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## Tell Obama What Dr. King Told LBJ: "God Didn't Choose America"

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There is probably no better a quote for this upcoming Martin Luther King holiday and certainly not a better message to convey at the MLK Day protest march this Monday, Jan. 21 in Washington, D.C. than the above sign photographed last year at a veterans march (in support of Ron Paul).

Celebration of Obama's second inauguration is already being dampened by news of his mulling the commencement of more drone bombing, of yet another African country, Mali, destabilized and engulfed in violence, in no small part due to spillover of the violence from U.S.-NATO bombing of Libya for regime change (see "America's Shadow Wars in Africa"; "The war in Libya was seen as a success, now here we are engaging with the blowback in Mali"; and "Mali and the Lure of Intervention"). Whoever said "the neo-cons are like pyromaniacs who set a fire and then laugh when no one can put it out" was quite perceptive. France's military entrance into Mali has already led to a hostage crisis and killing in Algeria. Would more drone bombing help put out the fire or only fuel it? Does anyone remember Dr. King's sober advice about how "violence begets violence?"

The coinciding of Inauguration Day with the Martin Luther King holiday must be more than serendipity. There is probably nothing more important right now to remind Obama about than what Dr. King thought about U.S. exceptionalist-based interventionism. Dr. King's full quote

was this: "Don't let anybody make you think God chose America as his divine messianic force to be a sort of policeman of the whole world."

From the start, evident in his weird Orwellian acceptance of the Nobel "Peace" Prize, Obama instead embraced Bush's "war presidency" and distanced himself from Dr. King's beliefs. Consequently, U.S.-NATO continues to be caught up in the "smart power" dance that is anything but smart based on reckless "whack a mole" and "enemy of my enemy is my friend" strategies. Its attempt to cloak itself in "humanitarianism" and playing on American exceptionalism to project altruistic, paternalistic good intentions does seem to fool liberals and conservatives alike, but even worse, it fools many of its own participants, the Empire builders themselves. (Peter Van Buren's insider book about the Iraq fiasco is aptly titled *We Meant Well*.) The American public is thus propagandized to believe that the ends always justify the means, that torture saves lives, that war is the answer, that it's possible to "bomb the village to save it." The Military Industrial Complex-controlled Empire is, of course, never truly well-intentioned. But the fighting for power in Mali seems even more complicated and convoluted than what's happening in Syria. It's doubtful there are any "good revolutionaries" in the three separate violent match-ups in Mali -- it's probably more akin to trying to gain control over an *Animal Farm* type situation. But once a country is so destabilized and degenerated into violence, it's an easy task for our humanitarian Western Empire to make the "right to protect" arguments that it "has to do something." So of course that "something" is always to drone bomb them. Casualty-free drone bombing that only takes foreign citizens' lives and extrajudicial killing that flows from elevating the lawlessness of war over the rule of law is sold as the US' new miracle cure. That's how the *Zero Dark Thirty* propaganda coincidentally works to get Americans to cheer for the end of the film and get sucked into believing in and supporting the role of US Lethal Enforcer of "world peace"--see "Rebranding the War on Terror for the age of Obama: 'Zero Dark Thirty' and the promotion of extra judicial killing" and "'Zero Dark Thirty' Is bin Laden's Last Victory."

Along with preying upon our (liberal) heartstrings and tugging at our American Exceptionalist-Interventionist impulses, there is also the extremely problematic over-emphasis at play by international law academics and "human rights" groups in the U.S.-NATO-Israel hegemony who have been led to almost totally ignore the "supreme crime" under international law. The problem with this type of emphasis only on "human rights" (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) and the "humanitarian law of warfare" (Geneva Conventions, etc. the rules about *how* war is waged) is that the more ingrained, older concept of *jus ad bellum* is forgotten. That wars of aggression are the supreme crime does not mix well with the "policeman of the world" notion. The "policeman of the world" role is of course seen as above the old (petty) Nuremberg Principle prohibition just as Nixon declared it wasn't illegal if the president does it.

In line with Martin Luther King Jr.'s warning NOT to believe that God chose America to be policeman of the world and that violence begets violence, President Obama should note that King simply pleaded for America to come home. That would have certainly included U.S. drones.