

# Puppet Regimes and Fake Democracy: Syria, Yemen, and America's Quest for Imperial Dominance

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*At the G8 summit last week, President Obama and other officials in his administration, began utilizing the talking point of [Yemen being a model to be emulated in Syria](#). Ostensibly, they were referring to the “peaceful” transition of power in Yemen as an example of what they would like to see in Syria. However, the comparison goes much deeper than simply this superficial connection. The truth is that Yemen represents, in more ways than one, the blueprint that the US imperialist ruling class would like to see applied to the escalating conflict in Syria.*

## **Puppet Regimes and Faux Democracy**

The “transition” of power in Yemen, from Saleh to Hadi, is a prime example of the hypocrisy of US policy, touting it as a victory for democracy while concealing the obvious fact that it was the creation of a puppet regime. Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi has been presented as the legitimate leader of Yemen, despite the fact that he was the U.S. choice to govern that country. His legitimacy depended on the myth of a democratically elected regime; the US propagates this myth wantonly, pretending that people won't remember that [Hadi ran unopposed in February](#).

If the purpose of democracy is to create forms of governance accountable to the citizenry and to establish a government that is truly representative of the people's desires, then it would be an outright lie to call the Hadi administration anything close to a democracy. In fact, as recent developments in Yemen have shown, his regime is nothing more than a puppet government, put in power by the United States in order to allow the CIA and other shadowy entities free reign to use drones, Special Forces, and other covert operations in what is supposedly a sovereign nation.

Not only is Hadi, the former vice President under Saleh, not democratically elected, he is the antithesis of progress in a country that was on the front lines of the Arab Spring. The people who marched through the streets of Sanaa and other cities across Yemen did so with the intention of effecting change in a country which, in the eyes of many, was seen as a backwards dictatorship. However, despite all the rhetoric about hope, change, and progress from the US State Department and the White House, President Obama and his minions, including [John Brennan \(counter-terrorism advisor and frequent representative of Obama in Yemen\)](#), immediately lent their support to Hadi. The betrayal came as no surprise to any informed observer as the United States was only interested in its own strategic interests in

the region.

## **US Tactics and the Geopolitical Imperative in Yemen**

US interest in Yemen is certainly not rooted in altruism or a desire to promote democratic ideals. On the contrary, it is the application of a long-standing geopolitical strategy to control international trade through the Mandab Strait and Suez Canal, access to African raw materials, and most specifically, block the expansion of Chinese economic influence in both the Middle East and Africa. For these reasons, the United States has a keen interest in both Yemen and Somalia, desperate to maintain chaos in those countries so as to prevent stable, nationalist leaders from emerging. In so doing, Washington once again shows itself to be an imperialist aggressor, interested only in maintaining and expanding the empire.

The tactics of this strategy are myriad. First and foremost, the US, in accordance with long-standing policy dating back to the Carter administration, uses the red herring of “Islamic extremism” and terrorism, to justify any actions it deems necessary for the advancement of its own agenda. In places like Afghanistan and Yemen, the enemy is Al-Qaeda which must be fought with US military might, while in Libya and Syria, [Al-Qaeda is an ally](#) fighting against the oppressive regimes of Gaddafi and Assad. This duplicity should come as no surprise since Washington’s foreign policy is based on expanding US hegemony rather than promoting any ideals.

The second aspect of America’s imperialist strategy is the fomenting of ethnic, tribal, and other sectarian conflicts. In doing so, Washington is able to prevent the emergence of any form of nationalism that, by definition, would stand in opposition to US imperialism. One must simply look across the Mandab Strait for an example of this strategy: Somalia. A nation of strategic and geographical importance, Somalia has been effectively destroyed by US policy over the last twenty years, having been transformed from a proud nation to a loose collection of tribal groups dominated by repugnant warlords with no regard for national identity.

In Yemen, we’ve seen this strategy employed vis-à-vis the Huthi rebellion, the propagandistic use of tribal groups as proxies of Saudi Arabia, Iran, or whomever the US wants to demonize, and countless other examples of these sorts of divisive tactics. In this way, the imperialists are able to keep Yemen fragmented, using it as a pawn on the geopolitical chessboard.

## **A Connection Between Yemen and Syria?**

With all this talk about Yemen, the question might be, “So, what’s this got to do with Syria?” The answer to this question can be found in an analysis of the social movements of the two countries. In Syria, just as in Yemen, there is a real, pro-democracy opposition that took to the streets in hopes of forcing reforms. Both movements began with high-minded ideals and sought to end what they perceived to be the outdated rule of dictatorial leaders. However, unlike Yemen, Syria has been under assault by West-sponsored, foreign mercenary terrorists who have usurped the title of “opposition”, thereby making the real opposition into a mere irrelevancy on the international stage. The United States and its proxies in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Israel, and elsewhere are responsible for this reprehensible turn of events.

And so, when the Obama administration claims that the Yemeni model is the best course of action in Syria, what they mean is that their tactics of subversion through terrorism are

simply a means to an end. Just as in Yemen, the United States seeks to topple Assad and install a puppet government, one that would be comfortable under the thumb of the imperialist ruling class. The US has no interest in protecting the rights of the ethnic and religious minorities or the real opposition (namely the National Coordinating Committee and the Popular front) in Syria, just as they had little interest in furthering the democratic aspirations of the people of Yemen. Rather, Obama and those who control him, seek regime change in Syria in order to use that nation as a geopolitical chess piece against Iran, Russia and any other nation unfortunate enough to be deemed an “enemy” of the United States.

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