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**Operation Odyssey Dawn: President Obama's
decision-making process**

Master's thesis

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Declaration

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In Prague on May 21, 2020

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References

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Abstract

Intervention in Libya is an anomaly in President Barack Obama's foreign policy during his eight years in the office. This thesis aims to analyze the decision-making process leading to this unprecedented step. Using Graham Allison's Bureaucratic Politics Model, the purpose of this analysis is to investigate the influence of some presidential advisors and allies on his final decision. Data for this study were collected using President Obama's public statements, biographies of several members of the administration, and secondary academic sources. After some general context, the thesis closely examines the selected period from the first protests in Libya on February 15 to the beginning of the Operation United Protector on March 31. This timeframe of forty-five days is further divided into the week-by-week process tracing analyses. The development on the ground in Libya is merged with changes of attitude in the American administration and changing alliances among the members of the advisory team of the President. The Bureaucratic Politics Model is used to analyze specific tactics used by American officials to impose their preferred scenario. The study also tests the applicability of several new methodological approaches within the Bureaucratic Politics Model like the palace politics perspective, agent-specific bargaining advantages versus organizational bargaining advantages, and the influence of the allied nation as the actors in American decision-making.

Abstrakt

Intervence do Libye představuje anomálii v rámci prezidentství Baracka Obamy během jeho osmi let ve funkci. Tato diplomová práce analyzuje rozhodovací proces vedoucí k tomuto bezprecedentnímu kroku. Cílem této analýzy je prozkoumat vliv některých prezidentových poradců a spojenců na jeho rozhodnutí za použití Bureaucratic Politics Model Grahama Allisona. Data pro tuto studii byla čerpána z veřejných projevů Prezidenta Obamy, memoárů některých členů administrativy a akademických sekundárních zdrojů. Po představení obecného kontextu tato diplomová práce blíže zkoumá vybrané období od 15. února do počátku Operace Unified Protector 31. října. Tento časový úsek čtyřiceti pěti dní je dále rozdělen do přehlednější analýzy dle týdnů s použitím metody process tracingu. Vývoj v samotné Libyi je propojen se změnami přístupu v Americké administrativě a měnících se spojenečtví mezi členy prezidentského poradního týmu. Bureaucratic Politics Model je využit k analýze specifických taktik použitých Americkými představiteli k prosazení jimi

preferovaného scénáře. Studie také testuje aplikovatelnost několika nových metodologických přístupů v rámci Bureaucratic Politics Model jako perspektivu palácové politiky, individuálních vyjednávacích výhod versus organizačních vyjednávacích výhod a vliv spojeneckých států jakožto aktéru v Americkém rozhodovacím procesu.

Keywords

Libya, President Obama, intervention, decision-making process, Bureaucratic Politics Model, Arab Spring, Graham Allison

Klíčová slova

Libye, Prezident Obama, intervence, rozhodovací proces, Bureaucratic Politics Model, Arabské jaro, Graham Allison

Title

Operation Odyssey Dawn: President Obama's decision-making process

Název práce

Operace Odyssey Dawn: rozhodovací proces prezidenta Obamy

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1. Introduction

American intervention in Libya in 2011 marks an apparent anomaly in the foreign policy pattern of President Obama's administration during his two terms in the office. Even as a member of the Illinois Senate, Barack Obama was not afraid to share his opinion about the use of military force in other countries. He strongly objected to the narrative propagated by the Bush government months before the Iraq intervention in 2003, going as far as calling it 'a dumb war' during his appearance on an anti-war rally in Chicago in October 2002.¹

How come a politician so adamant that Iraq invasion will end as a disaster would several years later commit himself to take military action in Libya? President Obama's attitude toward the use of military power is very nuanced. During the same speech, he repeats his support for the ongoing intervention to Afghanistan, which he later calls 'a war of necessity.' Yet, it is often complicated to differentiate between the two.²

Any military intervention has an inseparable potential of being too little too late, or too much too soon. The United States has its share of military action falling into both categories. Genocide in Rwanda in 1994 is the example of the former, response to violence in Kosovo in 1999 the latter.³

In the long history of American projection of its military might abroad, the very first victory of American military on foreign soil happened on the territory of today's Libya. 'The Barbary Coast' referring to the region under the nominal control of the Ottoman Empire in North Africa embodied a hive of scum and villainy. In response to the attacks on American merchant ships from the North African 'Barbary States,' the United States waged the Tripolitan War between 1801 and 1805.⁴

The apex of American interventionism possibly came between 1904 and 1929, when the United States deployed its forces at least twenty times in twenty-five years only in Central American and Caribbean countries alone. Many, if not most of these deployments, were

¹ Barack Obama, "Remarks of Illinois State Sen. Barack Obama Against Going to War with Iraq," Senator Barack Obama's official page, <https://web.archive.org/web/20021217033809/www.obamaforillinois.com/news.shtml> (Accessed on 29. 4.).

² Ibid.

³ Dag Henriksen and Ann Karin Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, (Oxford, England; New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 230.

⁴ Paul Tang Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, (New York, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 97.

unilateral forceful action on the part of the United States. Longest among them were those to Haiti from 1915 to 1934 and Nicaragua between 1912 and 1933.⁵

Since the end of the Second World War, the United Nations Security Council provided much-needed regulation and establishment of some rudimentary rules of behavior. During the entire duration of the Cold War, the Security Council authorized the use of force only two-times, firstly in Korea in 1950, and secondly in Rhodesia in 1966.⁶ By no means does this fact imply no other military interventions taking place, yet, it does suggest a fundamental change in the perception of the justifiable and legitimate use of force.

Nevertheless, since 1990, the Security Council has approved twenty-five military operations in only two decades. Six of these operations were undertaken by the USA alone with another six with a NATO-based coalition. Regional organizations carried out eight of these operations, namely the European Union four, the African Union two, and the Economic Community of West African States remaining two. Of the last five operations, two were undertaken by France and one each by Italy, Australia, and Gabon.⁷

The upwards trend of UN-authorized interventions implies the role of this foreign policy tool in future security crisis management, in particular for the most powerful and arguably the most active military force in the world. Therefore, it is crucial to fully grasp the decision-making process that leads to the use of the military option. Only by truly understanding the very nuances of this process could the possible flaws and shortcomings be overshadowed, and the possibility of another Rwanda, as well as Kosovo, undermined.

There are various methodological approaches to examine aspects of military interventions. Some focus on the activity rate, on the perceived rationale behind the decision, influences of seemingly unconnected impulses of domestic politics, and even simple theory of practice. This is but short overview of some academic approaches applied towards the intervention in Libya in 2011.

In her book '*Military Intervention in the Middle East and North Africa: The Case of NATO in Libya*,' Susannah O'Sullivan considers the motivating factors towards the intervention unequivocally determining the very nature of the given act. In the Libyan case, the United Kingdom, and by association also France, asserted the case for a 'virtuous war.' Virtuous war highlights aspects of speed, austerity, and precision of military action. Consequently,

⁵ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 16.

⁶ Aidan Hehir and Robert Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, (New York, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 165.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 165.

the whole intervention should, in most cases, be quick, altogether bloodless, cheap, and mainly moral.⁸

In the case of the United States' participation, O'Sullivan examines the rationale of 'limited war.' President Obama strongly emphasized 'no boots on the ground' policy in many of his press conferences in March 2011 and later. Clearly, the simultaneous continuation of two ongoing wars in Iraq and Libya, together with war-weariness of the public, are key determinants for the limited war case.⁹

Mikael Blomdahl also explores the various perspectives on military action using more broad categories of constructivism or rationalism in his '*Interacting Interests: Explaining President Obama's Libyan Decision.*' The constructivist perspective underscores the moral duty of international actors in undertaking such action. The Rationalist perspective, on the other hand, points out the lack of any negative impact on the actor's self-interests as a key prerequisite. Finally, there is the role of domestic politics and their influence. War-weariness may limit any military effort abroad, yet, popularity seeking could also drive a country into a disastrous war.¹⁰

Investigating the role of Britain and France, Jason W. Davidson uses an integrated model taking into account not only international norms and a threat to national interests but also the implicated prestige in intervening for the right cause.¹¹ Still, this integrated model focuses on the rationale of active participation and even propagation of intervening in Libya by Britain and France, rather than examining the decision process and the key actors in it.

Kjell Engelbrekt distinguishes among the participating countries in the form of their interventionism. As the main proponents of the intervention, Engelbrekt categorizes both the United Kingdom and France under assertive interventionism.¹² The United States is representative of moderate interventionism as it took the active role only after the human rights situation deteriorated.¹³ Regional organizations like the Arab League and Gulf Cooperation Council are classified with ambivalent interventionism, meaning not all

⁸ Susannah O'Sullivan, *Military Intervention in the Middle East and North Africa: The Case of NATO in Libya*, (New York, New York: Routledge, 2018), 60.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹⁰ Mikael Blomdahl, "Interacting Interests: Explaining President Obama's Libyan Decision," *European Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 13, Issue. 2, *European Association for American Studies*, 2018, 2.

¹¹ Jason W. Davidson, "France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 26, Issue 2, 2013, 312.

¹² Kjell Engelbrekt, Marcus Mohlin, and Charlotte Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, (New York, New York: Routledge, 2014), 48.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 49.

member countries were willing to take an active role in Libya.¹⁴ Lastly, there is reluctant interventionism of the Russian Federation and Turkey with their vocal reservations.¹⁵

These approaches, however, view the states as a unitary actor, yet, the national leaders can decide only so many issues.¹⁶ As President Obama said: “The simple act of making decisions degrades one’s ability to make further decisions.”¹⁷ Therefore, the state cannot be perceived as a unitary actor in foreign policy as the most senior officials make only the most crucial of decisions.

The first section of this thesis will examine the theoretical debate surrounding Graham Allison’s model with some new additions and critique from new authors. The second section should introduce the reader to the contextual fractography of President Obama’s foreign policy, US-Libyan relations, and the course of the Arab Spring before entering Libya. The main analytical part starts on February 15, with the first protests in Libya and ends on March 31, the day Operation Unified Protector took over Operation Odyssey Dawn. Finally, there will be some section dedicated to analytically challenge President Obama’s rationale for going through with the intervention. The hypothesis going in the research is that President Obama yielded to his advisors and European allies to get involved in Libya. The main questions, therefore, are: Who were the participating actors? What factors influenced President Obama? How exactly affected these actors and influences the decision-making process?

1.1 Methodology: Three Models of Graham Allison

In other words, they do not fully grasp the nuances of the decision-making process by oversimplifying it, this thesis, therefore, uses Graham Allison’s Bureaucratic Politics paradigm. Allison first used his method to analyze the Caribbean crisis in October 1962. In his view, there are three main questions: “The first question asks for an explanation; the second for a prediction; the third for a plan.”¹⁸ This thesis, however, has no such bold goals, it aims to merely explain the Libya decision and pinpoint some potential generalizing characteristics which could possibly contribute towards future predictions.

¹⁴ Ibid., 49.

¹⁵ Ibid., 51.

¹⁶ Nikolas K. Gvosdev, “How U.S. National Security Decisions Are Made,” *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, Orbis 2017, 28.

¹⁷ Michael Lewis, “Obama’s Way,” *Vanity Fair*, 2. 9. 2012, <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2012/10/michael-lewis-profile-barack-obama> (Accessed on 29. 4. 2020).

¹⁸ Graham T. Allison and Morton H. Halperin, “Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications,” *World Politics*, Vol. 24, Cambridge University Press, 197240.

The basic unit of Allison's approach is 'action' of a government, defined as "the various acts of officials of a government in exercises of governmental authority." To explain the actions, Allison uses 'action channels,' "regularized sets of procedures for producing particular classes of actions." Along the way through action channels, there is 'a number of decisions' "of specific actions to be taken by specific officials." All these units lead analysts to the nuanced understanding of 'outcomes' that "most participants and analysts are really interested in."¹⁹

1.1.1 Rational Policy Model

The first of the three models identified by Allison's Bureaucratic Politics paradigm is called Rational Policy Model or Model I, which uses the classic rational choice theory.²⁰ The general principle of Model I for the likelihood of action is: "(1) relevant values and objectives, (2) perceived alternative courses of action, (3) estimates of various sets of consequences, and (4) net valuation of each set of consequences."²¹

Rational Policy Model sees a state as a unitary actor making rational cost-minimalization and benefit-maximization analyses and choices. According to the Model I, there is no place for dissent nor emotions. In its extreme form, there should be no difference, for example, between the goals of the old conservative ruling class of tsarist Russia and the new ruling class of the communist Soviet Union, which arguably falls short of depicting reality.²²

1.1.2 Organizational Process Model

Model II or Organizational Process Model views the government as "a conglomerate of semi-feudal, loosely allied organizations."²³ It emphasizes the influence and role of state agencies and organizations as the main actors in foreign policy decision-making.²⁴ Every organization has its mission, essence, goals, programs, and standard operating procedures. Thus, they may come to very different conclusions.²⁵

¹⁹ Allison and Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications," 45.

²⁰ Kevin Marsh, "Obama's Surge: A Bureaucratic Politics Analyses of the Decision to Order a Troop Surge in the Afghanistan War," *Foreign Policy Analyses*, 2014, 267.

²¹ Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *The American Political Review*, Vol. 63, Issue 3, *American Political Science Association*, 1969, 694.

²² Roger Hilsman, Laura Gaughram, and Patricia A. Weitsman, *The Politics of Policy Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs: Conceptual Models and Bureaucratic Politics*, (N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1993), 51.

²³ Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," 698.

²⁴ Marsh, "Obama's Surge: A Bureaucratic Politics Analyses of the Decision to Order a Troop Surge in the Afghanistan War," 267.

²⁵ Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," 700.

Standard operating procedures often distort the original choices of most senior officials before implementing them into specific policies. These fixed procedures tend to change only in rare cases of budgetary cuts or dramatic performance failure.²⁶ While they are excellent for day-to-day standard actions, they are ill-suited to solve specific crises.²⁷ They also emphasize the parochial priorities and perceptions of the organizations.²⁸

1.1.3 Bureaucratic Politics Model

Finally, the Bureaucratic Politics Model or Model III focuses on a wide variety of people involved in governmental decision-making. According to this model, any action emerges from the process of ‘pulling and hauling.’²⁹ In this process of bargaining are involved senior as well as junior players, sometimes even ad hoc players could impact the final decision through action-channels.³⁰ The action-channels are “regularized sets of procedures for producing particular classes of actions.”³¹

The outcome in the form of decisions and actions “is not chosen as a solution to a problem but rather results from compromise, coalition, competition, and confusion among government officials who see different faces of an issue.”³² There are three ways to achieve the outcome: “if one actor is powerful enough, if preferences are congruent, or if preferences are not mutually exclusive.”³³ For the American system, this one powerful actor tends to be the President.

This model uses the ‘stand-sit’ proposition claiming that: “Where you stand depends on where you sit.”³⁴ In other words, as a response to the same problem, officials from the Department of State should prefer diplomacy where officials from the Pentagon should

²⁶ Ibid., 701.

