

Obama's Fourth War Intensifying, Who Will Be Victim Of the Fifth War?

By [Boris Volkhonsky](#)

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The New York Times has revealed what it calls “the Obama administration’s most closely guarded secret”, that is the fact that the US is not only launching a covert war in Yemen, but intensifying it now that the Yemeni president Abdullah Ali Saleh has fled the country after being wounded and receiving severe burns in a mortar attack on the presidential palace on June 2.

The reasons for the covert military operation are obvious. Abdullah Saleh is one of the most important allies of the US in its “anti-terrorist campaign”.

On the other hand, some of the rebels trying to put an end to his 33-year-old rule allegedly belong to Al Qaeda. It is reported that President Saleh himself authorized American military missions in Yemen back in 2009. But there has been a gap of almost one year in American airstrikes on Yemeni soil. Now, the airstrikes have resumed. As reported by The New York Times, the American campaign in Yemen is led by the Pentagon’s Joint Special Operations Command, and is closely coordinated with the Central Intelligence Agency. Teams of American military and intelligence agents have a command post in Sana, the Yemeni capital, to track intelligence about militants in Yemen and plot future strikes.

The recent strikes have reportedly killed several midlevel Al Qaeda militants. In fact, the score of civilian deaths is much higher. As US military officials admit, using force against militants in Yemen is complicated by the fact that Al Qaeda agents have mingled with other rebels and antigovernment militants, making it harder for the United States to attack them without the appearance of picking sides.

The whole story is strikingly different from what is going on, for example, in Libya, or what the US and its NATO allies would like to have in Syria. Abdullah Ali Saleh has ruled Yemen for 33 years – almost as long as his Libyan colleague Muammar Gaddafi. In terms of inner principles, his rule has not been much different from Gaddafi’s rule, or that of any other dictator in the Middle East. But – and the “but” is most important – while Gaddafi, or the Syrian Assad dynasty looked obvious villains in the Western eyes, Saleh has been an important ally. Therefore, the militants in Libya and protesters in Syria are called pro-democratic forces, while those in Yemen are labeled as QI Qaeda militants and terrorists.

It is easy to do so, since Al Qaeda is a network organization with a very loose or, by and large, a non-existent organizational structure. You raise arms against our ally, and you are automatically included into the “terrorist list”. But the situation in Yemen is much more complicated than “bad guys and good guys”.

Yes, there are radical Islamic militants among the protesters and it is quite probable that some of them are affiliated with Al Qaeda. But Saleh's regime has alienated such a wide spectrum of social forces that one cannot simply label everyone as "terrorists" and "militants".

The expression "double standards" have been so widely used lately that repeating it seems senseless. But on the other hand, the usual habits of the American leadership leave no other option. Franklin Roosevelt's phrase that "so-and-so is an SoB, but he is our SoB" seems to be relevant now and again.

And also, the Yemeni situation tears away all the masks Obama was trying so hard to put on when dealing with Libya. He has tried hard to present the Libyan operation as an entirely European affair with limited and forced assistance from Washington. But now it is becoming clear that such attempts were meant entirely for local consumption in the US. In fact, Obama is only too eager to launch a third war in Libya and a fourth one in Yemen.

The question is who will be the target of the fifth Obama war?

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