

The Politics of Empire: Presidential Rule by Deception - Obama, the Master Con-Man

Review of James Petras' Book

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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Petras pulled no punches saying “(i)n an electoral system, run by and for a corporate oligarchy, deception and demagoguery are essential elements – entertaining the people while working for the wealthy.”

Every US president does it. All congressional leaders. It’s “de rigueur” to pretend to be “everyman.” It persists while committing “war crimes worthy of prosecution.”

It’s play-acting. It’s duplicity. Obama is the “master of deceit.” He lacks an honest bone in his body.

He condemns torture while practicing it. He denounces Wall Street excess while supporting it. He wages one war after another while promising peace.

He backs Palestinian rights while trashing them. He supports the worst of Zionist militancy. He ignores institutionalized Israeli racism.

His word isn’t his bond. He broke every major promise made. He’s “hands down” the “greatest con-man president in American history,” Petras explains.

His predecessors pale by comparison. “(T)he enormous gap between style and substance, promise and performance, peace and war, capital and labor, has never been greater,” he added.

He continually promises one thing and does another.

He betrayed loyal constituents who supported him. He did so without a second thought. He’s more racist than most white Americans.

He reflects the worst of demagogic duplicity. He defends the indefensible. He’s a weapon of mass destruction. It bears repeating. He made America unfit to live in.

The Two Faces of a Police State: Sheltering Tax Evaders, Financial Swindlers and Money Launderers While Policing the Citizens

Petras cuts to the chase saying “(n)ever in the history of the United States have we witnessed crimes committed on the scale and scope of the present day by both private and state elites.”

Never has so much harm been done to so many to benefit an elite few.

Never was extreme wealth been accumulated more easily at the expense of countless millions harmed.

Never have so-called civilized societies so egregiously trashed longstanding cherished values.

Never was grand theft more institutionalized. Never were amounts involved as great as now.

Never did pillage more greatly become the national pastime. Never did so-called democratic governance more swindle its own people.

Never before did so many mega-crooks go unpunished. Never was high-crime more common practice.

Never was government in bed with business for stakes this great. Never were more people harmed in the process.

Guiding US doctrine endorses “too rich for jail, too big to fail,” said Petras. Ordinary people alone suffer.

Steal a billion, two or three and stay free. Steal a loaf of bread for hungry children and face prison time. Doing it three times perhaps means for life.

Law and order don't exist. Judicial unfairness is official policy. Ordinary people haven't a chance. Monied interests control things.

The Power of Israel in the United States

Israel Buys the US Congress: Sabotaging the US-Iran Peace Negotiations.

War or peace hangs in the balance. Thirty-five years of anti-Iranian hostility persists. Zionist power wants the Islamic Republic destroyed.

It wants all Israeli regional powers removed. It wants unchallenged military dominance.

It wants Israel given the right to steal Palestinian land freely. It wants it permitted to wage aggressive wars with impunity.

Attacking Iran risks regional or global war. Since WW II, “Israel has bombed, invaded and occupied more countries in the Middle East and Africa than any previous colonial power, except the US,” says Petras.

Its victims include “Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Sudan and Yemen.” Its terror attacks and targeted assassinations include numerous other countries.

Israel operates lawlessly with impunity. America partners in its crimes. It provides billion of dollars in annual support.

Red lines, timelines, deadlines, sanctions, sabotage, subversion, cyber attacks, assassinations, saber rattling, warmongering, spurious accusations, manipulated to fail P5+1 talks, and inflammatory headlines up the stakes for war.

Pretexts are easy to invent. False flags precipitate them. Zionist power in America buys

political support. It owns Congress. It gets most everything it wants.

Mainstream media march in lockstep. Truth is systematically buried. Unflinching Israeli backing substitutes. Fifty-two major US Zionist organizations exert enormous influence. Political Washington bows to their will.

Obama with Israel Against the World

America is a dictatorship, says Petras. Constitutional law is null and void. It's "presidential toilet paper!"

"Legal hacks and whores scratch their backsides and regurgitate the previous illegal executive orders in order to 'legitimize' new arbitrary powers to declare war" and destroy fundamental freedoms.