²⁷ David A. Cooper, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and Jessica Blankshain, “Deconstructing the “Deep State”: Subordinate Bureaucratic Politics in U.S. National Security,” *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, Orbis 2018, 526.

²⁸ Mikael Blomdahl, “Bureaucratic Roles and Positions: Explaining the United States Libya Secision,” *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol, 27, Issue 1, 2016, 145.

²⁹ Allison and Halperin, “Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications,” 57.

³⁰ Ibid., 47.

³¹ Ibid., 45.

³² Allison, “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” 708.

³³ Klaus Brummer, “Revising the Bureaucratic Politics Model,” *International Studies Association*, 2009, 11.

³⁴ Allison, “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” 711.

prefer the use of force.³⁵ Some organizational representatives may even put the organization's interests above those of the state.³⁶

1.1.4 Current Academical Discussion

Klaus Brummer, in his *Revising the Bureaucratic Politics Model* claims, that “[the stand-sit proposition] merely suggests that an actor's position strongly affects his preferences.”³⁷

Brummer puts more emphasis on the fact that “each person comes to his position with baggage in tow, including sensitivities to certain issues, commitments to various programs, and personal standing and debts with groups in the society.”³⁸ In *Deconstructing the “Deep State,”* David Cooper, Nikolas Gvosdev, and Jessica Blankshain concur with this view, that nowadays “careers are defined as much or more by the issues on which [careerists and political appointees] work rather than by the agencies in which they work on them.”³⁹

Each player's impact is determined by the power based on “bargaining advantages, skill and will in using bargaining advantages, and other players' perceptions of the first two ingredients.”⁴⁰ These advantages' origin could be structural or agent-specific. The structural bargaining advantage is for example seniority as the more senior position one has, the more power one wields.⁴¹ The agent-specific bargaining advantage could be proximity⁴² and competence.⁴³

This emphasis on working agenda rather than organization opens the possibility of sub-agency interests, that is inside one organization, there could be factions with various perspectives on resolving the given issue.⁴⁴ This also opens the possibility of a trans-agency coalition building.⁴⁵ The most profound example is the division between hawks and doves who could cooperate across the administrative organizations.

³⁵ Hilsman, Gaughran, and Weitsman, *The Politics of Policy Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs: Conceptual Models and Bureaucratic Politics*, 62.

³⁶ Cooper, Gvosdev, and Blankshain, “Deconstructing the “Deep State”: Subordinate Bureaucratic Politics in U.S. National Security,” 527.

³⁷ Brummer, “Revising the Bureaucratic Politics Model,” 2.

³⁸ Allison, “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” 709.

³⁹ Cooper, Gvosdev, and Blankshain, “Deconstructing the “Deep State”: Subordinate Bureaucratic Politics in U.S. National Security,” 530.

⁴⁰ Allison and Halperin, “Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications,” 50.

⁴¹ Brummer, “Revising the Bureaucratic Politics Model,” 9.

⁴² Gvosdev, “How U.S. National Security Decisions Are Made,” 30.

⁴³ Rebecca Adler-Nissen, “Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya,” *European Journal of International Relations*, 20(4), 2014, 5.

⁴⁴ Cooper, Gvosdev, and Blankshain, “Deconstructing the “Deep State”: Subordinate Bureaucratic Politics in U.S. National Security,” 530.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 532.

‘The palace politics perspective’ term by Nikolas Gvosdev, in his *How U.S. National Security Decisions Are Made*, emphasizes the growing role and influence of the White House aides. There is a significant shift of power in the American political system “where the legislative branch has steadily been ceding ground to a strengthening presidency, and the key national security cabinet members and other top agency officials have likewise been ceding influence to the White House staff.”⁴⁶

The National Security staff is a prime example of this shift. During the Clinton presidency, the National Security Council had approximately one hundred staffers, double than his predecessor George H. W. Bush. Under George W. Bush, the number of the National Security staff further double to two hundred. Most importantly, President Obama’s National Security Council had four hundred staff. What is more, the president made his National Security staff chair the interagency policy committees. In other words, even the very junior staffers were able to “convene meetings and request briefing materials and position papers from the different departmental and agency representatives.”⁴⁷

Crucially for this thesis, there is also the influence of interaction between states. Allison argues that “the actions of other nations will never be more than one of many influences on decisions and actions. However, when players are evenly divided, or new action suggests to many a substantial change in anticipated future actions, these reports of another nation’s actions can be decisive.”⁴⁸

This ability of senior officials in nation B to influence nation A’s actions when “(a) the actions of the first nation send a clear, consistent, simple signal and (b) some participants in the other nation want, in pursuit of their own interests, to change behavior on the desired way, and (c) this signal serves to increase the influence of these participants.”⁴⁹

1.2 Prominent Traditions of American Foreign Policy

As Richard Lebow stated, “American foreign policy traditions have manifested themselves to the culture, identity, and broader American approach to life and politics.”⁵⁰ There are four prominent traditions of American foreign policy identified by historian Walter Russell

⁴⁶ Cooper, Gvosdev, and Blankshain, “Deconstructing the “Deep State”: Subordinate Bureaucratic Politics in U.S. National Security,” 519.

⁴⁷ Gvosdev, “How U.S. National Security Decisions Are Made,” 31-32.

⁴⁸ Allison and Halperin, “Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications,” 60.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵⁰ Michael Clarke and Anthony Ricketts, “Shielding the Republic: Barack Obama and the Jeffersonian Tradition of American Foreign Policy,” *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 28, Issue 3, *Routledge*, 2017, 495.

Mead, named after some of the most impactful American politicians: Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, and Thomas Woodrow Wilson.⁵¹

Despite their differences, these US foreign policy cultures are united in some exceeding national characteristics. The vast majority of American politicians have always adhered to the tropes of the indispensable nation, the global leader, and the inevitable position of the United States as a global leader.⁵² They all believe in the role of capitalism to determine the character of the state and broader society.⁵³

The most evident differentiating criteria among the dominant foreign policy cultures is their level of extroversion. Jeffersonians and Jacksonians see the Republic as a ‘promised land’ or also ‘a City upon a Hill.’ Rather than actively exporting American values, the United States should lead by example for those willing to follow. Alternatively, Hamiltonians and Wilsonians see the role of America as a ‘crusader state’ actively shaping the world in ways consistent with US core interests and values.⁵⁴

The Hamiltonian tradition sees the main task of American foreign policy in promoting the country’s economic interests.⁵⁵ The concepts of freedom of the seas, open doors economies, and the international financial system are the core values for the Hamiltonians.⁵⁶

On the other hand, Wilsonians seek promotion of moral principles and democracy, even by use of force. Multilateralism is a very important aspect of Wilsonian democracy promotion.⁵⁷ Together with Hamiltonians, Wilsonians are seemingly the most numerous groups.⁵⁸

The Jacksonian tradition is closely intertwined with populism, visceral nationalism, and emphasis on military strength. In general, Jacksonians are very isolationist. Yet, they tend to use the military force even against perceived risks to their version of national interests.⁵⁹

Lastly, Jeffersonians are primarily focused on the protection of the Republic while not losing the very soul of it by foreign entanglements not directly connected to American core values.⁶⁰ For Jefferson, meddling foreign policy was a way towards a big federal

⁵¹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 5.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵³ Clarke and Ricketts, “Shielding the Republic: Barack Obama and the Jeffersonian Tradition of American Foreign Policy,” 496.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 498.

⁵⁵ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 5.

⁵⁶ Clarke and Ricketts, “Shielding the Republic: Barack Obama and the Jeffersonian Tradition of American Foreign Policy,” 497.

⁵⁷ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 5.

⁵⁸ Clarke and Ricketts, “Shielding the Republic: Barack Obama and the Jeffersonian Tradition of American Foreign Policy,” 496.

⁵⁹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 5.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

government, a concept he opposed his whole life. His approach was, still, far from the ‘head-in-the-sand’ isolationism of the interwar period of the twentieth century.⁶¹

When American core interests were endangered in any way, Jefferson had not hesitated to use force. A good example of this tendency is his order to seize the Barbary coast during the Tripolitan War, where the threat to the nation’s trade security justified the intervention.⁶² President Obama is often categorized as a modern Jeffersonian, yet it is clear that no one’s policies carry signs of only one of the American foreign policy traditions.

1.3 The International Perspectives of President Obama

Naturally, the most important actor in the American decision-making process leading to the intervention in Libya in 2011 was President Obama himself. Full personality analysis is well beyond the scope of this thesis, yet it ought to be addressed, at least in this concise form. Emma Johannesson applies the Five-level Model of personality on the President’s decision to act against Daesh in Syria, several years after the intervention in Libya.⁶³ Nevertheless, there is minimal chance of a significant change in President Obama’s personality traits in such a short time.

The Five-level Model of personality consists of evolutionary psychology, dispositional traits, characteristic adaptations, life narrative, and culture. Based on the model, President Obama is distinguished by his high conscientiousness, implying traits like high intelligence, caution, and goal-oriented nature. Also significant is his openness to experience leading to the very analytical and multipronged nature of his decision process.⁶⁴ In other words, President Obama likes to listen to his staffers, making cases for different perspectives, not letting them know his position.

After coming into office, President Obama wanted to change the image of America in the Middle East. In June 2009, he visited Egypt and delivered a rather famous speech at Al-Azhar University in Cairo. When establishing ‘the New Beginning,’ the President talked

⁶¹ Clarke and Ricketts, “Shielding the Republic: Barack Obama and the Jeffersonian Tradition of American Foreign Policy,” 503.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 501.

⁶³ Emma Johannesson, “The Power of Personality in Decision-Making: A study of Obama’s Decision to Launch Air Strikes in Syria,” *Uppsala University, Department of Government*, Bachelor thesis, 2016, <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:895370/FULLTEXT01.pdf> (Accessed on 29. 4.), 12.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

about the democracy promotion and military adventurism of the United States in previous years.⁶⁵

Being aware of the hurtful legacy of the previous administration, he said: “So let me be clear: No system of government can or should be imposed by one nation by any other... America does not presume to know what is best for everyone, just as we would not presume to pick the outcome of a peaceful election.” Yet, with the next breath, he also proclaimed: “But I have an unyielding belief that all people yearn for certain things... These are not just American ideas; they are human rights. And that is why we will support them everywhere.”⁶⁶ Even though, concerning the case of Libya, even Ben Rhodes referred to December 2009, the Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech as a clear embodiment of President’s Obama perspective on the need for military action under specific circumstances.⁶⁷ Rather surprisingly, when accepting this Prize, he made a case for a just war and the role of the instruments of war in preserving peace: “More and more, we all confront difficult questions about how to prevent the slaughter of civilians by their own government, or to stop a civil war whose violence and suffering can engulf an entire region. I believe that force can be justified on humanitarian grounds, as it was in the Balkans...”⁶⁸

He also made a case for the need for multilateralism when dealing with humanitarian crises: “Agreements among nations. Strong institutions. Support for human rights. Investments in development. All these are vital ingredients in bringing about the evolution that President Kennedy spoke about.” (that rather than a sudden revolution in human nature, people should focus on a gradual evolution in human institutions). Last but not least, he also spoke about the inevitability of consequences for those brutalizing their people.⁶⁹

President Obama’s perspective stayed unaltered even in the 2010 National Security Strategy. Once again, the Obama Administration emphasized the role of multilateralism in the cases

⁶⁵ Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President at Cairo University,” Cairo, Egypt, The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 4. 6. 2009, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-cairo-university-6-04-09> (Accessed on 29. 4.).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Lewis, “Obama’s Way.”

⁶⁸ Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President at the Acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize,” Oslo, Norway, The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 10. 12. 2009, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-acceptance-nobel-peace-prize> (Accessed on 29. 4.).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

necessitating the use of force.⁷⁰ Specially to prevent mass atrocities and genocide.⁷¹ The National Security Strategy also calls governments respecting democracy ‘more just, peaceful, and legitimate.’⁷²

The foreign policy of Obama’s administration could be characterized as a combination of multilateralism, or internationalism, in the general implementation. When US national security interests are concerned, however, it could shift into unilateralism.⁷³ Michael Clarke calls this phenomenon “multilateral retrenchment” and “counterpunching.”⁷⁴

The former aims to burden-sharing with international partners and to restore the American prestige tarnished by the legacy of Bush unilateralism in the Middle East. This burden-sharing is also sometimes characterized as an ‘off-loading’⁷⁵ or an ‘enabling leadership.’ In the case of Libya, this manifested in European allies taking the lead in gaining diplomatic support for humanitarian intervention in the first half of March.⁷⁶

The latter is a direct response to the perceived risk to American security or economic core interests. When American intelligence agencies tracked down possible hide-out of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad Pakistan, President Obama ordered raid violating Pakistani sovereignty.⁷⁷ Doing so with limited evidence only a few weeks after intervention in Libya demonstrated that President Obama was not afraid to use American military power unilaterally when needed.

Curiously, the first meeting about the possible discovery of bin Laden took place on March 14, right in the middle of the Libyan uprising.⁷⁸ This meeting, as well as the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster on March 11,⁷⁹ demonstrates that the President has never only one problem at the time, and he could make only so many decisions.

⁷⁰ The White House, “National Security Strategy of the United States of America,” US Government Printing Office, 2010, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf (Accessed on 29. 4.), 22.

⁷¹ Ibid., 48.

⁷² The White House, “National Security Strategy of the United States of America,” 37.

⁷³ Shahram Akbarzadeh, *American Democracy Promotion in the Changing Middle East: From Bush to Obama*, (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2013), 92.

⁷⁴ Clarke and Ricketts, “Shielding the Republic: Barack Obama and the Jeffersonian Tradition of American Foreign Policy,” 505.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 509.

⁷⁶ Jonathan Paquin, Justin Massie, and Philippe Beauregard, “Obama’s leadership style: enabling transatlantic allies in Libya and Mali,” *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, Vol. 15, Issue 2, Routledge, 2017, 185.

⁷⁷ Georg Löffman, “The Obama Doctrine and Military Intervention,” *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 24, Issue 1, 2019, 67.

⁷⁸ Lewis, “Obama’s Way.”

⁷⁹ Ibid.

