

*Patrice Lumumba, 1925-1961.*

# LUMUMBA SPEAKS

The Speeches and Writings  
of Patrice Lumumba, 1958-1961

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*On December 11, 1958, Patrice Lumumba, president of the Congolese National Movement, spoke at the Accra Conference. This occasion was the first time in the history of the Congo that black militants participated in an international Pan-African conference.*

*After the World's Fair in Brussels in the summer of 1958, the Congolese had brought decisive pressure to bear, shaking Belgian paternalism to its foundations. Despite the opposition of the colonial administration, the governor-general, on advice from Brussels, allowed a delegation of Congolese leaders to leave for Accra. A new era was beginning in the Congo, and through Lumumba's voice, Africa was about to hear the sound of a people awakening, the echoes of which were to resound throughout the world two years later.*

*All of Lumumba's speeches were extemporaneous. Except during formal debates, when he would refer to documents in his possession, he never used notes when he spoke.*

#### SPEECH AT THE ACCRA CONFERENCE

We thank the organizers of the Conference of the Assembly of African Peoples for the friendly invitation they kindly extended to our movement. We would like to express our gratitude to His Excellency Prime Minister N'Krumah and to the people of Ghana for the fraternal welcome given us.

We would also like to thank the representatives of the independent peoples present here for their continued defense of the Congo in international tribunals.

I hope they will regard these words, delivered in the name of all our compatriots, as an expression of our sincere gratitude.

### *The Present Situation in the Congo*

Up until the end of last year, there was no legislative council anywhere in the Congo. All the organs of the country were — and still are — consultative.

Since January of this year, the political structure of the country has undergone modification, the most important change being the creation of communes in certain cities in the Congo.

Legislation to that effect has been passed with regard to rural districts and will be applied in the course of the coming year.

But the new decrees concerning the organization of cities and rural districts have not yet granted these institutions complete autonomy.

In the urban councils, as in all the other consultative organs of the country, a system of representation has been instituted that gives the European minority and the African majority an equal number of seats. There is no need to underscore the fact that this is anti-democratic.

Realizing the progress that has been made by the various segments of the population and taking note of the demands repeatedly put forward by its subjects, Belgium has recently sent to the Congo a commission charged with the task of acquainting itself with the aspirations of the people at first hand.

We for our part believe that on this occasion the country clearly expressed its preference for self-determination.

The Belgian government has promised to deliver its solemn decision on this subject next month.

### *Our Program of Action*

The Congolese National Movement, which we represent at this great conference, is a political movement, founded on October 5, 1958.

This date marks a decisive step for the Congolese people as they move toward emancipation. I am happy to say that the birth of our

movement was warmly received by the people for this reason. [The fundamental aim of our movement is to free the Congolese people from the colonialist regime and earn them their independence.]

We base our action on the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man — rights guaranteed to each and every citizen of humanity by the United Nations Charter — and we are of the opinion that the Congo, as a human society, has the right to join the ranks of free peoples.]

We wish to see a modern democratic state established in our country, which will grant its citizens freedom, justice, social peace, tolerance, well-being, and equality, with no discrimination whatsoever.

In a motion we recently transmitted to the minister of the Congo in Brussels, we clearly stipulated — as did many other compatriots of ours — that the Congo could no longer be treated as a colony to be either exploited or settled, and that its attainment of independence was the *sine qua non* condition of peace.

In our actions aimed at winning the independence of the Congo, we have repeatedly proclaimed that we are against no one, *but rather are simply against domination, injustices, and abuses, and merely want to free ourselves of the shackles of colonialism and all its consequences.*

These injustices, and the stupid superiority complex that the colonialists make such a display of, are the causes of the drama of the West in Africa, as is clearly evident from the disturbing reports of the other delegates.

Along with this struggle for national liberation waged with calm and dignity, our movement opposes, with every power at its command, the balkanization of national territory under any pretext whatsoever.

From all the speeches that have preceded ours, something becomes obvious that is, to say the least, odd, and that all colonized people have noticed: the proverbial patience and good-heartedness

that Africans have given proof of for thousands of years, despite persecution, extortions, discrimination, segregation, and tortures of every sort.

The winds of freedom currently blowing across all of Africa have not left the Congolese people indifferent. Political awareness, which until very recently was latent, is now becoming manifest and assuming outward expression, and it will assert itself even more forcefully in the months to come. We are thus assured of the support of the masses and of the success of the efforts we are undertaking.

This historical conference, which puts us in contact with experienced political figures from all the African countries and from all over the world, reveals one thing to us: despite the boundaries that separate us, despite our ethnic differences, we have the same awareness, the same soul plunged day and night in anguish, the same anxious desire to make this African continent a free and happy continent that has rid itself of unrest and of fear and of any sort of colonialist domination.

We are particularly happy to see that this conference has set as its objective the struggle against all the internal and external factors standing in the way of the emancipation of our respective countries and the unification of Africa.

Among these factors, the most important are colonialism, imperialism, tribalism, and religious separatism, all of which seriously hinder the flowering of a harmonious and fraternal African society.

This is why we passionately cry out with all the delegates:

*Down with colonialism and imperialism!*

*Down with racism and tribalism!*

*And long live the Congolese nation, long live independent Africa!*

*On his return from Accra, Lumumba and his friends conducted the first great political meeting in Congolese history, appearing before a crowd of ten thousand people. The text below is the speech delivered by Lumumba at Leopoldville on December 28, 1958.*

*It must be recalled that at this point the entire province of Leopoldville and the capital were already keenly aware of the realities of their situation because of the political action of the Abako, which had set up a network of cells that covered the entire Lower Congo and had forced the Belgian administration to confront a hostile populace insisting on its rights.*

#### SPEECH AT LEOPOLDVILLE

I thank you in the name of the Congolese National Movement for having come in such numbers to the first meeting we have held since the founding of our movement.

This large crowd is a sure sign of the hopes you have placed in the Congolese National Movement and the aims that it intends doggedly and stubbornly to pursue.

From this day forward, during the entire course of our campaign, we shall therefore do our utmost not to disappoint those patriots who have demonstrated their trust in us by supporting us and seconding our efforts.

The remarks addressed to you today will be divided into two parts: in the first part, we will give you a faithful and authentic report of the work accomplished at the Conference of the Assembly of African Peoples in which we have recently participated; in the second part, we will put before you our movement's program for action. We wish to carry out this program with the active collaboration of each and every Congolese: man, woman, and child.

The idea of holding a conference of all the African peoples was initially proposed at the time of the celebration of the first anniversary of Ghana's independence, following an exchange of views by African leaders who had gathered in Accra on this solemn occasion. This idea was seconded at the Conference of Independent African States, held in Accra in the month of April, 1958, and was given concrete form through the creation of a preparatory commission.

This commission immediately set to work, and thanks to its ef-

for the first Conference of the Assembly of African Peoples has just been held in Accra, from the fifth to the thirteenth of December.

This historic conference brought together the representatives of political and nationalist groups, labor unions, et cetera, from all the dependent and independent African territories. The number and the nature of its participants, who came from all corners of the world, made the Accra Conference a popular and representative one.

