
Subject: The Systematic Emasculation of Africa's Leadership-Part Four (Final)

From: Sophia Tesfamariam (sophia_tesfamariam@hotmail.com)

To: sophia_tesfamariam@hotmail.com;

Date: Sunday, November 18, 2012 4:20 PM

The Systematic Emasculation of Africa's Leadership-Part Four (Final)

Sophia Tesfamariam

The US mission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was informed of every move made by the African Union, before and after key meetings. There are African countries that are kept in the dark about the Organization's activities and yet, the Americans and Europeans not only call the shots but also advise Africans on whom they should elect and African leaders go out of their way to accommodate their requests. The US Charge D'Affaires according to a cable met with Deputy Chairperson Patrick Mazimhaka on 6 January 2006 and Vicki Huddleston:

“...asked Mazimhaka for ideas on how to ensure Bashir does not win the Assembly chairmanship. Mazimhaka (protect) said that only high-level outreach to key countries such as Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Africa, Botswana, Algeria and Ghana has a chance of success. Mazimhaka said that international partners should strongly encourage these leaders to attend the Summit and to vote against Bashir...”

Talking about selling out one of your own!

The American Embassy cables show the extent of the emasculation of leaders in the Horn of Africa. It is amazing to see how hard they worked to blemish Robert Mugabe's reputation and instead of standing up for the elderly statesman who has spent the better of his life fighting for Africa's and Zimbabwe's independence, we find those who cannot even walk a mile in his shoes trashing him behind closed doors. These shameless coconut heads don't have the guts to stand up for their people and they certainly don't have the guts tell him how they feel, to his face!

In an 18 August 2009 cable, “CHARGE CALLS ON AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION CHAIR PING”, the visiting US official reaffirmed USG interest in deepening ties with the continental organization. For his part, the Chairman of the African Union Commission tells Ambassador Meece in his first visit to the African Union as CDA for the bilateral mission and USAU the following:

“...On Zimbabwe , there was agreement that the country's economy had been severely damaged in recent years, and Ping expressed optimism about the country emerging from its political crisis. Prime Minister Tsvangirai will eventually take power, he predicted. The only reason President Mugabe has remained in power is that his advisers have urged him to do so to protect their own interests, he assessed...”

At a January 31 meeting on the margins of the African Union Summit, African Union Commission Chairperson Jean Ping and Acting A/S for African Affairs Phillip Carter met and discussed regional issues. The cable, “AU SUMMIT: AF ACTING A/S CARTER MEETS WITH AU COMMISSIONER JEAN PING”, details the conversation in which the Chair of the AU Commission is found once again bad mouthing President Mugabe of Zimbabwe. Here is what the cable[i] said:

"...We know Mugabe should go," he confided. Some AU member states would even support a military option to remove Mugabe from power. But he cautioned that the military option in another country, the DRC, has left 5 million dead over 15 years, and there is still no change. "Mugabe will fight. It's a similar situation to Congo." Ping predicted that trying to force out Mugabe by force would ignite a fire in the region..."

Well, I had no idea that the fire raging in the Congo was a result of another regime change agenda gone wrong...

What came as a surprise to this author is the vicious attack on Mugabe that came from Raila Odinga, the Prime Minister of Kenya. Declaring the power-sharing Agreement in Zimbabwe dead, Odinga labeled the elderly statesman, a "vile dictatorship" that must be stopped. That may have gotten him high marks from the US Ambassador who urged him to “keep speaking out” against Mugabe and encouraged Odinga to call on other African leaders to do the same, but he has lost all my respect. Odinga believed that the Presidents of Rwanda, Zambia, and Senegal could be convinced to speak out against Robert Mugabe...like he was...were they?

Well, a member of the Rwandan government agreed with the US that Mugabe had to go but said “GOR would not” get out in front of “the African Union position on Zimbabwe nor the SADC/Mbeki facilitation of talks”. That is a long way of saying NO...Rwanda will not be party to Kenya’s vilification campaign against President Mugabe.