1.4 History of US-Libyan relations

As previously mentioned, the Tripolitan War between 1801 and 1805 represented the first victory under the American flag on foreign soil.⁸⁰ Symbolically, the defeat of the Barbary States has, therefore, also been the first-ever foreign intervention of the U.S. Military. The reaction to attacks and seizures of American merchant ships, as well as holding of crews for ransom, provided a threat to core American security interests. Tripolitan or Barbar war proved to be the first of many unilateral interventions in the history of the young Republic. No sooner than during the second world war were the United States and Italian colony of Libya, consisted of three historical Ottoman governorates of Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and Fezzan, in contact. At the end of the North African campaign, the former colony came under the shared administration of the United Kingdom and France. Former administering Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, while the latter took control of Fezzan.⁸¹

On December 24, 1951, Libya, under the new King Sidi Muhammad Idris Al-Mahdi Al-Sanusi I., became an independent Constitutional Monarchy with a federal system of government.⁸² King Idris I. inherited country united in its resentment towards Italian occupation but not much else.⁸³ The pro-western Kingdom gained economic and military aid from the USA, which was, in return, allowed to build the Wheelus Air Base near Tripoli.⁸⁴ Essentially oligarchical conservative elite under King Idris I. distanced itself from the wave of Arab Nationalism alienating new younger classes causing the army coup in September of 1969. The King was deposed while in Turkey for medical treatment by young army officers led by Colonel Moammar Al-Qaddafi. Egypt and Iraq recognized the newly established Libyan Arab Republic almost immediately. Curiously, the United States did not oppose the Coup and managed to maintain its military presence in Libya until 1971.⁸⁵

Moammar Qaddafi, the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst educated military officer, introduced his philosophy of neutrality in the bipolar world called Third Universal Theory published in his Green Book.⁸⁶ Libya became a serious actor firstly in the pan-Arabism

⁸⁰ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 97.

⁸¹ Abdul Karim Bangura ed., *Assessing Barack Obama's Africa Policy*, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 74.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 74.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁸⁴ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 99.

⁸⁵ Bangura ed., *Assessing Barack Obama's Africa Policy*, 78.

⁸⁶ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 100.

movement and later in the pan-Africanism movement. Qaddafi also managed to wage several disastrous border conflicts with Chad over Aouzou Strip.⁸⁷

The US-Libyan relations gradually worsened until 1973, when Libya played a leading role in the oil embargo, nationalizing several American oil companies.⁸⁸ What is more, Libyan planes even shot down several US military aircraft in March and April of the same year over the Mediterranean.⁸⁹ Hostilities further deteriorated with the storming of the US embassy in Tripoli by a mob in December 1979 characterized by absolute lack of any response of security forces.⁹⁰

The 1980s passed with events turning to direct violence by Libyan support for Abu Nidal, a well-known terrorist. In 1981, two F-14 Tomcats were downed in the Gulf of Sidra.⁹¹ Several attacks across Europe traceable to Abu Nidal in 1985 convinced President Reagan to impose unilateral sanctions via Executive Orders 12543 and 12544 in January 1986.⁹²

The whole conflict escalated in the bombing of the Berliner nightclub La Belle Discotheque in April 1986 and the infamous explosion of Pan American Airways Flight 103 from London to New York over Lockerbie in Scotland on September 21, 1988.⁹³ The nightclub attack, with 3 people killed and two hundred thirty injured, provoked a retributive operation El Dorado Canyon. This operation carried out air strikes on Tripoli 10 days after Berlin attack, killing approximately sixty people. During the raid, one F-111 Aardvark fighter-bomber was shot down, killing both members of the crew. In Lockerbie, all two hundred and fifty-nine passengers and crew, together with 11 people on the ground, passed away, most of them US citizens.⁹⁴

Lockerbie attack became the essence of US-Libyan relations for years to come. Among other incidents, it was a pretext for a failed coup attempt in 1990⁹⁵ and United Nations Security Council Resolutions 731 and 748 in 1992, demanding Libyan release of the perpetrators of the Lockerbie bombing.⁹⁶

⁸⁷ Ibid., 101.

⁸⁸ Bangura ed., *Assessing Barack Obama's Africa Policy*, 79.

⁸⁹ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 105.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 108.

⁹¹ Ibid., 111.

⁹² Ibid., 112.

⁹³ Bangura ed., *Assessing Barack Obama's Africa Policy*, 80.

⁹⁴ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 113.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 116.

⁹⁶ Bangura ed., *Assessing Barack Obama's Africa Policy*, 81.

In November 1993, another UN Resolution 883 froze Libya's overseas assets and targeted all oil-related industry.⁹⁷ This Resolution finally brought change in Qaddafi's approach, forcing him to cut ties with Abu Nidal and his associates. The 1990s were characterized by Qaddafi's submission to the demands culminating in an agreement with the 1998 trial at The Hague under Scottish Law.⁹⁸

This decade was also symbolized by Qaddafi's shift from pan-Arabism towards pan-Africanism demonstrated by his active role in the resolution of several regional conflicts and crucial role in the establishment of the African Union. All in all, Qaddafi seemed to begin his rapprochement with the West.⁹⁹

Libya signed several treaties and conventions committing Libya to renounce any pursue of ballistic missiles and nuclear programs, chemical weapons, and support of terrorism in the early 2000s.¹⁰⁰ Libya also paid compensation to all families of Lockerbie victims in 2003. Next year, President Bush lifted most unilateral sanctions, and Libya uncovered its enormous cache of nuclear technology.¹⁰¹

During the early 2000s, Libya improved its relations not only with the United States but also with the United Kingdom and France. British Prime Minister Anthony Blair visited Libya in 2004. During the so-called 'deal in the desert,' he agreed to a rather controversial Prisoner Transfer Agreement signed in 2008.¹⁰² In 2007, Moammar Qaddafi officially visited Paris. He erected his Bedouin tent next to the Élysée Palace, outraging many French in the process.¹⁰³

On May 31, 2006, the United States restored full diplomatic relations with Libya.¹⁰⁴ The whole rapprochement culminated in September 2009, marking the first personal participation of Qaddafi in the UN General Assembly in New York.¹⁰⁵ Libya seemed to be on its way to become a valid member of the international community, adhering to established customs.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 119.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 119.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 122.

¹⁰¹ Bangura ed., *Assessing Barack Obama's Africa Policy*, 81.

¹⁰² Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 47.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 29.

¹⁰⁴ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 10.

¹⁰⁵ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 125.

1.5 Arab Spring

Mohammed Bouazizi, twenty-six years old Tunisian street vendor, set himself aflame on December 17, 2010, in Sibi Bouzid after enduring harassment by police.¹⁰⁶ No one expected this incident to spark events of the Arab Spring. Yet on January 14, 2011, just one month after the start of protests, Tunisian President Zine Al-Abidine Ben Ali fled the country.¹⁰⁷

With first protests on Cairo's Tahrir square on January 25, the Arab Spring became a regional movement.¹⁰⁸ Egypt, with its cultural impact on the whole Arab world, brought not only the attention of the world media but also several hard decisions for world leaders, including President Obama. The conflict between American strategic interests and its core values represented the first of many hard choices for the Obama administration.¹⁰⁹

Already, some rift between most senior and more junior officials became apparent. Vice President Joe Biden, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, and National Security Advisor Thomas Donilon all advised caution and were generally against strong condemnations of a key regional ally. Conversely, more junior officials like Deputy National Security Advisor Denis McDonough, Homeland Security Advisor John Brennan, National Security Advisor to the Vice President Tony Blinken, Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications Ben Rhodes, National Security Council Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights Samantha Power, and Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice all urged public appeal for change.¹¹⁰

At the end of January, USA dispatched Special Envoy Frank Wisner, former Ambassador to Egypt, to privately push President Muhammad Hosni El-Sayed Mubarak towards reforms.¹¹¹ However, when President Mubarak announced pro-reform steps during his February 1, speech, it proved too little too late. The situation on Tahrir escalated when Mubarak's supporters rode armed into the crowds on camels.¹¹²

Unlike in Libya, US officials had direct contact with their counterparts in Egypt like Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi in the case of Secretary Gates¹¹³ and Minister Ahmed

¹⁰⁶ Samantha Power, *The Education of an Idealist*, (HarperCollins e-books, 2019), 288.

¹⁰⁷ Robert M. Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, (London: WH Allen, 2014), 503.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 504.

¹⁰⁹ Hillary R. Clinton, *Hard choices*, (New York; London; Toronto; Sydney; New Delhi: Simon & Schuster, 2014), 339.

¹¹⁰ Susan Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, (New York; London; Toronto; Sydney; New Delhi: Simon & Schuster, 2017), 268.

¹¹¹ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 342.

¹¹² Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, 506.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 505.

Aboul Gheit in the case of Secretary Clinton.¹¹⁴ These contacts proved crucial in the face of violent escalation, leading to the takeover of power by the Supreme Council of the Egyptian Armed Forces¹¹⁵ with Field Marshal Tantawi as the new head of state¹¹⁶ on February 11.

2. Arab Spring in Libya

2.1 From protests to Uprising, (February 15-20)

On February 15, Fathi Terbil, a lawyer defending the victims of the Abu Salim massacre from 1996,¹¹⁷ had been arrested in Benghazi, sparking a protest of a group of his colleagues against Terbil's jailing.¹¹⁸ The action of the internal security service came two days before Remembrance Day of the alleged prison massacre and only a few days after the fall of the Egyptian regime.¹¹⁹

During the Remembrance Day or the 'Day of Rage' on February 17, thousands of people in Benghazi, Al Bayda, Tobruk, Tajurah, Misurata, and Tripolis participated in the protests.¹²⁰ There were first shots fired into the crowds in Benghazi¹²¹ and reports of clashes between government forces and defecting police officers in Al Bayda.¹²² Unlike Tunisia and Egypt, Libyan Arab Spring was turning violent from the very beginning.

In response, President Obama issued a written statement expressing deep concerns about emerging violence in Libya and other Middle Eastern countries.¹²³ Curiously, the Libyan regime released Fathi Terbil before Friday prayers on February 18, complying with the demands of the protestors. Unfortunately, very few people paid attention at the moment.¹²⁴ Most of the violence emerged in the East, namely in cities of Benghazi, Al Bayda, Ajdabiya, Darna, and Misurata.¹²⁵ Benghazi, the center of the uprising, came under rebel control on

¹¹⁴ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 342.

¹¹⁵ Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, 509.

¹¹⁶ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 346.

¹¹⁷ In 1996, Qaddafi let several hundred of inmates in Benghazi prison to be shot.

¹¹⁸ Power, *The Education of an Idealist*, 288.

¹¹⁹ Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, 510.

¹²⁰ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 134.

¹²¹ Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 194.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 193.

¹²³ Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on violence in Bahrain, Libya and Yemen," Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 18. 2. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/02/18/statement-president-violence-bahrain-libya-and-yemen-0> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹²⁴ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 11.

¹²⁵ Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 200.

February 20. On the other hand, the government suppressed protests in Tripoli by Monday.¹²⁶ Meanwhile, both American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton¹²⁷ and British First Secretary of State William Hague¹²⁸ condemned the Libyan government for its actions.

2.2 Opposition Consolidation, (February 21-27)

The loss of Benghazi on Sunday and the armament of opposition also in Misurata from the security forces' bases on Monday¹²⁹ provoked Moammar Qaddafi to address the Libyan population in his infamous 'zenga zenga' (alley-to-alley) speech in an attempt to bolster regime support, and sow fear into the ranks of the opposition.¹³⁰ Unfortunately, the regime also reacted with violence, including air and artillery assaults.¹³¹ Some pilots, however, refused to bomb protesters and defected to Malta with their two modern Mirage F-1 fighter aircraft.¹³² Both the Permanent Representative of Libya to the United Nations Abdurrahman Mohamed Shalgham and the Deputy Permanent Representative Ibrahim Dabbashi followed suit soon after.¹³³

In reaction to the rise of violence, the United States ordered the non-essential embassy personnel to leave Libya already on February 21.¹³⁴ Yet, it proved to be a task for several days. The regime response also persuaded the United Nations Security Council to condemn the actions on the 22nd,¹³⁵ and the Arab League even suspended the Libyan membership also on Tuesday.¹³⁶ The Peace and Security Council of the African Union condemned the violence one day later.¹³⁷

On Wednesday, President Obama for the first time directly addressed the situation during his press conference, yet, he refrained from using Colonel Qaddafi's name as there were some U.S. diplomats still in Libya.¹³⁸ "The entire world is watching, and we will coordinate

¹²⁶ Ibid., 193.

¹²⁷ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 142.

¹²⁸ Davidson, "France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis," 321.

¹²⁹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 194.

¹³⁰ Stephen R. Weissman, "The Law: Presidential Deception in Foreign Policy Making: Military Intervention in Libya 2011," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol 46, Issue 3, 2016, 672.

¹³¹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 11.

¹³² Jeremiah Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, (Congressional Research Service, 2011), 10.

¹³³ Adler-Nissen, "Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya," 10.

¹³⁴ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 142.

¹³⁵ Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, 510.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 511.

¹³⁷ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 149.

¹³⁸ Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, 511.

our assistance and accountability measures with the international community.”¹³⁹ Despite the heavy weapons used by the regime, the opposition took control over Misurata, Zawarah, and Al Bayda by the 23rd.¹⁴⁰

No sooner than Friday when last Americans left Libya, the Obama administration imposed unilateral sanctions on Libya and cut all diplomatic ties.¹⁴¹ President Obama signed Executive Order 13566, freezing assets worth more than thirty-two million dollars.¹⁴² Despite this action, the United States was far from being the leading country in this stage. For example, Secretary of Defense Gates emphasized during his testimony that the armed forces are in no state to add any commitment in Libya to Iraq and Afghanistan.¹⁴³

France and Great Britain together submitted a proposal for the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970, which unanimously passed on the 26th. The Resolution imposed assets freeze, an arms embargo, travel bans on Libyan officials, demanded the end of hostilities under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and referred the violence to the International Criminal Court.¹⁴⁴ The United Kingdom swiftly took the position of the penholder¹⁴⁵ due to its ‘mastery of procedures.’¹⁴⁶ In other words, it took the agent-specific bargaining advantage of competency. The United Nations Human Rights Council also suspended Libyan membership.¹⁴⁷ President Sarkozy was the first head of the state, calling for Moammar Qaddafi to step down on February 25.¹⁴⁸

During the readout of President Obama’s call with Chancellor Merkel, Press Secretary Jay Carney pointed out President’s statement that “when a leader’s only means of staying in

¹³⁹ Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President on Libya,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 23. 2. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/02/23/remarks-president-libya> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹⁴⁰ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 134.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 143-145.

¹⁴² Barack Obama, “Letter from the President Regarding Libya Sanctions,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 25. 2. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/02/25/letter-president-regarding-libya-sanctions> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹⁴³ James Mann, *The Obamians*, (New York: Viking Penguin, 2012), 299.

¹⁴⁴ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970, S/RES/1970 (26. 2. 2011), available from <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/s/res/1970-%282011%29> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹⁴⁵ Jason Ralph and Jess Gifkins, “The purpose of United Nations Security Council practice: Contesting competence claims in the normative context created by the Responsibility to Protect,” *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 23, Issue 3, 2017, 642.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 637.

¹⁴⁷ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 148.

¹⁴⁸ Davidson, “France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis,” 316.

power is to use mass violence against his own people, he has lost the legitimacy to rule and needs to do what is right for his country by leaving now.”¹⁴⁹

The week ended with the unification of the opposition under an umbrella organization of the National Transitional Council¹⁵⁰ under Mustafa Abdel-Jalil and the fall of further cities of Zawiya and Ajdabiya.¹⁵¹ Both cities were to play a crucial role in the coming weeks.