As a result of this broad representation and the unanimity of the delegates' views, the conference formulated and proclaimed the philosophy of Pan-Africanism. Following this line of thought, it pointed out ways in which a peaceful African revolution could be brought about. It set as its goal the formulation of concrete plans and the establishment of the tactics and strategy of this revolution in relation to: (1) colonialism and imperialism; (2) racism and discriminatory laws and practices; (3) tribalism and religious separatism; (4) the position of tribal chieftains — (a) under the colonial regime, (b) in a free democratic society.

In order to fight colonialism more effectively, the conference as a whole denounced the time-honored weapon that its upholders use to impose their will: "divide and rule," that tactic which, as the African masses became aware of the realities of their situation, was modified to fit the changing circumstances and which assumed subtle and roundabout forms in order to hit harder than ever, destroy the native peoples' determination to unite and free themselves, and impose the economic dependence that is the foundation of international imperialism.

In view of the importance of the questions to be dealt with, five commissions were created within the conference for the purpose of examining the problems raised and putting practical and realistic conclusions before the congress.

The areas these commissions were to examine are as follows:

*Commission Number 1:* The question of colonialism and imperial-

ism in Africa — the injustices they have caused and how to become aware of them.

*Commission Number 2:* The question of racism and discriminatory laws and practices — distributing land to Africans — the adoption of universal suffrage in all African territories without discrimination based on race, tribe, religion, education, or wealth — applying the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man in all African countries.

*Commission Number 3:* The question of tribalism and religious separatism, which also constitute fertile sources of dissension that the colonialists exploit in order to secure an even firmer hold over us — the position of traditional institutions under colonial domination and in a free democratic society.

*Commission Number 4:* The question of the adjustment of African borders — merging or confederating groups of regional states in a community of United States of Africa.

*Commission Number 5:* This commission was charged with establishing a permanent organization to serve as the embryonic form of a future United States of Africa.

The five commissions met separately and each of them presented its recommendations to the General Assembly. The final resolutions of the conference were discussed and passed during a plenary session.

A permanent secretariat was created to assure that these resolutions are carried out and that the work undertaken advances on a continuing basis. Its headquarters will be in Accra.

The conference likewise appointed the fifteen members of the executive committee.

These members have taken on very great responsibilities, for they are watching over the destiny of all of Africa.

The mission of the executive committee, and the aims and objectives of the conference as well, are as follows:

(a) to promote mutual understanding and unity among the peoples of Africa;

- (b) to hasten the liberation of Africa from imperialism and colonialism;
  - (c) to marshal world opinion in support of the liberation of Africa; to recommend concrete means and methods of attaining these goals;
  - (d) to develop the spirit of community among the peoples of Africa so as to promote the birth of the United States of Africa.
- In broad outline, these were the aims and the resolutions of the Pan-African Conference of Accra.

In conclusion, the conference is asking for the immediate independence of all of Africa and has announced that no country in Africa is to remain under foreign domination after 1960.

The Conference of the Assembly of African States in Accra marks a decisive step toward the complete expression of the African personality and toward the perfect unity of all the fraternal peoples of our continent.

That is why our movement will always oppose with every power it possesses the balkanization of national territory under any pretext whatsoever.

Ladies and gentlemen, all the forces of the country must be mobilized in order to hasten the attainment of the goals that we have just defined for the well-being of all.

We address a passionate appeal to all Congolese patriots, to all associations and organized groups, to unite around the Congolese National Movement, an appeal addressed to all Congolese, regardless of tribe, sex, or religion.

The objective of the MNC is to unite and organize the Congolese masses in the struggle to improve their lot and wipe out the colonialist regime and the exploitation of man by man.

We invite all our compatriots, whatever their station, and whatever their present or past tendencies or divergences of opinion, to pool their energies and their courage with ours in order to carry out the necessary and indispensable formation of a united front, without

which we will not be able to assert ourselves or make our voice heard, the voice of the Congolese people. It is high time that the Congolese people prove to the world that they are conscious of the realities of the sort of independence being offered us — a token gift that the government is preparing for them and promising them. We do not want this sort of independence.

It is time that the Congolese in the population centers and the interior let the world know that they are in no way divided, but rather are united in a single, just cause.

It is time for the Congolese people to awaken from their slumber, to break their silence, to overcome the fear instilled in them, so as to demonstrate, peacefully but resolutely, that they are a force to be reckoned with.

Certain people are attempting to lead naive Congolese to believe that the country's attainment of its independence will bring on a flight of foreign capital, disturbances because there are not any black technicians yet, and so on.

We for our part believe, and base our opinions in this regard on the experiences of other African countries — which were in fact even farther behind than ours is, when they took over the reins of government — we believe that the Congo's attainment of its independence will both stabilize the Congolese economy and constitute a solid guarantee for foreign investments.

In point of fact, the reinvestment within the country of all the profits made by national companies, the speeding up of the program of industrialization, the granting of numerous scholarships to the country's students by the Congolese state, the elimination of the present security bond of 50,000 francs that must be put up by any Congolese desiring to go outside the country for training, the granting of numerous loans to the Congolese middle classes, the organization of free and compulsory education at all levels, the development of peasant associations and cooperatives in rural districts, the total elimination of all types of legal discrimination, the enthusiasm for work that will be created by the payment of decent salaries

and the enjoyment of human freedoms — all these things prove to us, ladies and gentlemen, that the Congo's attainment of its independence will bring greater well-being to the people of this country, a well-being that they are not able to enjoy fully under the present regime.

If at this point there are Europeans who believe that they will be able to perpetuate a repressive regime forever, we can but regret this.

If, on the contrary, the meaning and the legitimacy of our struggle are understood by men who have sincerely made up their minds to give us fraternal support and aid in building our country by honest labor and the contribution of financial capital and technical resources, then the Congolese will note this with interest and regard these men as true friends of the country.

The present dream of Africa, of all of Africa, including the Congo, is to become a free and independent continent, like all the other continents of the world, for it is the will of the Creator that all men and all peoples be free and equal.

It remains for us, ladies and gentlemen, to outline for you our movement's program of action.

The fundamental aim of the Congolese National Movement, which is typically African in spirit, is the liberation of the Congolese people from a colonialist regime and attainment of their independence.

This movement has no ties whatsoever either with the government or with any other political organization set up by Europeans, as certain of its detractors behind the scenes are leading people to believe.

These are merely the sort of maneuvers to subvert the movement that are the specialty of detractors. Our watchword is to do our work well and let them talk. We are fighting for truth and justice. This truth will triumph, even if it is trampled underfoot today.

We base our action on the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man — rights guaranteed all citizens of humanity by the United

Nations Charter — and feel that the Congo, as a human society, has the right to join the ranks of free peoples.

We want to say farewell to the old regime, that repressive regime that keeps nationals from enjoying political rights that have been recognized as legitimately belonging to every human being and every free citizen.

We want our country, our great country, to have another face, the face of an independent and happy people freed from anxiety, fear, and every sort of colonialist domination.

