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OSAGYEFO SPEAKS

to the

National Assembly



Africa's
Challenge

16

A time of danger—and of hope

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A SPEECH ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS BY
OSAGYEFO Dr. KWAME NKRUMAH
President of the Republic of Ghana
DELIVERED TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON
AUGUST 8th, 1960

MR. SPEAKER, MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY:

I come to-day to speak to you on African affairs with particular reference to the Congo situation. This decade is a momentous decade in our lives. This is a time of great danger for Africa but it is also a time for the greatest hope. The nations of Africa have to-day an opportunity to achieve a union and independence which was undreamed of ten years ago. They also face the danger of disunity and disintegration. Throughout the whole continent of Africa colonialism is in confusion and retreat. The retreat of colonialism, however, is of no value unless the peoples of Africa are mobilised to advance and occupy the positions from which the colonialists have retreated. Nothing could be more dangerous than a power vacuum in Africa.

The new African nations must, from the very nature of the conditions under which they became independent, be in their early days weak and powerless when contrasted with the great and older established nations of the world. Potentially, however, an African union could be one of the greatest forces in the world as we know it. One of the most encouraging things which have taken place within the last six months or so is the growing realisation among African statesmen that we must unite politically and that, indeed, in the words of the Prime Minister of Northern Nigeria, that a united states of Africa is inevitable. As I have stated elsewhere, there are three alternatives open to African states: firstly, to unite and save our continent; secondly, to disunite and disintegrate; or, thirdly, to sell out. In other words: either to unite, or to stand separately and disintegrate, or to sell ourselves to foreign powers.

What then are the practical steps which we should take to achieve this union of African states or republics? Let me first analyse for you the decline of colonialism as I see it.

The African continent consists of no less than 24 per cent or almost one-quarter, of the total world land area. It only, however, contains $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the world's population. In other words, while Africa is, in size, one-quarter of the world, it only comprises in population one-twelfth. This is not because intrinsically the potential resources of the continent would not support in prosperity as large a population as other parts of the world, but because largely owing to the colonial past of Africa, African resources both in manpower and in natural products have been drained away from our African homeland and have been used to enrich other parts of the world.

Before we can achieve an African solution to our problems, it is necessary to be clear about the real nature of colonialism. Much of world misunderstanding of Africa is due to the acceptance of subconscious premises.

Unfortunately, accurate population statistics for Africa are difficult to obtain, but if the usual estimate of a total African population in the neighbourhood of 215,000,000 is accepted, then the total percentage of so-called European settlers does not exceed 3 per cent of the total population of the African continent. A minority of this small size would not anywhere else in the world be thought to constitute an international problem. It does so on the African continent solely because the world looks at Africa essentially from a European standpoint.

If, in any other continent, a minority of 3 per cent of the total population demanded special privileges and advantages, they would be laughed at by world opinion. The European population of the African continent is only a political force because subconsciously they are still regarded as the representatives of colonialism. Their continued ascendancy is considered essential for the maintenance of a hold on Africa by the world outside the African continent.

In practice, however, the economic and social basis for this non-African ascendancy is disappearing.

Nearly three months ago I spoke to the United Nations Association of Ireland and I spoke then about the dangers which arose from the determination of a minority to maintain its ascendancy in a world where the social and economic basis of that ascendancy had disappeared. I said on that occasion, with reference to the ruling minorities which still hold away in Algeria and South Africa, the Rhodesias, Nyasaland, and

Kenya, and in the Portuguese and Spanish colonies in the African continent, and I quote my actual words:

The motives of the ruling minorities are, of course complex and varied, but they have in them one common factor—a fear, amounting hysteria, as to what might happen to them if they conceded the principle and, I believe, the only principle which can bring peace and prosperity to Africa, the principle of ‘one man, one vote’.

The experience of Ghana shows how unreal such a fear is. Of course, the longer oppression continues, the more dangerous and explosive becomes the situation. Ultimately, if the majority are oppressed and degraded in the way in which the majority of Africans are being treated to-day in Algeria and in the Union of South Africa and, indeed, in many other parts of the African continent, all government becomes impossible and the states which are practising oppression disintegrate completely. All organs of government break down, economic chaos supervenes, threatening not only the territory concerned, but possibly even the financial stability of the colonial power responsible for the oppression.