2.3 Highpoint of initial uprising, (February 28-March 6)

By the end of February, White House “moved warships from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean to show force and increase [American] optionality.”¹⁵² These three warships were: a destroyer, USS Barry, an amphibious landing ship, USS Kearsarge, and an amphibious transport dock, USS Ponce.¹⁵³ Secretary Gates, however, viewed such redeployment from the Persian Gulf area as a security risk.¹⁵⁴

This shift in the stationing of warships got Secretary Gates to cut National Security staff from obtaining “too much information on the military options.”¹⁵⁵ This rather unprecedented step was the first serious sign of split among the Administration officials. Already, the Rational Policy Model’s perception of a state as one unitary actor seems to be lacking in describing reality.

During hearing before the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee on Wednesday, Secretary Gates addressed the emerging debate about the possibility of establishing a no-fly zone above Libya. He said that: “A no-fly zone begins with an attack on Libya to destroy the air defenses (...) and then you can fly planes around the country and not worry about our guys being shot down.”¹⁵⁶ In other words, Secretary of Defense took a position in direct contrast with the ‘stand-sit’ proposition. Instead of propagating the use of the military, he emphasized the pitfalls of establishing a no-fly zone.

¹⁴⁹ Barack Obama, “Readout of President Obama’s Call with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 26. 2. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/02/26/readout-president-obamas-call-chancellor-angela-merkel-germany> (Accessed on 19. 5).

¹⁵⁰ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 19.

¹⁵¹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 203.

¹⁵² Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 269.

¹⁵³ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 151.

¹⁵⁴ Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, 512.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 512.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 513.

President Obama addressed the situation in Libya for the first time in person during a press conference with President Calderón's visit to Washington on March 3. According to him: "Muammar Qaddafi has lost the legitimacy to lead and he must leave." More importantly, President Obama explained his broader approach towards the Libyan crisis: "number one, no violence against citizens; number two, that we stand for freedom and democracy."¹⁵⁷

In the first week of March, the initial violent uprising reached its highpoint. The opposition controlled the coastline from Ras Lanuf to the border with Egypt, the area around Misurata, Nafusa mountain, Gharyan, Yafran, Nalut, Zawiyah, and Zuvara.¹⁵⁸ In fact, rebels were within reach of Sirte, the regime bastion, and the birthplace of Colonel Qaddafi.¹⁵⁹

On Sunday, March 6, the government forces commenced the counter-offensive.¹⁶⁰ If up to now Libya seemed to be more violent but heading in the same direction as revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, the Libyan regime decided to change that. After the shock from the initial wave of protests, the military was ready to demonstrate its advantage in heavy weapons and air superiority.

Suddenly, the White House staff did not redeploy American warships unnecessarily. On the first day of regime counter-offensive, USS Ponce and USS Kearsarge were within striking distance of Tripoli. Some officials admitted that some passive operations like monitoring and jamming were already in effect. Several American transport aircrafts C-130s also started to airlift Egyptian refugees who fled to Tunisia from Libyan violence.¹⁶¹

White House Chief of Staff William Daley appeared on NBC's Meet the Press, where he shared his reservations about any military involvement in Libya, stating: "Lots of people throw around phrases like no-fly zone - they talk about it as though it's just a video game."¹⁶²

Despite his insistence that the USA has no vital interests in Libya, the same day, National Security Advisor Tom Donilon established a working group from National Security Council staffers concerning Libyan development.¹⁶³ In other words, the National Security Council

¹⁵⁷ Barack Obama, "Remarks by President Obama and President Calderón of Mexico at Joint Press Conference," Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 3. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/03/remarks-president-obama-and-president-calder-n-mexico-joint-press-confer> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹⁵⁸ Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 200

¹⁵⁹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 30.

¹⁶⁰ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 20.

¹⁶¹ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 157.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁶³ Mann, *The Obamians*, 299.

became the prime action-channel for the Libyan revolution, which even highlighted the value of proximity of some actors within the staff.

2.4 Regime counter-offensive, (March 7-13)

Due to the quickly rising number of casualties,¹⁶⁴ President Obama changed his rhetoric and appealed to the members of the Qaddafi government during the press conference with Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard on March 7. He emphasized that they would take their share of responsibility for any crimes against the protesters and that it is ‘their choice’ on what they will do next.¹⁶⁵

On the same day, Vice President Biden landed in Europe on his planned visit to Finland, Russia, and Moldova. His meetings with President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin on Wednesday and Thursday respectively helped establish a communication channel with Russia early in the decision-making process.¹⁶⁶

NATO also reacted to the escalation of violence, it ordered several Boeing E-3 Sentry, commonly known as AWACS, participating in Operation Active Endeavor to monitor Libyan territory and the Central Mediterranean on March 8.¹⁶⁷ Gulf Cooperation Council endorsed the establishment of a no-fly zone above Libya the same day, a first regional organization to do so.¹⁶⁸

On Wednesday, Press Secretary Carson announced that, according to the National Security Council meeting, “The United States would support humanitarian action but nothing more.”¹⁶⁹ During the National Security Council meeting, Secretary Gates insisted that: “what was happening in Libya was not a vital national interest of the United States.”¹⁷⁰ Despite the readout of President Obama’s call with Prime Minister Cameron only one day ago

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 299.

¹⁶⁵ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Gillard of Australia After Bilateral Meeting,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 7. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/07/remarks-president-obama-and-prime-minister-gillard-australia-after-bilat> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹⁶⁶ Anthony Blinken and Michael McFaul, “Conference Call on Vice President Biden’s Upcoming Trip to Finland, Russia and Moldova,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 4. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/04/conference-call-vice-president-bidens-upcoming-trip-finland-russia-and-m> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹⁶⁷ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 17.

¹⁶⁸ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 142.

¹⁶⁹ Blomdahl, “Interacting Interests: Explaining President Obama’s Libyan Decision,” 5.

¹⁷⁰ Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, 511.

mentioning “the full spectrum of possible responses, including (...) a no fly zone,”¹⁷¹ any action by the American military seemed improbable. British position, on the other hand, had been made clear earlier that day when Cameron publicly announced that “the world cannot let Benghazi become another Srebrenica.”¹⁷²

Between March 9 and 10, the rebels lost control over Ras Lanuf, Gharyan, and Zawiya.¹⁷³ Zawiya was about to become a symbol of the revolution due to the actions of government forces. The 32nd Reinforced Brigade of the Armed People under the leadership of Khamis Qaddafi, hence sometimes called Khamis Brigade, allegedly used indiscriminate fire using mortars, machineguns, and other heavy weapons.¹⁷⁴

Perhaps because of the fall of Zawiya, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper to claim that the Libyan regime would likely prevail over the long run if there would be no assistance for the Opposition.¹⁷⁵ National Security Advisor Donilon and his Deputy Ben Rhodes had to adjust his testimony during their press briefing,¹⁷⁶ yet the message was clear, the American government was far from united.

Secretary Clinton testified the same day, and she believed that “the United States acting alone would be stepping into a situation whose consequences are unforeseeable.”¹⁷⁷ Most of the senior officials in the Obama administration, therefore, seemed to be unwilling to intervene in Libya as late as March 10. France, on the other hand, recognized the National Transitional Council, the first country to officially do so,¹⁷⁸ after President Sarkozy met with Mahmoud Jibril of the National Transitional Council.¹⁷⁹ Since then, France took the position of the vocal leader of the emerging coalition. The United States meanwhile only agreed on

¹⁷¹ Barack Obama, “Readout of the President’s call with Prime Minister Cameron of the United Kingdom,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 8. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/08/readout-presidents-call-prime-minister-cameron-united-kingdom> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹⁷² Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 51.

¹⁷³ Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 200.

¹⁷⁴ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 161.

¹⁷⁵ Mann, *The Obamians*, 300.

¹⁷⁶ Tom Donilon and Ben Rhodes, “Briefing by National Security Advisor Tom Donilon and Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes on Libya and the Middle East,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 10. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/10/briefing-national-security-advisor-tom-donilon-and-deputy-national-secur> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹⁷⁷ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 366.

¹⁷⁸ Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 207.

¹⁷⁹ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 20.

partial cooperation with opposition and meeting their representatives in Paris during Secretary Clinton's visit next week.¹⁸⁰

International organizations also reacted to regime counter-offensive gains in previous days. African Union presented 'the African Union Roadmap' calling for " (i) the immediate cessation of all hostilities, (ii) the cooperation of the competent Libyan authorities to facilitate the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to the needy populations, (iii) the protection of foreign nationals, including the African migrants living in Libya, and (iv) the adoption and implementation of the political reforms necessary for the elimination of the causes of the current crisis."¹⁸¹ NATO came with 'Leslie criteria,' Named after Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to NATO Mariot Leslie, for involvement including "1) a demonstrable need for military activity, 2) a clear legal basis and 3) regional support."¹⁸²

On Friday, as the regime took Brega, some two hundred and forty kilometers from Benghazi,¹⁸³ President Obama was unambiguous during his press conference that "Qaddafi is on the wrong side of history." Still, he seemed so unwilling to commit to any military action in Libya mentioning that "[any] time I send the United States forces into a potentially hostile situation, there are risks involved and there are consequences. And it is my job as President to make sure that we have considered all those risks." The President also announced that the United States would send Special Representative to National Transitional Council Christopher Stevens.¹⁸⁴

"The calculus in Washington shifted when on Saturday, March 12, 2011, the twenty-two-nation Arab League adopted an unprecedented statement calling on the United Nations Security Council to impose a no-fly zone and protect civilians, while recognizing the Libyan opposition forces as the legitimate government."¹⁸⁵ Susan Rice was not only to one think so, as even Secretary Clinton admitted the change in her calculus.¹⁸⁶ For the first time in history, the Arab League urged intervention in one of the member states. Despite other nations being

¹⁸⁰ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 159.

¹⁸¹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 278.

¹⁸² Adler-Nissen, "Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya," 15.

¹⁸³ David Cameron, *For the Record*, (London: William Collins, 2019), 275.

¹⁸⁴ Barack Obama, "News Conference by the President," Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 11. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/11/news-conference-president> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

¹⁸⁵ Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 269.

¹⁸⁶ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 367.

“no more than one of many influences on decisions and actions,”¹⁸⁷ this vote was to be one of the key points leading toward the Libyan intervention.

2.5 President Obama decides to act, (March 14-19)

Secretary Clinton landed in Paris on March 14 to participate in the G8 summit at the Elysée Palace. She met with Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International cooperation of the United Arab Emirates, even before the summit. He allegedly promised her Emirati participation in Libyan intervention. Naturally, the European allies also tried to sway the United States as they were eager to act.¹⁸⁸

Later in the evening, Secretary Clinton met with Mahmoud Jibril, the representative of the National Transitional Council, who managed to persuade President Sarkozy to recognize the opposition as a legitimate representative of Libya just a few days earlier.¹⁸⁹ During their meeting, Jibril tried to plea for American help even by raising memories of Rwanda and Yugoslavia from the Clinton presidency.¹⁹⁰

Meanwhile, President Obama welcomed Prime Minister Rasmussen of Denmark in the White House. During remarks after their meeting, he voiced his plan “to coordinate closely both through NATO as well as the United Nations and other international fora to look at every single option that’s available to us in bringing about a better outcome for the Libyan people.” Arguably, President Obama was getting ready to act.¹⁹¹

The next day, Secretary Clinton flew to Cairo to meet Secretary-General of the Arab League Amr Moussa, a staunch supporter of the intervention. He further reassured her about regional Arab support for military action in Libya. Besides the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Jordan were willing to take part in the intervention and thus provide legitimacy.¹⁹²

Apparently, this experience with allies’ support and contact with the oppositional representative persuaded Secretary Clinton about the feasibility of the military involvement.¹⁹³ “Our NATO allies were prepared to take the lead in any military action. The

¹⁸⁷ Allison and Halperin, “Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications,” 60.

¹⁸⁸ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 368.

¹⁸⁹ Michael Hastings, “Inside Obama’s War Room,” *RollingStone*, 13. 10. 2011, <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/inside-obamas-war-room-238074/> (accessed 19. 05. 2020).

¹⁹⁰ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 369.

¹⁹¹ Obama, 14.3.

¹⁹² Clinton, *Hard choices*, 371.

¹⁹³ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 21.

Arab League would support it, and some would even actively participate in combat operations against an Arab neighbor - a telling sign of how far Qaddafi had gone.”¹⁹⁴ According to Michael Hastings, one of the reasons was also when “a coalition of Egyptian youth groups refused to meet with her.”¹⁹⁵ Anyway, Secretary Clinton distanced herself from the attitude presumed by the ‘stand-sit’ proposition.

France, Great Britain, and Lebanon drafted a resolution for the United Nations Security Council. Lebanon, as the only Arab League nation on the Security Council, represented the will of the whole regional organization.¹⁹⁶ Their draft would establish a no-fly zone above Libya. Once again, the United Kingdom was in the role of the penholder.¹⁹⁷ However, it was Nawaf Salam, Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations, who proposed the resolution on Tuesday.¹⁹⁸

2.5.1 The National Security Council meeting, (March 15)

Back in Libya, there were clashes over Ajdabiya, the last stop on the way to Benghazi.¹⁹⁹ Misurata was in turmoil and cut from electricity and water supply.²⁰⁰ Benghazi was about to face the same problem, as the government forces were closing in on the source of both for the coastal city.²⁰¹

In Washington, the National Security Council meeting listed as “The President and the Vice-President Meet With Secretary of Defense Gates” started at 4 p.m.²⁰² It was this meeting where the final ‘pulling and hauling’ were to take place using the prime action-channel of the working group.

At the beginning of the meeting, Secretary Clinton informed the others, through video from Tunisia, about the willingness of European allies to lead and Arab allies to support the intervention. Deputy Director of National Intelligence Cardillo briefed the situation room on the latest development in Libya that three cities, including Ajdabiya, fell.²⁰³

¹⁹⁴ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 370.

¹⁹⁵ Hastings, “Inside Obama’s War Room.”

¹⁹⁶ Adler-Nissen, “Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya,” 10.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁹⁸ Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 269.

¹⁹⁹ Ben Rhodes, *The world as it is: inside the Obama White House*, (London: The Bodley Head, 2018)112.

²⁰⁰ Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 196.

²⁰¹ Rhodes, *The world as it is: inside the Obama White House*, 112.

²⁰² Lewis, “Obama’s Way.”

²⁰³ Hastings, “Inside Obama’s War Room.”