In a motion transmitted to the minister of the Congo in Brussels, we stressed the fact that the Congo can no longer be considered a colony to be either exploited or settled and that the attainment of its independence is the *sine qua non* condition of peace.

In our action to win the independence of the Congo, an independence that we wish to be total, we have repeatedly stated that we are against no one, but only against domination, injustices, and abuses, and merely want to free ourselves of the shackles of colonialism and all its consequences.

If these injustices and these abuses persist despite our repeated protests, they will eventually be the cause of a split between Belgium and the Congo and of any social disturbances that this country may undergo.

The Congolese people have as much right to be independent as the other peoples of the world. This is a basic, natural, and sacred right that no doctrine can dispute and no power take away from them. It is likewise by virtue of this right that they will be the ones to decide what specific limitations are to be placed on the exercise of their independence, for their own good, for that of their own society, or that of all humanity. It is also by virtue of this right that the Congo will freely determine what sort of relations it will have with Belgium.

Genuine independence within the interdependence of free nations, the total liberation of the Congo from every form of guardianship:

that is what our people aspire to, and this is what it is incumbent upon sincere patriots to proclaim in the full light of day.

It would be a shame, a great shame, for the inhabitants of this country — and above all for the Belgian administration — if the Congo were to continue to be subjected to the rule of a colonial empire at a time when enlightened world opinion condemns the domination of one people by another.

The work of colonization undertaken by Belgium in the Congo must be limited in time and in space. In our opinion, this limit has been more than attained.

We want to free ourselves in order to collaborate with Belgium in freedom, equality, and dignity. Collaboration is not possible when the relationship is one of subjugation. The Congolese must enjoy the immediate and total exercise of fundamental freedoms and every sort of political, administrative, private, and public right.

We do not exclude the possibility that a confident, fruitful, and lasting collaboration between the Congo and Belgium or between the black and white inhabitants of this country can be effected once we have won our independence. Belgians, like any other foreign residents, will continue to live in the Congo. But this collaboration will be possible only if Belgium understands, from this day forward, the Congolese people's wishes for dignity and freedom, and if she does not inordinately delay their liberation but voluntarily agrees to put an end to the colonialist regime.

Nor can the independence that we demand in the name of peace be considered by Belgium as a gift; on the contrary, it is a question of the enjoyment of a right that the Congolese people have lost.

We rightfully appreciate the contribution that Belgium, the Belgians, and foreigners have made to the development of the Congo. The progress made thus far in the economic and social field surpasses that of certain other countries, as we have seen with our own eyes. But where the shoe pinches is the fact that the Belgian government has neglected the political emancipation of the Congolese, and the bettering of the lot of the black woman. In this area our country lags

quite far behind, since less developed countries than ours already enjoy freedom or are on the way to doing so.

It is this gap that we wish to overcome without delay.

We regret the tendency of the Belgian administration to force the Congolese to be what it wants them to be rather than what they want to be. We likewise regret the policy whereby the Congolese are granted only those rights that the government is willing to measure out drop by drop, as an act of charity rather than as legitimate rights that nationals are demanding.

Did European and Western nationalists act any differently in their struggle for the independence of their respective countries? Let them answer this question.

The arguments of this sort that are thrown in the face of all those fighting for freedom strike us as moves to intimidate us.

Moreover, the notion of Belgian sovereignty in the Congo must also disappear from the colonialist vocabulary. The Congo is not Belgian property; it is a country like any other, and it must enjoy sovereignty just as Belgium does.

The Congolese State will be founded on the equality, the solidarity, and the fraternity of all Congolese.

We are pleased to note that the resolutions of the conference are identical with the views of our movement.

As a matter of quite secondary importance, we protest against the report that has appeared in the press stating that the conference ended in confusion.

This report, which in our eyes constitutes a move to sabotage the conference, is far from being the truth of the matter. On the contrary, the conference ended in a manner that pleased and delighted all the delegations.

Ladies and gentlemen, as you can see, Africa is irrevocably engaged in a merciless struggle against the colonizer for its liberation. Let our compatriots join us in order to serve the national cause more effectively and carry out the will of a people seeking to free itself from the chains of paternalism and colonialism.

The Congolese people must awaken from their slumber and look forward to our independence and our freedom.

The Congo is our homeland. It is our duty to make this homeland greater and more beautiful.

In conclusion, we invite you to raise your voices with us: long live the Congo, long live the National Movement!

*On January 4, 1959, serious outbreaks of violence took place in Leopoldville, and several dozen people died in the resulting repression. This riot was as sudden as a clap of thunder in the Congolese "oasis of peace," and the Belgian press was greatly disturbed. The leaders of the Abako were arrested.*

*On January 13, King Baudouin and the Belgian government took a position on the political and administrative future of the Congo: "We have today resolved to lead the peoples of the Congo toward independence in prosperity and peace."*

*On February 13, Lumumba sent this note to the minister of the Congo.*

### THREE DEMANDS OF THE CONGOLESE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

#### 1. Elections by Universal Suffrage

At this moment, when the administration is studying the measures necessary to carry out the reforms that have been envisaged, the Congolese National Movement demands, with regard to the elections, a system of presentation of plurinominal lists and organization of the elections on the communal level. This must also be done in the districts and territories.

The MNC is opposed to a system that would divide communes into small voting districts and precincts.

#### 2. The Constitution of the Superior Council and the Legislative Council

The population as a whole would like to know when the Superior

Council [the future Chamber of Deputies] and the Legislative Council [the future Senate of the Congo] are to be set up; it does not understand why that government has set a date for the constitution of lower-level councils and not for higher bodies.

The setting of a date for the constitution of higher bodies is of capital importance for the inhabitants; it is the only step that will earn the trust of each of them.

We believe that on the psychological plane it is to the government's complete advantage to set this date.

#### 3. The Creation of a Commission for Political Development

In order that the policy envisaged may be better oriented, the Congolese National Movement requests that a political commission, in which Congolese will actively participate, be set up in Leopoldville.

This commission, which will function independently of the Congolese administration, will be entrusted with the task of seeing that the new policy is rigorously implemented and of suggesting directly to the minister any sort of solution it considers useful in order to speed up the creation of the institutions envisaged in the government's declaration.

*The development of political organizations went ahead apace in the Congo, and parties multiplied. But Lumumba was almost the only leader who remained convinced that international contacts were a precious and very effective aid in the struggle of the Congolese people. He therefore decided to leave for Ibadan (Nigeria), where on March 22 he addressed the closing session of the International Seminar, organized by the Congress for the Freedom of Culture and by the University of Ibadan.*

### AFRICAN UNITY AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

I thank the Congress for Freedom and Culture and the University of Ibadan for the kind invitation they extended me to attend this

international conference, where the fate of our beloved Africa is being discussed.

It has been most gratifying to me to meet here a number of African ministers, men of letters, labor union leaders, journalists, and international figures interested in the problems of Africa.

It is through these person-to-person contacts, through meetings of this sort, that African leaders can get to know each other and draw closer together in order to create that union that is indispensable for the consolidation of African unity.

