it the product of a national accord. Imagine that: a “government” fabricated behind closed doors in meetings between the US, EU states, and regional powers, then announced from up high to Libyans as their new government, which they are encouraged to support, to pretend as if it was their own, while it remains externally located (in a luxury hotel in Tunisia). As if not expecting anyone to raise an eyebrow, let alone a question, the UN’s Libya envoy, Martin Kobler, declared: “We must advance on the political process by [installing a government in Tripoli](#)”—the UN is now in the business of *installing* governments. In 2011, the UN spearheaded regime change in denying the Libyan government [the right to represent itself at the UN](#), in a series of fundamental violations of international laws that are at the very core of the UN...but which obviously were never meant for the decolonized, who mostly did not exit when the UN was founded.

All of this talk of a new government has thus come from the same international leaders that so confidently declare, in final and absolute terms, how this or that national leader “must go,” and has “lost all legitimacy”. Again, from the same figures that speak of “democracy promotion”—we have a government which no Libyan elected, or even selected. The same path toward a manufactured fiction of governance was pursued by the US and NATO in Afghanistan, in creating Hamid Karzai as president, and then later applauding the “courageous will of the Afghan people” for allegedly “voting” in elections rife with fraud on a massive scale, when millions more “Afghans” than were registered turned out to “vote”. The same was done in Iraq, so that it could be claimed that an Iraqi government “agreed” to the sweeping neoliberal transformations unilaterally imposed by Iraq’s US dictator, Paul Bremer of the “Coalition Provisional Authority”.

No wonder then that the forces backing the General National Congress, in Tripoli, announced their intention to [arrest any members of this new third government should they set foot in Libya](#). No wonder also that reportedly many Libyans refer to this UN mandated fiction as “[the foreign government](#)”.

Science fiction, masked as US foreign policy and UN resolutions, seems to really come to light when “governments” are created, “recognized” and installed, while possessing none of the qualities that define a government—no territory to govern, no local roots, no local history, and above all, no sovereignty. Though they may be *unbelievable* as governments, this should not distract from what is instead quite credible: these inventions form part of the new global (re)colonial regime. As suggested in the last section, apparently nothing bothered imperial powers so much as decolonization—and they had every intention of clawing it back and finding new ways of reimposing colonialism.

## “Failed State” versus “False Caliphate”

“The last thing in the world you want is a [false caliphate](#) with access to billions of dollars of oil revenue,” US Secretary of State John Kerry said earlier this month. Then [The New York Times](#) notes in a matter of fact manner: “there is no functioning government now in Libya”. So how is the caliphate “false,” when it is compared to something which is absent? In fact, one would be hard pressed to find a well-substantiated source that is able to convincingly explain, first, how the Islamic State came to create a base in Libya, and second, how it has been able to entrench itself and spread with such speed. What dominates the mind space instead are the sorts of circular arguments advanced by [The New York Times](#) and by the US government: “forming a unity government could lay the groundwork for the West to provide badly needed security assistance to the new Libyan leadership”. In other words, install a government so that you can send aid to this fictitious entity, so that it can do the bidding of foreign powers. It’s bad science fiction because it is too transparently false and not even remotely credible—and the self-serving nature of the exploitative relationship, is only able to produce a parody of international law to justify itself.

## Invented Governments versus Sovereign Governments

We are not dealing with the first time that the the US has tried to invent a government for Libya. Somewhat unlike “Wings Over the World” in part 1, who declared that the intentions of his “government” (“World Communications”) is to put an end to sovereignty, the US will not end it outright so much as invent it almost out of thin air. The US announced that the Jamahiriya led by Muammar Gaddafi had “lost all legitimacy”—but *in the face of what exactly* had it supposedly “lost” its legitimacy? Confirming what we already knew and understood, retired CIA operative Tyler Drumheller wrote various memoranda to Sidney Blumenthal—Hillary Clinton’s private advisor on

