

I saw your pieces on “British interests” [column 64 and postscript] but I think there are other things going on, although I agree with you about what Britain should properly now do.

- i. I think “British interests” would, as a policy, strike most half-witted soft-shoed modern English good mothers and fathers as “too selfish” a policy.
- ii. I think the governments of France and England feel that such invasions do somehow serve British or French interests (economic or otherwise).
- iii. A lot can be explained as coming out of post-imperial grandeur and, even, interestingly, the consequent mixture of (a) old habits of rule, (b) new cultures of guilt (and seeking to make reparation).
- iv. I think a lot cannot be explained or excused by human rights, but is anyway.

It is a mixture of motives run riot. Secular messianism, the old Suez habit not quite out of the system, and a wholly post-Suez sense that we should do things not for British interests but for vacuous universal abstractions like “democracy”.

Gaddafi may come a cropper.

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