In fact, the African unity so ardently desired by all those who are concerned about the future of this continent will be possible and will be attained only if those engaged in politics and the leaders of our respective countries demonstrate a spirit of solidarity, concord, and fraternal collaboration in the pursuit of the common good of our peoples.

That is why the union of all patriots is indispensable, especially during this period of struggle and liberation.

The aspirations of colonized and enslaved peoples are everywhere the same; their lot too is the same. Moreover, the aims pursued by nationalist movements in any African territory are also the same. The common goal is the liberation of Africa from the colonialist yoke.

[Since our objectives are the same, we will attain them more easily and more rapidly through union than through division. . . .

These divisions, which the colonial powers have always exploited the better to dominate us, have played an important role — and are still playing that role — in the suicide of Africa.

How can we extricate ourselves from this impasse?

• . . . In my view, there is only one way: bringing all Africans together in popular movements or unified parties.]

All tendencies can coexist within these parties bringing all nationals together, and each will have its say, both in the discussion of problems facing the country and in the conduct of public affairs.

A genuine democracy will be at work within these parties and each one will have the satisfaction of expressing its opinions freely.

The more closely united we are, the better we will resist oppression, corruption, and those divisive maneuvers which experts in the policy of "divide and rule" are resorting to.

This wish to have unified parties or movements in our young countries must not be interpreted as a tendency toward political monopoly or a certain brand of dictatorship. We ourselves are against despotism and dictatorship.

I wish to draw everyone's attention to the fact that it is the height of wisdom to thwart from the very outset any possible maneuvers on the part of those who would like to profit from our apparent political rivalries in order to set us against each other and thus delay our freeing ourselves from the colonialist regime.

Experience proves that in our African territories the opposition that certain people create in the name of democracy is often not inspired by a concern for the common welfare; a thirst for glory and the furthering of personal interests are the principal, if not the only, motives for this.

It is only when we have won the independence of our countries and when our democratic institutions are stabilized that the existence of a pluralist political system will be justified.

The existence of an intelligent, dynamic, and constructive opposition is indispensable in order to counterbalance the political and administrative action of the government in power. But this moment does not appear to have arrived yet, and dividing our efforts today would be to render our country a disservice.

All our compatriots must be persuaded that they will not serve the general interest of the country if they are divided or if they foster such divisions, any more than they would serve it by balkanizing our country and partitioning it into weak little states.

Once the territory was balkanized, it would be difficult to achieve national unity again.

Calling for African unity and then destroying its very foundations is hardly proof of a genuine desire for such unity.

In the struggle that we are peacefully waging today to win our independence, we do not intend to drive Europeans out of this continent or seize their possessions or persecute them. We are not pirates.

On the contrary, we respect individuals and the rights of others to well-being.

The one thing we are determined to do — and we would like others to understand us — is to root out colonialism and imperialism from Africa. We have long suffered and today we want to breathe the air of freedom. The Creator has given us this share of the earth that goes by the name of the African continent; it belongs to us and we are its only masters. It is our right to make this continent a continent of justice, law, and peace.

All of Africa is irrevocably engaged in a merciless struggle against colonialism and imperialism. We wish to bid farewell to the rule of slavery and bastardization that has so severely wronged us. Any people that oppresses another people is neither civilized nor Christian. The West must free Africa as soon as possible.

The West must examine its conscience today and recognize the right of each colonized territory to freedom and dignity.

If the colonialist governments promptly understand our aspirations, we will negotiate with them, but if they stubbornly insist on considering Africa their possession, we will be obliged to consider the colonizers the enemies of our emancipation. Under these circumstances, we will regretfully cease to be friends with them.

I hereby publicly take it upon myself to thank all those Europeans who have spared no effort to help our peoples improve their lot. All humanity will be grateful to them for the magnificent mission of humanization and emancipation they are carrying out in certain parts of Africa.

We do not want to cut ourselves off from the West, for we are

quite aware that no people in the world can be self-sufficient. We are altogether in favor of friendship between races, but the West must respond to our appeal.

Westerners must understand that friendship is not possible when the relationship between us is one of subjugation and subordination.

The disturbances that are occurring at present in certain African territories will continue to occur if the administrative powers do not put an end to the colonial regime. This is the only possible path to genuine peace and friendship between African and European peoples.

We have an imperative need for financial, technical, and scientific aid from the West aimed at rapid economic development and the stabilization of our societies.

But the capital our countries need must be invested in the form of mutual aid between nations. National governments will give this foreign capital every sort of guarantee it wishes.

The Western technicians to whom we make an urgent appeal will come to Africa not to dominate us but to serve and aid our countries.

Europeans must recognize and come to accept the idea that the liberation movement that we are engaged in throughout Africa is not directed against them, nor against their possessions, nor against their persons, but purely and simply against the regime of exploitation and enslavement that we are no longer willing to tolerate. If they agree to put an immediate end to this regime instituted by their predecessors, we will live in friendship and brotherhood with them.

A twofold effort must be made to hasten the industrialization of our various regions and the economic development of the country. To this end, we address an appeal to friendly countries to send us an abundance of capital and many technicians.

The lot of black workers must be appreciably improved. The wages they earn at present are clearly insufficient. The dire poverty of the working classes is the source of many of the social conflicts that exist at present in our countries. Labor unions have a great role to play in

this regard, the role of protectors and educators. It is not enough merely to demand a raise in wages; there is also a great need to educate workers in order that they may become conscious of their professional, civic, and social obligations, and also acquire a clear conception of their rights.

On the cultural plane, the new African states must make a serious effort to further African culture. We have a culture all our own, unparalleled moral and artistic values, an art of living and patterns of life that are ours alone. All these African splendors must be jealously preserved and developed. We will borrow from Western civilization what is good and beautiful and reject what is not suitable for us. This amalgam of African and European civilization will give Africa a civilization of a new type, an authentic civilization corresponding to African realities.

Efforts must also be made to free our peoples psychologically. A certain conformism is noticeable on the part of many intellectuals, and its origins are well known.

This conformism stems from the moral pressures and the reprisals to which black intellectuals have often been subjected. The minute they have told the truth, they have been called dangerous revolutionaries, xenophobes, provocateurs, elements that must be closely watched, and so on.

These moves to intimidate us and corrupt our morals must cease. We need genuine literature and a free press that brings the opinion of the people to light, rather than more propaganda leaflets and a muzzled press.

I hope that the Congress for Freedom and Culture will aid us along these lines.

We hold out a fraternal hand to the West. Let it today give proof of the principle of equality and friendship between races that its sons have always taught us as we sat at our desks in school, a principle written in capital letters in the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man. Africans must be just as free as other citizens of the

human family to enjoy the fundamental liberties set forth in this declaration and the rights proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.

The period of racial monopolies is now at an end.

African solidarity must take concrete form in facts and acts. We must form a bloc in order to demonstrate our brotherhood to the world.

In order to do so, I suggest that governments that have already won their independence give every possible aid and support to countries that are not yet independent.

In order to further cultural exchanges and the rapprochement of French-speaking and English-speaking countries, the teaching of both French and English should be made compulsory in all African schools. A knowledge of both these languages will put an end to the difficulties of communication that French-speaking and English-speaking Africans encounter when they meet. This is an important factor for their interaction.

