OMNI LIBYA NEWSLETTER #2, July 1, 2011. Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace (#1May 2, 2011)

Contents of #1

Why Gaddafi and Not the Other Tyrants
Mayer
Rubenstein
Blum
Carson: Deal with Saudis
Noueihe: Bombing a School for Children
Killing Gaddafi’s Son and Grandchildren

Contents for #2

QUESTIONING NATO'S ATTACKS ON LIBYA

Dennis Kucinich and War Powers; House Blocks Kucinich Bill
William Blum
Cindy Sheehan
Mike Ferner, VfP
Eric Bronner
Jonathan Schell
Keith Olbermann and Michael Moore
Adam Schreck and Hadeel Al-Shalchi
Ralph Nader: Unconstitutional War
MEDIA SUPPORT FOR NATO INVASION

NYT for Escalation

PBS NewsHour

CNN

“House Blocks Vote on Kucinich Libya Bill Over Fears It Might Pass “

Elspeth Reeve, The Atlantic Wire

Intro: "House Republicans postponed a Wednesday vote on Rep. Dennis Kucinich's resolution to end US involvement in the bombing of Libya because they were afraid it would pass." 


The Anti-Empire Report by William Blum

July 1st, 2011 www.killinghope.org

“Libya: Unending American hostility”

If I could publicly ask our beloved president one question, it would be this: "Mr. President, in your short time in office you've waged war against six countries — Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen and Libya. This makes me wonder something. With all due respect: What is wrong with you?" The American media has done its best to dismiss or ignore Libyan charges that NATO/US missiles have been killing civilians (the people they're supposedly protecting), at least up until the recent bombing "error" that was too blatant to be covered up. But who in the mainstream media has questioned the NATO/US charges that Libya was targeting and "massacring" Libyan civilians a few months ago, which, we've been told, is the reason for the Western powers attacks? Don't look to Al Jazeera for such questioning. The government of Qatar, which owns the station, has a deep-seated animosity toward Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and was itself a leading purveyor of the Libyan "massacre" stories, as well as playing a military role in the war against Tripoli. Al Jazeera's reporting on the subject has been so disgraceful I've stopped looking at the station.
Alain Juppé, Foreign Minister of France, which has been the leading force behind the attacks on Libya, spoke at the Brookings Institution in Washington on June 7. After his talk he was asked a question from the audience by local activist Ken Meyercord:

"An American observer of events in Libya has commented: 'The evidence was not persuasive that a large-scale massacre or genocide was either likely or imminent.' That comment was made by Richard Haass, President of our Council on Foreign Relations. If Mr. Haass is right, and he's a fairly knowledgeable fellow, then what NATO has done in Libya is attack a country that wasn't threatening anyone; in other words, aggression. Are you at all concerned that as NATO deals more and more death and destruction on the people of Libya that the International Criminal Court may decide that you and your friends in the Naked Aggression Treaty Organization should be prosecuted rather than Mr. Gaddafi?"

Monsieur Juppé then stated, without attribution, somebody's estimate that 15,000 Libyan civilians had been killed by pro-Gaddafi forces. To which Mr. Meyercord replied: "So where are the 15,000 bodies?" M. Juppé failed to respond to this, although in the tumult caused by the first question, it was not certain that he had heard the second one. (For a counter-view of the Libyan "massacre" stories, see this video.)

It should be noted that, as of June 30, NATO had flown 13,184 air missions (sorties) over Libya, 4,963 of which are described as strike sorties. You can find the latest figures on the Allied Command Operations website.

If any foreign power fired missiles at the United States would Barack Obama regard that as an act of war? If the US firing hundreds of missiles at Libya is not an act of war, as Obama insists (to avoid having to declare war as required by US law), then the deaths resulting from the missile attacks are murder. That's it. It's either war or murder. To the extent there's a difference between the two.

It should be further noted that since Gaddafi came to power in 1969 there has virtually never been a sustained period when the United States has been prepared to treat him and the many positive changes he's instituted in Libya and Africa with any respect. For a history of this hostility, including the continual lies and scare campaigns, see my Libya chapter in Killing Hope.

---

**Cindy Sheehan's Soapbox**

**June 26, 2011**

Dear Friend,

Welcome back to Cindy Sheehan's Soapbox!

