

## FROM RICE TO SHINN: THE TRAGEDY OF REAL POLITIK

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Former US Ambassador to Ethiopia, David Shinn, was, alas, no exciting personality. Just the usual messenger of lies and a man serving his country to the best of his ability. He recently attended a memorial service in New York's Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem for the late dictator and mass murderer Meles Zenawi. Along with the Korean Ban Ki-moon and Susan Rice, US representative to the UN, and shrilled in his blog against Ethiopians protesting the whole idea of having a memorial for a man who should have been tried for mass murder. But then again what is a diplomat but a suave and professional liar!

American ambassadors to Ethiopia have worked hands in glove with the dictator. The latest was the tennis partner of Meles. Shinn said in his blog, along with Rice, that they had had their differences with Meles who was, come what may, like Caesar, an "honorable man". Not very funny at all. However much America tries to talk of human rights and concern for democracy the reality is that America is just interested in her own national interest and has embraced and would embrace dictators faster than fast so long as they are under its diktat. The Chinese do it as do the European countries. It is the fact of life of our century and that is why as far as Africans are concerned it makes absolutely little difference if Obama or Romney are the next president of the USA. Ethiopians and all Africans are the proverbial cat who said whosoever comes I just get my usual dose of milk, little changes. So long as America and the West pursue their interest and ignore the democratic and human rights aspirations of Africans the reality on the ground is that pro West African dictators would be backed, supported, praised and eulogized. NO wonder Susan Rice, Sheen and

others all wailed for the dictator. To paraphrase one former US official, Kirkpatrick, he sure is a horrible SOB but he is our SOB.

David Shinn dabbles in Ethiopian politics even after leaving his post as US ambassador. He probably thinks he is an expert on Ethiopia-- after all pathetic political amateurs are experts on us thanks to skin color and connections. Paul Henze, Prendergast, Levine, Young, and many others have scribbled nonsense in their effort to support Meles and his regime and to attack the opposition and especially the Amhara people they consider as enemies of their interests. Shinn claims, along with Rice, that they had had a difference on human rights issues and more. But where is the evidence? If they were opposed to Meles on the basic issues of democracy and human rights how come America backed him to the hilt notwithstanding his massacres, his election rigging, his repression against the free press and his policy of holding more than 35,000 political prisoners in his dungeons and secret prisons Oh yes he was horrible but we loved him because he was our puppet. That being the truth why is Shinn trying to peddle the nonsense on his blog of being objective, balanced etc..?

Shinn and Rice are trying to inform us on the qualities of the late dictator Meles. They say he was intelligent and we say to them he was a street smart fast talking con man. They say he wanted good for Ethiopia and we counter with “does wanting good mean massacring people, repressing dissent violently, murdering opposition people, massacring many in the Ogaden, Gambella, Addis Abeba, etc, jailing independent journalists”? Their Meles is not our Meles. They see a friend we see an enemy, they see a servant we see a traitor. At the end of the day, we are not naive enough to forget that all of it is involves real politik. Meles served Western interest, Chinese interest, Arab interest and it is not surprising if they all cry for him and commemorate him. The role of the Abyssinian Baptist Church is sad indeed. Shame on them. In the past African Americans stood on the side of

the Ethiopian people and quite a few came to Ethiopia to fight with the people against the hordes of Mussolini. That the same church hails and commemorates the criminal Meles who murdered Ethiopians and hurt the whole country is shameful. The church should stop calling itself Abyssinian!

Real politik is real and tragic. Ethiopians have for long been victims of it. Africans as a whole have been the tragic victim of the West's hypocrisy and real politik. The dictatorial regimes of Equatorial Guinea, Chad, etc enjoy American support because they sell their oil to Washington. Despite the coming to power of the Socialist Holland in France he is cuddling with dictators like Kabila who is having a year round grand sale of Congo's resources. Shinn and Rice invoke cheap virtues to cover up the expensive vices of their country. The same Westerners who sanctimoniously proclaim they will not talk to the butcher Assad hail and eulogize the mass murderers in Africa, the late Meles included. It is not principle but hypocrisy. We have differences with him on questions of democracy and human rights, say Sheen and Rice, but he was an honest person. What is honest? Can a dictator be intelligent? The moment any leader becomes a dictator he forfeits being intelligent and just becomes a stupid beast who represses and murders. And those, like Shinn and Rice, who fail to understand this basic fact become liars with a purpose.

David Shinn was angry at those courageous Ethiopians who protested and said shame on you for commemorating a dictator. He is actually riling internally against his own shame and perversity of honoring a mass killer. He is no friend Ethiopia and will never be despite his pretensions. Rice is not important; she is an expected mercenary serving her masters. The identity of the master is not really important. The difference between Romney and Obama could very well be of importance for America but as far as Africans are concerned it is a beauty contest between monkeys as

we Ethiopians say. The Bush politics on Africa was not changed an iota by Obama who had no qualms praising the dictator Meles. Sarkozy is gone but we can bet many Euros that socialist Holland will not change French politics on Africa. In fact, we are being informed the Holland government will deport back more African refugees than done by Sarkozy. Holland flew to Kinshasa to have a Francophone meeting with African dictators that are curses on their people. Dictators are bad (like Saddam, Khadafy or Assad) if they are not pro West. If they are pro West they are hailed and praised and protected and backed and, if they die, commemorated with fine words. Shinn and Rice are Americans doing their national duty by sprinkling salt into our wound and lamenting a departed mass murderer.