By Patrick O'Connor and Patrick Martin

At congressional hearings Tuesday and Wednesday and in statements to the media, top officials of the Obama administration defended the strategy behind American military intervention in Libya, as the Pentagon moves ships and warplanes towards the North African country. The same debate is going on across the Atlantic among the European powers that have deployed their own military assets to the war on Gaddafi's regime.

In this official debate, the rights and interests of the Libyan people count for nothing. The US and European imperialists are concerned about the practical difficulties of turning military forces into a huge and largely desert country, and about the political implications of the launching of a third major intervention against a regime that has kept the US and European imperialists at bay for years.

Why are we spending over $500 billion in Libya? Why are we there? Why are the civil rights of the Libyan people not being respected? Why are we not telling the Libyan people that they are not being respected?

The Pentagon chief was responding to a question from the Obama administration’s policy advisor, Senator John McCain, the Republican presidential candidate in 2008, and Senator Joseph Lieberman, the right-wing Democrat who fervently supported the Bush administration throughout the war in Iraq. McCain told the Atlantic Council, a Washington think tank Tuesday that the US should immediately impose a no-fly zone over Libya.

"Of course we have to have a no-fly zone," McCain declared. "We are spending over $500 billion, not counting Iraq and Afghanistan, on our nation’s defense. And we can’t afford to lose a no-fly zone over Tripoli.

"The problem here is that you have to ask yourself who would you be arming," he warned. "Who would be preparing a range of different tribes and communities that have very different agendas once Gaddafi goes?"

German foreign minister Guido Westerwelle said that a no-fly zone should be considered, but warned that "the impression that this is about military intervention and not about the larger problems that emerge under any circumstance."

He added that public discussion of US and European military action against Libya was key to persuading countries of the "propaganda of the dictator" and strengthening Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi politically.

"Media claims of widespread air attacks by forces loyal the Gaddafi regime have fuelled the calls for outside military intervention. But Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had made an international media statement that the US military had been unable to confirm such attacks."

"The Washington Post also reported that military officials Tuesday denying that such attacks had taken place outside of attempts to bomb arms depots. "I don’t think we have seen indications they’re bombing people," he told the newspaper."

"These admissions under-score the fraudulent character of the air commandos. We are employing the US and international media for a so-called ‘humanitarian’ intervention into Libya."

"From the outset of the crisis, Washington and its European allies have been centrally concerned with protecting their valuable stake in Libya’s oil industry and advancing their regional geo-strategic interests."

"The Obama administration initially wanted to see if Gaddafi could crush the uprising, and only turned against its ally in Tripoli after the regime lost control of large parts of the country."

"Then the drumbeat of war commenced, with a concerted propaganda campaign likening Libya to the Balkans, and even Rwanda or Sudan, in order to provide the pretext for an intervention aimed at turning the North African state into a semi-colony subservient to the operations of the major oil corporations."

"The self-appointed leader of the so-called ‘liberal opposition’ to Gaddafi, Mr. Chirac, warned that he would encourage Chinese, African and Indian oil companies to begin operations in Libya."

"The EU is the longest nose in the world. He was named the man with longest nose by the Guinness World Records recently."

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Obama "outraged" by shooting of U.S. troops in Germany

WASHINGTON, April 2, 2011 - President Barack Obama said on Saturday that he was "saddened and outraged" by the shooting of two U.S. Air Force personnel in Frankfurt, Germany. He told reporters at the White House that "I am saddened and outraged by this attack."

"We will spare no effort in learning how this outrageous act took place."

"The two airmen were killed on Wednesday afternoon when a gunman from Kosovo attacked a bus carrying U.S. soldiers at Frankfurt airport."

"Two others were injured in the incident."

"Obama said the United States will work with German authorities to ensure that "all the perpetrators are brought to justice."

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