Swaziland, Angola, the Sandinista of Nicaragua, the PLO, the Native American Movements throughout the Americas, The Nation of Islam led by Louis Farrakhan to name but a few. Nelson Mandela called Muammar Qaddafi one of this century’s greatest freedom fighters, and insisted that the eventual collapse of the apartheid system owed much to Qaddafi and Libyan support. Mandela said that in the darkest moments of their struggle, when their backs were to the wall, it was Muammar Qaddafi who stood with them. The late African freedom fighter, Kwame Ture, referred to Qaddafi as ‘a diamond in a cesspool of African misleaders’. The hideous notion being perpetuated by the media and reactionary forces, inside and outside of Libya, that this is just another story of a blunted dictator that has run its course is a deliberate distortion. In the words of the Islamic scholar Mahmoud Ayub: “For millions of the oppressed of Asia, Africa and Latron America, Qaddafi is a hero, a corramde in the revolutionary struggle against imperialism, exploitation and racism. In short, Qaddafi has been loved and hated, admired and reviled, and above all feared as an impulsive politician who refuses to play the usual games of international diplomacy.”

No one can deny Muammar Qaddafi’s invaluable contribution to human emancipation and the universal truths outlined in his Green Book. Progressive scholars in many parts of the world, including the West, have acclaimed The Green Book as an incisive critique of capitalism and the Western Parliamentary system.

In addition, there is no denying that the system of direct democracy posited by Qaddafi offers an alternative model and solution for Africa and the Third World, where multiparty so-called democracy has been a dismal failure, resulting in poverty, ethnic and tribal conflict and ills.

Every revolution, since the beginning of time, has defended itself against those who would want to roll back its gains. Europeans should look back into their own bloody history to see that this includes the American, French and Bolshevik revolutions. Marxists spoke of Trotsky and Lenin’s brutal suppression of the Kronstadt rebellion by the Red Army as being a ‘tragic necessity’.

Let’s get it right: The battle in Libya is not about peaceful protesters versus an armed and hostile state. All sides are heavily armed and hostile. The battle being waged in Libya is essentially a battle between those who want to see a unified and liberated Libya and Africa, free of neo-colonialism and neo-liberal capitalism and free to construct systems of government compatible with the African and Arab personalites and cultures and those who find this entire notion repugnant. And both sides are willing to pay the ultimate price to defend their positions.

Make no mistake, if Qaddafi and the Libyan revolution are defeated by this opportunistic conglomerate of reactionaries and racists, then progressive forces worldwide and the Africans Unification project will suffer a huge defeat and set back.

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