US and Europe weigh up Libyan intervention as oil prices spike

By Patrick O'Connor

The Obama administration and its European counterparts are coordinating a more aggressive stance toward Libya, including possible military intervention, in response to fears of an international oil price shock. With Libya’s daily oil output reduced by an estimated 50-60 percent, oil has surged to its highest price in more than two years, at nearly $110 a barrel. Stock markets have fallen in the US, Europe and Asia over fears that further price hikes may trigger inflation and slow economic activity.

The overriding concern of the imperialist powers is to re-establish stability in the North African state, an oil producer and major oil exporter. The various critics levelled by the Western leaders against the Libyan government’s brutal violence are utterly hypocritical—Muammar Gaddafi has enjoyed the warmest of relations with the US and Europe over the past decade. His regime was funded and armed by these powers, preparing it for Washington’s geo-strategic objectives in the region and collaboration with the foreign oil companies permitted into Libya. Many senior political and business figures have enriched themselves by working with Gaddafi, notably former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who was a frequent visitor to Tripoli on behalf of US investment bank JPMorgan Chase.

Now, however, the government in Tripoli appears on the verge of collapse as opposition forces extend their control from the eastern part of the country to western urban centres near the capital.

Libya’s French President Nicolas Sarkozy declared: “The international community cannot remain a spectator to these massive violations of human rights.” He called for the imposition of a NATO-ordered “no fly” zone over Libya. This comes just weeks after the Sarkozy administration moved to have French not police help former Tunisian dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali crush the revolt that sparked the unfolding revolution across North Africa and the Middle East. The possible creation of a no fly zone over Libya is being discussed internationally. Concerns have been raised in the US and Britain over the chances of having Russia and China approve this measure through the UN Security Council. Several media outlets have ominously noted former Libyan oil company has declared force majeure—a legal clause allowing it to walk away from contractual obligations—on反映了

Minister Joel Kaapanda

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“We should avoid trial by public opinion. This is not within the letter and spirit of the Namibian Constitution, our supreme law of the land. It is against this background that in order to meet the requirements imposed by Article 12 (Fair Trial) of the Namibian Constitution, we are required to conduct ourselves within the letter and spirit of our Constitution. It will be sad to see those who are liable to prosecution being acquitted because of trial by public opinion.”

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