What the ruling minorities should be afraid of is not that power will fall into the hands of the majority, but that by their own attempt to maintain a social order which cannot longer exist, they will themselves be their own executioners.

The supreme task of the United Nations is to organise, before it is too late, a peaceful transfer of power.

This is the eleventh hour! Unless we act in concert together through the United Nations, it will be too late to save the ruling minorities of Africa from the consequences of their own political blindness and folly.

We must act now, not only in the interest of the minorities who are so assiduously organising their own destruction, but in the interests of the majority. If the situation is allowed to develop to its inevitable conclusion it will not of course prevent the defeat and the destruction of the ruling minorities, but that destruction will be accompanied by untold hardships and misery. The situation that is likely to arise, if nothing is done, is one that is bound to be in itself a danger to world peace.

What in my opinion is now required is positive action by the United Nations.

Though this speech was made long before the event, it does, I consider, describe exactly the situation which has subsequently arisen in the Congo. Fundamentally, Belgian influence in the Congo has been destroyed not because the Belgian Government agreed to hand over power to the Congolese Republic—this was inevitable—but because for far too long the white minority in the Congo had excluded Africans from all positions of authority. They had trained and raised the Force Publique, a military organisation based on the harshest discipline and designed to train Africans to suppress their fellow Africans. This instrument broke in the hands of the Belgian elite. The violence in the Congo was not a mass violence; it was essentially a revolt of troops who had been suppressed and brutally disciplined until they could stand it no longer. It is a pure accident of history that this revolt took place after and not before the Belgians had handed over power. Long years of colonial rule had turned the Congo into a volcano liable to erupt at any moment. When the Belgian Government heard the first rumblings underground, it hastily quit the country before the real eruption took place. Nevertheless, they have proved themselves to be, as I said in my address to the Irish United Nations Association, their own executioners.

No one can, of course, condone or excuse assault, violence and murder, however great the provocation. It is necessary, however, to understand that it is possible for a colonial power to create a situation in which such violence is bound to occur and that, in fact, is what the Belgian Government did by a consistent policy of colonialism over a period of 80 years.

In regard to the Congo, I am indeed glad that the policy which I suggested in London is now being followed. As I said then, unless we act in concert together through the United Nations, it will be too late to save the ruling minorities of Africa from the consequences of their own political blindness and folly.

Fortunately, in the case of the Congo, the United Nations are acting. If the Belgian businessmen who in the years gone past made such profitable investments in the Congo are to save anything out of the wreck, it will be through the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Belgian troops from every part of the Republic of the Congo.

It would be a mistake, however, to look upon the Congo as a case apart or to suppose that the basic conditions which have produced the present situation in the Congo do not in fact exist in one form or another throughout the whole of the African continent.

As I said in Dublin, the problem of Africa is essentially bound up everywhere with a struggle between a ruling minority and an under-privileged and economically exploited majority. In many African territories this minority is of different racial origin to the majority, but the problem remains the same irrespective of the race of the minority and the majority. It is therefore no solution to the African problem for a colonial power to hand over authority to a small clique of African politicians who are not generally representative of the people from whom they have sprung. To do so may postpone the final day of reckoning, but it can only postpone it for a short space of time and, even in such states, the reckoning may come far sooner than any of us suppose. Mr. Speaker, I speak with the guidance of history.

The Government of Ghana supports wholeheartedly the United Nations intervention in the Congo. The only thing that is wrong with United Nations intervention is that it came too late and is acting too slowly.

Recent events in the Congo have shown that independent African states are capable and better equipped to deal with the great problems of Africa than are the powers outside the African continent. This does not mean that Africa will not need the disinterested and impartial aid of the United Nations and other powers working through the United Nations, or through the African states themselves. A situation, however, has been reached when African states are technically competent to tackle any problem arising on the African continent. I would not be so presumptuous as to put forward a Monroe doctrine for Africa. I must say, however, that the great powers of the world should realise that very often African questions can be settled by African states if there is no non-African state outside intervention or interference.

