



# Obama's Not-So-Advisable Appointment

## *Obama's Choice Of U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice For National Security Advisor Raises New Questions*

**This Afternoon, Obama Announced His Appointment Of U.N Ambassador Susan Rice To Replace Tom Donilon As National Security Advisor.** "Susan Rice will replace Tom Donilon as national security adviser, the White House is expected to announce Wednesday. Rice, currently the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, will be formally introduced in her new role by President Barack Obama at 2 p.m. ET."

(Chuck Todd, "Susan Rice To Be Appointed National Security Adviser," [NBC News' Politics](#), 6/5/13)

### **OBAMA'S QUESTIONABLE PICK FOR NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR WAS DEEPLY MIRED IN BENGHAZI TALKING POINTS CONTROVERSY**

#### *Susan Rice Delivered The Obama Administration's Response To The Benghazi Terror Attack, Repeatedly Denying That There Was Any "Terrorist Element" Involved*

**On September 16, Five Days After A Deadly Attack On The U.S. Consulate In Benghazi, Libya, Rice Denied There Was A "Terrorist Element" To The Attack, Saying It Appeared To Be "Almost A Copycat Of The Demonstrations Against Our Facility In Cairo, Which Were Prompted Of Course By The Video."** NBC's DAVID GREGORY: "You talked about this as spontaneous. Can you say definitively that the attacks that killed Ambassador Stevens and others there was spontaneous? Was it a planned attack? Was there a terrorist element to it?" U.N. AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: "The best information we have at present, first of all, there's an FBI investigation that's ongoing and we look to that investigation to give us the definitive word as to what transpired. But putting together the best information that we have available to us today, our current assessment is that what happened in Benghazi was in fact initially a spontaneous reaction to what had just transpired hours before in Cairo. Almost a copycat of the demonstrations against our facility in Cairo, which were prompted of course by the video. What we think then transpired in Benghazi is that opportunistic extremist elements came to the consulate as this was unfolding. They came with heavy weapons, which unfortunately are readily available in post revolutionary Libya and it escalated into a much more violent episode. Obviously, that's our best judgment now. We'll await the results of the investigation, and the president has been very clear we'll work with the Libyan authorities to bring those responsible to justice." (NBC's "Meet The Press," 9/16/12)

- **Rice: Extremists “Hijacked” Protests That Had Formed Outside The Benghazi Compound “To Replicate The Sort Of Challenge That Was Posed In Cairo.”** U.N. AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: “We believe that folks in Benghazi, a small number of people came to the embassy to - or to the consulate, rather, to replicate the sort of challenge that was posed in Cairo. And then as that unfolded, it seems to have been hijacked, let us say, by some individual clusters of extremists who came with heavier weapons, weapons that as you know in - in the wake of the revolution in Libya are - are quite common and accessible. And it then evolved from there. We’ll wait to see exactly what the investigation finally confirms, but that’s the best information we have at present.” (ABC’s “This Week,” 9/16/12)
- **Rice Said That The Attack In Benghazi Was “A Direct Result Of A Heinous And Offensive Video.”** U.N. AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: “First of all, let’s be clear about what transpired here. What happened this week in Cairo, in Benghazi, in many other parts of the region...” ABC’s JAKE TAPPER: “Tunisia, Khartoum...” RICE: “...was a result - a direct result of a heinous and offensive video that was widely disseminated, that the US government had nothing to do with, which we have made clear is reprehensible and disgusting.” (ABC’s “This Week,” 9/16/12)
- **Rice Claimed The Administration’s “Best Information” Pointed To “A Spontaneous Reaction To What Had Just Transpired In Cairo As A Consequence Of The Video.”** U.N. AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: “The information, the best information and the best assessment we have today is that in fact this was not a preplanned, premeditated attack. That what happened initially was that it was a spontaneous reaction to what had just transpired in Cairo as a consequence of the video. People gathered outside the embassy and then it grew very violent and those with extremist ties joined the fray and came with heavy weapons, which unfortunately are quite common in post-revolutionary Libya and that then spun out of control. But we don’t see at this point signs this was a coordinated plan, premeditated attack. Obviously, we will wait for the results of the investigation and we don’t want to jump to conclusions before then. But I do think it’s important for the American people to know our best current assessment.” (Fox News’ “Fox News Sunday,” 9/16/12)

***Initial Evidence Pointed To The Presence Of “Islamic Extremists,” Raising Questions About Why Susan Rice So Strongly Rejected Even The Possibility Of Terrorism***

**The CIA’s Initial Talking Points Clearly Stated “We Do Know That Islamic Extremists With Ties To Al-Qa’ida Participated In The Attack.”** “Like the final version used by Ambassador Rice on the Sunday shows, the CIA’s first drafts said the attack appeared to have been ‘spontaneously inspired by the protests at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo’ but the CIA version went on to say, ‘That being said, we do know that Islamic extremists with ties to al-Qa’ida participated in the attack.’ The draft went on to specifically name the al-Qaeda-affiliated group named Ansar al-Sharia. Once again, Nuland objected to naming the terrorist groups because ‘we don’t want to prejudice the investigation.’” (Jonathan Karl, “Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference,” [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