It also looks like Zambia was not playing along. A 29 April 2009 cable does not sound too happy. The American diplomat doesn’t sound too happy with the President of Zambia’s attitude towards the UK,

which was demanding that Zambia put pressure on Mugabe. This is what Ambassador Donald Booth writes in the cable:

“... the GRZ's flat-out rebuff of the UK visit marks a new level of unresponsiveness and intransigency...his dearth of leadership and vision, and Banda's apparent timidity, reinforces Embassy's previous reporting that Banda is unlikely to confront problems in Zimbabwe at the expense of his relationship with Mugabe...”

That is the way it should be. Why should Africans be coerced, forced and intimidated to snitch, lie, and undermine one of their own? No European leader is subjected to such harassment and vilification, why is it okay to vilify and malign African leaders?

So what about Senegal? Was Odinga right in thinking that it too could be convinced to join the anti-Mugabe bandwagon? He was dead wrong. To his credit, Senegal's President Abdoulaye Wade, a firm believer in Africans resolving African problems, did not join the herd. According to the Embassy cable[ii], he did not want to see “Mugabe be humiliated by the West”. At least Wade recognized it for what it was. He knew that the ultimate goal is to see Africa's leadership humiliated and disgraced.

For the American diplomat that authored this cable, Africans resist and desist from humiliating one of their own said to be sharing:

“...a reflex, perhaps born out of their childhood experiences with British colonialism, to resist any attempt by foreign donors or other leaders to push their "outsider" approaches to African challenges...”

How patronizing!

In another cable, a US diplomat discusses the power-sharing agreement in Zimbabwe with his UK counterpart. Neither one of them has anything good to say about President Mugabe. Here is an excerpt from that cable:

“...In discussing the agreement of the MDC to participate in a unity government with Mugabe's ZANU-PF, Brown indicated the U.K. views it as problematic, and Carter said the United States would judge on the basis of practical actions going forward. Both the United Kingdom and the United States are skeptical about the prospects of success in the implementation of the

agreement and share the concern Tsvangirai may not be up to the task of coping with Mugabe's agenda and machinations. Carter said Mugabe's image would have to become even more tarnished before he could be removed from power; Brown agreed, adding the United Kingdom assumes Mugabe will "screw it up." Both agreed they will need to move cautiously as the new government gets installed. Brown fully concurred with Carter's view that the donors must be careful not to be accused of trying to undermine or derail the new government..."

From funding opposition groups, to imposing travel restrictions, to cutting off development aid, the neocolonialists have done everything to prevent Mugabe from governing his nation in peace. With God's help and the support of the Zimbabwean people, he hangs on. It is not enough to just make Mugabe's work of governing his nation harder, for these neo-cons, his image must also be destroyed.

In a way, I can't blame US diplomats and members of the Western NGOs and media groups for their condescending attitudes. They don't know who their equals are and don't believe that Africa's leadership deserves the same respect as that of Europe or the United States. Why would they when their own leadership doesn't believe that African's deserve to be treated with respect. It is not my intention to address the incoherent and racist US policy for Africa today, but allow me to present an excerpt from an interesting book about US policy and how African leaders are viewed.

How did the end of the Cold War affect US foreign Policy? In a nutshell, the U.S. came out of this era to see itself as a sole super power in the world, and its policy for Africa reflected the attitude borne. In the book, "Madeleine Albright and the New American Diplomacy", Thomas W. Lippman presents US policy for Africa in the post Cold War era and attempts to illustrate the reasoning behind the policy. In writing about US engagement in Africa and Madeline Albright's appreciation of US' role in Africa's post Cold War transformation Lippman said:

"...Albright concluded that the United States could play a useful role in nurturing that transformation only by developing a new way of dealing with African leaders and governments. They could no longer be appraised in terms of their value as Cold War proxies, good if inclined toward Washington, bad if inclined toward Moscow. Nor, she concluded, could the way they ran their countries be measured by Western standards of performance... Many of the brightest new African leaders were struggling to keep themselves and their countries afloat in the face of economic collapse, military insurgency, and tribal rivalries. They were not interested in hearing lectures from Washington about human rights or, if they could avoid it from the International Monetary Fund about their interest rates and monetary policies..."