Action at an early stage by the United Nations need not involve the costly and difficult task of assembling a United Nations force. Early and prompt action by the African states can avoid the disorganisation and disorder which always accompany the final disintegration of a colonial power.

I am greatly heartened that there is a growing realisation that outside intervention backed and supported only by the United Nations is essential if chaos is not to envelope large parts of the African continent.

The Government of Ghana supports and applauds the action of Mr. Garfield Todd, the former Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, who called upon the United Kingdom Government to suspend the entirely undemocratic constitution of Southern Rhodesia and to maintain order in that territory until a democratic constitution could be established. I should like to see a similar appeal to the United Nations from responsible figures in Algeria and in the Union of South Africa and in other colonial territories in Africa.

As I have said on previous occasions, the problem of South Africa and of Algeria are very similar. In both these countries there is a European minority settled over a considerable period of time who claim, by virtue of their race, an inalienable right to rule forever over the great majority of the inhabitants.

Actual civil war is taking place in Algeria to-day. In South Africa, the Rhodesias, and Nyasaland there is, at the moment, that same deceptive calm which preceded the storm in the Congo. In the same way as hardly anyone anticipated that the Congo could become independent in the foreseeable future, so no one to-day considers that the same forces are at work in the Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique nor in the so-called Spanish possessions of Rio d' Oro and Rio Muni as were at work in the Congo. The time for complacency and smugness about colonies in Africa is gone, and gone forever.

Nothing is more pathetic than the attempt made by colonial powers to explain the upheavals of Africa as being due to external influences. It is undoubtedly true that where the situation is uncertain great powers will, in their own interests, attempt to obtain a foothold. What is, however, abundantly clear, is that the African revolution is inspired and generated from within and not from without.

The duty of African politicians is to explain, patiently, continuously and persistently to the outside world, the essence of African nationalism and its problems.

In the first place, whether any particular continent is backward or developed is a pure question of the moment in time when one happens to study the continent in question.

Civilization probably dawned contemporaneously in Africa and in China. Certainly, the origins of European culture trace their roots back to the ancient civilizations of the Nile valley.

An English writer thus compared the conditions in the ancient kingdom of Ghana with those of England of the same date:—

“ In 1066 Duke William of Normandy invaded England. In 1067 an Andalusian Arab, El Bekri, wrote an account of the court of the West African King of Ghana. This king, whenever holding audience, ‘ sits in a pavilion around which stand his horses caparisoned in cloth of gold; behind him stand ten pages holding shields and gold-mounted swords; and on his right hand are the sons of the princes of his empire, splendidly clad . . . ’ Barbarous splendour, perhaps; but was the court of this African monarch so much inferior, in point of organised government, to the court of Saxon Harold ? Wasn't the balance of achievement just possibly the other way round ? ”

Why was it that Ghana, which was in the eleventh century at least equal in power and might to England, disappeared as it did ? The answer is obvious. It was through the disunity of the African continent created by serious external influences and internal disharmony and discord.

Throughout the middle ages great African states existed and indeed the culture and traditions of the ancient world were preserved not in Europe, but in the countries of Africa. The fatal error of the North African states of that day was that they were engaged in conflict not only in the north with the powers of Europe, but also in the south with African states of the day.

We have, however, now overcome this ancient disunion. The Sahara no longer divides us; it is no longer a physical or a political barrier between us.

One of the greatest achievements of the Conference of Independent African States is to bring together in one organisation the African states north and south of the Sahara. We have all of us come to realise that our interests are not conflicting but that we all have a common interest in preserving the unity and independence of Africa.

Perhaps the greatest danger that Africa faces to-day is what I call balkanisation.

The term balkanisation is particularly appropriate for describing this danger since it arises from the action of the then great powers when they divided into a number of small and competing states the colonial possessions of the Turkish Empire in Europe.

At the very time when these great powers were splitting up the Balkans in Europe into a number of states, they were also engaged in partitioning Africa amongst themselves. In Europe the political situation had developed to an extent which made it impossible openly to apportion the Turkish Empire among the other great powers. Already there were small independent states in the Balkans and therefore all the great powers could do was to ensure that, whatever happened, no Balkan state should be created which was strong enough to stand on its own feet.