On the side opposing the intervention, Secretary Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mullen saw no national interest in Libya, Vice President Biden and White House Chief of Staff Daley viewed Libya only as a political downside.²⁰⁴ According to Gates, the intervention would provide only enormous costs and unpredictable consequences.²⁰⁵ National Security Advisor Donilon preferred the low-cost option of supplying the opposition with weapons.²⁰⁶ Only a week ago, this seemed to be a generally accepted option, but now was time for more radical measures..²⁰⁷

Admiral Mullen saw the possible intervention as “an extraordinarily complex operation to set up.”²⁰⁸ As Gates mentioned, the United States had only “limited information on the leaders of the uprising in the east of Libya while they had no information whatsoever on those leading the uprising in the western half of the country.”²⁰⁹

Pentagon came to the meeting with a proposal of a binary choice of establishing a no-fly zone or not getting involved. However, the Libyan regime did not use airpower but rather heavy weapons to crush the opposition. President Obama was shocked to realize that “You’re telling me a no-fly zone doesn’t solve the problem, but the only option you’re giving me is a no-fly zone.”²¹⁰ It became clear that most of the senior officials were not keen to act in Libya.

Obama turned to the junior officials, ‘the backbenchers,’ admitting, “I went to people who were not at the table. Because I am trying to get an argument that is not being made.”²¹¹ Ambassador to the United Nations Rice and National Security Council Senior Director Power arguably took the lead. They had been both deeply affected by their experience in the 1990s.

Rice was part of the Clinton administration during the Rwandan genocide. She later reflected, “I swore myself that if I ever faced such a crisis again, I would come down on the side of dramatic action, going down in flames if that was required.”²¹² Rice was also one of the earliest foreign policy advisors to Obama during his campaign.

²⁰⁴ Lewis, “Obama’s Way.”

²⁰⁵ David Fitzgerald and David Ryan, *Obama, US Foreign Policy and the Dilemmas of Intervention*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 97.

²⁰⁶ Hastings, “Inside Obama’s War Room.”

²⁰⁷ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 21.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 20.

²⁰⁹ Fitzgerald and Ryan, *Obama, US Foreign Policy and the Dilemmas of Intervention*, 104.

²¹⁰ Lewis, “Obama’s Way.”

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 171.

Power became famous thanks to her Pulitzer Prize-winning book about historical trauma of genocides from the 1990s and the possible ways to prevent such events from reappearing. She also joined the presidential campaign early and established a special bond with Obama. She had to leave the campaign after an inappropriate statement in the press but rejoined Obama's team after his inauguration.

Due to the long-lasting professional relationship with the President, they both acquired agent-specific bargaining advantage of proximity. Deputy National Security Advisor Rhodes, as Obama's speechwriter, was one of very few members of the administration, to arguably have an even closer relationship with the President. They were conceivably able to approach President Obama even in a less formal way.

They also both brought their baggage, which is sensitivities to certain issues from their experience, commitment to a program of preventing any possible genocide, and perceived debt to the victims. In their case, the issue on which they work rather than the agency they happened to be part of had determined their perspective. As an example, Power was not supposed to be part of the National Security Council meeting, she got there thanks to her boss Donilon, clearly breaking standard operating procedures of her organization.²¹³

During the meeting, Power warned that "this would be a first large atrocity on our watch."²¹⁴ Rice emphasized that they cannot allow repeating Rwanda-like moment when 'the U.S. blinked.'²¹⁵ For Rhodes, the problem was "what we would say if we choose not to do something... We'd have to explain to the American people and the world why we're choosing not to join the international community in doing something."²¹⁶

Other middle-ranking officials joined Rice, Power, and Rhodes.²¹⁷ Among them were National Security Advisor to the Vice President Anthony Blinken,²¹⁸ Ambassador to Libya Gane Cretz,²¹⁹ Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder,²²⁰ National Security Council Senior

²¹³ Power, *The Education of an Idealist*, 295.

²¹⁴ Rhodes, *The world as it is: inside the Obama White House*, 112.

²¹⁵ Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 270.

²¹⁶ Rhodes, *The world as it is: inside the Obama White House*, 114.

²¹⁷ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 21.

²¹⁸ Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 271.

²¹⁹ Hastings, "Inside Obama's War Room."

²²⁰ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 219.

Director Gayle Smith,²²¹ and National Security Council Director Jeremy Weinstein.²²² Rhodes argued that this split highlighted ‘the generational chasm.’²²³

The only senior official siding with them was Secretary Clinton. During her travel around the allies, she changed her position to fully supporting the intervention. She altered her position after meeting with European and Arab allies.²²⁴ Arguably, she also saw the dwindling influence of Secretary Gates and decided to change sides.²²⁵

The President ended the meeting for it to reconvene later that day with a direct order, “I want real options.”²²⁶ When the National Security Council met again, it was not only without junior officials but also without Secretary Clinton due to the time zone difference, but she made her position clear beforehand.²²⁷ Most probably, Deputy Secretary of State William Burns took her place as a representative of the Department of State.

Pentagon came with a third option, later called ‘a no-drive zone.’²²⁸ This option should allow American aircraft to target even heavy weaponry and military vehicles on the ground. Yet, this scenario could have been possible only if Ambassador Rice would be able to gain international support for it. She, however, already finished her draft even before the second meeting.²²⁹ She reassured the President that she would be able to implement the phrase allowing the coalition to take ‘all necessary actions’ to protect the civilians.²³⁰

What then persuaded President Obama to go through with the intervention? There was a possibility of destabilization spreading to post-revolution Egypt and Tunisia.²³¹ The unprecedented support from the Arab League.²³² President Obama also did not want to be forced to intervene later under more unfavorable conditions as European allies seemed determined to establish a no-fly zone even without the United States.²³³

²²¹ Mann, *The Obamians*, 302.

²²² Blomdahl, “Bureaucratic Roles and Positions: Explaining the United States Libya Secision,” 147.

²²³ Rhodes, *The world as it is: inside the Obama White House*, 113.

²²⁴ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 21.

²²⁵ Hastings, “Inside Obama’s War Room.”

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Paquin, Massie, and Beauregard, “Obama’s leadership style: enabling transatlantic allies in Libya and Mali,” 197.

²²⁹ Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 271.

²³⁰ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 21.

²³¹ Fitzgerald and Ryan, *Obama, US Foreign Policy and the Dilemmas of Intervention*, 102.

²³² Paquin, Massie, and Beauregard, “Obama’s leadership style: enabling transatlantic allies in Libya and Mali,” 192.

²³³ Ibid., 198.

Most importantly, the city of Benghazi with seven hundred thousand people facing possible massacre.²³⁴ When Ambassador Rice promised to gain legitimacy through the United Nations Security Council Resolution with the ‘all necessary measures’ clause, it became a turning point in the American approach.²³⁵ If the resolution passed, the United States would enforce it. As President Obama said, doing nothing could have “stained the conscience of the world”²³⁶ and “that’s not who we are.”²³⁷

2.5.2 Pursuite of international authorization, (March16-17)

Until now, Ambassador Rice let other nations lead the discussion about Libya on the floor of the United Nations.²³⁸ However, after the meeting on Tuesday, she began to lead for the authorization of a new resolution based on the draft by Lebanon, France, and Britain with American input, including ‘all necessary measures’ clause.²³⁹ Admiral Mullen hand-delivered the orders for the authorization to the White House on Wednesday.²⁴⁰ On the same day, Ambassador Rice, for the first time, admitted that the United States is ready to participate in military intervention in Libya.²⁴¹ Saif Al-Islam Al-Qaddafi, son of the Colonel, announced on the national television that “everything will be over in 48 hours.”²⁴² The pressure increased even more.

The United Nations Security Council needed nine votes in favor and no veto from any permanent member for the resolution to pass.²⁴³ President Obama called President Medvedev on March 16, to prevent Russian veto. President Medvedev only stated that “he has given the foreign minister the necessary instruction on the matter.”²⁴⁴ Ambassador of Russia to the United Nations Churkin even presented an alternative resolution calling just for a cease-fire, yet he dropped it very soon after.²⁴⁵

²³⁴ Hastings, “Inside Obama’s War Room.”

²³⁵ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 172.

²³⁶ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 15.

²³⁷ Lewis, “Obama’s Way.”

²³⁸ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 49.

²³⁹ Power, *The Education of an Idealist*, 301.

²⁴⁰ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 172.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 175.

²⁴² Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 200.

²⁴³ Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 274.

²⁴⁴ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 73.

²⁴⁵ Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 273.

The United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Lebanon were sponsoring the text. Brasil and India signaled that they would abstain. Germany pursued sanctions rather than military intervention and therefore decided not to support the draft.²⁴⁶ Secretary Clinton called her counterpart in Portugal Luís Amado to secure its vote.²⁴⁷ Colombia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were also keen to support the resolution.

All the pressure to secure the nine votes was now on three members of the African Union. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson managed to persuade Nigeria to vote in favor.²⁴⁸ France pressured Gabon to do the same.²⁴⁹ President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and President Sarkozy all called President Jacob Zuma to secure all three votes.²⁵⁰ Russia and China decided to choose ‘constructive abstention.’²⁵¹ Ambassador Churkin promised the abstention of Russia to Ambassador Rice day before the vote.²⁵² Secretary Clinton later confirmed this during a phone call with Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov from Tunisia.²⁵³ For China, the decision of regional organizations like the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League pushed them to abstain as not to upset them.²⁵⁴ Minister Juppé had arrived in New York before the vote to emphasize French leadership and secure more influence in the Security Council.²⁵⁵ During the discussion on the floor of the United Nations, the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina made a strong case for the resolution “I know what the airstrikes can do, I was there, but eventually it did bring peace.”²⁵⁶ Ten countries voted in favor of the resolution, five abstained.²⁵⁷

The Resolution 1973 took inspiration from the untested concept of ‘responsibility to protect.’ The 2005 UN Summit Outcome Document endorsed this concept in September 2005,²⁵⁸ similarly to the International Court of Justice and the International Law Commission.²⁵⁹ The summit outcome document “calls on the international community to protect vulnerable

²⁴⁶ Adler-Nissen, “Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya,” 14.

²⁴⁷ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 372.

²⁴⁸ Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 274.

²⁴⁹ Adler-Nissen, “Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya,” 13.

²⁵⁰ Weismann, 684.

²⁵¹ Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 185.

²⁵² Rice, *Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For*, 274.

²⁵³ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 371.

²⁵⁴ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 57.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

²⁵⁶ Adler-Nissen, “Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya,” 12.

²⁵⁷ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 176-178.

²⁵⁸ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 44.

²⁵⁹ Fitzgerald and Ryan, *Obama, US Foreign Policy and the Dilemmas of Intervention*, 100.

populations by taking ‘collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council.’”²⁶⁰ However, the original idea contained “a three-pronged responsibility- to prevent, to react, to rebuild.”²⁶¹

2.5.3 Building the coalition, (March 18-19)

The next day, March 18, President Obama announced demands of Libya: “Qaddafi must stop his troops from advancing on Benghazi, pull them back from Ajdabiya, Misrata, and Zawiya, and establish water, electricity and gas supplies to all areas (...) These terms are not subject to negotiation.”²⁶² Even though the Obama administration took steps towards action in the last few days, according to Secretary Gates, “Considerable divisions still existed among Obama’s advisors as late as 17 March for American military engagement in Libya.”²⁶³

President invited some of the congressional leaders to the situation room to comply with the War Powers Resolution. According to Deputy National Security Advisor Rhodes, “either member of the bicameral congressional leadership came to the White House to speak with President Obama, or the president spoke with them over the phone. After these conversations, officials from the Departments of Defense and State and the intelligence agencies spoke to some individuals on the ‘appropriate oversight committees.’”²⁶⁴ Hastings, however, presents a slightly different version of the meeting, “according to two senior congressional sources with direct knowledge of the meeting, Obama ‘came into the room, sat down and read some talking points [of] a paper.’ Then the president said, ‘If there are any questions, you can ask my advisers,’ and left the room.” He flew on the planned visit to South America.²⁶⁵

²⁶⁰ Ralph and Jess Gifkins, “The purpose of United Nations Security Council practice,” 639.

²⁶¹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 229.

²⁶² Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President on the Situation in Libya,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 18. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/18/remarks-president-situation-libya> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

²⁶³ Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, 518.

²⁶⁴ Ryan C. Hendrickson, *Obama at War: Congress and the Imperial Presidency*, (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2015), 56-57.

²⁶⁵ Hastings, “Inside Obama’s War Room.”

3. Operation Odyssey Dawn

However, even before this official threshold, French fighter jets intercepted the military column heading for Benghazi. French Dassault Rafale, the only deployed fighter jets not able to be intercepted by Libyan anti-aircraft weapons, opened fire on Libyan military vehicles at approximately 16:45 local time. The importance of this attack cannot be overstated as it prevented any execution of the attack on the rebel stronghold.

From Friday to Saturday, the situation on the ground escalated as the government forces were entering the outskirts of Benghazi. During the Paris summit with European and Arab allies, Secretary Clinton, President Sarkozy, and Prime Minister Cameron discussed their options. They decided that the whole intervention would be under the nominal leadership of General Ham from the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM). However, France and Britain established separate headquarters in Mount Verdun and Northwood, respectively. Therefore, when the first attack commenced, three different operations began, French Operation Harmattan, British Operation Ellamy, and American Operation Odyssey Dawn. Yet, Operation Odyssey Dawn was not only the American part of the intervention but also a general name for the whole intervention due to the AFRICOM leadership.

Curiously, even before the summit ended, French fighter jets had intercepted the military column heading for Benghazi. French Dassault Rafale, the only deployed fighter jets able to evade Libyan anti-aircraft defense,²⁶⁶ opened fire on Libyan military vehicles at approximately 16:45 local time. The importance of this attack cannot be overstated as it prevented any execution of the attack on the rebel stronghold. Yet, some, including Secretary Gates, would claim that President Sarkozy was aiming for ‘a little extra publicity.’²⁶⁷

3.1 Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses, (March 19-20)

On March 19, 2011, at approximately 22:00 local Libyan time, the military option came officially into effect.²⁶⁸ In the opening hours of Operation Odyssey Dawn, the U.S. and British naval assets launched one hundred-nineteen Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles on strategic shoreline air defenses, air bases in Tripoli and Misrata, Command and Control (C2)

²⁶⁶ Paquin, Massie, and Beauregard, “Obama’s leadership style: enabling transatlantic allies in Libya and Mali,” 198.

²⁶⁷ Gates, *Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war*, 519.

²⁶⁸ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama and President Sebastian Pinera of Chile at Join Press Conference,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 21. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/21/remarks-president-obama-and-president-sebastian-pinera-chile-join-press-> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

targets, including Khamis Brigade headquarter.²⁶⁹ Two Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Stout and USS Barry, two Los Angeles-class submarines USS Providence and USS Scranton, and one Ohio-class cruise missile submarine USS Florida launched one hundred-twelve Tomahawks, while British Trafalgar-class nuclear submarine HMS Triumph launched an additional seven (Great Britain fired five more later during the intervention).²⁷⁰ Bear in mind that single Tomahawk cruise missile costs 1.3 million dollars, for example, the United Kingdom spent almost a fifth of its overall costs for the engagement during these first three days, with more than six months to go.²⁷¹

Despite the crucial role of the three respective navies in the SEAD (Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses) phase of the intervention, the main tools used for the no-fly zone enforcement were obviously air force assets. Royal Air Force Tornado GR4 aircrafts delivered 3000-mile sorties from Marham base via Storm Shadow cruise missiles, making it the longest RAF bombing mission since the Falklands. Tornados provided a unique capability for the coalition like bunker destruction.²⁷² RAF also dispatched ten Eurofighter Typhoons to Italian Gioia del Colle base. Additionally, Great Britain also deployed VC-10 tanker aircraft, several C-17 and C-130 transports, and Nimrod and Sentinel ISTAR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance) planes.²⁷³

As mentioned, France deployed twenty Rafale and Mirage 2000 fighter jets from Solenzara Air Base on Corsica. These twenty fighter jets delivered fifty-five sorties just within the first three days.²⁷⁴ Additional twenty-six aircraft were taking off from Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier, including sixteen Rafale fighter jets.²⁷⁵ The United Kingdom and France were the only coalition partners of the United States that conducted airstrikes on ground targets.

