

ON THE KATANGA CRISIS
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On November 26 and 27 I was in Leopoldville, where I had conversations with Prime Minister Adoula, President Kasavubu, General Mobutu and other members of the Congolese Government. The next few days I spent in Katanga, where I had an opportunity for extensive conversations with President Tshombe.

Part of my purpose in visiting the Congo was to reinforce my knowledge of the situation by firsthand observation. The other part of my purpose was to find out whether there did, in fact, exist a basis for the peaceful reunification of the Congo.

Both Adoula and Tshombe impressed me as men of exceptional intelligence and integrity. I am convinced on the basis of my conversations with them that both men desire unity, and that unity is possible because what they have in common far outweighs their differences.

Both of them want a meeting.

But whereas Adoula's government insists that the meeting take place in Leopoldville, Tshombe says he is willing to meet anywhere but Leopoldville. This is the one immediate difference between them.

I believe this difference is not serious and can be resolved. But it cannot be resolved so long as the present military action in Katanga persists.

I have already reported on the situation in the Congo to President Kennedy, Vice President Johnson and Secretary of State Rusk.

Having done so, I now feel free to speak out publicly. I do so because I fear that the UN's policies in the Congo, unless they are revised, will destroy the Congo and destroy the UN in the process.

These policies will not foster unity in the Congo, but chaos.

They will not foster reconciliation, but division.

They will not foster freedom, but will, if pursued to their logical conclusion, turn the Congo over to Communist imperialism.

It is a fact for all free men to ponder that the present UN policy in the Congo derives from a UN resolution that was sponsored by Guinea and Ghana and that had the enthusiastic approval of the entire Soviet bloc. Obviously, the Communists feel it serves their interests.

The Soviets want the Congo not only because of its great mineral wealth but also because it would give them the key to the rest of the African continent.

The Soviet plan of conquest is brutal and simple. They plan to produce chaos in order to take control.

They favor UN military action against Katanga because they feel that the Government of President Tshombe stands in their way.

There are a few facts about President Tshombe which even his most bitter critics cannot deny. To my mind, they are facts of paramount importance.

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Tshombe has kept the economy of his country working. He has, by African standards, given it an efficient administration. He has kept his people employed and happy. And he has been able to do all these things because he has, with remarkable success combatted the incursions of racism and Communism.

In Katanga, blacks and whites, Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Orthodox Christians, and primitive tribal negroes, live together on terms of serenity. Indeed, missionaries with many years of experience in Africa told me that race relations in Katanga were probably the best to be found in Africa. From what I saw with my own eyes, I believe that there are many respects in which we in America could learn lessons from Katanga in the field of race relations.

All of this will be destroyed if the UN deposes Tshombe and permits the Gizengalist Lumumbaist military hordes of the North to descend upon Katanga.

The UN presence in the Congo is justifiable on two grounds.

First, there is a need for an external force to preserve order in certain parts of the Congo.

Second, the UN can and should play the role of peace-maker and mediator.

But I do not see how an international organization dedicated to peace can wage war on the people of Katanga without destroying its purpose and its meaning. And I do not believe that conciliation can be achieved by bullying and by shows or use of military power.

UN policy in the Congo has from the beginning been a mixture of necessary actions and hideous mistakes.

In the Northern Congo, the UN has played a vital role in defending public order against the hordes of undisciplined soldiers who have been rampaging through the country, completely unresponsive to the control of their own officers. Everyone to whom I spoke in Leopoldville told me that public order would collapse overnight if the UN were to pull out.

But there was no public disorder in Katanga when the UN sent its forces in there. On the contrary, there was complete order. In Katanga everyone to whom I spoke -- black and white, European and American residents, Methodists, Baptists, Catholics, Seventh Day Adventists -- told me that the UN forces had been a source of tension and disorder. The people of Katanga do not understand what so many UN soldiers are doing there. They regard the UN as an alien military presence, and they have come to hate it just as passionately as the Irish people once hated the Black and Tans or as the Israelis once hated the British Army in Palestine.

Even from the standpoint of the reunification of the Congo, the massive UN military presence in Katanga has been a complete miscalculation.

The theory was that the government and the people of Katanga would show this show of military strength. Instead, it has caused them to put their backs up and has further accentuated the division.

The UN also had a theory that Katangese separatism would vanish overnight if they simply removed the so-called white mercenaries and advisers. The great majority of these have now been removed. But this has only served to fan the flames of Katangese nationalism.

The charge has been made that Mr. Tshombe has refused to listen to reason. My own impression is that the instruments of suasion and reason have never seriously been tried. Instead, there has been pressuring and bullying and open disdain and complete lack of personal understanding.