The great powers at the end of the 19th century established their domination over one or other of the little states which had been created. The effect was to produce a political tinder-box which any spark could set alight and involve the whole world in flames. The explosion came in 1914 when in one part of the old Turkish Empire an Austrian Archduke was murdered by a Serbian from another former part of the same colonial empire. This murder involved the world in the greatest war which history had ever seen up to that time. The war occurred primarily because Serbia, from whence the murderer came, was a Balkan state under the protection of the then imperialist Russia, while Bosnia, where the murder took place, was a colonial possession taken over from Turkey by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Russia came to the aid of Serbia, Germany to the aid of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. France then joined in support of Russia. In order to attack France, Germany invaded Belgium, and in order to defend Belgium, the Government of the United Kingdom declared war upon Germany on behalf of all members of the then British Empire. Mr. Speaker, in passing, I would remind the people of Belgium that in this war which the Commonwealth entered to defend their freedom, the first shot fired by any Commonwealth force anywhere in the world was fired by a Ghanaian soldier of the then Gold Coast, during the advance of Gold Coast troops on Lome, which was then part of the German colony of Togoland.

I have given this account of the history and effect of balkanisation in Europe to illustrate the extreme danger of a similar policy being applied by the colonial powers to the

African continent. In the same way as defensive alliances by the Balkan powers with rival powers outside the Balkans resulted in a world war, so a world war could easily originate on the African continent if African states make political, economic and military alliances with rival powers from outside Africa. The new colonialism creates client states, independent in name, but in point of fact pawns of the colonial power that is supposed to have given them independence. When an African balkanised state concludes a pact with its colonial power, then that state has lost control over its foreign policy and is therefore not free.

On the other hand, if Africa is converted into a series of tiny states, such alliances are inevitable. Some of these states have neither the resources nor the personnel to provide for their own defence or to conduct an independent foreign policy. They will, in their weak position, rely on the armed forces and the diplomats of another country both for their security and their external policy. Nor can they become economically independent. They have not the resources to establish their own independent banking systems and they are compelled to continue with the old colonial framework of trade. The only way out is to stand together politically.

Political freedom is essential in order to win economic freedom, but political freedom is meaningless unless it is of a nature which enables the country which has obtained it to maintain its economic freedom.

The African struggle for independence and unity must begin with political union. A loose confederation of economic co-operation is deceptively time-delaying. It is only a political union that will ensure a uniformity in our foreign policy projecting the African personality and presenting Africa as a force important to be reckoned with. I repeat, a loose economic co-operation means a screen behind which detractors, imperialist and colonialist protagonists and African puppet leaders hide to operate and weaken the concept of any effort to realise African unity and independence. A political union envisages a common foreign and defence policy, and rapid, social, economic and industrial developments. The economic resources of Africa are immense and staggering. It is only by unity that these resources can be utilised for the progress of the continent and for the happiness of mankind.

We must learn from history. The genius of the South American people has been to a considerable extent frustrated

by the fact that when the Spanish and Portuguese colonial empires dissolved they did not organise themselves into a united states of South America. At the same time, when South America became free, the colonial states which acquired their independence were potentially as powerful as the United States in North America. Their failure to come together resulted in one part of the American continent developing at the expense of the other. Nevertheless, there is only one country in South America, namely, Paraguay, which has a population of less than 3 million.

At the moment independent states in Africa are being established with populations of less than a million. Territories in Africa which have become independent or are likely to become independent in the near future, and which have populations of less than 3 million, include the Central African Republic, Chad, the former French Congo (which has only a population of $\frac{3}{4}$ million), Dahomey, Gabon (with a population of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ million), the Ivory Coast, Niger, Sierra Leone and Togoland. It is impossible to imagine that the colonial powers seriously believe that independence could be of much value to these African states in such a terrible state of fragmentation. Surely this is only in pursuance of the old policy of divide and rule. Colonialism invented the system of indirect rule. The essence of this system was that a chief appeared nominally in control while actually he was manipulated from behind the scenes by the colonial power. The setting up of states of this nature appears to be only a logical development of the discredited theory of indirect rule.