The U.S. Air Force assets deployed B-2 Spirit bombers in the initial phase to target airfields delivering their sortie of forty-five JDAMs (Joint Direct Attack Munitions), thanks to the refueling, directly from the continental United States.²⁷⁶ As can be expected, American fighters from bases in Europe also assisted in a no-fly zone enforcement. Concretely, the F-

²⁶⁹ Michelle Mandley, "Libya, Obama, and the War Powers Resolution," *Towson University Journal of International Affairs*, Vol 46, Issue 1, 2013, 5.

²⁷⁰ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 13.

²⁷¹ Paquin, Massie, and Beauregard, "Obama's leadership style: enabling transatlantic allies in Libya and Mali," 197.

²⁷² Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 55.

²⁷³ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 18.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁷⁵ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 42.

²⁷⁶ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 7.

15Es from Britain and F-16CJs from Germany. USS Kearsarge and USS Ponce provided further support with their AV-8B Harrier fighters, CH-53 Super Stallion helicopter, and MV-22 Osprey tiltrotor aircraft.²⁷⁷

President Obama appeared before the press for a short time to announce the authorization of limited military action. He emphasized that “Actions have consequences, and the writ of the international community must be enforced. (...) As a part of this effort, the United States will contribute our unique capabilities at the front end of the mission to protect Libyan civilians, and enable the enforcement of a no-fly zone that will be led by our international partners.”²⁷⁸

3.2 Enforcing the no-fly zone, (March 21-27)

Ambassador Daalder was responsible for securing NATO take-over, only three days into the intervention, NATO members already met to discuss this possibility.²⁷⁹ During the meeting, France and Turkey got into a heated debate ending with the French representative leaving the room. Turkey seemed resolute to veto any possible takeover.²⁸⁰ In addition, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs Franco Frattini threatened to close Italian bases for the coalition without direct NATO leadership.²⁸¹ President Obama had to call both President Sarkozy and Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan to secure their support for Operation Unified Protector.²⁸² Secretary Clinton is also credited with solving this situation during a four-way call.²⁸³

On March 21, President Obama flew from Brazil to Chile, making a press conference with President Pinera. During this conference, President Obama once again stressed the limited nature of American involvement in Libya as the main actor in the first phase of SEAD operations while letting the coalition partners from Europe and the Middle East enforce the no-fly zone.²⁸⁴ The same message was also the content of the letter to Congress, which,

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 11.

²⁷⁸ Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President on Libya,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 19. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/19/remarks-president-libya> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

²⁷⁹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 219.

²⁸⁰ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 375.

²⁸¹ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 194.

²⁸² Clinton, *Hard choices*, 375.

²⁸³ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 24.

²⁸⁴ Obama, “Remarks by President Obama and President Sebastian Pinera of Chile at Join Press Conference.”

however, also fulfilled his obligations under the War Powers Resolution to inform the legislative within forty-eight hours.²⁸⁵

What is more, the same day, one of the American F-15E Strike Eagle strike fighters crashed near Benghazi due to a technical problem. While Quick Reaction Force rescued Major Kenneth Harney near the crash site, Captain Tyler Stark was unaccounted for several hours. Fortunately, opposition fighters managed to find him, and he later returned to the coalition forces.²⁸⁶

Still on Monday, Prime Minister Cameron secured authorization from the House of Commons for the British participation. During his speech, Prime Minister defined his criteria for taking action and further stressed the necessity of swiftness, excluding the due process of parliamentary authorization.²⁸⁷ In other words, they were consistent with the ‘Leslie criteria.’²⁸⁸

On the 22nd, while making a press conference with President Funes of El Salvador, President Obama began his shift in the interpretation of United Nations mandate. The statement: “Now, you were absolutely right that as long as Qaddafi remains in power,... unless he is willing to step down, that there are still going to be potential threats towards the Libyan people,” clearly indicates the possibility of regime change already being considered under the umbrella of Resolution 1973.²⁸⁹

By Tuesday, Libyan air force and long-range air defenses were deemed ‘largely ineffective.’²⁹⁰ In other words, the Libyan regime was no longer capable to even threaten the coalition forces in implementing any measures they want. Perhaps, this persuaded Russia, China, India, and Brasil to call for a ceasefire.²⁹¹

In the middle of the week, NATO formally agreed to take full responsibility for no-fly zone enforcement since March 27.²⁹² While Germany withdrew all naval assets in the

²⁸⁵ Barack Obama, “Letter from the President regarding the commencement of operations in Libya,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 21. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/21/letter-president-regarding-commencement-operations-libya> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

²⁸⁶ Lewis, “Obama’s Way.”

²⁸⁷ Davidson, “France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis,” 321.

²⁸⁸ Adler-Nissen, “Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya,” 15.

²⁸⁹ Barack Obama, “Remarks by President Obama and President Funes of El Salvador in Joint Press Conference,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 22. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/22/remarks-president-obama-and-president-funes-el-salvador-joint-press-conf> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

²⁹⁰ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 10.

²⁹¹ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 195.

²⁹² Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 24.

Mediterranean from NATO command,²⁹³ it also sent more aircraft to Afghanistan so other coalition members could deploy in Libya.²⁹⁴ The no-fly zone itself expanded from the border with Tunisia to the border with Egypt.²⁹⁵

Besides NATO members, there were also other partner countries deploying to Libya like the United Arab Emirates²⁹⁶ and Qatar.²⁹⁷ The UAE, with the biggest air force in the region, pledged six F-16 and six Mirage fighter aircraft. Qatar deployed six Mirage fighter aircraft and two C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft.²⁹⁸ Crucially, both Arab countries also deployed their special forces on the ground to train the opposition and provide JTAC (Joint Terminal Attack Controller) role on the ground.²⁹⁹

After the end of the initial SEAD phase of the intervention, the main task for the deployed military aircraft was air policing and, crucially, providing CAS (Close Air Support) in favor of the opposition forces. During the weekend, the United States deployed its unique capability for this task in the form of A-10 attack fighters and AC-130 gunships.³⁰⁰

3.3 NATO takeover, (March 28-31)

The President himself formally addressed the nation during his speech at the National Defense University in Washington after his return from South America. He emphasized that, “I made it clear that Qaddafi had lost the confidence of his people and the legitimacy to lead, and I said that he needed to step down from power.” He also reminded the nation that about 700 000 inhabitants of Benghazi, “could suffer a massacre that would have reverberated across the region and stained the conscience of the world. It was not in our national interest to let that happen. I refused to let that happen.”³⁰¹

Especially, President Obama recalled his pledge of limited involvement that, “America’s role would be limited; that we would not put ground troops into Libya; that we would focus

²⁹³ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 16.

²⁹⁴ Adler-Nissen, “Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya,” 14.

²⁹⁵ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 8.

²⁹⁶ Jay Carney, “Statement by the Press Secretary on UAE Support for UN Security Council Resolution 1973,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 24. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/24/statement-press-secretary-uae-support-un-security-council-resolution-1973> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

²⁹⁷ O’Sullivan, *Military Intervention in the Middle East and North Africa: The Case of NATO in Libya*, 63.

²⁹⁸ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 20.

²⁹⁹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 146.

³⁰⁰ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 8.

³⁰¹ Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on Libya,” Office of the Press Secretary, official page of the White House, 28. 3. 2011, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/28/remarks-president-address-nation-libya> (Accessed on 19. 5.).

our unique capabilities on the front end of the operation and that we would transfer responsibility to our allies and partners.”³⁰² During the video call with President Sarkozy, Prime Minister Cameron and Chancellor Merkel, all participants agreed, “Qaddafi had lost any legitimacy to rule and should leave power.”³⁰³ In other words, the coalition undertook another significant step towards regime change, which they denied to even consider as an option during the vote at the United Nations Security Council.

On Tuesday, March 29, during the London Conference, the Libyan Contact Group had been established. Among the members were representatives of NATO, the European Union, the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and all five permanent members of the UN Security Council. Already, Russia and China not only refused to attend but vocally protested the ongoing military actions in Libya.³⁰⁴ Curiously, there was also rather limited African representation at the conference.³⁰⁵

Operation Unified Protector officially succeeded Operation Odyssey Dawn on March 31.³⁰⁶ American military personnel withdrew from direct combat missions on the 4 April. From now on, the United States played only a supporting role, including ‘intelligence, logistical support, search and rescue assistance, and jammed regime communications.’

Overall, the United States deployed 50% of the troops, 38% of the aircraft and accounted for close to 30% of the sorties,³⁰⁷ while also providing 80% of air refueling, 75% of aerial surveillance hours, and 100% of electronic warfare missions under Operation Odyssey Dawn.³⁰⁸ The United States spent approximately 1.1 billion dollars during the intervention and subsequent support of the Operation Unified Protector. The U.S. military also added another hundred Tomahawk cruise missiles unleashed on regime targets coming to the final 221 fired.³⁰⁹ As President Obama said, “In just one month, the United States has worked with our international partners to mobilize a broad coalition, secure an international mandate

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ralph and Jess Gifkins, “The purpose of United Nations Security Council practice,” 641.

³⁰⁵ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 280.

³⁰⁶ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 25.

³⁰⁷ Paquin, Massie, and Beauregard, “Obama’s leadership style: enabling transatlantic allies in Libya and Mali,” 196.

³⁰⁸ Mandley, “Libya, Obama, and the War Powers Resolution,” 5.

³⁰⁹ Paquin, Massie, and Beauregard, “Obama’s leadership style: enabling transatlantic allies in Libya and Mali,” 197.

to protect civilians, stop an advancing army, prevent a massacre, and establish a no-fly zone with our allies and partners.”³¹⁰

4. Problems with American narrative of Operation

Odyssey Dawn

As demonstrated, the main reasons for President Obama to yield to his advisors and order military intervention in Libya were the escalating situation on the front lines where regime forces reached outskirts of Benghazi, regional support from the Arab League, and pledge from the European allies to take the lead in latter phases of the intervention. However, there are some general problems with this rationale of the President’s decision. This section aims to suggest some factual irregularities contesting this rationale. In the context of the whole thesis, this merely highlights the great danger of making decisions based on distorted or inaccurate information.

4.1 Collateral damage

While President Obama was not wrong in his summary of the Operation Odyssey Dawn, his fulfillment of the promise to let coalition partners handle the no-fly zone phase of the intervention provided them with unforeseen complications. Withdrawal of American A-10s and AC-134 from kinetic missions³¹¹ revealed limitations of any meaningful CAS capability among participating countries.³¹² The lack of this capability forced the coalition to shift airstrikes from hitting individual vehicles or artillery pieces to target stationary infrastructures like electrical power stations, oil refineries, and water treatment plants.³¹³ Only France and Great Britain imposed no restrictions on their airstrike targets, which not only slowed down any meaningful support for the opposition counter-offensive but also put immense pressure on British and French personnel, inevitably leading to collateral damage.³¹⁴ Fatigue, less precise munition, and false intel led to many incidents of civilian

³¹⁰ Obama, “Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on Libya.”

³¹¹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 16.

³¹² Paquin, Massie, and Beauregard, “Obama’s leadership style: enabling transatlantic allies in Libya and Mali,” 198.

³¹³ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 37.

³¹⁴ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 28.

casualties like in the well-recorded case of killing thirty-two civilians in Majer on August 8. Arguably, American withdrawal was one of the reasons leading to such incidents.³¹⁵

Both Britain and France later somewhat mitigated this risk by deploying attack and CSAR (Combat Search and Rescue) helicopters to provide direct support to the rebel forces. In the case of the United Kingdom, an amphibious assault ship HMS Ocean deployed a handful of Apache attack helicopters. France sent Mistral-class amphibious assault helicopter carrier Tonnerre with Tigre and Gazelle attack helicopters and Puma and Caracal CSAR helicopters. These significantly enhanced coalition capabilities from May 2011.³¹⁶

Naturally, there are reasons to question the decision to intervene in the first place. As Alan J. Kuperman demonstrates, “Contrary to most contemporaneous Western reporting, many Libyan protesters actually were armed and violent from the first day of the uprising.” According to Amnesty International, there were cases of defecting security forces shooting on loyalists on February 17, in Al Bayda.³¹⁷ UN Human rights Council mentions the armament of protestors from seized government police stations and military barracks changing the response of regime forces to ‘shoot to kill.’³¹⁸ Human Rights Watch concurs with their counts of casualties during the first seven weeks of fighting in Misurata, with 257 people killed and 949 wounded, in the city of 400 000, the majority being ‘military-aged males.’³¹⁹

Kuperman estimates the possible scenario of no international intervention to last six weeks and costs approximately one thousand one hundred killed.³²⁰ Instead, after Operation Odyssey Dawn and Operation Unified Protector, the Libyan revolution lasted thirty-six weeks with eight thousand dead by U.S. estimates, and up to thirty thousand dead according to the interim health minister.³²¹ In other words, the intervention in Libya possibly magnified the count of deaths seven-times, that is not counting the impact of the second Libyan civil war and regional spillover like in Mali.

³¹⁵ O’Sullivan, *Military Intervention in the Middle East and North Africa: The Case of NATO in Libya*, 72.

³¹⁶ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 38.

³¹⁷ Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 193.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 194.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 195.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 204.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 206.

4.2 Local Participation

4.2.1 False narrative of Arab support

Local support for the intervention played a crucial role in changing the calculus for many important administration officials. Libya marks the first time that the Arab League called for UN intervention in any member country. Besides the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation either fully supported or at least welcomed the intervention.

Just one week into the protests, on February 22, the Arab League suspended Libyan membership. The no-fly zone itself had been endorsed on March 8 by the Gulf Cooperation Council and on March 12 by the Arab League. The Operation Odyssey Dawn included deployments of Qatari and Emirati fighter aircraft as well as non-combat support from Jordan and Morocco.

However, under closer scrutiny, there seem to be evident misconceptions about this support and the crucial role of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Both monarchies used their positions in the presidency of the Arab League,³²² and the chairmanship of the Gulf Cooperation Council³²³ respectively to push for the intervention in Libya. Doha engineered Libya's membership suspension from the Arab League.³²⁴ Abu Dhabi secured the Gulf Cooperation Council endorsement.

