

The “Real Obama” is Bent on Killing Innocent People with Remote-controlled Drones

By [Prof Rodrigue Tremblay](#)

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“You can’t say civilization don’t advance... in every war they kill you in a new way.” Will Rogers (1879-1935) American cowboy, vaudeville performer, humorist, social commentator and motion picture actor

[Afghan parents] “have burned their own children to exaggerate claims of civilian casualties caused by American military operations.” Gen. Davis H. Petraeus, top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, February 20, 2011, (report of a meeting at President Hamid Karzai’s presidential palace)

“If people can’t trust not only the executive branch but also don’t trust Congress, and don’t trust federal judges, to make sure that we’re abiding by the Constitution with due process and rule of law, then we’re going to have some problems here.” Pres. Barack Obama, speech in San Jose, Ca, (June 7, 2013)

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.” [Abraham Lincoln](#) (1809—1865), 16th President of the United States (1861-65)

When Barack Obama defeated Mitt Romney in the 2012 U.S. presidential election, there was hope that the newly reelected president would show his true colors during his second term, not having to run again and having nothing to lose by being himself.

I, for one, hoped that the [Real Obama](#), the 2008 Obama of “Yes we Can”, would liberate himself from the Washington-centered [military-industrial complex](#) and show some character and principles, and reverse some of the most dangerous policies that the Bush-Cheney administration had set in motion. Also, there was hope that Barack Obama, as American President, would establish some distance between his administration and Israeli Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu](#) who had openly campaigned for Mitt Romney and against him during the election, a fact that earned Netanyahu the title of “Republican representative from the state of Israel.”

Granted that President Obama, on paper at least, is much less a loose cannon than would have been a John McCain or a Mitt Romney in the presidency, both of whom sometimes gave the impression of being little more than neocon puppets. But expectations were that Barack Obama would be much more than a slightly improved version of his radical opponents of 2008 and 2012. Instead, evidence indicates that Barack Obama went the other way and is actively competing with [Richard Nixon](#) and George W. Bush to become a secretive and warmongering president.

It would seem that Barack Obama has gone [native](#), i.e. he has embraced the Washington nomenclatura's agenda with enthusiasm in restraining civil liberties and in promoting [global warfare](#) in the quest of an [Imperial America](#). In particular, he has increased the killing of innocent people, often innocent [children](#), around the world with the crude instruments of state terror and killing machines called military unmanned "[drones](#)".

Keep in mind that such instruments of terror were invented in the 1980s by an Israeli national, [Abraham Karem](#), then chief designer for the Israeli airforce, and who migrated to California to pursue his activities. Initially used for surveillance only, advances in information and computer technology have made possible the building of military killing drones, to the delight of the [companies](#) that build them – mainly American and Israeli – which have raked in gorgeous profits for their contracts with the CIA and the Pentagon.

Indeed, the sophisticated remote control technology, using satellite communications for targeted killing has been progressing very fast since the CIA and the U.S. Air Force deployed the first weaponized unmanned drones after 2001. The first military drone was the Predator, manufactured by [General Atomics Aeronautical Systems](#), a division of [General Atomics](#) headquartered in San Diego, CA. The same company developed a larger version called the Reaper, capable of launching Hellfire missiles at their human "prey". The newest model is the [Avenger](#), and no doubt that many other versions will be profitably developed. —This technology has made remote killing easy, like a video game that isolates the killer from his victim.

The [moral dimension](#) of this new kind of brutality detached from humanity has not yet been fully appreciated. Just as it was immoral for American President Harry Truman to order the drop of nuclear bombs on the civilian population of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, in 1945, it is immoral for President Barack Obama to authorize targeted assassinations around the world.

Such remote-controlled weaponized drones, commanded remotely from Nevada, for example, can fire missiles at the houses of foreign nationals in the tribal areas of Pakistan and in other countries, but they often miss their intended targets and they hit peasant homes and other private facilities and kill innocent civilians. Many consider such acts of aggression as state terrorism on a large scale.

Obama has even usurped the unilateral power of [killing American citizens](#) with drones without due process. No other American president has ever claimed to have such a [power](#) outside of the U.S. Constitution.

All this has made observers reassess Obama's character and agenda. Just as George W. Bush was less than candid in making public the moral and legal justifications for introducing torture in the U.S. military culture, a huge step backward, Barack Obama has been opaque on the moral, legal and constitutional basis for his killing program abroad. In Bush's case, the shaky legal advice to "justify" torture came from an unknown lawyer of Korean origin, John Yoo whose [torture memos](#) were made public for evaluation.

In Obama's case, to routinely engage in targeting suspected nameless militants for assassination in foreign countries with which the U.S. is not at war, his administration has argued that the legal advice offered to the president is confidential and secret. —This is not a trivial matter. So far, it has been estimated that the United States has killed [4,700 people](#) abroad with drone strikes, outside of declared war zones. The Obama administration has

dramatically expanded the use of killing drones abroad. For example, the Obama administration has increased by [600 percent](#) the drone strikes that the Bush-Cheney administration had initiated, and this for strikes in Pakistan alone.

At least with Bush II, people knew who gave the advice and the nature of such advice. With Obama, everybody is in the dark, including even members of Congressional [intelligence committees](#), let alone Joe public. The irony comes from the fact that candidate Barack Obama, in 2008, was a fierce critic of George W. Bush's national security policies, notably regarding his approval of interrogation practices widely seen as torture. Now, all that has emerged to justify targeted assassinations is an anonymous [16-page document](#) flatly stating that the President has such an authority. If this is not the sign of an imperial presidency, what is? That is why some have begun referring to Obama as [Dictator Obama](#).

The European Parliament has recently issued a [statement](#) questioning the Obama administration's refusal to divulge the legal and moral basis for its targeted killing program abroad:

"We are deeply concerned about the legal basis, as well as the moral, ethical and human rights implications of the United States' targeted killing programme that authorises the [CIA](#) and the military to hunt and kill individuals who have suspected links to terrorism anywhere in the world."

In conclusion, let us say that the Obama administration should be leading international efforts to outlaw the widespread use of weaponized unmanned drones, just as gas warfare and nuclear warfare have been outlawed. Sadly, President Barack Obama is rather promoting their use, making the world an even more dangerous place. Such weapons, like nuclear bombs, are bound to spread and what's good for the goose may also be good for the gander. These weapons could come to haunt the U.S. itself in the future. They don't increase U.S. security in the long run. They rather reduce it. —Nobody should have the right to kill just anybody, anywhere in the world. This is the stuff of tyranny.

Professor Rodrigue Tremblay, a Canadian-born economist, is the author of the book ["The Code for Global Ethics, Ten Humanist Principles"](#), and of ["The New American Empire"](#)

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