This past week, I went to San Francisco to see one of my personal heroes, Cynthia McKinney, speak about her recent trips to Libya--from Cynthia, we always hear the truth. No media, corporate, or US government propaganda spin! Click here for a great article Cynthia's son, Coy, wrote about the entire Libya scam. Click here to read the transcript of an interview I did with Cynthia about U.S. election fraud. Cynthia will be our guest on the Soapbox on Sunday, July 3.  cindy@cindysheehanssoapbox.com

---

**Mike Ferner's Opinion of Obomba's "Non-Hostile" War**

**June 20, 2011**

Dear VFP Members and Supporters,

Begging your forbearance, I just had to take a break from ongoing administrative duties here at the VFP office to respond to the most recent in a long string of grotesque outrages.
I'm referring to the Obama administration's response to a federal lawsuit filed by Rep. Dennis Kucinich and 9 other Members of Congress contending the Libyan adventure is unconstitutional, as well as a letter from House Speaker Boehner warning the President to observe a deadline in the War Powers Act and get Congressional approval for invading Libya.

The administration's response to Congress -- and I am not joking or borrowing a line from the Daily Show -- is that Mr. Obama can spend a billion dollars bombing the daylights out of Libya based on nothing more than his own authority because:

<full story>
http://veteransforpeace.org/news_detail.php?idx=80   vfp@veteransforpeace.org

---

Propaganda for War

FOCUS: Stephen Eric Bronner, “Imperiled Revolutions”

*Reader Supported News* June 24, 2011

Excerpt: "The Arab Spring was marked by spontaneous revolts, lack of charismatic leaders, youthful exuberance, and disdain for more traditional forms of organizational discipline. That is what made these revolutions so appealing. Institutional obstacles to democracy, however, require institutional responses: speaking truth to power is no longer enough. Success now hinges on the organization of power by the former insurgents and their ability to deal with the armed forces, the bureaucracy, religious institutions and the global economy."

“If Americans Don't Get Hurt, War is No Longer War”


Los Angeles Times June 22, 1011

Jonathan Schell writes: "American planes are taking off, they are entering Libyan air space, they are locating targets, they are dropping bombs, and the bombs are killing and injuring people and destroying things. It is war. Some say it is a good war and some say it is a bad war, but surely it is a war. Nonetheless, the Obama administration insists it is not a war. Why?" The Obama administration has come up with a remarkable justification for going to war against Libya without the required Congressional approval.


Reader Supported News

Keith Olbermann, Michael Moore on Libya, Current TV

Keith Olbermann made his long-awaited return to cable news last night. His first guest was Michael Moore, who took on the Obama administration's decision to not seek Congressional approval for military action in Libya.

READ MORE http://readersupportednews.org/off-site-opinion-section/133-133/6339-first-guest-michael-moore-on-libya
“Libyan Civilians Said Killed in NATO Airstrike”

Adam Schreck and Hadeel Al-Shalchi, Associated Press

The report begins: "The Libyan government accused NATO of bombing a residential neighborhood in the capital and killing civilians early Sunday, adding to its charges that the alliance is striking non-military targets. At least four people, including two children, were reported killed."


“NATO Admits Airstrike Killed Civilians”

Adam Schreck and Hadeel Al-Shalchi, Associated Press/Canadian Press

The report begins: "Libya's government said NATO warplanes struck a residential neighbourhood in the capital Sunday and killed nine civilians, including two children. Hours later, NATO confirmed one of its airstrikes went astray."


“Ralph Nader,” Waging Another Unconstitutional War “

Reader Supported News  June 18, 2011
Intro: "The meticulous Harvard Law Review editors should be rolling over in their footnotes. The recidivist violations of constitutional and statutory requirements by their celebrated predecessor at that journal - Barack Obama - have reached Orwellian dimensions in the war against Libya."

**NEW YORK TIMES** on Obama’s Speech and Regime Change

“NYT Demands Libyan War Escalation” By Robert Parry
April 8, 2011  Neocon editors who increasingly dominate the New York Times want President Barack Obama to deploy A-10 and AC-130 aircraft for close-combat attacks against Libyan government forces in urban areas.  Read more:  [http://www.readersupportednews.org/off-site-opinion-section/71-71/5566-nyt-demands-libyan-war-escalation](http://www.readersupportednews.org/off-site-opinion-section/71-71/5566-nyt-demands-libyan-war-escalation)

Public TV’s Libya Limits: Narrow war debate on PBS NewsHour”  3/29/11

If public television's mission is to bring diverse viewpoints to the airwaves, the discussions about the war in Libya on the PBS NewsHour haven't lived up to that standard. Over the past two weeks, the NewsHour has featured an array of current and former military and government officials in its discussion segments--leaving little room for antiwar voices, U.S. foreign policy critics and legal experts.

- On March 18, the NewsHour interviewed the Obama administration’s UN Ambassador Susan Rice.