They both played a crucial role in the historical Arab League endorsement of intervention in any member state, which passed unanimously. During the vote, there were only twelve members present out of the twenty-one (suspended Libya would be twenty-second). Moreover, all six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council were among the twelve passing the endorsement. In other words, the Gulf Cooperation Council hijacked the vote while manufacturing perception of far wider regional support for the intervention.³²⁵

Each of the monarchies had specific reasons to do so. According to Kristian C. Ulrichsen: "Qatar's interests in Libya were projected by personal connection, soft power, and awareness that the campaign offered a marketing of the Qatari brand."³²⁶ In the case of the United Arab

³²² Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 113.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 142.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 123.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 111.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 124.

Emirates, Jean-Marc Rickli argues that, “Libya represented a good opportunity for the UAE to shape the perceptions in the West that it had become a reliable military partner...”³²⁷

Unfortunately, besides a very different rationale for supporting the intervention, they also supported different rebel brigades. Besides material support for their respective partners, Doha and Abu Dhabi also deployed hundreds of Special Forces to assist rebels and provide JTAC capability for coalition aircraft. These units played a crucial role, especially during capturing Tripoli in Operation Dawn Mermaid in August 2011.³²⁸ As can be expected, this disunity highly predetermined the subsequent struggle for power among the opposition factions, which continues in 2020.

Contradicting all their pro-revolutionary action in Libya, on March 14, the Peninsula Shield Force of the Gulf Cooperation Council entered Bahrain to assist in suppressing protests. The United Arab Emirates sent five hundred police officers to Bahrain, in addition to one thousand Saudi soldiers with armored support, Qatari forces also formed part of the deployment. Obviously, actions in Bahrain put into question the true rationale in the case of Libya.³²⁹

Even Secretary Clinton, in her memoirs, indicates some ‘quid pro quo’ tendencies from Emirati Minister Abdullah bin Zayed at the time when the United States required local participation on the intervention. During their conversation on the eve of Operation Odyssey Dawn he allegedly said: “Frankly, when we have a situation with our armed forces in Bahrain, it’s hard to participate in another operation if our armed forces’ commitment to Bahrain is questioned by our main ally.”³³⁰

4.2.2 Ignorance of African Union

Additionally, there is noticeable ignorance of any initiative of the African Union. Peace and Security Council of the African Union condemned the violence already on February 23.³³¹ However, it also came with a plan for reconstruction and reformation on March 10. ‘the African Union Roadmap’ introduced four main points: cease of hostilities, humanitarian assistance distribution through Tripoli government, protection of foreign citizens in Libya, and gradual political reform.³³²

³²⁷ Ibid., 134.

³²⁸ Ibid., 146.

³²⁹ Ibid., 124.

³³⁰ Clinton, *Hard choices*, 358.

³³¹ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 149.

³³² Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 278.

On the eve of Operation Odyssey Dawn, the African Union meeting in Mauritania decided to send officials to Tripoli to act as an intermediary. Unfortunately, these officials were meant to arrive at Tripolis on March 20.³³³ Moreover, the Libyan Contact Group uniting most relevant actors lacked any representation of the African Union except Morocco, which arguably became a member for other reasons.³³⁴

4.3 Role of European Allies

4.3.1 France

Amid the initial Libyan uprising in 2011, France emerged as the outspoken privileged public leader of the international response. President Sarkozy first called for Qaddafi to step down on February 25.³³⁵ France was also the first state to recognize the oppositional National Transitional Council as the legitimate representative of Libya on March 10 after President Sarkozy met with Mustafa Abdel-Jalil of the National Transitional Council.³³⁶

As can be expected, President Sarkozy had more incentives to take decisive action in the face of violence in Libya than the protection of the opposition. Firstly, France was afraid of the possible refugee crisis with all correlated costs.³³⁷ Secondly, France imported up to 15% of its oil from Libya.³³⁸ Thirdly, the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations Gérard Araud warned of possible crimes against humanity.³³⁹

At the turn of 2010 and 2011, President Sarkozy himself reached a low point in his popularity, threatening his chances in the forthcoming presidential election.³⁴⁰ Furthermore, the French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Michèle Alliot-Marie was spending her Christmas break in Tunisia during the initial protests against President Ben Ali in December 2010 and, shockingly, she offered material help to the regime to quell the protests.³⁴¹ This initial misstep not only cost Minister Alliot-Marie her position but also jeopardized France's traditional position of influence on the African continent.

³³³ Ibid., 280.

³³⁴ Ralph and Jess Gifkins, "The purpose of United Nations Security Council practice," 641.

³³⁵ Davidson, "France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis," 317.

³³⁶ Hehir and Murray ed., *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, 207.

³³⁷ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 20.

³³⁸ Davidson, "France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis," 319.

³³⁹ Ibid., 315.

³⁴⁰ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 26.

³⁴¹ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 29.

Therefore, on the one hand, he sought a popularity boost before the election at home. On the other, he sought prestige recovery on the international scene, particularly in the Maghreb region. In the French institutional framework, the President's office, the Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs concentrate most of the decision-making power.³⁴² Still, when the French parliament finally voted on the authorization of the military operations in Libya on July 12, oppositional politics backed their long-term vocal support by overwhelmingly voting in favor of the continuation of the military engagement.³⁴³ Unfortunately for President Sarkozy, this also meant that Libyan intervention could not be used in his upcoming reelection campaign to differentiate himself from his opponents.

4.3.2 The United Kingdom

In 2011, similarly to its French counterpart, the government of the United Kingdom was quick to publicly express their critique of Moammar Qaddafi for his actions against the protesters. Prime Minister Cameron mentions in his memoirs Qaddafi's infamous 'zenga zenga' speech from February 22, as the breaking point where he leaned towards decisive action. Listening to this speech with Downing Street Chief of Staff Edward Llewellyn, it reminded both of them the 'Mad Dog' personality of Qaddafi associated with him throughout the 1980s.³⁴⁴

Defense officials were rather unenthusiastic when Prime Minister Cameron announced his support for the establishment of the no-fly zone over Libya on February 28.³⁴⁵ Secretary of State for Defence Liam Fox and the Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir David Richards both viewed Libya as clashing with British commitments in Afghanistan as well as an open-ended commitment for comparatively little strategic gain. Secretary Fox and General Richards, however, did not agree on the boundaries of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 authorization provided for the military forces.³⁴⁶

Obviously, Great Britain had more than one rationale to commit themselves to the intervention. The wider region of the Middle East and North Africa represents about 50 % of all defense-related export sales from the United Kingdom.³⁴⁷ In 2009, the British government sold Libya defense equipment worth £21.7 million. This equipment bore the

³⁴² Ibid., 27.

³⁴³ Ibid., 32.

³⁴⁴ Cameron, *For the Record*, 273.

³⁴⁵ Davidson, "France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis," 322.

³⁴⁶ Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 52.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 48.

mark of ‘chemical, biological weapons, teargas, or radioactive materials.’³⁴⁸ Needless to say, that facing the risk of an armed uprising, Qaddafi would not hesitate to use any of this equipment tarnishing the British regional prestige in the process.

Prime Minister Cameron himself also faced rising critique in Britain for his military budget cuts in previous years. Combined with Cameron’s will to show more global leadership, this critique provided less virtuous incentives for taking action. The government won parliamentary support when House of Commons had voted in favor of the intervention on March 21.³⁴⁹

In conclusion, the British case for the interventions was slightly more nuanced than the French unified pursues of reputation recovery. Despite Cameron’s will to display global leadership, he had to persuade his head of the Ministry of Defence and the head of the British Armed Forces to undergo military action in Libya. The United Kingdom had to defend its prestige, facing the possibility of British defense-related material misuse by the Qaddafi regime.

5. Congressional Perspective

As far as the role of Congress is concerned, and despite the introduction of the War Powers Resolution on November 7, 1973, there are several reasons for its absence in the analyses.³⁵⁰ During the four decades of the Resolution’s legislative history, there are numerous examples of interventions without its application.³⁵¹

There are three most profound constraints on presidential powers included in the War Powers Resolution. Firstly, there is the obligation to consult with Congress “in every possible instance... before introducing United States Armed Forces into hostilities.” Secondly, the President should submit a report within forty-eight hours, “setting forth... the circumstances necessitating the introduction of United States Armed Forces and... the estimated scope and duration of the hostilities.” Finally, there is the sixty-day threshold obliging the President to “terminate any use of United States Armed Forces with respect to which such report was submitted,” in the absence of congressional authorization.³⁵²

³⁴⁸ Davidson, “France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis,” 321.

³⁴⁹ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 19.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

³⁵¹ These are, among others, invasion of Grenada in 1982, deployment of troops to the Persian Gulf during 1988, invasion of Panama in 1989, or intervention to Somalia in 1993.

³⁵² “War Powers Resolution,” Yale Law School, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/warpower.asp (Accessed on 19.5.).

President Obama complied with the first two obligations as required. On March 19, during his remarks, he stated: “I’ve acted after consulting with my national security team, and Republican and Democratic leaders of Congress.”³⁵³ The Letter to Congress on the 21st, within the intended forty-eight-hour window since the outbreak of hostilities, fulfilled the second obligation.³⁵⁴ However, already at this moment, it became obvious that the Administration was not seeking any authorization from Congress.

The White House claimed the adequacy of the United Nations Security Council’s Resolution 1973 as an authorization.³⁵⁵ However, Section 6 of the United Nations Participation Act of 1945 clearly states that: “The President is authorized to negotiate a special agreement or agreements with the Security Council which shall be subject to the approval of the Congress...”³⁵⁶ Therefore, the Administration turned towards the decision of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to lead the operations later in March. Unfortunately, with a very similar outcome. Article 11 of the North Atlantic Treaty declares that all “provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes.”³⁵⁷

Most involved in this activity were Department of State legal advisor Harold Koh and White House counsel Robert Bauer. Firstly, they claimed the absence of any definition of war and hostilities within the War Powers Resolution. They interpreted ‘hostilities’ as “an ambiguous term of art that is defined nowhere in the state.” Later, they shifted the ambiguity from ‘hostilities’ to their ‘limitlessness.’³⁵⁸ They also used ‘limited kinetic action’ to describe any military participation before the April 4.³⁵⁹

The appeal towards the Resolution 1973, however, does not signify the unanimous opposition across the aisle among the Congress members. Both Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH), and Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, were supporting the executive branch by limiting the efforts of some more junior members of their respective chamber.³⁶⁰ Very vocal advocates of the intervention were also Senator Carl Levin (D-MI)

³⁵³ Obama, “Remarks by the President on Libya.”

³⁵⁴ Obama, “Remarks by President Obama and President Sebastian Pinera of Chile at Join Press Conference.”

³⁵⁵ Ryan C. Hendrickson, “Libya and American war powers: war-making decisions in the United States,” *Global Change, Peace & Security*, Vol. 25, Issue 2, 2013, 178.

³⁵⁶ “United Nations Participation Act, Yale Law School official website, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/decad031.asp (Accessed 19. 5.).

³⁵⁷ “The North Atlantic Treaty,” NATO official website, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm (Accessed 19. 5.).

³⁵⁸ Mandley, “Libya, Obama, and the War Powers Resolution,” 1.

³⁵⁹ Hastings, “Inside Obama’s War Room.”

³⁶⁰ Hendrickson, “Libya and American war powers: war-making decisions in the United States,” 184.

Chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee³⁶¹ and Senator Joe Lieberman (D-CT) Chair of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.³⁶²

Senator John McCain (R-AZ) and Senator John Kerry (D-MA) Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee were very vocal supporters of the Libyan intervention.³⁶³ Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) Chair of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee with Senator McCain co-sponsored Senate Resolution 102 on March 15, calling the President to recognize the Libyan Transitional National Council as the sole legitimate governing authority.³⁶⁴

Nevertheless, the argument stands; is 7 725 sorties, 397 airstrikes, 145 drone attacks across seven months a limited action?³⁶⁵ The Libyan case illustrates the evolution of an interpretive pattern that has weakened the War Powers Resolution's ability to function in certain cases of more limited deployment. It shows a congressional inability to enforce its perceived authority in the risk of American troops endangerment. On the other hand, in the active support by many high-ranking members of both chambers as well as both parties, we also witnessed some bipartisan legislative activism questioning the perpetuating legislative deference.³⁶⁶

6. Conclusion

The aim of the present research was to examine the decision-making process of Obama's administration to intervene in Libya in March 2011. The main goal was to determine why generally reluctant President Obama decided to use American military force against another country. The present study was designed to determine the effect of Obama administration officials and presidential advisors on this uncharacteristic decision.

The research has confirmed the shortcoming of the Rational Policy Model to examine the current foreign policy. The American government was fundamentally divided on approaching the Libyan crisis and in evaluating the level of threat towards American national interests it provided. The Model I, therefore, failed to explain Libyan intervention.

Similarly, the Organizational Process Model fell short of describing the Libyan decision. Secretary Clinton, as well as Secretary Gates, were taking the opposite perspective that 'stand-sit' proposition would have anticipated. However, this may be partially explained by

³⁶¹ Ibid., 186.

³⁶² Fitzgerald and Ryan, *Obama, US Foreign Policy and the Dilemmas of Intervention*, 97.

³⁶³ Hendrickson, "Libya and American war powers: war-making decisions in the United States," 183.

³⁶⁴ Gertler ed., *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, 4.

³⁶⁵ Hendrickson, "Libya and American war powers: war-making decisions in the United States," 182.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 186.

the budgetary constraints for the Department of Defense. After all, one of the main organizational interests is self-preservation. Moreover, any military failure would significantly impact the Pentagon's prestige. In the case of Secretary Clinton, Model II could partly explain her change of mind as a step towards increasing influence over the Department of Defense.

Therefore, the Bureaucratic Politics Model matches the results of the analyses. The final decision emerged from the process of 'pulling and hauling' during the National Security Council meeting on March 15. In this case, the outcome was achieved by persuading the President rather than preferences being congruent or not mutually exclusive.

The analyses also confirmed Brummer's claim that each person's baggage, rather than the 'stand-sit' proposition determine an actor's position in the bargaining process. Many middle-ranking officials whose formative years took place on the background of civilian massacres of the 1990s were too involved in preventing similar incidents from taking place to adhere to the organizational perspective.

Agenda, rather than organizational structure, shaped the opinion of many in the White House and National Security Council staff. It also caused the sub-agency coalitions to emerge as the National Security Advisor Donilon took the opposite perspective than many of his subordinates.

Agent-specific bargaining advantages also seemingly overshadowed any influence of organizational advantage of seniority. The proximity of several proponents of the intervention allowed Samantha Power to participate in the meeting and Susan Rice to boldly promise the enforcement of 'all necessary measures' clause in the Security Council. Additionally, Secretary Clinton arguably represented a significant fraction of the Democratic party establishment.

The selection of the National Security Council as the main action-channel through the working group also confirms the palace politics perspective as a tool best describing the new emerging structure of foreign policy decision-making. The growing power of the National Security Council and the White House staff across several administrations from both political parties presents a significant challenge to the traditional departments. While the departments are, for the most part, comprised of career diplomats, except for the most senior positions, the National Security Council and White House tend to be more interconnected with the current administration.