- **The State Department Decided To Remove References To The Al Qaeda-Affiliate And CIA Warnings About Terrorist Threats In Benghazi From The Talking Points.** “The edits included requests from the State Department that references to the Al Qaeda-affiliated group Ansar al-Sharia be deleted as well references to CIA warnings about terrorist threats in Benghazi in the months preceding the attack.” (Jonathan Karl, “Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference,” [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

**Even Though Rice Had Access To Classified Information That Pointed To Al Qaeda Affiliates’**

**Involvement In Benghazi, “She Mostly Used Her Appearances To Emphasize The Story Line Of The Spontaneous Demonstration Over An Anti-Muslim Video.”** “Intelligence officials suspected affiliates of Al Qaeda and named them in their original talking points for Rice, but that information was deemed classified and was softened to ‘extremists’ as the talking points were cycled past Justice, State, the National Security Council and other intelligence analysts. As The Times’s Eric Schmitt wrote, some analysts worried that identifying the groups ‘could reveal that American spy services were eavesdropping on the militants — a fact most insurgents are already aware of.’ Rice was given the toned-down talking points, but she has access to classified information. Though she told Bob Schieffer on CBS’s ‘Face the Nation’ that the extremist elements could have included Qaeda affiliates or Al Qaeda itself, she mostly used her appearances to emphasize the story line of the spontaneous demonstration over an anti-Muslim video. She disputed the contention of the president of Libya’s General National Congress, who called the attack ‘preplanned’ when he talked to Schieffer just before Rice.” (Maureen Dowd, Op-Ed, “Is Rice Cooked?” [The New York Times](#), 11/17/12)

- ***The New York Times’ Maureen Dowd “An Africa Expert, Rice Should Have Realized That When A Gang Showed Up With R.P.G.’S And Mortars In A Place Known As A Hotbed Of Qaeda Sympathizers And Islamic Extremist Training Camps, It Was Not Anger Over A Movie.”*** (Maureen Dowd, Op-Ed, “Is Rice Cooked?” [The New York Times](#), 11/17/12)

## **RICE’S PERFORMANCE ON THE SUNDAY TALK SHOWS HAS RAISED QUESTIONS ABOUT HER QUALIFICATIONS AND JUDGMENT**

**Obama Claimed That Rice “Had Nothing To Do With Benghazi And Was Simply Making A Presentation Based On Intelligence She Had Received.”** OBAMA: “Well first of all, I’m not going to comment at this point on various nominations that I’ll put forward to fill out my cabinet for the second term. Those are things that are still being discussed. But let me say specifically about Susan Rice. She has done exemplary work. She has represented the United States and our interests in the United Nations with skill and professionalism and toughness and grace. As I’ve said before, she made an appearance at the request of the White House in which she gave her best understanding of the intelligence that had been provided to her. If Senator McCain and Senator Graham and others want to go after somebody, they should go after me. And I’m happy to have that discussion with them. But for them to go after the U.N. ambassador, who had nothing to do with Benghazi and was simply making a presentation based on intelligence she had received, and to besmirch her reputation is outrageous.” (President Barack Obama, [Remarks At A Press Conference](#), Washington, DC, 11/14/12)

- ***The New York Times’ Maureen Dowd “Then Why Was She The Point Person?”*** “His argument that Rice ‘had nothing to do with Benghazi,’ raises the question: Then why was she the point person? The president’s protecting a diplomatic damsel in distress made Rice look more vulnerable, when her reason for doing those shows in the first place was to look more venerable.” (Maureen Dowd, Op-Ed, “Is Rice Cooked?” [The New York Times](#), 11/17/12)

**An Obama Official Said Rice Decided To The Sunday Talk Shows To “Close The Stature Gap,” But Was “Focused On The Performance, Not The Content.”** “Ambitious to be secretary of state, Susan Rice wanted to prove she had the gravitas for the job and help out the White House. So the ambassador to the United Nations agreed to a National Security Council request to go on all five Sunday shows to talk about the attack on the American consulate in Libya. ‘She saw this as a great opportunity to go out and close the stature gap,’ said one administration official. ‘She was focused on the performance, not the content. People said, ‘It’s sad because it was one of her best performances.’ But it’s not a movie, it’s the news. Everyone in politics thinks, you just get your good talking points and learn them and reiterate them on

camera. But what if they're not good talking points? What if what you're saying isn't true, even if you're saying it well?" (Maureen Dowd, Op-Ed, "Is Rice Cooked?" [The New York Times](#), 11/17/12)