It would be highly presumptuous for Ghana to criticise any defence organisation into which other powers seek to enter in order to preserve their own positions. It is, however, proper for Ghana to comment on such defence arrangements when they are used to under-write and insure colonialism on the African continent. Whatever may be the purpose of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation on the shores of the North Atlantic, so far as Africa is concerned, that organisation should not be used to under-write regimes which in viciousness, regarding oppression and degradation of the African, surpass even what is taking place in South Africa. I refer to the Portuguese territories of Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea and the Spanish territories of Rio Muni, Rio d'Oro, St. Isobel, Ifni and Fernando Po. Portugal and Spain also possess a number of African colonies which the wind of change in Africa has not

yet stirred visibly. It is necessary, however, for African states to put forward constructive proposals in regard to the future of these territories. The NATO powers should realise that so far as Africa is concerned, they compromise themselves if they do not bring pressure to bear on their colonialist NATO partners to grant independence to their colonies in Africa. Belgium, for instance, should be persuaded to implement without delay the decisions of the Security Council in regard to the Congo. Belgian troops should be made to withdraw completely and unconditionally from the Congo.

It has often been said that Africa is poor. What nonsense! It is not Africa that is poor. It is the Africans who are impoverished by centuries of exploitation and domination.

To give one example. In Northern Rhodesia the Government considers that the country is so poor that, to quote the Colonial Office Report for 1958: "No rapid progress can be expected in secondary education." In fact, with an African population of nearly two million, there are only 1,900 African children in secondary schools. Northern Rhodesia, however, is not poor. Its copper mines are among the most successful and profitable in the world. They pay a far higher rate of interest on the capital invested than would be found in other parts of the world.

Let me give you another example. The mandated territory of South-West Africa is always described by the Union of South Africa as one of the "poorest" territories in the world. But it is not poor from the point of view of the foreign shareholders in the Tsumeb copper-lead-zinc mine.

I have frequently emphasised that imperialism in the present stage of African nationalism will employ many feints. With one hand it may concede independence, while with the other it will stir up the muddy waters of tribalism, feudalism, separatism and chicanery in order to find its way back in another guise.

What is going on now in the Congo is a typical example of this latest kind of imperialist and colonialist manoeuvre. And there are very good reasons why we should have expected something of the kind to happen. The interests that are engaged in the Congo are empires in themselves, and those in Katanga especially have fabulous advantages which they are loath to abandon.

Foremost among these is the immensely ramified Societe General de Belgique, whose pyramidal structure covers the Comite' Speciale du Katanga. This "Comite" holds property of size which is breath-taking. That a single concern could hold property of the size of one hundred and eleven million, one hundred and eleven thousand, one hundred and eleven acres is a staggering thought. But this is the size of the empire of the Comite' Generale du Katanga, and it contains some of the world's most valuable mineral rights.

A subsidiary in this giant structure is the Compagnie du Haut Katanga, which is linked to the Union Miniere du Haut Katanga. The Union Miniere has procured for itself in the Katanga area a concession of seven thousand seven hundred square miles; that is, a territory more than half the size of Belgium itself. This concession was not due to expire until the 11th March, 1990. The independence which passed to the people of the Congo on the 30th June this year they feared could cut across the privileges enjoyed by the Union Miniere to exploit the riches of this vast region in the interests of its shareholders and the Belgian Government, which has a two-thirds interest in the Comite Speciale du Katanga, the organisation owning 25 per cent of the Union Miniere.

Here are interlocking connections which are of considerable importance, and it is easy enough to understand what there is at stake when we realise that the Union Miniere produces out of its Katanga concessions 7 per cent of the total world production of copper, 80 per cent of cobalt, 5 per cent of zinc, as well as substantial quantities of cadium, silver, platinum, columbium, tungsten and many other important minerals. It also operates the uranium mine at Shinkolobwe, which provides the raw material for some nuclear weapon nations. The amount of this production is a closely guarded secret, as is also the price paid for it.

The Union Miniere produces at least 45 per cent of all Congo exports, and these are so profitable that its net profits, that is, its profits after all reserves and allocations have been made, are well over twenty million pounds per annum.