Finally, the Libyan case is a clear-cut example of other nations influencing the final decision at the time of the split government. France and Britain persuaded President Obama that they would take responsibility for the second phase of the intervention in Libya and also later the third, rebuilding, phase. It allowed the United States to shift from the supported power to the supporting power.³⁶⁷ Similarly, the unprecedented call from the Arab League to action provided the American government with much-needed legitimacy.

The impact of the decision to intervene in Libya on the Obama administration is very telling. Secretary Gates resigned from his post several months after the Operation Odyssey Dawn. In the meantime, however, he managed to lose in the process of ‘pulling and hauling’ once more in the case of unilateral action against a compound in Abbottabad, where President Obama chose special forces raid rather than an airstrike proposed by Secretary Gates.³⁶⁸

On the other hand, advisors supportive of the intervention generally got promoted in the second Obama administration. Susan Rice became National Security Advisor, while Samantha Power filled her old post of Ambassador to the United Nations. Antony Blinken stayed in the structure of the National Security Council but moved to the more senior position. Senator Kerry, one of the most vocal supporters of the intervention in the Senate, became the new Secretary of State while Hillary Clinton decided to distance herself from the administration in preparation for her presidential election bid for 2016.

To conclude, the Bureaucratic Politics Model is seemingly most suitable to interpret mechanisms of foreign policy decision-making. Gramahm Allison originally used this model to describe the Caribbean crisis of 1962. This thesis used it to describe the different decisions by the very different president, yet both, as well as Kevin Marsh’s analyses, focus on American foreign policy. There is potentially a case to make about the model’s culture-boundness. American Presidential system is very specific in the context of other countries. The second apparent problem with the model is its omission of the President himself. There is not much applicability towards, arguably, the most important actor in the whole decision-making process. These are just some of the pathways future of the Bureaucratic Politics Model research may be heading.

With regard to Libya, Operation United Protector continued until October 2011, when Colonel Moammar Qaddafi had been killed. Despite the promising beginning, the country

³⁶⁷ Engelbrekt, Mohlin, and Wagnsson ed., *The NATO Intervention in Libya: Lessons learned from the campaign*, 30.

³⁶⁸ Hastings, “Inside Obama’s War Room.”

slipped into a civil war which wages until today. When President Obama reflected on his decision, he mentioned several reasons the intervention ended in disappointment. “The degree of tribal division in Libya was greater than our analysts had expected.”³⁶⁹ The powerful Al-Warfalla and Al-Zuwayya tribes were among the first groups to revolt, yet they were long-lasting rivals of the Colonel Qaddafi’s tribe.³⁷⁰ The European allies also did not go through on their promise to take responsibility for the second and third phase if the intervention. As Prime Minister Cameron said, “this is not going into a country and knocking over its Government, and then owning and being responsible for everything that happens subsequently.”³⁷¹ The first implementation of the ‘responsibility to protect’ concept, therefore, did not fail as the intervening countries refused to implement the third important part, the responsibility to rebuild.³⁷²

7. Summary

Tato diplomová práce analyzuje necharakteristické rozhodnutí prezidenta Obamy vojensky intervenovat v Libyi v roce 2011. Popisuje časové období od prvních protestů v Bengházi 15. února po ukončení Operace Odyssey Dawn 31. března. Během tohoto období se snaží propojit vývoj na frontové linii Libyjské revoluce s dynamicky se proměňujícím názorovým směřováním uvnitř Obamovy administrativy mezi prezidentovými poradci a vlivem spojeneckých států. Činí tak za pomoci Bureaucratic Politics Model, jenž Graham Allison poprvé využil v roce 1969 a dále zdokonaloval v průběhu života.

Po historické a kontextuální úvodní stati autor představuje vývoj celé revoluce v týdenních intervalech. Tento přístup slouží jednak k lepšímu demonstrování procesů v rozhodovacím procesu a také umožňuje čtenáři zorientovat se v jasně daný časový moment pro jednodušší orientaci.

Celé zkoumané období lze dále rozdělit do čtyř celistvějších částí na základě jejich vnitřní dynamiky. Prvním je druhá polovina února, kdy bylo hlavním zájmem Americké administrativy evakuovat všechny Americké občany z Libye. Pouze po dokončení této evakuace se Spojené státy odhodlaly veřejně odsoudit počínání Libyjského režimu.

³⁶⁹ Jeffrey Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine”, *The Atlantic*, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/> (Accessed on 19. 05.).

³⁷⁰ Abomo, *R2P and the US Intervention in Libya*, 140.

³⁷¹ Davidson, “France, Britain and the intervention in Libya: an integrated analysis,” 325.

³⁷² Henriksen and Larssen ed., *Political rationale and international consequences of the war in Libya*, 229.

Celá dynamika Amerického přístupu se výrazně proměnila po 6. březnu, kdy Kaddáfího ozbrojené složky začali s protiútokem, který zatlačil povstalce zpět z území, která do té doby ovládli. Zdánlivě tak byli na cestě ke krvavému potlačení revoluce. Tento vývoj přiměl Spojené státy se svými Evropskými spojenci zaujmout velmi aktivní přístup k propagaci mezinárodní vojenské intervence.

Avšak rozhodnutí pro aktivní účast Spojených států na takové intervenci přišlo až poté, co Liga Arabských národů zcela bezprecedentně vyzvala mezinárodní společenství ke zřízení bezletové zóny nad územím Libye. Tento krok významně ovlivnil několik klíčových členů Obamova poradního sboru a kabinetu. Celkově se tak proměnil poměr příznivců přímé vojenské účasti oproti jejím odpůrcům.

Ministryně zahraničních věcí Hillary Clinton byla nejvýše postavenou zastánkyní proaktivní skupiny, který byla jinak složena zejména z níže postavených poradců prezidenta. Někteří z těchto níže postavených poradců však měli možnost ovlivnit prezidenta Obamu díky jejich dlouhodobému profesnímu vztahu už z dob Obamovy prezidentské kampaně. Jinými slovy byli tito poradci schopni prezentovat prezidentovi určitá fakta více neformálním způsobem.

Většina těchto poradců byla z generace, která nastupovala do veřejných funkcí v průběhu devadesátých let a byla tak ovlivněna několika masakry civilního obyvatelstva napříč světem. Velká část těchto poradců si tedy vyvinula určitou traumatickou zkušenost a zvýšenou citlivost k tématu masakru civilního obyvatelstva a zejména Americké neschopnosti takovýmto událostem zabránit. Společně se značným vlivem Evropských spojenců a regionální podpory Ligy arabských národů se jim podařilo prezidenta Obamu přesvědčit k příkazu pro Americké ozbrojené složky k bombardování Libyjského režimu. Bohužel, mnohá fakta vedoucí k tomuto rozhodnutí se později ukázala jako více či méně zkreslená ať již nepřehledností a rychlostí vývoje na frontové linii tak účelným jednáním některých spojeneckých národů.

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9. List of Appendices

Appendix no. 1: List of relevant members of Obama administration (list)

Biden Joe, Vice President of the United States

Blinken Anthony, National Security Advisor to the Vice President of the United States

Brennan John, United States Homeland Security Advisor

Burns William J., United States Deputy Secretary of State

Cardillo Robert, Deputy Director of National Intelligence

Carney Jay, White House Press Secretary

Carson Johnnie, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs

Ham Carter, General, United States Africa Command

Clapper James, Director of National Intelligence

Clinton Hillary, United States Secretary of State

Cretz Gane, United States Ambassador to Libya

Daalder Ivo, United States Ambassador to NATO

Daley William, White House Chief of Staff

Donilon Thomas, United States National Security Advisor

Gates Robert, United States Secretary of Defense

McDonough Denis, United States Deputy National Security Advisor

Mullen Michael, Admiral, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Obama Barack, President of the United States

Power Samantha, National Security Council Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights

Rhodes Ben, United States Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications

Rice Susan, United States Ambassador to the United Nations

Smith Gayle, National Security Council Senior Director for Development and Democracy

Stevens J. Christopher, United States Special Representative to National Transitional Council

Weinstein Jeremy, National Security Council Director for Human Rights

Appendix no. 2: Selected period in calendar form (table)

FEBRUARY

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

MARCH

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Appendix no. 3: Graphic showing the rough locations of the military targets struck as part of the initial phase of Operation Odyssey Dawn (Slide from 19. 3. 2011 Department of Defense presentation) source: globalsecurity.org

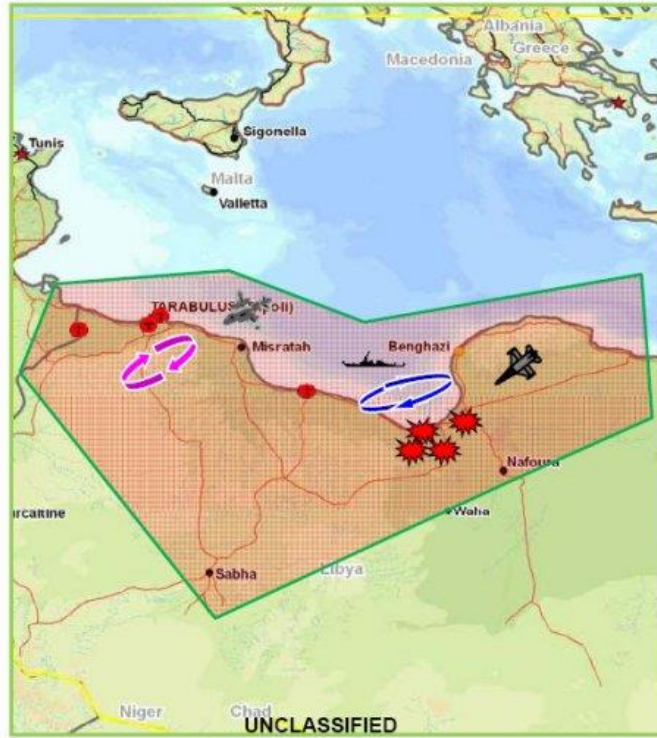
COALITION FIRST STRIKES



1

Appendix no. 4: Graphic of the Coalition no-fly zone in Libya as part of Operation Odyssey Dawn (Slide from 19. 3. 2011 Department of Defense presentation) source: globalsecurity.org

COALITION NO FLY ZONE



2

ZÁVĚREČNÉ TEZE MAGISTERSKÉ PRÁCE NMTS

Závěrečné teze student odevzdává ke konci Diplomního semináře III jako součást magisterské práce a tyto teze jsou spolu s odevzdáním magisterské práce do SIS předpokladem udělení zápočtu za tento seminář.
Jméno: Petr Buriánek
E-mail: petr.buris@gmail.com
Specializace (uved'te zkratkou)*: KSAS
Semestr a školní rok zahájení práce: ZS 2018/2019
Semestr a školní rok ukončení práce: LS 2019/2020
Vedoucí diplomového semináře: Lucie Kýrová, M.A., Ph.D.
Vedoucí práce: PhDr. Jan Hornát, Ph.D.
Název práce: Operation Odyssey Dawn: President Obama's decision-making process
Charakteristika tématu práce (max 10 řádek): Tato práce analyzuje rozhodovací proces prezidenta Obamy v průběhu Libyjské revoluce v roce 2011. Za použití Bureaucratic Politics Model Grahama Allisona se zaměřuje zejména na členy prezidentského poradního sboru a různé způsoby jimiž tyto poradci ovlivnili konečné rozhodnutí. Hlavní snahou se rozkrýt vztahy mezi vývojem situace na frontových liniích Libyjské revoluce a dynamicky se měnícími spojenectvími mezi jednotlivými členy Obamovy administrativy. Zohledněna je také role Evropských a Arabských spojenců, kteří také sehráli významnou roli v přesvědčení prezidenta Obamy k velmi necharakteristickému kroku.
Vývoj tématu od zadání projektu do odevzdání práce (max. 10 řádek): Zatímco téma nezaznamenalo výraznější změnu od svého původního návrhu, metodologický přístup k celému problému došel zcela významné změny. Původně zamýšlená Game Theory byla nahrazena mnohem vhodnějším nástrojem Grahama Allisona, zejména pak Bureaucratic Politics Model. Z phledu zdrojů je kladen větší důraz na biografie než bylo původně zamýšleno z důvodu omezeného přístupu k vládním dokumentům.
Struktura práce (hlavní kapitoly obsahu): Methodology: Three Models of Graham Allison Arab Spring in Libya From protests to Uprising, (February 15-20) Opposition Consolidation, (February 21-27) Highpoint of initial uprising, (February 28-March 6) Regime counter-offensive, (March 7-13) President Obama decides to act, (March 14-19) Operation Odyssey Dawn Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses, (March 19-20) Enforcing the no-fly zone, (March 21-27) NATO takeover, (March 28-31)
Hlavní výsledky práce (max. 10 řádek): Prezident Obama se rozhodl k nasazení ozbrojených složek Spojených států zejména vlivem bezprecedentního kroku Ligy arabských států volající po bezletové zóně nad Libyí, ochotou Evropských spojenců převzít odpovědnost za pozdější fáze vojenské intervence a také

z důvodu hrozícího masakru v Benghází. Tyto tři důvody také vedly ke změně názoru několika klíčových členů Obamovy administrativy, zejména pak ministrině Clinton, která svým vlivem pomohla poradcům prezidenta změnit jeho postoj.

Prameny a literatura (výběr nejpodstatnějších):

Hillary R. Clinton, Hard choices, (New York; London; Toronto; Sydney; New Delhi: Simon & Schuster, 2014).

Robert M. Gates, Duty: memoirs of a secretary at war, (London: WH Allen, 2014).

Samantha Power, The Education of an Idealist, (HarperCollins e-books, 2019).

Ben Rhodes, The world as it is: inside the Obama White House, (London: The Bodley Head, 2018).

Etika výzkumu:**

Jazyk práce:

anglický jazyk

Podpis studenta a datum

Petr Buriánek 20. 5. 2020

Schváleno	Datum	Podpis
Vedoucí práce		
Vedoucí diplomového semináře		
Vedoucí specializace		
Garant programu		

* BAS – Balkánská a středoevropská studia; ES – Evropská studia; NRS – Německá a rakouská studia; RES – Ruská a eurasijská studia; SAS – Severoamerická studia; ZES – Západoevropská studia.

** Pokud je to relevantní, tj. vyžaduje to charakter výzkumu (nebo jeho zadavatel), data, s nimiž pracujete, nebo osobní bezpečnost vaše či dalších účastníků výzkumu, vysvětlíte, jak zajistíte dodržení, resp. splnění těchto etických aspektů výzkumu: 1) informovaný souhlas s účastí na výzkumu, 2) dobrovolná účast na výzkumu, 3) důvěrnost a anonymita zdrojů, 4) bezpečný výzkum (nikomu nevznikne újma).