

AMSPECBLOG

What Are We Doing in Libya?

By Doug Bandow on 6.28.11 @ 1:52PM

My friend Ulf Gartzke reminds us how Western governments tend to routinely repeat false claims of atrocities in order to give their military campaigns a moral gloss. So it is in Libya.

Writes Gartzke:

While Western governments and the international media have seized the ICC indictment as a much-needed show of moral support for NATO's controversial / fledgling military campaign, two of the world's leading human rights organization - Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch - have just announced that their independent, on-the-ground investigations found no credible evidence for the claim that Col. Qaddafi's forces have used mass rape as a weapon of war. The NGO investigation did reveal that the rebels in Benghazi have repeatedly and knowingly made false claims or manufactured evidence - essentially to bolster their PR case against Col. Qaddafi.

According to Donatella Rovera, the Arabic-speaking senior crisis response adviser for Amnesty, who was in Libya for three months after the start of the uprising, "we have not found any evidence or a single victim of rape, or a doctor who knew about somebody being raped". She stresses this does not prove that mass rape did not occur, but there is no evidence to show that it did. Liesel Gertholtz, head of women's rights at Human Rights Watch, which also investigated the charge of mass rape, said: "We have not been able to find evidence."

No one thinks Moammar Qaddafi is a good guy. But not all of the opposition are good guys either. And there's no guarantee that the people most likely to win a power struggle if Qaddafi is ousted will be good guys either.

Barack Obama's splendid little adventure in North Africa never made any sense. More than three months on, it has proved to be a monumentally foolish waste of money. If the French and British want to carry on, let them: the U.S. should say Enough!

Doug Bandow is a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute and the Senior Fellow in International Religious Persecution at the Institute on Religion and Public Policy. A former Special Assistant to President Ronald Reagan, he is author of *Beyond Good Intentions: A Biblical View of Politics (Crossway)*.