Territorial barriers must also be done away with so that Africans may travel freely between the various African states.

Scholarships should also be set up for students in the dependent territories.

I want to take advantage of the opportunity here offered me to pay honor publicly to Dr. Kwame N'Krumah and Mr. Sekou Touré for having succeeded in liberating our brothers in Ghana and Guinea.

Africa will not be truly free and independent as long as any part of this continent remains under foreign domination.

I conclude my remarks with this passionate appeal:

Africans, let us rise up!

Africans, let us unite!

Africans, let us walk hand in hand with those who want to help us make this beautiful continent a continent of freedom and justice!

At this juncture the Congolese political parties were divided on the questions of federalism and a united front. On March 9, Minister van Hemelrijck had decided to free the leaders of the Abako, but this party remained resolutely determined to promote the establishment of the Republic of the Central Kongo. Eight organizations decided at this point to hold the first congress of the unitarian parties in Luluabourg, April 9-12. The position taken by Lumumba and his followers was supported by Iléo and Kalonji, among others. As the congress of Luluabourg ended, Lumumba declared:

Two essential points have emerged. The fact, first of all, that the assembly unanimously proclaimed itself to be in favor of the unity of the Congo and the constitution of a unitarian government. This position, which was accepted by everyone, is certain, from this day forward, to thwart the maneuvers of certain persons who have often recommended the establishment of federal states, which was bound to lead to a rapid "balkanization" of the Congo. This is one capital point. The second principal point is that the congress likewise pronounced itself unanimously in favor of the establishment of a Congolese government in January 1961.

As is clear from the government statement of January 13, the "new policy" of Belgium took the form of unilaterally imposing measures aimed at the democratization and the subsequent autonomy of the Congo. Congolese political groups soon afterward demanded mutual consultations, and then genuine negotiations, to determine the future of the country. This was the case, among others, in the texts drawn up by the leaders of the Abako in Brussels on March 16 and at the end of April.

In a similar vein, on April 20, 1959, the Interfédérale specifically stated in its memorandum: "It is necessary to study the means of putting the declaration of January 13 into effect, through commissions including Congolese from all over the country and Belgians

from Africa and from Belgium." On April 21, Lumumba again demanded political negotiation.

Following the deliberations of the congress and the resolutions that have been adopted, we are now counting on negotiating with Belgium; we hope that she will be sufficiently on the alert and vigilant enough to admit the necessity and the legitimacy of these negotiations that we wish to embark upon in the name of the Congolese people. It must not be forgotten that the superior interests of Belgium are at stake. It can no longer be denied that the political organizations that now exist in the Congo, which have just stated their position at the conclusion of the deliberations that we have attended, are representative of black opinion. To refuse to grant these political organizations the dialogue and the negotiations that they are seeking in the name of peace would be to disappoint not only those who can help Belgium carry out its new policy, but also all those sectors of the population who have expressed their confidence in the leaders of these organizations. A refusal by Belgium to negotiate with these leaders would be catastrophic.

On April 22, 1959, at the invitation of the Cercle du Libre Examen (the Club of Free Examination), Patrice Lumumba delivered a long lecture, followed by a debate, at the Free University of Brussels. Three days later, on April 25, the president of the Congolese National Movement continued his report in a speech delivered to the Amis de Présence Africaine. It is the second speech that is published below. The opening remarks of this message have been lost, however, due to a technical error at the time the speech was recorded.

Lumumba gave numerous lectures in Belgium, all of which were attended by sizable audiences. He enjoyed making contact with the most diverse sorts of groups, and fiercely refused to allow himself to be coopted by any one group or party.

## THE CONGO OF TOMORROW

We have capable men who are just waiting for a chance to get to work. I visited Guinea recently: there are clever ministers in the government, and seven state secretaries who have ministerial status. Only three of these eighteen ministers have studied at a university; the others have finished high school, held jobs, and acquired a certain amount of experience, and the government of Guinea has brought in French technicians to help it in the field of law, economics, agronomy, and every other area of activity. So I think it is possible today to set up a Congolese government.

We have chosen January 1961 as our deadline. We thus have two years in which to prepare ourselves, and we are convinced that two years from now we will be in a position to take over the responsibilities of running our country, with the Belgians working side by side with us to help us and guide our footsteps. If Belgium understands us, if Belgium takes this fervent desire — the desire of the Congolese people — into consideration, she will be entitled to our friendship. The people will see for themselves that when the proper moment came and we decided we were capable of self-rule, the Belgians did not stand in our way. On the contrary: they will have helped and guided us. The question of the future relations between Belgium and the Congo will resolve itself automatically. There will be no difficulty whatsoever. We are the ones to say: look, we still need Belgium in this field of endeavor, we still need European technicians. But if the Belgian people, the Belgian government, refuse to take our demands into consideration, what will happen as a result? The government perpetuates bitterness and fosters a climate of continual discontent, and whatever the Belgians may say, whatever their wishes in the matter may be, we are going to gain our independence, come what may. In the end the Congolese people are liable to say: "Belgium has always been opposed to our emancipation. We've had enough of that now; we're going our own sep-

arate way. . . ." And that is precisely the problem. Everyone — the financiers, the colonialists — keeps asking for guarantees. But such guarantees depend entirely on them, because winning our independence does not mean that we are going to seize property belonging to Belgians; we are not thieves, we respect other people's property. It is a matter of a gentleman's agreement with the status of an international right; when any citizen finds himself in another country, his property and his person must be protected. This is the problem as we see it.

So today we want our country to be independent. We want to run our country now so that we may draw up agreements between an independent Congo and an independent Belgium on an equal footing, and thus foster friendship between these two peoples.

I am very happy to meet young Belgians here who share our ideas, progressive young Belgians who agree with us, who will help press for Congolese independence tomorrow and are joining forces with us. This is encouraging. It proves that they are dissatisfied, that they disapprove of the attitude of certain Belgians in the Congo today. I do not want to make any sort of sweeping general statement: there are Belgians in the Congo — certain civil servants, certain colonists, certain doctors, certain missionaries — who have always treated Africans in a dignified way. But they are no more than a minority. Why are the majority opposed? Belgians in the Congo believe that when the blacks get their independence tomorrow, they are going to seize everything Belgians own. This is still the usual reaction among typical Europeans, even after the new policy, even after the declaration on January 13. They keep saying: "These are the blacks who are going to take our places tomorrow, and where will that put us? Where will we go?" That is the reaction of all these colonists. There are a few today who are willing to change, and there are also those who refuse to do so, who are even sabotaging the policy that has just been laid down by Belgium — so seriously that there is general discontent in the Congo today. And we must have the courage to denounce these plots, these maneuvers that are taking shape in the

Congo. There are still certain Europeans who are determined to divide blacks, to set one against the other. Here in Belgium certain Africans have been gulled into making declarations and attacking certain sectors of the population.

