

Susan Rice, a US diplomat who loves dictators

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Fifteen days ago when the death of PM Meles Zenawi became official, US ambassador to the UN, Susan Rice, tweeted the following: “Prime Minister Meles leaves behind an indelible legacy of major contributions to Ethiopia, Africa, and the world”. When I read her tweets, for a brief moment I thought I and Susan Rice were living in a different planet. I am a United States citizen, and I don’t appreciate when my tax money pays the salary of my ambassador to the UN who accolades a vicious dictator whose name is closely linked to genocide, torture, and corruption. I know our speeches are protected by the first Amendment and we have the right to speak our mind. But, madam Ambassador, how do you feel if I make a public statement saying that the authors of “Jim Crow” leave behind an indelible legacy of major contributions to America’s south, especially, to American blacks? We know southern elites benefited from Jim Crow laws in the same fashion Meles Zenawi’s ethnic comrades benefited from his exclusive political and exploitative economic policies. And this is what you called “Major contribution” to Ethiopia. Madam Ambassador, all I can say is SHAME ON YOU!

Madam Ambassador, when the following words came out of your mouth this week in Addis Ababa, I believe it was one of your lowest moments in Ethiopia, may be in your life. Here is what you said: “He [Meles] was tough, unsentimental and sometimes unyielding. And, of course, he had little patience for fools, or “idiots,” as he liked to call them”

Madam Ambassador, please allow me to ask you one simple question . . . does PM Zenawi’s set of fools and idiots include you? I’m asking you this because here is what PM Zenawi said about the Voice of America: “We have been convinced for many years that in many respects, the VOA Amharic Service has copied the worst practices of radio stations such as Radio Mille Collines of Rwanda in its wanton disregard of minimum ethics of journalism and engaging in destabilizing propaganda” Look, Madam Ambassador, as long as the late Zenawi is concerned, everyone that opposes him is an idiot to him. The only reason he compared the VOA to Radio Mille Collines of Rwanda is that the VOA was exposing his dictatorial regime. The above quote was crafted and written by you, so who were you referring to when you said he had little patience for fools, or “idiots”? As long as I am concerned, you were referring to yourself because to Meles Zenawi, the VOA and the US Department of State [at least every year when it reports on the Human Rights issue of Ethiopia] are fools or idiots. Unless you tell me otherwise and apologize to the great people of Ethiopia for your uncivilized comments, I stand by what I said.

We know America and you are in love with the dictator in Ethiopia. In 2005, when over 200 Ethiopians were killed on the streets of Addis (some killed not far from the US embassy); President Bush congratulated Meles Zenawi's re-election. In 2010, when Meles was re-elected for the fourth time with 99.6% of the vote in a marred election, President Obama, who once said: "Africa needs strong institutions, not strong men", congratulated the re-election of Africa's strongest man. To be honest, as long as Zenawi was willing to trade the life of young Ethiopians for a huge sum of American money, America was happy and it was willing to be a shelter for Zenawi's torture, abuse, and extrajudicial killings. All in all, the human right conditions of Ethiopia went from bad to worse at the time of President Clinton and George W. Bush, and got worst at the watch of president Obama. You [Susan Rice] were a top US official at two of those administrations.

Dear Madam Ambassador, did you know that when PM Meles killed over 200 innocent civilians in 2005, some of his victims were as young as 12 years old? I want you to know that 12 years old Nebiyou was gunned down as he was begging for mercy on his knee, and most of the 200 victims were shot and killed by heavy machineguns mounted on Humvees supplied by your government. Instead of worshiping a child killer and presenting him as a hope for children, please double check the facts. Madam Ambassador, thanks to the WikiLeaks, we know these are facts that you and your government know very well. But, knowing Meles and his atrocities did not stop you from saying the following garbage: "In his children and all children, Meles saw the promise of renewal and the power of hope" Aren't you a mother Madam Ambassador? Do you think the mother of 12 years old Nebiyou and the mothers of the other young boys who lost their children would say the same thing? To these mothers their hope is killed, but to you, the man who killed their hope is "the power of hope". Madam, if you are a Catholic, you need a long one-to-one session with your padre.

Madam Ambassador, let me tell you what hope is because I don't think you know the real meaning of hope. Hope is when MLK said "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character" Madam Ambassador, without this hope and the fight for this hope, forget going to Addis and applauding a vicious dictator, you wouldn't have moved an inch from the Washington, DC ghettos, a city you were born and raised. MLK lived and died for the hope that you, me and millions of blacks are enjoining today. Whereas, your prodigy, Meles fought for 17 years and ruled for 21 to create Bantustan like ethnic divisions, making his ethnic base at the top of the division. Madam Ambassador, do you think segregated America was a hope to American blacks? Are you the product of that kind of hope? The answer is clear, so why do you think a man that built an ethnic empire in Ethiopia would be a hope for Ethiopians? Who knows what or who the hope for Ethiopia is, you or Ethiopians? Sorry, this is a bad question, I already said that you don't know what hope is.

If you still didn't give up reading, please go and read Graham Peebles' article. Here is his comment on Zenawi's death: "Let a new day dawn for the people, one filled with hope and fundamental change, where human rights and justice are respected, where freedom is encouraged and cultivated in all areas and where fear is banished to the past" It is sad that America's top diplomat sees hope in Zenawi, and America's journalist sees hope and fundamental change for Ethiopia after Zenawi. What a startling difference? Who has a better view of the world, a journalist or a diplomat? Well, I don't know, but even if it is a diplomat, it shouldn't be you.