Abuse of power demands impeachment. It's a national imperative. America's Declaration of Independence states:

"(W)hen a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, (it's the right of the people, it's) their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."

Straightaway as president, Obama violated his sacred trust. He betrayed his constituents. He trashed rule of law principles.

He's guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors. He spurns fundamental civil and human rights. He mocks democratic values.

He threatens humanity. He's heading America for WW III. Removing him is top priority. The alternative is potentially grim.

Fifteen Minutes An American President

Obama's 2009 inaugural address promised "a new approach with a new emphasis on respect and a new willingness to talk."

Ravaging one country after another followed. So did overthrowing democratically elected leaders. Numerous other high crimes define his tenure.

He's a wolf in wolf's clothing. Neocons infest his administration. Peace is a four-letter word. Rule of law principles don't matter.

Diktat power runs things. Humanity is more than ever threatened. It may not survive on his watch. America is the real evil empire. No nation ever matched its ruthlessness. Perhaps none ever will.

Israel's Willing Executioners: AIPAC Invades Washington

"When a country, like the United States, is in decline, it is not because of external competition: declining competitiveness is only a symptom," says Petras.

"It is because of internal rot. Decline results when a nation is betrayed by craven

leaders, who crawl and humiliate themselves before a minority of thuggish mediocrities pledged to a foreign state without scruples or moral integrity.”

AIPAC is the most prominent face of US Zionist power. It fronts for Israel. It’s an unregistered foreign agent. It calls itself “America’s Pro-Israel Lobby.”

Virtually no one in Congress confronts it. Doing so is a career-ender.

It has virtual veto power over war and peace, trade and investment, multi-billion dollar arms sales, enormous handouts to Israel, and all Middle East policies affecting the Jewish state under Democrat and Republican administrations alike.

It’s a weapon of mass destruction. It supports Israel’s worst crimes. Its annual meetings are “the most outrageous public display of Zionist-Jewish power as it shapes US foreign policy,” says Petras.

“The sole purpose of AIPAC is to ensure Israel’s unchallenged military and political power over a huge region from North Africa to the Persian Gulf.”

Presidents, top administration officials, and congressional leaders pay homage to its power.

They march to the same drummer. They collaborate in high crimes. They support what demands condemnation.

They disgrace themselves in the process. They betray their constituents at the same time.

Fifty-two Major American Zionist Organizations control them. They serve a foreign government.

They do so against the interests of ordinary Americans. They do it “without scruples or moral integrity,” says Petras.

The Great Transformation of Jewish American Charities

Charity no longer defines them. Over time, they shifted disgracefully. They did so, Petras said, from:

- “social aid for working Jews, poor immigrants and elderly Holocaust victims to political influence peddling at the service of the highly militarized state of Israel;
- from engaging in social welfare for American Jews to political lobbying for military transfers to Israel;
- from grassroots leaders sharing life styles and struggles with their rank and file donors to millionaire CEOs entertaining Zionist billionaires and banging tables for Israel at the White House while paying off the Congressional influential; and
- from reaching out and aligning with Americans working for peace with justice in the Middle East to embracing every tin horn monarch and dictator who signs off on Israeli annexation of Palestinian land.”

In the process, they lost their popular mass base. Members resigned in protest. Others were forced out.

They're no longer Jewish community representatives. They front for lawless Israeli power. They do so without ethics or integrity.

Imperial and Zionist Wars and Terror in the Middle East: Palestine, Iran, Syria and Yemen

Israeli Terror: The "Final Solution" to the Palestine Question (page 130/31)

Longstanding ethnic cleansing reflects official Israeli policy. Palestinians are systematically dispossessed.

For decades, Israel "confiscat(ed) their lands, destroy(ed) (their) homes, bulldoz(ed) (their) orchards and (established) 'Jews-only' colonial settlements serviced by highways, electrical systems and water works for the exclusive use of the settlers and occupying soldiers," said Petras.

Israel is the only nation without declared borders. Its Greater Israel objective explains why. It wants them expanded.