When we consider these facts in relation to the present serious situation in the Congo, it is not at all difficult to appreciate the efforts that are being made to separate Katanga from the Republic of the Congo. With the present fiercely Congolese nationalist movement, this can only be done through puppets who are willing to be used. Thus we have the apparent

willingness of the Belgians to comply with the United Nations resolution and to withdraw their troops from the Congo being counteracted by the threat of secession by Tshombe, the chairman of the Provincial Council of Katanga, a province of the independent Republic of the Congo, and through him the Union Miniere and the Belgian Government defying the United Nations troops from entering Katanga.

The British press admit that the Union Miniere in fact controls the Provincial Council of Katanga and everything that Tshombe does. For example, *The Times* of the 12th July, reported as follows from Elizabethville:

The city is now, however, entirely controlled by the Belgian military. Much in Katanga depends on what the Union Miniere, which supports Mr. Tshombe, the Premier, now decides to do.

The Union Miniere was originally set up by a combination of Belgian, South African and British mining groups. Until comparatively recently the mines were extremely valuable as they had a practical monopoly in the supply of uranium. The mines also produce about 75 per cent of the world's cobalt and nearly 10 per cent of the world's copper.

Following upon independence, the financial arrangements of the company were rearranged and a substantial portion of the shareholding in the Union Miniere was to go to the government of the Congo. The rest of the capital is held by the Societe General de Belgique and Tanganyika Concessions Limited.

Tanganyika Concessions Limited was originally registered in London but in November, 1950 control was transferred to Southern Rhodesia. In 1957, Captain Charles Waterhouse, who had been the leader in the English House of Commons of the anti-United Nations Suez group, a Conservative Member of Parliament, resigned his seat to go to Southern Rhodesia as Chairman of Tanganyika Concessions.

Tanganyika Concessions is also closely concerned with the Portuguese colonies in that it controls the railway from Bobito Bay to the Congo frontier.

Capital investment from outside is, of course, required in Africa. But if there is real political independence the profits from the investment of this capital can be shared in a way which is fair both to the outside investor and to the people of the country where the investment is made.

The evil of balkanisation, disunity and secessions, is that the new balkan states of Africa will not have the independence to shake off the economic colonial shackles which result in Africa being a source of riches to the outside world while grinding poverty continues at home.

There is a real danger that the colonial powers will grant a nominal type of political independence to individual small units so as to ensure that the same old colonial type of economic organisation continues long after independence has been achieved. This in itself is a source of the gravest potential danger for the whole world. The peoples of Africa do not seek political freedom for abstract purposes. They seek it because they believe that through political freedom they can obtain economic advancement, education and a real control over their own destiny. If there is a grant of independence to a state which is so small that it cannot mobilise its own resources and which is tied by a series of economic and military agreements to the former colonial power, then a potentially revolutionary situation is at once created. These are the situations facing the new Africa of to-day.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the National Assembly: The present situation presents a great danger to world peace and a challenge to the African states in particular. The situation demands prompt and urgent action. I accordingly called a press conference last Saturday, and I would like to read to you in full the statement that I made to the press:

The behaviour of the government of Belgium in regard to Katanga has, in the opinion of my government, created a situation which, if not dealt with firmly and immediately, will constitute a major threat to world peace.

The facts of what has happened are in no way in dispute.

At the time of independence of the Congo the Belgian government supported the unity of the new state and a treaty, which the Belgian government claims is still in force, was made by Belgium with the Republic of the Congo on the basis of the republic being one single state. Up to this time the only suggestion that Katanga might secede was a report in a London newspaper of a supposed interview with the Prime Minister of the Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland, Sir Roy Welensky.

On 11th July Mr Tshombe, the Chairman of the Katanga Provincial Council, issued a statement saying that Katanga was a sovereign independent republic and calling upon the Federation

of Rhodesia to send troops to restore law and order. Troops were not in fact sent by the Federation; they were shortly afterwards despatched by Belgium, on the ostensible ground that they were needed to protect the lives of Belgian nationals. Once, however, the Belgian troops arrived in Katanga, they undertook duties in no way connected with preserving the lives and safety of Belgian nationals. Indeed, their activities were in many ways more likely to endanger the lives of Belgian nationals than to protect them.