Libya in 2011—which showed just how [foreign powers helped to concoct the opposition “government”](#) [the National Transitional Council, or NTC] that they would then recognize as the “legitimate representative” of all Libyans. This recognition was offered in spite of the fact that neither during the “rebellion,” nor as plainly demonstrated after 2011, did such legitimacy ever exist on the ground. Had they been the legitimate representatives of all Libyans, then we would not have the “failed state” of today. However, that realization makes an awful lot of regime changers and humanitarian imperialists distinctly uncomfortable, because it suggests a flip side: that what was forcibly overthrown, and had existed for 42 years (a record lifespan that Libya is unlikely to match again), must have had a solid base of legitimate representation. Either way, those for whom the fiction of legitimate governance was invented, are today on the receiving end of the same process that instituted them—they are being uninvented by a reinvention.

## **The Failure of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)**

It is difficult to find any writer publicly commenting, let alone explaining, a fact that should be painfully obvious to the world right now: the United Nations of the “new world order” has failed miserably to achieve any reality for the illusion that Western liberal democracy would be transplanted to subjugated populations around the world, and take root. No roots, only routes to the nearest emergency exit: the irony is that the last two letters in UNSMIL are themselves untrue—it is no longer *in Libya*. UNSMIL was forced to leave Libya in 2014 over the violent failure of the costly myth it had peddled to the world’s taxpayers who support it.

“Transition to democracy”—this was the phrase repeatedly produced by UNSMIL to describe Libya post-2011. In 2012, UNSMIL said it was [committed](#) “to assist and support Libyan national efforts to undertake political dialogue, promote national reconciliation and embark upon the electoral process”. The [“democratic transition and electoral process”](#) were, together, UNSMIL’s stated top priority.

In what reads like a “mission accomplished” statement for regime change, on February 17, 2012, the office of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon announced that Libyans now stood [“within reach of a democratic future which one year ago seemed only a distant dream”](#). This marked the first anniversary of Libya’s “revolution”—an event barely commemorated in Libya anymore, apart from public expressions of regret and remorse. The statement attributable to his office added:

“The Secretary-General urges all Libyans to stand together in a spirit of reconciliation; to insist that a revolution in the name of human rights must not be tarnished by abuses but must bring about justice through rule of law; and to ensure that women, youth and civil society as a whole are encouraged to play their full part in the development of transparent, inclusive and accountable institutions. The transition to democracy is a period of great challenges, but it is also a time of opportunities to build a new Libya that honors the sacrifices of its people in their struggle for freedom”.

While many speak of a “failed state” in Libya, fewer speak of “failed inter-state organizations” such as the UN in Libya. The UN imposed itself in the role of supporting “democratic transition” and “democracy promotion” in Libya, of building a state based on the [“rule of law,”](#) in part through its instrument on the ground, [UNSMIL](#), and through other key agencies, such as the [UNDP](#) (United Nations Development Programme). The UNDP *was* especially [active in Libya, investing \\$30 million](#) in support for the electoral process (which ended up in ruin, with negligible turnouts), supporting

the National Transitional Council and the National Congress, supporting the constitutional process, allegedly strengthening institutions, public administration, accountability and transparency, and supporting “civil society” and “civic engagement”. The UN’s program was, in ambition, in the same tradition as the artificial, externally-imposed, package of neoliberal transformations that the US occupation authority tried to impose on Iraq.

[The UN](#) also played a vital diplomatic, media, and legalistic role of its own in ensuring regime change in Libya. In recent years, the UNDP adopted the practice of writing partial, partisan attacks on the former government of a member state in articles on its website, such as [this one](#) filled with hyperbole and falsehoods bundled into a single sentence: “Four decades under the rule of one of the harshest authoritarian regimes in the Arab region have left no chance for Baba and her peers to learn about democracy and good governance”. In striking contrast, the UNDP site contains no visible evidence of the termination of its role in failure, how it failed on so many fronts, and why, nor an account for how it foolishly wasted millions of world taxpayers’ dollars on a project of social and political engineering, the likes of which were known only under former colonial rule.