In 1982, Oded Yinon prepared "[The Zionist Plan for the Middle East](#)." The Association of Arab-American University Graduates called it "the most explicit, detailed and unambiguous statement to date of the Zionist strategy in the Middle East."

"Its importance...lies not in its historical value but in the nightmare which it represents."

It states for Israel to survive, it must dominate the region. It must become a world power.

Doing so requires balkanizing Arab nations along ethnic and sectarian lines. It involves making them Israeli satellites.

Israel wants all historical Palestinian land, said Petras. It wants non-Jews "expel(led)." It wants Jews alone granted rights. It denies Palestinians entirely.

It commits high crimes too grave to ignore. It does so daily. It literally gets away with murder with impunity. So-called peace talks mock legitimate ones.

Palestinians are largely on their own to survive. Besieged Gazans suffer most of all. Israel keeps them isolated illegally.

Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas is a longtime Israeli collaborator. So are other PA officials. They're Israeli enforcers.

They betray their own people for generous benefits derived. They're complicit in causing enormous human suffering.

Obama at the General Assembly: Sacrificing Palestine for Zionist Campaign Funds

Petras discussed his September 21, 2011 address. He "overt(ly) pander(ed) to Israel," he said. He's done it at AIPAC conferences.

He supports lawless Israeli policy. He spurns fundamental Palestinian rights. He's indifferent to their vital needs.

"From the angle of satisfying the US Zionist power configuration (ZPC) and securing a massive flow of re-election financing, Obama's (2011) UN speech was a smashing success," Petras explained.

He grovels before Zionist interests. He supports hugely destructive ones. He turns a blind eye to Israel's settlement project.

He finances its wars of aggression. He vetoes all justifiable anti-Israeli Security Council resolutions

He supports wrong over right. He's a war criminal multiple times over. He disgraces the office he holds.

Israeli Bombers: Al Qaeda's Air Force

Israeli history reflects multiple crimes of war, against humanity and slow-motion genocide.

Generations of leaders deplored peace. They thrive on war. "Its foreign policy depends on perpetual regional wars and political instability," said Petras.

Fifty-two Major American Zionist Organizations endorse its lawlessness. Israel is partnered with Obama's war on Syria.

It wants another regional rival removed. Iran's turn awaits. In 2014, Israel budgeted nearly \$3 billion dollars for war on the Islamic Republic.

Waging it would be madness. It remains to be seen what follows. It doesn't matter what Israel does most often.

"The entire Zionist power configuration in Washington has lined up to support the Jewish state," said Petras.

"When Israel commits an act of war against its neighbor, no matter how unjust and brutal the act, Zionists from the most religious to the most secular, the 'peacenik' and neo-cons, all form a united chorus in praise of the righteous and moral 'Jewish Bombs' even as they fall on the besieged people of Syria today and Iran tomorrow."

Peace remains elusive. It's nowhere in sight so far nor benefits accrued if it arrives.

The Bloody Road to Damascus: The Triple Alliance's War on a Sovereign State

Syria is Obama's war. Proxy death squad invaders are used. So far they lack an air force. Obama likely plans Libya 2.0.

Plans to initiate it last summer were postponed. They weren't cancelled. Full-scale war on Assad may be one major false flag incident away.

It remains to be seen what Obama plans. He wants another imperial trophy. Plans to oust Assad are firm.

The road to Tehran runs through Damascus. It's "paved with lies," Petras explains. It bears repeating. Iran's turn awaits. Perhaps regional war will follow.

Saudi Arabia: A Retrograde Rentier Dictatorship and Global Terrorism

Saudi Arabian governance mocks legitimacy. It "has all the vices and none of the virtues of an oil rich state like Venezuela," said Petras.

It's "governed by a family dictatorship which tolerates no opposition and severely punishes human rights advocates and political dissidents."

It "finances the most fanatical, retrograde, misogynist version of Islam, the 'Wahhabi' sect of Sunni Islam."

It's a valued US ally. America supports some of the world's most ruthless despots. It targets independent governments for regime change.

