



# PRESS NOTICE

## W. WALTER WILKINS UNITED STATES ATTORNEY DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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**October 6, 2009**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **LEE COUNTY PRISONER CONVICTED OF THREATENING THE PRESIDENT**

Columbia, South Carolina ---- United States Attorney W. Walter Wilkins stated today that Unula Boo Shawn Abebe, age 24, a prisoner currently incarcerated at the Lee Correctional Institution in Bishopville, was convicted by a federal jury in Columbia for threatening the president by mail, a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 871. Senior United States District Judge Matthew J. Perry, Jr., presided over the trial and will sentence Abebe next January.

Evidence presented at the trial established that Abebe wrote two letters from jail threatening the president. The first letter, dated January 18, 2009, was sent to the White House. It read (grammar, spelling, and punctuation in original):

This is Unula Abebe. Head of the Kemosabe's. And I have a team, of highly trained sniper's, all equipped with: 7.62-mm SVD Dragunov and

Sako TRG-41 boltaction sniper rifle's ready to kill you, if my demands are not met by a specific date, a date in which I will not reveal to you. I have already given them the go, with strict order's that if my demands are not met by said date, which can only be confirmed by me, to neutralize you at their most earliest convenience. This order apply's to [marked out word] be carried out against you and any one else who wish to prevent my team from carrying out my order's. All demands will be made in parson at the WHITE HOUSE in a meeting between me and you.

On January 28, 2009, in a letter addressed to the district court in Columbia, he wrote (grammar, spelling, and punctuation in original):

This is Unula Abebe, since it has become quite clear to me that the only way I will get justice of of state and federal judicial system is through the spilling of court official's blood. I take this time to advise you as a system and as a country that I will. I am going to start bringing physical death upon all of your citizens and this threat includes your presidents of the U.S.A. There is absolutely no exceptions to this letter regardless if I am released or not. Please take notice that I swear that every threat in this letter is the truth. This threat includes every citizen of the U.S.A.

Both of these letters were mailed from Lee Correctional Institution in Bishopville, with the Defendant's name and prisoner number noted in the return address on the envelopes and signature blocks of the letters. The Defendant's fingerprints were on both letters, and the handwriting was identified as his by expert testimony.

Abebe testified that he didn't write the letters, but suggested that another prisoner wrote them in an attempt to frame him.

Mr. Wilkins stated the maximum penalty Abebe can receive is a fine of \$250,000 and imprisonment for five years.

The case was investigated by agents of the United States Secret Service.

Assistant United States Attorney Winston D. Holliday, Jr., of the Columbia office handled the case.

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