We want to secure our independence through the united effort of all. We want the Belgians to put a stop to their divisive policy. We must understand each other, and they must join forces with us. This is how we can build a Congolese nation, through the friendship of all. I think — I am in fact convinced, and optimistic enough to believe that despite everything, despite the insults, the moves to intimidate us, the threats that have been made, we have chosen the path we will follow and the sort of struggle we will wage, one that will continue to be nonviolent, and I believe that the events of January fourth will not be repeated. We too deery violence. We have chosen just one weapon for our struggle, and that weapon is non-violence, because we believe that whatever the goal, it can be reached by peaceful means. That is what our struggle represents, and that is why I call for the moral support of every friend of humanity, of all those who believe that every human being, whatever the color of his skin, whatever his social status, can and must enjoy the same freedoms as every other citizen of humanity. [*Applause.*]

Q. Can you say a few words about the ties your movement has with other parties which have the same aim in the Congo, if there are any such?

A. Our ties are ties of friendship and fraternal collaboration with all parties and groups that are pursuing the same objective we are. Small political parties do exist today. There are a great many being formed every day, and throughout all this, there has been constant conniving by Europeans, who keep urging the Congolese to create little political parties that will spring up like mushrooms — their one purpose being to cause confusion. In order to put a stop to these maneuvers, we organized a congress at Luluabourg to which all the political parties were invited, and we explained to everyone that we

were all pursuing the same objective: serving the general interest of the country. Since our aim is one and the same, that is to say the liberation of the country, the independence of the country, why should we be divided?

We therefore formed a Common Front and passed a resolution providing for the independence of the Congo and the establishment of a Congolese government in January 1961. All the political parties signed the resolution and came out in favor of this deadline, and we set a date for the second congress, which is to take place in October of this year, for the express purpose of drawing up an electoral platform, so that where there are one, two, or three political parties in the same locality, a single electoral list can be drawn up. In places where there is only one party such as ours, which already has local chapters throughout the Congo, this party will stand for election all by itself. All this obviously is a united front for the attainment of our freedoms.

Q. Mr. Lumumba, what was the opinion of Africans at this point regarding the role that they would be called on to play and would like to play in activities organized on an international basis — I am thinking in particular of the United Nations, of specialized institutions such as UNESCO, the World Health Organization, the International Labor Organization, and so forth. I would like to ask you two questions: Many of us would like to know who is discussing these problems in Africa at this time. What measures have been taken thus far by the Belgian government and by Africans themselves with regard to this question? Do Africans hear it discussed on the radio? For example, have basic texts, in particular texts relative to the Declaration of the Rights of Man, been translated into any of the African languages?

In your opinion and that of many Africans, it would be useful if certain relations were established between the Belgian Parliament and the leaders of the various Congolese political parties. In some countries — in England in particular — certain organizations that have no connection with the government have managed to organize

such contacts even though they have very limited financial means: the African Bureau in London, for example, the aim of which is to put Africans in touch with members of the British Parliament without regard to party affiliations. A sort of nucleus of members of Parliament has thus been formed to consider African and colonial questions. I would appreciate it very much if you would discuss for a moment how useful you think such relations would be to both parties when you speak of the relations between Congolese political leaders and members of the Belgian Parliament.

A. With regard to the United Nations and specialized institutions, the Congolese populace has absolutely no knowledge either of the program they have for the Congo or of discussions concerning it. Very often the only people who have any information are a handful of intellectuals who have access to certain documents or pick up a piece of information here and there. The government has no plans for a news program on the subject. We studied this problem when the Committee of the Pan-African Conference met recently at Conakry, and I made a public statement to be transmitted to the United Nations, urging that a change be made in the United Nations Charter along these lines, since there is a very clear distinction between trust territories and nonautonomous territories. In the case of trust territories, such as the Cameroons, Togoland, and Rwanda-Burundi, a United Nations Commission on Trusteeship goes out to interview the chiefs and the population and question them firsthand about their aspirations and possible complaints. There is thus permanent surveillance of these territories. But in the Congo and the other nonautonomous territories, there is no such surveillance, and each time, for example, that Belgium or any other country is questioned on the subject, the reply is that "these are internal affairs." Obviously certain abuses can thus be camouflaged, and we have said: it is not because these Africans were colonized by Germans, who were later driven out by others, that they are now the ones best colonized; it's because they've come under the trusteeship of the United Nations. And we have asked that all African

territories have the same status. It should be possible to make such a change in the charter, because we are as much human beings as the peoples of the other African territories. There must be permanent surveillance by the United Nations in all the African territories. A definite date must be set, so that within two years all the African territories will become independent within the framework of international peace set forth in the United Nations Charter.

When I went to Paris, I tried to contact the representative of UNESCO and get specific information in this regard, because we have just set up a permanent secretariat of the National Movement. We need to have the specific information necessary to know what is going on at the United Nations and learn of its resolutions and investigations. We will thus have an overall view of the problems that concern the Congo and Africa, for our personal information, and I believe that I will be able to contact the proper persons. There is no program for this purpose on the part of the government. We therefore want to make a personal effort, for the entire population in our country is eager to know what is happening in the United Nations and in the specialized organizations.

Q. I believe that there are plans within the framework of the United Nations Information Service for other movements, privately organized outside of the government, youth organizations, political parties and so on . . . and that in certain cases information is sent them. Do you know of any libraries or organizations that may have obtained such information?

A. No, I do not know of any. What I do know is that most of the libraries that have been set up in the Congo are state libraries, where as a matter of fact there is a certain amount of censorship. The only material put in these libraries is what the government wants put there, and the Congolese don't trust them. This is why the Congolese make very little use of any of the official libraries run by the administration; they prefer to order the books they want rather than visiting a library where the only thing they find is novels or unimportant little books that don't tell them anything.

As for contacts with members of Parliament, they are very important, because political parties, as they are organized today, are legitimate representatives of the opinion of the population. These political parties must have the chance to be in constant contact with members of Parliament, to inform members of Parliament about the problems of the country and the future progress of the country. The administration itself, however well intentioned it may be, is not in a position to know about the problems of the country, because very often, even when members of Parliament — the Labor Group — visit the Congo, they invite the tribal chieftains who are the administration's real intermediaries in to see them; and these tribal chieftains tell them only those things that will please the administrator, the commandant of the district, and never say what they think or what the people think, so that these members of Parliament are frequently misled; and the conclusions they draw from their mission, from their visit to the Congo, do not always reflect the opinion of the people. But political parties, which have no ties to the government, which are neutral, which really represent the opinion of the populace, could provide the Belgian Parliament with genuine information, and thus it is necessary for Parliament to allow negotiations, to allow dialogues between its members and political leaders.

*Q.* I would like to know what in your opinion the psychological reaction was, on the one hand in white circles and on the other hand in African circles, when Mr. Cornélis\* returned to the country.

*A.* The reaction of the European population was one of joy because it had demanded that Mr. Cornélis remain in office. A delegation was even sent to meet with the minister and the king for this purpose. Petitions were circulated demanding that he be kept in office. As for the Congolese populace, I don't know what its psychological reactions were, because at the time Mr. Cornélis's mandate was confirmed, at the time he returned to the Congo, I was no

\* Mr. Cornélis was the governor-general. (Editor's note.)

longer in the country and thus could not tell you what the reaction of the Congolese people was.

