

The New York Times

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Editorial letter

To the Editor:

In his March 25 column, “The Ego Advantage,” David Brooks muses about how a leader as mentally unhinged as Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi manages to stay in power for 42 years. His basic conclusion: megalomania pays.

Most likely, this does have something to do with Colonel Qaddafi’s staying power. But Mr. Brooks does not mention the far more decisive influence of the American military-industrial complex.

As reported in “Shady Dealings Helped Qaddafi Amass Fortune“ (front page, March 24), Colonel Qaddafi’s continued domination over Libya has a lot to do with the willingness of multinationals like Boeing, Raytheon, ConocoPhillips, Occidental, Caterpillar and Halliburton to contribute to his “kleptocracy” and thereby reap for themselves enormous economic gain.

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