Such disorder as did occur in the Republic of the Congo was due entirely to the mutiny of the Force Publique. It was a notable feature of the disturbances that no civilians joined in any disorder and such violence as occurred was solely due to the mutineers. The safety of Belgian lives and property was therefore closely connected with the problem of restoring discipline in the Force Publique. It is hard to imagine any action more likely to encourage the mutiny or to endanger the lives of Belgian nationals.

In the guise of suppressing an alleged mutiny of the Force Publique the Belgian forces attacked and overwhelmed by superior military force those detachments in the Force Publique in Katanga which supported the legitimate government.

Radio Leopoldville has broadcast a list of the casualties suffered by the Congolese army in this fighting and the total runs into many hundreds of deaths.

On the 14th July, the United Nations Security Council passed the first of its resolutions dealing with the Congo situation. This called for the withdrawal of Belgian troops and the Resolution was accepted by Belgium. On the evening prior to the Security Council meeting the Government of Ghana invited the Belgian Ambassador in Ghana to get in touch with his own government so as to be able to inform the Government of Ghana on the exact position of Belgium. In order that he could speak direct to his government a telephone circuit to Belgium was specially opened and, as a result of his conversations, the Belgian Ambassador informed the Government of Ghana that the Belgian Government intended to evacuate its troops from Katanga.

Nevertheless, despite these various assurances, Belgian troops remained in Katanga and are, in fact, responsible for denying entry to Katanga to the United Nations forces. It is perfectly clear that since the Belgian forces militarily control all the airfields in the Katanga area they could have prevented these airfields being closed to United Nations forces. Far from co-operating with the United Nations, the Belgian Government

has been actively engaged in supplying with arms and officers and training the so-called Katanga armed forces which are now threatening to resist United Nations troops.

The Government of Ghana cannot accept as genuine the so-called secession movement. Such a movement never appeared until Belgium militarily occupied the area and, in the view of my Government, the utterances of Mr. Tshombe when under Belgian protection have about as much validity as the utterances of the then King of the Belgians when he was under Nazi protection during the war.

I agree entirely with summing up of the situation which appeared in the United Kingdom newspaper The Times on the 12th July. After having pointed out that Elizabethville, the capital, was entirely under military control, The Times went on to point out that much of what happens in Katanga depends upon what the Union Miniere, which supports Mr. Tshombe, now decides to do.

One of the most worrying features of the present situation is the apparent dictation of policy in Africa by foreign mining companies. It would appear that fundamentally the Belgian Government is acting in the interests of this concern and with a complete disregard of the interests of the people of the Congo.

The Government of Ghana in the days before the independence of the Congo worked very closely with the Government of Belgium. My government lent its good offices whenever possible to assist in achieving agreements and compromises. My government has at all times attempted to maintain good relations with the Government of Belgium and Ghana is willing, once again, to use its good offices to attempt to secure some way out of the present situation. Any solution, however, can now only be based on the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Belgian troops.

Time is, however, running very short, Ghana for one certainly, and I believe also all of the other independent African states, would not tolerate the construction in the centre of Africa of a puppet state maintained by Belgian troops and designed to fit the needs of an international mining concern.

If no United Nations solution is forthcoming, Ghana would lend such armed assistance as the Republic of the Congo might request. Ghana would provide this assistance even though it meant that Ghana and the Congo had to fight alone against Belgian troops and other forces maintained and supplied from Belgium. My government, however, believes that if such a struggle

did arise, Ghana and other African states would not be without aid and assistance from other countries which value, as a principle, the conception of African independence.

Then I said Mr. Speaker: In the light of the gravity of the situation, I have decided to put the whole issue of the Congo before the National Assembly on Monday and we are today to obtain the necessary mandate for the complete mobilisation of all Ghana armed forces for appropriate action and for such military action that may be required in concert with the Congolese Government in any eventuality.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the National Assembly:

I have been in constant touch with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and with my brothers, the leaders of other African states. Consequent upon my press conference last Saturday, I addressed the following message to the leaders of other African states. I quote:

In my view a most serious situation has arisen in that Belgian troops have, on African soil, defied the authority of the United Nations.

A special responsibility, in my opinion, rests upon all African states to take vigorous steps to reassert the authority of the United Nations. I consider that it is essential for all African states to act with complete solidarity and to support a common policy. I believe that we should now press the United Nations Security Council to demand the complete and unconditional withdrawal of all Belgian troops immediately from all parts of the Congo. I am sure that if we are united in demanding this we will obtain the support of the Security Council. Such unity is also essential to prevent outside interference in the affairs of the African continent.