## **Apprentice Semi-Statehood versus Recalcitrance**

[For all of 2015](#), the news was filled with repeatedly premature announcements that a new “peace plan” had been agreed upon in Libya, with a new government of national unity to replace or subsume the two main competing governments (the General National Congress in Tripoli, versus the House of Representatives in Tobruk). Each time, the news turned back to announcing that the latest new deal had been rejected by one or both parties. Then in December, a new Government of National Accord was triumphantly declared by the UN and the US. It’s not even a government based in Libya—in fact, it is not even allowed to enter Libya, under threats of arrest from GNC backers. So we were then told the GNA would “soon” be formalized—except that it was immediately [rejected](#) by the parliament in Tobruk. The new government, a revised version of the GNA, would be formed “within the [next 10 days](#)” we were told in January. By February, an extension of an “[extra week](#)” was sought. As the [Libya correspondent](#) for *The Guardian* noted, “this is an extension of an extension”. At the time of writing, [yet another extension](#) was introduced, and UN’s Libya envoy, Martin Kobler, sought to publicly pressure Libyans to [hurry up](#).

Facing the possibility of further extensions, foreign powers (the US and leading EU states) have increased pressure on Libyans to accept the foreign-backed “unity” government, [under the threat of sanctions](#). “There is no time to lose for the national unity government to assume its functions and securely establish itself in Tripoli,” the newly appointed French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault asserted imperiously, warning that anyone “obstructing the process” would face international sanctions: “That point is clear”.

Of course that process has been “obstructed,” not just by anyone but by all of the contending parties in Libya. Let’s remember that even if the extensions referred to above cease, they will only have ceased with one of the two contending parliaments in Libya. The entire process of installing a new government is being led by the UN, with the forced agreement of the House of Representatives in Tobruk. The GNC in Tripoli is deliberately excluded altogether—already, from before the start, the process has doomed itself to failure, insisting on taking the name of “national accord” in the absence of accord. The UN thus became an external party to one side in a civil war. Freezing out the GNC was the [mission of the previous “peace envoy,”](#) UNSMIL’s Bernardino Leon. He privately boasted of a strategy to “[completely delegitimise GNC](#)” and that “[GNC should disappear](#)”. Leon was privately [in the pay of](#) the [United Arab Emirates](#), which is opposed to the GNC and [continues](#)

[to violate the UN arms embargo](#). The [UAE](#) also sought to control the process of selection a candidate as head of the new government. One [analysis](#) summed up the situation as follows:

“Parachuting a third ‘government’ into Libya by Western vote is pretty bad. But, as things tend to be in the region, the UN action is actually far worse than it appears. First, the newly approved UN plan is the exact plan devised and announced by former UN envoy Bernardino Leon – who was caught accepting a high-paying job from a country which was arming, funding and fighting with one side of the Libyan conflict. The same Leon who told his future employers that one of his goals was to ‘discredit’ one of the existing Libyan governments. Compounding a bad situation, in response to the [Leon scandal](#), the UN has not only refused to even acknowledge the conflict of interest and corruption of their envoy, they unanimously approved the plan he drafted. It’s little wonder that leaders in Libya and the region are not supportive of the ‘new’ UN plan for a ‘unity’ government”.

The United Nations Security Council’s Resolution 2259 ([UNSCR 2259](#))—passed with the approval of Russia and China, let it be noted—reads as a charter for foreign intervention in Libyan affairs. It demands the Government of National Accord’s “full cooperation with the International Criminal Court and the Prosecutor” (p. 3), while consistently imposing foreign concerns about the oil trade, migrants, and terrorism. UNSCR 2259 not only endorsed the new GNA “[as the sole legitimate Government of Libya](#),” but it also called on all UN member states “to cease support to and official contact with parallel institutions claiming to be the legitimate authority, but which were outside of the Political Agreement”—which effectively means that the [GNC has been internationally outlawed](#), a fact lost on most journalists. The UN mandated that the new GNA be implanted in Tripoli (supposedly without any resistance from GNC militias), with the immediate aim of international support for the GNA being to fight the Islamic State (Daesh), along with Ansar al-Sharia and Al-Qaeda. Any parties acting as “spoilers” would face UN sanctions.