If defeating communism was Washington's Cold War agenda, it was replaced very quickly with other

wars that remain equally ruinous and incoherent. Not sure if it was a Freudian slip, as this author did not expect it, but Lippman wrote the following about Albright's engagement with Africa's leadership. He wrote:

“...Albright decided to accommodate the presidents and prime ministers she met and make an effort to treat them as equals, tolerating if not approving of certain counterinsurgency and crowd control tactics that would have outraged human rights purists...”

How condescending!

Treat them as equals? Of course they are not her equals, they are her superiors and not because they are heads of states, but because they have earned their stripes!

Most of Africa's leadership has sacrificed their entire lives to liberate their people from the yolks of colonization. While Albright was enjoying her new life in the United States, these African men and women were in the trenches, fighting for their people's rights to self-determination. They withstood cluster bombs and deadly napalm bombs to emerge victorious, not just for their military strategies, but also because they were intellectuals, second to none. Their education was not just in theory, but time and bomb tested on the ground.

Hired African intellectuals have churned out many ugly articles about Africa's leadership, not wanting to be accused of racism, these establishments have hired Africans, to give it an African face and presumably to give credence to their insults on Africa's leadership. The Wiki leak cables have exposed something even uglier; African leaders tearing up, undermining and ridiculing their peers. It is a disgrace and quite shameful.

For the record, I am one of those individuals that has read and re-read the Wikileaks cables from Eritrea and for the most part, with the exception of a few morally bankrupt and greedy individuals (labeled as democrats by US diplomats), I am happy to report that, Eritrea remains one of the few exceptions in the Horn of Africa. Allow me to end this series on a high note. There is hope in Africa for not all African leaders have been brought to their knees. There are many unsung heroes in the continent who have managed to keep their eyes on the ball, not to lose sight of the vision for their nations, in fulfillment of their people's aspirations and dreams.

Contrary to the leaderships in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya, one would be hard pressed to find the President of Eritrea engaging in doublespeak, backstabbing, lies or gossip about any leader in the Horn region or anywhere else in Africa. No members of the Eritrean government have participated in any kind of servitude that would embarrass their people and undermine the credibility and integrity of their nation. Eritrea's leadership is also not in the habit of divulging state secrets or national security issues to junior diplomats or Ambassadors serving in the region.

Neocolonialists (of both colors) have been unable to come to terms with Eritrea's self respect, policy of self reliance and refusal to kneel. Despite the overt, covert and unprovoked hostilities against the State of Eritrea and its people, the Wikileaks cables show, Eritrea has not been party to the emasculation of Africa and its leadership. On the contrary, Eritrea has stood firm on defending Africa's rights to development and the right of all Africans to live in peace within their own internationally recognized borders. Eritrea has stood with the people of Africa in their call for dignity, equality and respect.

The people and government of Eritrea have been misrepresented by US Ambassadors serving in Eritrea and in the region. They mistake their proud demeanor and label it as being "arrogant"; they misunderstand their cultured traditions and their reserved language as being "secretive", and their refusal to stoop to engaging in street gossip as being "elusive". These racist individuals have left no stones unturned to blemish Eritrea's image and distort the reality in Eritrea...why? Because they consider it a failure when they cannot create another banana republic in their image...

So be it...

In this series, the author has endeavored to show the extent of Africa's emasculation, not to insult Africa's leaders but to wake them up and make them realize how much they have hurt the continents people and themselves. That being poor does not mean intellectually inferior. When we stick together and watch out for one of our own, we earn the respect of others.

As Sekou Touré said, "We prefer dignity in poverty to affluence in slavery"!

[i] <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2009/02/09ADDISABABA266.html> accessed 11/08/2012

[ii] <http://wikileaks.org/cable/2008/05/08DAKAR572.html> accessed 11/08/2012