Owing to the urgency and gravity of the situation, I made a public statement this morning in Accra and I shall make a further statement to the Ghana Parliament on Monday afternoon. This is the message I sent to the Independent African Conference.

In my statement of today I said that if no new United Nations solution was forthcoming, then Ghana would lend to the Congo such armed support as the Congo might request. I am certain that if we all stand together in support of a policy of complete unconditional and immediate withdrawal of Belgian troops from Katanga and other parts of the Congo, it will be possible to resolve the present crisis within the framework of the United Nations.

I am absolutely convinced that the United Nations will support this policy if we stand together.

Nevertheless, I am sure that if the worst came to the worst and no United Nations solution was found and, therefore, Ghana had to give military assistance to the Congo outside the framework of the United Nations, Ghana would have your sympathy in taking this action. I hope we shall also have your support in any military steps which become necessary through the failure of the United Nations to deal with the issue.

And now, Mr. Speaker and Members of the National Assembly, the issues before us are clear and we must be prepared for any eventuality. I am therefore asking you for a mandate for the complete mobilisation of all Ghana armed forces for appropriate action and for such military action as may be required.

The call of the hour is *Hands off Congo* and we must press the Security Council and the United Nations to effect the speedy and unconditional withdrawal of all Belgian troops from Katanga and all other parts of the Congo.

Mr. Speaker:

There are some people who are at present talking of a loose form of federation as between Katanga and the rest of the Congo.

In my view, any person who talks of a federal type of constitution for the Congo is a supporter of the imperialist cause.

This proposal to establish a loose federation in the Congo is merely an attempt by those who failed to detach Katanga from the Republic of the Congo to get balkanisation of the Congo by the back door.

The question of a constitution for the Congo is entirely a matter for the Congolese people themselves to decide; and the Congolese people can have the opportunity to decide the issue in perfect freedom and security only when the Belgian troops have withdrawn completely, unconditionally and immediately from Congolese territory, including Katanga.

Mr. Speaker: We have today to make an extremely grave decision. We must decide whether Ghana should commit her armed forces to offensive military operations against the Belgian troops which are illegally in Katanga. The action of the Belgian Government is an open and flagrant defiance of the united opinion of the world expressed in a unanimous

resolution of the Security Council. It is the view of myself and my government that unless African states, acting jointly and in concert, are prepared to uphold, by force of arms if necessary, the resolutions of the United Nations, then the ideal of the United Nations will be destroyed for ever.

History has therefore placed a very heavy burden on the shoulders of new and small states like Ghana and it might be said that Ghana and other African states should sit back and allow other powers better equipped militarily and financially to undertake the burden of maintaining international law in Africa. If, on the other hand, we merely sit back and allow the great powers of the world to settle this problem as they see fit, we may find that far from settling the question we have merely involved ourselves in those quarrels which unhappily divide so much of the globe. Once we admit our impotence to solve the question of the Congo primarily with our own African resources, then we tacitly admit that real self-government on the African continent is impossible. Therefore, however heavy the burden, I believe that military action should be taken primarily by the independent states of Africa, and at the conclusion of my address to you, you will be invited to support a government motion authorising the government, if necessary to take such military action against Belgium as may be necessary in the light of the circumstances. The government wishes for this authority from Parliament in order to be able to tell the United Nations that Ghana will fight under United Nations leadership against Belgium in support of United Nations resolution. However, if the United Nations are unable to implement United Nations resolutions, Ghana would co-operate with the independent military forces of the other independent African states to drive the aggressor from African soil.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the National Assembly: This is a turning point in the history of Africa. If we allow the independence of the Congo to be compromised in any way by the imperialist and capitalist forces, we shall expose the sovereignty and independence of all Africa to grave risk. The struggle of the Congo is therefore our struggle. It is incumbent upon us to take our stand by our brothers in the Congo in the full knowledge that only Africa can fight for its destiny. In this struggle we shall not reject the assistance and support of our friends, but we will yield to no enemy, however powerful or strong.

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