And what has been the result? Spoilers. The presidents of Libya’s two rival parliaments immediately and jointly [rejected the UN decree](#).

## **Libyan Opposition to UN Impositions and Threats**

Interestingly, the same Resolution (p. 1) made a note of [a letter](#) it had received signed by the both heads of the country’s two contending parliaments—Aguila Saleh Gouider, President of the House of Representatives, and Nouri Ali Abu-Sahmain, President of the General National Congress. [That letter](#) damns the UN process, and makes reference to the fact that Libyans have been conducting their own, independent peace talks (in Malta), in a process that parallels and rivals that of the UN. In brief, [the letter](#) emphasized that any agreement reached, “should reflect the will and agreement of the Libyan people in order to gain full support,” and the signatories complained that UNSMIL did not give them a chance to complete their talks, and instead “went ahead with the signing ceremony in Skhirat”. They stated very pointedly in what should be read as a reasonable warning:

“You will be aware that ignoring the views of the House of Representatives and the General National Congress would fundamentally undermine the very meaning of consensus and its outcomes. Moreover, the violent demonstrations that broke out in Tripoli and numerous other Libyan towns have underscored the lack of consensus regarding the presidential council. The latter is not the product of a Libyan

consensus. Rather, it stems from the personal interpretation of the outgoing United Nations envoy, Bernardino León. A government grounded in a genuine, broad-based national consensus would be in a position to confront the crisis facing Libya. A government bereft of such consensus—as is the case of the government announced by UNSMIL—would create serious complications for the situation in Libya”.

Malta’s Foreign Minister, George Vella, backed up the Libyan letter, arguing that the threatened imposition of sanctions against Libyans opposed to the UN agreement, would inevitably [worsen the situation](#).

## Forced Solutions are Failed Solutions

It is an extraordinarily bad piece of science fiction that is being sold to the international public here, as suggested by the nature of the remarks made by US Secretary of State, John Kerry: “[I urge all Libyans to support this final agreement and to unite behind the Government of National Accord](#)”. That a US official presumes to *tell Libyans* what they should support and how they should behave, is itself a testament to the fact that the “agreement” on Libya was produced without Libyan agreement. It is a falsehood, a fabrication, a solution that requires force to be made real, and thus inevitably a failed solution.

[Samantha Power](#), US ambassador to the UN, then added to the fiction by arguing that the “agreement” offers Libya a chance “to reclaim the opportunities first made possible by the February 17th, 2011, revolution”. The noteworthy irony here is that the UN decree displaces the same parties that were recognized and legitimated by the UN in 2011.

What most writers have already understood—and at least this point is not in dispute—is that the whole rush by foreign powers to create a puppet government is [to legitimate a rush to war in Libya](#). Western powers, working through the UN, not only want a superficially [unified Libya so that they can bomb it](#), they also want the powers that be to recognize their replacements. That such unvarnished arrogance should pass with so little comment outside of Libya is a disturbing testament to our own numb acquiescence to imperialism.

The GNC President announced that Libyans can solve their own problems, with foreign assistance, “but we [will not accept foreign intervention](#) against the will of the Libyan people”. One analyst supported this statement, explaining: “A Libyan-drafted and approved peace plan followed by a unified, Libyan-led military force to push the Islamic State out of Libya would be have been best for everyone. But that would have called for patience and support for Libyans to create their own peace for their own country. [Unlike resolutions and bombers, resources like patience appear to be in short supply in the West](#)”.

Symbolic of the rejection of the UN, the UN’s envoy, [Martin Kobler, was humiliated](#) by the GNC authorities in Tripoli when “his press conference was interrupted and told he needed permission to hold it at Mitiga airport”. Kobler, embarrassed, quickly departed.

Failed intervention has thus already set about creating a new round of failed intervention. That this should transpire during a US presidential election campaign, with virtually no comment by any of the candidates, is a very bad sign. It is a bad sign first for Libya, and other African states that may be targeted next, and second for US citizens.

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