



Katanga calling...

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March 22, 1963

PRESIDENT MOISE TSHOMBE'S MESSAGE . . .

to 100,000 cheering Katanga people:

My dear-fellow countrymen, dear friends:

My joy at being among you again is beyond expression... A thousand thanks for your welcome, your enthusiasm, your loyalty...

But your cheers should not be for me alone: they should be above all for all the members of the Government who, in my absence, assumed the responsibilities of office in a perfect team-spirit...

Our thoughts also go to those who, in the large towns such as KOLWEZI, JADOTVILLE and KAMINA, as well as in the interior of the country, have continued working despite all kinds of difficulties and the breakdown of communications. Thanks to them, thanks to you, three cruel wars will not have been able to crush the courage, the spirit and the loyalty of the Katanga people.

Further proof of this loyalty was given me yesterday by the statement made by Chief KAPONDA and by the previous statements of the great chiefs KASONGO-NIEMBO, MWATA-YAMVO, of the MWAMI MWENDA MUNONGO, of the chiefs of Baudouinvillie, of Pweto, of Mitwaba, and of many other territories. Their statements gave the lie to what some of the foreign press, with biased news sources, wrote with such complacency. THE TRIBAL CHIEFS HAVE ALWAYS HAD OUR COMPLETE BACKING AND WE KNOW THAT THEY HAVE RETAINED THEIR FULL CONFIDENCE IN US.

Our thoughts go also, and above all, to the many soldiers, policemen and civilians who are no longer with us, who gave their lives for us... Their sacrifice will not have been in vain, for they will be the ferment of our deeds of tomorrow. Thanks to them, we shall have the strength to face the tasks which lie before us.

Because, my friends, all is not over. Last August, freely and with enthusiasm, we accepted the Plan of National Reconciliation, known as the U Thant Plan.

This plan, accepted by Leopoldville and guaranteed by the United States, England and Belgium, provided for the sharing of administrative powers, the drawing-up of a federal constitution and of a draft finance bill, and, as a transitory measure, the division in equal parts of certain specified revenues and the attribution to Katanga of at least 50% of currencies originating in that state.

WE STILL AWAIT THE REALIZATION OF THIS U THANT PLAN AND WE WISH TO EXPRESS OUR ASTONISHMENT AT THE PRESENT SILENCE OF THOSE GOVERNMENTS WHO GUARANTEED IT.

For our part, we have fulfilled our obligations... We maintain and proclaim once more our total adherence to the Plan. Our position is frank, categorical, and with no ulterior motive...

From the moment I returned, with the help of my ministers I began to study certain serious problems. It was not without apprehension that I became aware of the deterioration of the economic situation... In a few days, despite the state of my health, I shall visit the interior to study local problems on the spot.

Another problem is also in the news: some people are again talking of the North and of the South of Katanga. For us, these designations are purely geographic, for Katanga is one and will remain one...

When we speak of reconciliation and of the obligations of Katanga, it is obvious that, at the same time, we turn to our Congolese brothers and their leaders. We invite them, as we do our own people, to still their personal resentments and not to refuse the hand and the invitations we extend to them.

Our reconciliation must result in positive efforts and deeds, and must not be marred by pettiness. We must, at all costs, avoid anything which might separate us...

My friends, dear Katanga people, have courage.

I thank you for your wonderful welcome. I am sure that with your help, our Katanga, our beloved country, will again become the country where it is good to live, the country where people are happy, where strangers are welcomed, a country open to all, calm and prosperous.

God, who has never abandoned us, will aid us in our task for the greatest good of all.

(Speech by President Moïse Tshombe in Elisabethville, Katanga, on March 13, 1963.)

THE GRAND COUNCIL OF KATANGA CHIEFS PROTESTS. . .

TO: President John F. Kennedy; President J. Kasavubu; Prime Minister C. Adoula... President Moïse Tshombe; Queen Elizabeth II; General de Gaulle; His Holiness Pope John XXIII.

"We, the "Chefs Coutumiers", guardians of our customs and ancestral traditions, protest against the imaginary letter (N.B: officially released by the UN on January 8, 1963). On behalf of all the "Chefs Coutumiers" and members of the Grand Council, over which I still have the honor to preside, I vigorously protest against the forged letter published during the latest hostilities in Katanga, and according to which the eight Great Chiefs of Katanga sent a letter to Mr. Adoula repudiating our President Tshombe and asking for him to be investigated. This letter is completely unfounded and is pure invention on the part of those who published it.

"We, the Katanga Chiefs, are united and will always be loyal to President Moïse Tshombe, who was legally elected, and to his Government.

"We wonder today why we should act against the very President we ourselves chose. If we accepted the plan for reconciliation, if we showed good will to reach an understanding with our Congolese brothers, it was because it was necessary. We also wished to put an end to the misery in the Congo. We want to build that wonderful country that is the Congo in general, and our native Katanga in particular. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NO USE FOR DISHONEST PEOPLE WHO SLANDER THE TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES.

"I categorically deny the falsehoods contained in the alleged letter, which we have been libelled as having signed... IF I SEND YOU THIS MESSAGE TODAY, IT IS TO STATE THAT EVERYTHING THE UNITED NATIONS PUBLISHED WAS A CAMPAIGN OF LIES...

"May Katanga remain one and indivisible, and may God protect our President, Moïse Tshombe.

"Signed: KATANGA Kianana, President of the Grand Council."
(Katanga, March 18, 1963)

FROM UN SOURCES...

"Quite possibly NO ACTIVITY ever ENGAGED IN BY THE UNITED NATIONS HAS SUFFERED SO MUCH as the Congo Operation FROM PUBLIC MISUNDERSTANDING of its purposes and activities. Much of this misunderstanding, of course, has been due to the deliberate campaign of the well-financed Katanga propaganda machine... The United Nations, through its public information services, has striven valiantly to counteract this propaganda, but has enjoyed only partial success. It is by no means clear how the United Nations, which must always seek to adhere to fact and truth, can fend off the insidious attacks or unscrupulous propaganda. This vital problem will require very careful attention in connection with any future operation of a kind similar to that undertaken in the Congo..."

(Excerpts from "Reports on Congo", United Nations Review, p.13, Vol. 10, N° 2, February 1963.)

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