You are an African American woman whose roots go back to Africa, but your attitude towards Africa is awfully distasteful. Madam Ambassador, sadly, you are not alone. There is another high profile African American female [Jendayi Frazer] who equally has bad taste for Africa and Africans. What in the hell is this Madam Ambassador? Group think, despise, arrogance, or all of the above? Let me take you back to 1994 and remind you the Rwandan genocide. Here is what you said: "If we use the word 'genocide' and are seen as doing nothing, what will be the effect on the November [congressional] election?"

Oh! My God, did you say "November Election" Madam Ambassador? It is not surprising that we are on the eve of another election and here you are praising an African dictator who committed a genocide killing more than 400 ethnic Agwaks in a single day. If this was in Iran, I know you would have been all over the media and on shuttle diplomacy between Moscow and Beijing to sanction Iran. I am not a fan of Iran, please don't take me wrong. But, what about Ethiopia and the Ethiopian people? Are you telling me that the life of 400 ethnic Agwaks is worth noting as long as Zenawi is serving American interest? Madam Ambassador, you are the only person in 1994 that had trouble calling the genocide in Rwanda genocide. This is exactly why I still believe that you are from a different planet. It seems to me that, as long as you are on election year, you refuse to be guided by principle, the truth, ethics or morality. You tend to say anything; I mean anything that you think influences the outcome of the election in favor you.

Madam Ambassador, do you remember the "Kent State Massacre"? I know you do though you were five years old at the time. More than 42 years after the massacre, the US media is still a critique of the Kent State shooting, and the families of the victims are still mourning. The Kent State shooting took the life of 4 people and wounded 9 others. Madam Ambassador, your Mr. "world-class mind" killed 200 and wounded more than thousands just seven years ago. How can we Ethiopians forget a national tragedy that shocked the nation just seven years ago when Americans remember the Boston Massacre [1770] Baylor Massacre [1778] and the Kent State Massacre [1970]? In the November Massacre [2005 in Ethiopia] or in all of the massacres here in the US, the perpetrators are not great minds because great minds don't kill people who seek freedom. It's the little mind that kills people and it's also the little mind that praises killers. Madam Ambassador, your recent speech in the same city that I went to college reminds me the

following quote by Nicholas Boileau: However big the fool, there is always a bigger fool to admire him.

Madam Ambassador, great minds like MLK died [assassinated by little minds] so that you can be judged by the content of your character and sit where you are sitting now. The Ethiopian people whom you called great people [Yes, they are] deserve nothing less than their greatness. The only time you said the right thing on that pathetic speech is when you said the ‘great people’ of Ethiopia. Remember, this did not move me at all because even a dead clock is correct twice a day. Madam Ambassador, you said: “I suspect we all feel it deeply unfair to lose such a talented and vital leader so soon, when he still had so much more to give” You are absolutely right. So much more to give to America, but so much more to imprison and so much more to torture and kill in Ethiopia. You don’t know how much antacid medication I took after I heard your unabashed speech.

Don’t worry Madam Ambassador; I have power just like you do, though my power comes once every four years. I live in Northern Virginia where every single vote matters this November for your struggling boss. I will make sure that I cast my first republican vote in my life so that you and your boss go back to colleges and universities [like Jendayi Frazer] and talk whatever you want to talk. Here, at least, I have the option to ignore you.

Though I didn’t live much in Addis, I love Addis. I really do. Addis is the pride of Africa where the OAU was formed. It is the first black city where the UN Security Council convened. Addis is the first, may be the only capital city in the world founded by blacks. Well, as it is a city of hope and expectations, Addis is also a city of sorrow and grief. It’s a city where dictators of all kinds and their supporters mislead the people with their venomous misguided speeches. Here is an excerpt from one of the misguided speeches: “True, he [Meles] never belied any lack of confidence in his judgments. He was tough, unsentimental and sometimes unyielding. And, of course, he had little patience for fools, or “idiots,” as he liked to call them” (Susan Rice).

Madam Ambassador, if you think your speech was aimed at telling the Ethiopian people about the ‘judgment’ of Meles, I think you wasted time and resources talking a little too much and a little too long. The Ethiopian people know Meles. In fact, now they also know you and your poor judgment.

Madam Ambassador, you said: He [Meles] was uncommonly wise – able to see the big picture and the long game. Which big picture and which long game Madam? In his 21 years in power, he built an army where more than 90% of the commanders are from his ethnic group. He built a huge security apparatus where the key personnel at every level of the apparatus come from his ethnic base in Tigray. He built an economic empire that controls the commanding heights of the Ethiopian economy. In this economic empire, the emperor, the princes & princess, the lords and

the vassals all come from a region Meles calls "My home". Politically, Meles' party [TPLF] controls power at every level. For your information, Ethiopia has a population of close to 90 million people out of which only 6% are Tigreans who are the power base of Meles Zenawi. Madam Ambassador, this is your man with big picture and long game. What is big in Meles Zenawi, or you just don't know what the word big means living in Big Apple. Look, Madam, Meles created a political system where his 6% minority group dominates 94% of the Ethiopian population. If this is what you call big, your vocabulary lacks the antonym of big.

Madam Ambassador, you can say anything you want about Meles Zenawi when you are tasked with writing his biography, but when you address the Ethiopian people, please watch your mouth and speak the truth. You told us how close you two were, if this is true, I'm afraid he may have infected you. Dear Madam Ambassador, you must visit an Ethiopian priest to get sanitized. The Ethiopian people know freedom no less than you know, the only problem is that their freedom is taken away and their human right is violated by a man whom you called a man of judgment. Madam Ambassador, not only Meles, but you too have a serious lapse of judgment. Dear Madam, I strongly believe you and the administration you serve are responsible for every abuse, torture, and murder that Meles inflicted on the Ethiopian people. We shall overcome!

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