***The Washington Post's Dana Milbank Criticized Rice For Merely "Following Orders From The White House," Even After Her Talking Points Were "Contradicted By The President Of The Libyan National Assembly, Who, On CBS's 'Face The Nation' Just Before Rice, Said There Was 'No Doubt' That The Attack On Americans In Benghazi 'Was Preplanned.'"*** "Compared with this, the flap over Libya is relatively minor — but revealing. It's true that, in her much-criticized TV performance, she was reciting talking points given to her by the intelligence agencies. But that's the trouble. Rice stuck with her points even though they had been contradicted by the president of the Libyan National Assembly, who, on CBS's 'Face the Nation' just before Rice, said there was 'no doubt' that the attack on Americans in Benghazi 'was preplanned.' Rice rebutted the Libyan official, arguing — falsely, it turned out — that there was no evidence of such planning. True, Rice was following orders from the White House, which she does well. But the nation's top diplomat needs to show more sensitivity and independence — traits Clinton has demonstrated in abundance. Obama can do better at State than Susan Rice." (Dana Milbank, Op-Ed, "Susan Rice's Tarnished Resume," [The Washington Post](#), 11/16/12)

***Obama Had Hoped To Nominate Susan Rice For Secretary Of State, But She Was Forced To Withdraw Her Candidacy Over Her Role In Delivering The Misleading Benghazi Talking Points***

**U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice Took Herself Out Of The Running For Secretary Of State "In The Face Of What Promised To Be A Contentious Senate Confirmation Battle" Because Of Her False Statements Following The Benghazi Attacks.** "Susan Rice, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and a close confidante of President Barack Obama, withdrew her name from consideration as secretary of state on Thursday in the face of what promised to be a contentious Senate confirmation battle. Rice has drawn heavy fire from Republicans for remarks she made in the aftermath of a September 11 attack on the U.S. mission in Benghazi, Libya, in which four Americans were killed, including Ambassador Chris Stevens." (Steve Holland, "Susan Rice Withdraws As Secretary Of State Candidate," [Reuters](#), 12/14/12)

**WITH HIS APPOINTMENT OF SUSAN RICE, OBAMA ADDS YET ANOTHER SENIOR-LEVEL OFFICIAL WITH QUESTIONABLE FOREIGN INVESTMENTS**

**Several Of Obama's Cabinet-Level Officials Have Already Faced Scrutiny For Their Investment Activities.** "Another White House nominee is facing some heat in Congress for putting money in a Cayman Islands fund. Michael Froman, President Barack Obama's pick for U.S. trade representative, invested in the same offshore fund as Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew, according to financial disclosure documents and tax forms." (William Mauldin, "Another Obama Pick Faces Scrutiny Over Finances," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 6/4/13)

***Rice Invested In Companies With Billion-Dollar Deals With Iran***

**According To Previous Disclosure Statements, Rice Holds Between \$50,000 And \$100,000 Of Stock In The International Oil Giant Royal Dutch Shell Which "Owes Iran About \$1 Billion."** "One of the biggest of the holdings, between \$50,000 and \$100,000, according to Rice's disclosure statement for 2011, is Royal Dutch Shell. The international oil giant stopped buying crude oil from Iran early this year as sanctions were tightened to block oil exports by Iran and to stop financial transactions with its central bank. A company spokesman said officials dealing with Iran could not be reached, but a person familiar with the company, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of a lack of authorization to discuss the topic, said Royal Dutch Shell owes Iran about \$1 billion. (Steven Mufson and Tom Hamburger, "Rice Holds Stakes In Firms

That Have Done Business In Iran," [The Washington Post](#), 11/29/12)

- **Rice Holds Between \$15,000 And \$50,000 Of Stock In The Italian International Oil Company ENI Which Received A "Waiver From Sanctions To Enable It To Collect Oil As Payment For About \$1 Billion Iran Owes The Company."** "Rice and her husband also own between \$15,000 and \$50,000 of stock in ENI, the Italian international oil company. ENI has said that it is no longer doing business with Iran, but it has a waiver from sanctions to enable it to collect oil as payment for about \$1 billion Iran owes the company from earlier business deals. The company had been purchasing crude oil and developing natural gas fields." (Steven Mufson and Tom Hamburger, "Rice Holds Stakes In Firms That Have Done Business In Iran," [The Washington Post](#), 11/29/12)

### ***Even Democrats Question Rice's Investments***

**Democrat Staffers Said Rice's Investments "Would Prompt Questions Of Her" If She Had Been Nominated As Secretary Of State.** "On Thursday, Republicans on Capitol Hill began circulating information about Rice's investments connected to Iran. Asked about the disclosure revelations, one senior GOP official, speaking on the condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the topic, said, 'This news adds to the list of questions about Susan Rice – not only her public statements, but now there are broader concerns about her past record.' Democratic staffers also said on condition of anonymity for the same reason that the investments would prompt questions of her if she is nominated." (Steven Mufson and Tom Hamburger, "Rice Holds Stakes In Firms That Have Done Business In Iran," [The Washington Post](#), 11/29/12)