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This was true of Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien, the recent UN representative in Elizabethville, who succeeded in making himself the most hated man in Katanga. It was also true of at least two others who previously headed the UN operation in the Congo: the Indian Rajeswar Dayal and the Frenchman, Michel Tombelaine. Dayal, who was a Krishna Menon designee, threw his weight behind the Lumumbaists in the most flagrant manner. So did Tombelaine, who apparently shared Dayal's political outlook completely.

It is obvious that such a UN team was hardly qualified to conciliate.

The chief UN Lumumbaists are now gone. But unfortunately the policy they created does not die easily. It is my hope, however, despite the present unhappy events, that we are on the verge of a new beginning.

Brian Urquhart, the new UN representative in Katanga, is an altogether superior man who believes in the instrument of suasion, and who, I think, will prove himself a diplomat, if given the chance. Lewis Hoffacker the new American Consul in Elizabethville, has, in the two months he has been in Katanga, done his utmost to establish good relations with the Katangese leaders and to reason with them. With Hoffacker and Urquhart in Elizabethville, the way is open to diplomacy if those in charge of UN policy and US policy are willing to try it.

But the present fighting must be stopped before it degenerates into all-out war. This is imperative. It does not serve the interest of the UN and it certainly does not serve the interests of the Katangese people. It serves only the interests of the Kremlin, which is now openly rubbing its hands in glee at the prospect of all-out war between the UN and the Katangese people.

We are caught up in a vicious circle to which we must put an end.

There have been provocative actions and provocative statements on both sides.

The Katangese regarded the UN resolution as a declaration of imminent war. For this they cannot be blamed because the resolution was so construed by its Afro-Asian sponsors and by highly reputable Western newspapers. The UN for its part, has to this day offered no assurance that this was not so.

The Katangese responded to the UN resolution with emotional statements calling for resistance, and by erecting roadblocks.

Leopoldville responded, in turn, by calling upon the youth of Katanga to rise up against the Tshombe government and appointing Jason Sendwe Administrator for the conquered territories of North Katanga.

Finally, there came the UN action to remove the roadblocks and the bitter fighting which is going on at this moment.

From my own experience that all the lack of discipline, all the triggerhappiness and all the savagery are not on the side of the Katangese. The UN forces especially the Churkas, are at least equally in need of restraint.

But let us stop recriminations and let us stop the bloodshed. The problems of the Congo cannot be resolved with guns and bayonets. They can only be resolved with good will and reason. If we make the necessary effort, I feel confident of the outcome.

I feel constrained to say a few words concerning President Moise Tshombe.

I consider President Tshombe one of the most impressive men I have ever met and one of the most maligned men in history. The fact that so many people have turned against him without really knowing him is simply another proof of the power and subtlety of the communist propaganda apparatus.

It is a base lie that Tshombe is a puppet of the Belgians. He is a dedicated nationalist leader who truly believes in the brotherhood of black men and white men and who is wise enough to understand that, at least for some decades to come, the interests of his people require the presence of some foreign capital and some foreign technicians. But in his own house, he is master.

Tshombe is a man of profound intelligence, a devoutly religious man who has served as a Methodist lay preacher.

He can communicate with equal ease with the most sophisticated men and with primitive natives.

He is a natural leader of men, and people respond to him, believe in him and follow him.

Tshombe's ability as an administrator is proved by Katanga's prosperity.

His courage is proved by his actions.

Tshombe and Adoula are both statesmen whom Africa cannot afford to lose. The Cause of African freedom demands that they be brought together.

I know that President Kennedy would like to see them come together, that he is deeply distressed over the present bloodshed, that he desires nothing more than peace and freedom and harmony for the peoples of the Congo.

I am grateful to the President for the interest he has expressed in my trip.

Let me outline certain measures which I personally consider essential if peace and order are to be returned to the Congo.

(1) To allay the fears of the Katangese, the UN should immediately announce that it has no intentions of overthrowing Tshombe or of subjugating the Katangese people.

(2) There must be an immediate cease fire, followed by the withdrawal from Elizabethville of all forces but the local gendarmerie, and an exchange of prisoners taken in the recent fighting. Both sides must appeal for restraint.

(3) As a token of goodwill, the UN should withdraw some of its forces from Katanga, including the Ghurka unit which, unfortunately has made itself so unpopular.

(4) An heroic effort must be made to terminate the danger presented by the 50,000 Balubas in the grim refugee camp just outside Elizabethville. The Balubas must be disarmed. With Tshombe's cooperation they must be encouraged to return to their villages and their jobs. Until this can be accomplished, camp conditions must be improved and more adequate security must be maintained.

~~Equally determined effort must be made to put an end to the disorders in northern Congo, in particular to disarm the marauding bands of soldiers who today are little better than bandits.~~

(6) Force must give way to diplomacy. Immediate steps should be taken to bring Adoula and Tshombe together.