*Q.* Mr. Lumumba, you spoke of the political education of the Congolese masses, which was definitely going to be initiated by the Congolese movement or by the political parties. I would like to ask you if you have a program for this and if you can describe it in more detail today.

*A.* Our program for this is to be carried out within the framework of the Congolese National Movement. We already have chapters in Leopoldville. We have a chapter in each community, and chapters have already been set up in many provinces of the Congo; this activity will continue down through the end of this year. We will thus have chapters in the capital city of each territory and in all the posts in the interior, and each time that speeches are given or instructive discussions take place in any area, we will have them mimeographed. The chapters hold general meetings, which educate those who take part in them. The members discuss the lecture and voice their objections, and we are going to get the leaders to organize frequent discussions and informative talks within the framework of the local organizations.

We have plans, of course, to publish a party newspaper in the months to come, which will serve as a link between the party and its members.

As for the problems of young people, we are also starting youth movements as of now, for Congolese young people have been badly neglected for the most part, and we must concern ourselves with recruiting and educating them. We will thus have chapters in each commune, in each district, as well as an organization on the national level. And we will also have women's chapters — there are already some. Women have their own particular problems. In this way, we will be able to draw in all levels of the population, including women and young people, and advertise the programs of civic education for the people, so to speak, through newspapers and public reports. In order to do this, I call on our students here in

Belgium. They should not only work toward getting their own education; it would also be desirable for them to conduct certain studies and send me suggestions during my stay here in Belgium or forward them to me in Leopoldville. Here in Belgium they have been able to follow the efforts to organize young people's and women's movements, and I believe they can provide reports on how this was done. We will have continuing discussions on the subject between university students now in Europe and our organizations in the Congo. Very often too, when a person is coming home on vacation, he will be able to write us and we will go meet him when he arrives, introduce him at a meeting, and have him give a talk in the city on this subject or that. This, it seems to me, is how the consciousness of each individual, of each intellectual, will be awakened. We must concern ourselves more and more with this education of the populace. . . .

Q. (MR. ARONSTEIN, secretary-general of the League for the Rights of Man). The various Congolese political parties that met in Lubumbashi agreed to demand or recommend that a Congolese government be created and installed in office in January 1961. I would like to ask Mr. Lumumba whether in his opinion and that of his colleagues this Congolese government will be a government formed in a completely independent state of the Congo, or whether he envisages an interim form of government enjoying an autonomy that would be rather broad but not absolute and at the same time would remain within the framework of Belgian sovereignty, as was the case in French Africa and in British Africa in particular?

A. Our position on this subject is very definite. It is not a question of a drastic and sudden break with the Belgian administration, because we know that in many areas we still need Belgium's experience, but what we are asking for is the establishment of a Congolese government in the month of January 1961. Once it is set up, it is this government which, through the voice of its legitimate representatives, will study the final form: either the adoption of total independence or the continuation of certain ties with Belgium. Let

us suppose, for example, that we do not have sufficient cadres at that time for defense, the army, or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as is quite possible. Even if the government is already set up, this aid could still be provided by Belgium. But all this obviously depends on the negotiations and the proposals that may be put before us by the Belgian Parliament, and in the light of the views expressed at that time by each side, I believe that a rational formula will be reached that will be much more advantageous to the Congolese government.

Q. (MR. ARONSTEIN). If I have rightly understood Mr. Lumumba's view of the matter, he has in mind the establishment in January 1961 of a government that will have sovereignty and negotiate on an equal footing with the Belgian government with regard to the final or future form of government in the Congo and the relations between Belgium and the Congo.

Moreover, in the speech Mr. Lumumba delivered at the University of Brussels, he declared in answer to a question concerning Belgian investments and interests in the Congo that, as he has stated here, it was a question neither of expropriation nor of appropriation, but that once the Congolese government was set up, it would naturally, by virtue of its sovereignty, be the judge of which agreements previously entered into by the colonial power, without of course consulting the natives of the country, ought to be respected, and which agreements, in the view of the Congolese government, ought to be subject to revision. I would like to ask him the following question: I do not doubt for a moment the legitimacy of such a position. But I would like to know if he does not entertain certain fears as to the possibility of an economic crisis in the Congo if a situation of this sort is created, that is to say if a certain atmosphere of insecurity, at least from the economic point of view, becomes widespread; and whether the Congo in such a case might not run a certain risk of finding itself in the same situation that has confronted many countries in Eastern Europe, namely, having to proceed quite rapidly, with means that are perhaps insufficient in

the beginning, from a position that from the economic point of view has advanced very slightly, to the development of a modern country; and if this process, the legitimacy of which I do not question for an instant, might not have as an almost inevitable consequence the entrenchment of what is euphemistically called a "strong power" and which might also be called more or less of a dictatorship. In certain African states that have recently been granted their independence, there are certain examples that might perhaps justify this fear — and I should like to ask whether this does not constitute a threat to the scrupulous respect of the rights of man in the Congo, at least in the first days of its existence as an independent nation, a problem that Mr. Lumumba has stated is of as serious concern to him as it is to us.

A. I believe that I must speak freely and frankly to you with regard to this subject. I have often questioned even ordinary workmen, and thus conducted a sort of public opinion poll. I have asked them: "When we have won our independence, do you think we will have to take this property back?" Their answer has been: "No, why should we take it back? What we want is our freedom. We aren't interested in their property at all; the way we see it, when we are independent conditions may well change, and we may perhaps have more possibilities and be as rich as the Europeans."

I don't think there is any risk involved here, because in all honesty I have often spoken with people from various classes of the population, and they have no intentions of this sort. But as you have rightly emphasized, it is possible that certain agreements that the colonial power has entered into are not compatible with the future development or the interests of the Congolese state and that a quite normal review of them will be undertaken, as Belgium or any other country in the world would do.

But all this will be the subject of negotiations, of discussions, of agreements so that neither party is harmed. Even the security of investments will depend on what the Belgian government does to

hasten our attainment of self-determination. I can say to you: yes, I will give you guarantees. But if the people have the impression today that they are being persecuted, if they have the impression that Belgian power wishes to delay their emancipation at any price, then the day when this people finally wins its sovereignty by brute force, there will be a sort of vengeance because of the bitterness that will have been felt. "That's that," the people will say. "These men are wicked; we have demanded our rights for years and they have never been willing to give them to us. It is through force or some sort of intervention that we have won our independence; they weren't nice to us." That is the truth, and as the minister said again yesterday, a matter of people's feelings. But even though for the moment there has been no recourse to violence and no hostility toward the Belgian administration, on the other hand there definitely are demands being made. Of the territories that are already autonomous, there are some that are independent and others that are presumably going to become so, and it is to be hoped that within a few years the entire territory will become independent. But what do we see? The Congo today is one of the countries farthest behind, one of the most backward countries from the point of view of political emancipation. When one visits Brazzaville, which is less advanced than Leopoldville from every point of view, one finds ministers, deputies, a prime minister who is an abbé. . . . But there is absolutely nothing being done in the Congo. I have the impression that the Belgians do not want to help us get ahead. So we are beginning to doubt Belgium's sincerity.

