

## Are we going to wage war on all of them?

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*Libya did not gently accept this new type of domination, now, the two old imperial powers, France and the United Kingdom, followed by the United States, are punishing this insubordination*

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"The spectacle of American, British and French missiles pulverising an Arab and Muslim country at the dead of night arouses a sense of foreboding. Such ventures have too often begun with good intentions and naive overconfidence, but..." With these words *The Economist* began its editorial of March 26, analyzing the new "humanitarian war" undertaken by the "West". And it asks: "where will it end?" I do not know either, but I am sure that in this venture there are no good intentions. The aim is not to "prevent the massacre of an insurgent people" as alleged, but to regain supremacy over an oil-rich country governed by a violent and unpleasantly nationalist dictator. The problem is that that government knew how to use the oil wealth to reach a reasonable degree of development, so that it will not be so easy to overthrow it.

The West took advantage of the opportunity created by the rebellion in Tunisia and in Egypt to start the war, but in those countries there were two rebelling populations fighting for democracy. In Libya there is no population rebelling, there is a struggle between tribes, there is a civil war. The only "mass" manifestation that newspaper photographers were able to catch was that of a mass of vehicles in Benghazi celebrating the bombings. As to the anticipated massacre, more Libyans are already dying in the war than would probably die if there were no foreign intervention.

This war will not end well, because the legitimacy of imperialist ventures is long gone. In the nineteenth century, to be an empire was glorious for a rich and industrial country. But imperialism caused so much evil to dominated populations that, after World War II, they freed themselves, and overt colonialism came to be condemned all over the world. It was, however, replaced by informal colonialism – by the association of ancient metropolises with the corrupt elites of the poor countries. Middle East was the privileged object of this type of association, together with the poor Latin American and African countries. Only Asian countries and some countries such as Libya did not gently accept this

new type of domination. This is the reason why they grew and improved their people's standard of living. Their human development index ranks 52nd, as opposed to the Brazilian rank, which is 72nd.

Now, the two old imperial powers, France and the United Kingdom, followed by the United States, are punishing this insubordination. The new Western paladin is Nicolas Sarkozy who thinks he will be re-elected this way. He underestimates the French. As every people, the French are also nationalist, but they know that this war makes little sense, and that they cannot rely on their president. Therefore, although the war was approved by 61% of the population, his popularity rate went down to very low levels: on April 6, after the war began, it hit 30%. Since the hope that the war would be quickly won proved incorrect, this localized support will soon go away. What will remain is another bloody war, that has nothing humanitarian in it, against a dictator who has little in his favor. But there are so many dictators in the same situation. Are we going to wage war on all of them?