- On March 22, the NewsHour brought on Charles Kupchan, a former Clinton administration National Security Council staffer, along with a couple of rare guests without U.S. government or military backgrounds: Daniel Dombey of the Financial Times and former Libyan Ambassador Ali Suleiman Aujali, who broke with the Gadhafi regime and is aligned with the opposition.
On March 23 the NewsHour was back to the officials-only format, interviewing a pair of former senators, Democrat Gary Hart and Republican Norm Coleman, both of whom support the White House action in Libya, and Deputy National Security Adviser Denis McDonough.

On March 24, the NewsHour interviewed retired Army Gen. Jack Keane and Frederic Wehrey, a former Air Force officer and Iraq War vet now at the Rand Corporation, both of whom supported sending some U.S. ground troops to Libya. Viewers weren't told that Keane's consulting firm, Keane Associates, includes major military companies among its clients (USA Today, 3/10/10), or that Keane is also on the board of General Dynamics, a major military contractor.


There are many aspects of the Libya War that should be discussed on public television, featuring the views of those outside of elite Beltway circles. The 1967 Carnegie Commission report that gave birth to PBS envisioned it as a "forum for debate and controversy" that would "provide a voice for groups in the community that may be otherwise unheard." The NewsHour should include those principles in its decisions about whom to include in its coverage of Libya.

**ACTION:**

Tell the NewsHour to open up its Libya discussions to voices outside the Beltway, including antiwar voices, U.S. foreign policy critics and legal experts.

**CONTACT:**

PBS NewsHour  onlineda@newshour.org

(703) 998-2138  You might also want to send your comments to PBS ombud Michael Getler (ombudsman@pbs.org), and post copies of your comments on the FAIR Blog.

CNN

Journalism 101 - How to Avoid Being a Propaganda Tool

By Leslie Griffith, Reader Supported News  18 June 11

How to avoid being a propaganda tool in one easy step.
It's been a long, slow slide for CNN. The once-proud cable news pioneer has consistently crawled under the media's lowering bar, but this week it blazed a new trail to the bottom.

In at least one glaring example this week, the CNN editorial staff threw out the basics of textbook journalism in favor of racy innuendo. I don't blame reporters, I blame their bosses who don't insist on responsible reporting.

Reporters are pressured to find "edgy" and "sexy" stories to fill the never-ending news cycle. So, reporters make compromises. This week's most glaring compromise involved two things Americans like to talk about more than just about anything else - Viagra and Sex. I could shout "Viva Viagra" in an attempt to lighten things up a bit ... but this story has far-reaching ramifications. It's no laughing matter.

Here's a quote from Russ Baker, reporter and editor of the investigative website whowhatwhy.com:

"Last week at WhoWhatWhy we put out an important story about what's going unreported concerning the bombing of Libya. Now, our concern is about what is being reported. We're amassing indications that the Libya mass rape story being used to drum up support among NATO allies for continued bombing ... may be false. In other words, part of an intense disinformation campaign. And one that is working, with the BBC the latest to buy into it."

Now we get CNN's titillating installment, which involves an alleged cell-phone video of a Libyan woman being sexually abused by alleged Gaddhafi loyalists and, for good measure, complete with all the repulsive details and heart-breaking screams. But this is where we have to pay close attention ... because the reporter told us in the content of the story that it could actually be nothing more than planted propaganda.

She cautions: "We've been unable to verify its authenticity. We don't know where it was taken, or when, or by whom."

What? Did we read that right?

In any responsible newsroom, that alone is reason enough not to publish the story or run the video. Without confirmation and without knowing where and from whom it came, it is little more than a baseless story with no attribution. In fact, after running the story, CNN is in danger of propagating what appears to have become a massive disinformation campaign to drum up support for a war. And that's why reporters and editors always ask for multiple sources, direct attribution and some concrete evidence that the story is indeed based in fact. This is chapter one in any journalist's textbook. It keeps reporters from becoming little more than mouthpieces or stenographers and, Murrow forbid, from reporting lies.

But this is how most news organizations operate today. They rush to out-titillate the competition without checking the facts and before considering whether or not they've been manipulated ... and their eye-catching story simply planted.

Obviously, "We the people" need to buy newsroom bean counters a set of journalism textbooks, perhaps highlighting the chapter on how to avoid becoming a tool.
Leslie Griffith has been a television anchor, foreign correspondent and an investigative reporter in newspaper, radio and television for over 25 years. Among her many achievements are two Edward R Murrow Awards, nine Emmies, 37 Emmy Nominations, a National Emmy nomination for writing, and more than a dozen other awards for journalism. She is currently working on a documentary, giving speeches on "Reforming the Media," and writing for many on-line publications, as well as writing a book called "Shut Up and Read." She hopes the book, her speeches, and her articles on the media will help remind the nation that journalism was once about public service ... not profit. To contact Leslie, go to lesliegriffith.org.

END OF 2ND REPORT ON LIBYA