It want subservient pro-Western puppet leadership replacing them. It spurns democracy at home and abroad.

It's waging terror wars on humanity. It's spending trillions of dollars doing so. It lets vital homeland needs go begging. It wants unchallenged global dominance.

Iran-US Interim Agreement: Historic Breakthrough of Historic Sellout?

American agreements aren't worth the paper they're written on. US history reflects it. Native Americans suffered through centuries of heroic lost struggles. From 1492 to today, they experienced promises made and broken.

Winning the West involved betraying them. One US treaty after another was violated. Imperialism works this way. Things haven't changed. Today they're worse than ever.

Earlier US policy makers sought sea to shinning sea dominance. Today they want it globally. They want it unchallenged. They'll stop at nothing to get it.

Obama is America's latest rogue leader. He's a moral coward. He's a serial liar. His word isn't his bond. Petras asked if the so-called "historic (Geneva) breakthrough" was real or a mirage.

Does it end 34 years of Iran bashing? Or is it the latest US betrayal dressed up in diplomatic mumbo jumbo?

The Big Lie about an Iranian nuclear threat persists. It's fake. It's a red herring. US intelligence reports say so.

It's common knowledge in Washington. It doesn't matter. Congressional Iran bashing continues. So do punitive administration actions.

Petras said Geneva ostensibly "is directed toward undermining Iran's potential 'capacity' to have a nuclear program: there are no weapons to destroy, no weapons plans exist, no war plans exist and there are no strategic offensive military operations on the Iranian 'drawing board.' "

“We know this because repeated US intelligence reports” say so.

“So the entire current negotiations are over weakening Iran’s ongoing peaceful, legal nuclear program...”

They aim to “undermin(e) any future advance in nuclear technology that might protect Iran from an Israeli or US attack...”

Longstanding US/Israeli policy prioritizes destroying Iranian independence. It’s replacing it with pro-Western puppet governance.

It’s advancing US/Israeli imperialism. It’s eliminating all rival states. It’s establishing unchallenged control. It’s going all out by whatever means necessary.

Iran sought normalized relations with Washington and other Western countries for decades. It offered major concessions.

Its sincere efforts were spurned. Is this time different? Has Washington turned a page? Obama has all the proving to do. If past is prologue, don’t expect it.

The Assassination of Anwar Al-Awlaki by Fiat

Obama ordered death by drone missile. He murdered a US citizen abroad. He did so without justification.

He committed cold-blooded murder. For sure not for the first time. Or the last. He governs by diktat authority. He ignores fundamental rule of law principles.

Bill of Rights protections are gone. International law doesn’t matter. Washington rules alone apply. Hegemons operate that way.

So do rogue leaders like Obama. It bears repeating. He exceeds the worst of his predecessors.

Oligarchs, Demagogues and Mass Revolts...Against Democracy

US democracy exists in name only. Most other European ones operate the same way. Monied interests alone matter. Ordinary people have no say.

So-called “color-coded ‘mass revolts’ in Eastern Europe (including former Soviet republics) featured (duplicitous) popular leaders who exhorted the masses in the name of ‘independence and democracy...,” said Petras.

They were “pro-NATO, pro(Western) (imperial stooges) liked to neoliberal elites.”

Modern-day “oligarchs privatized and sold off the most lucrative sectors of the economy, throwing millions out of work.”

“They dismantled the welfare state and handed over their military bases to NATO for the stationing of foreign troops and the placement of missiles aimed at Russia.”

They betrayed their own people in the process. Things are worse now than ever.

Washington's history reflects backing governments spurning the needs of their own people. Western monied interests alone matter.

Hard times inflict enormous punishment. Wars compound the worst of conditions. Things continue going from bad to worse. A race to the bottom harms countless millions.

Petras concludes saying "understanding imperial politics requires:

- analyzing its changing structure and operational code;
- identifying its ideology and technological innovations;
- analyzing the domestic foundations of empire and the interplay between overseas expansion and internal decay; and
- locating idiosyncratic domestic political configurations which influence and direct the particular policies and strategies of empire builders."

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