But if we now draw up a list of demands and Belgium says: "All right, we'll give you your autonomous government, but we want security and don't want to lose what we've already invested in the Congo or what we're now willing to invest for economic development," then the people will be satisfied. When we first asked for our sovereignty, they helped us, and I readily admit that they closed their eyes to certain rules, if only for moral reasons. But these men will be compensated for the benefits they have extended us;

we have reserved certain privileges for them: Belgians will be given preference as regards investments and the hiring of technicians. All this depends, however, on whether Belgium grants our wishes at this point. Otherwise all the rest will be resolved without any fear on our part. What I am expressing are my deepest feelings, and they are the feelings of the people. Our feelings are going to change if we are disappointed by the regime.

Q. You said yesterday that the population, which used to number at least thirty million, has declined to five and a half million. What is the source of these figures? Who made such a population study in the past?

A. I am happy to answer you. Read a work entitled *The Future of the Congo Is Threatened*, written by Mr. Delcommune, one of the men who built the Congo. It is an old work that can be found in the government's official libraries.

Q. Do you believe that the Congolese masses are really interested in the political problem you have just told us about? Isn't their confidence in you simply a desire to regain their dignity?

A. All the Congolese masses, both those in the big cities and those in the interior, are actively interested in this problem. They are far more revolutionary, in fact, than we are. They are fearful — they are afraid of reprisals — but they are behind us. The masses do not always dare express themselves and present their demands to a police commissioner or an administrator, but when we go among them, it is they who urge us on; they want to go ahead much faster than we do. But as reasonable men, we think this over and do not agree, we believe that it will take at least. . . .

Q. Are you going to seem to be some sort of traitors in the eyes of the masses if you try to put the brakes on a little?

A. Not at all, because it is our duty to educate, to inform these masses and tell them: "We quite agree, your desire is legitimate, but there are difficulties." And the masses understand and follow us.

Q. Would the Congolese National Movement allow whites to join its ranks?

A. The MNC is not an antiwhite movement. It is not racist. If a sincere European, whose intentions we were certain of, wanted to join our movement, the committee would study the question and then decide. But we naturally cannot accept opportunists or spies in our ranks whose only reason for coming to us would be to attempt to subvert the movement.

Q. Is it difficult to know whether Europeans are sincere?

A. We know whether they are or not, because the Europeans who are in the Congo have been there for a number of years. We know how they behave toward Africans. And if this European or that has always been friendly toward Africans, there is no problem, we accept him. But if we know that he has always been a reactionary who is against our emancipation and is now coming to us only out of a sort of opportunism, we are perfectly aware that it is hypocrisy.

Q. A person who was unable to attend the lecture has sent in a question that we are going to ask: in its final resolutions, the Accra Conference took a strong stand in favor of the total independence of Africa by 1960. But not all the African territories will be freed of colonial guardianship by that date. This will obviously be the case in the Congo. They will thus be going counter to the resolution. As a member of the Permanent Committee of Accra, can you tell us whether it has envisaged any sort of action, any measures to hasten the independence of these various territories? What are these measures — either overt or covert?

A. Obviously, categorical resolutions were passed, and there were representatives of almost all the already independent states at the Accra Conference. There were also representatives of certain international powers. And the Permanent Committee is there to see that this policy is applied in the various territories. That is why, in the case of South Africa for example, where we know there has

been notorious bad faith, where there is not much reason to hope for the liberation of the Africans who live there, a boycott was declared, and it was decided that economic pressure would be brought to bear so that there would be a boycott of merchandisc coming into or out of South Africa by all the independent states that might take part in economic exchanges. Certain Western states also agree with us and are going to act along the same lines, without perhaps taking a public stand. Moral pressure will likewise be exerted. People are going to think and say that exploitation is now out of the question, that the United Nations now exists, that international forums now exist. These people will have anonymous abuse heaped upon them. People will likewise become aware of the fact that political enslavement on the domestic scene is now out of the question and that they must free themselves.

So I think that these civilizing, Christian states are eventually going to realize that it is not at all in their interests to use force to perpetuate a policy that is bound to collapse sooner or later despite all their efforts. The interests of such powers do not lie in dominating these peoples politically, but in guaranteeing the economic interests of financiers, of merchants, of all those who have invested money in the Congo. I have talked with lots of them who tell me: "Mr. Lumumba, you can have your economic independence tomorrow. We approve of this. The only thing we're concerned about is making sure that our investments in the Congo will be safe and we will not be harmed. As for your political independence, the moment we are assured that everything will be all right, we ourselves will put pressure on the government to give you your independence, because once a government is independent, capital is much more secure than when people are still thinking: 'What's going to happen tomorrow; what's going to happen later on?'"

I visited Guinea and saw Frenchmen who told me: "Mr. Lumumba, we are better off now than we were under the old French administration. Our interests are better served by the African administration than by the old French functionaries. And now that

the state is independent, the government even does us favors that the colonial regime never did." And I have heard the same sort of thing in Ghana. And I have also seen a number of requests on the part of Frenchmen who once feared that the Guineans would go on the rampage and seize their property. All this is a reminder that though they left the country on the eve of independence, and even afterward, they have now begun to ask the government to allow them to return to Guinea. I saw a number of requests of this sort in the ministries. And I do not believe that at present there is any civilized country capable of systematically planning to enslave these people despite everything. I don't think, I don't believe, there is any such country — except perhaps South Africa or Portugal.

JEAN VAN LIERDE. In the case of South Africa, it must be said that there are still several important political figures in Belgium who are good friends of the leaders in South Africa, who are often well received here, and our list of accusations must include the fact that in the United Nations and in the Trusteeship Commission Belgium has too often been the only one to side with South Africa when it came to voting on a number of motions for the liberation of the African peoples made by the Afro-Asiatic countries. This must be recorded in the black book against Belgian policy on the international plane. I know that there have not been very many of us who have denounced this paternalist attitude of Belgium in the United Nations down through the years, but I believe that we must continue to point this out and above all hope that it will come to an end and that in the future we will not see the Belgian delegates on the Trusteeship Commission side with South Africa too frequently when votes are taken.

PATRICE LUMUMBA. In this regard, I shall take the liberty of saying that I definitely recall the times Belgium voted in favor of South Africa. This did Belgium's cause enormous damage in the Congo. When the press reported it, I heard Africans in all the cafés saying: "Belgium is siding with South Africa, and this proves

that she is trying to institute the same policy in the Congo; we've already seen signs of it in Katanga, where these people want to create a second South Africa." This did Belgium's cause immense harm in the minds of the populace, and people looked with great disfavor on Belgium for having sided with such a power because it was imperialist, in order to maintain its position in certain territories. Very often during my travels in Africa, I have met Africans of independent countries who attend UN meetings and who have told me: "Belgium is a bad power." Every time a power is censured for its bad colonial administration, even in the case of France, Belgium has always voted on that power's side. And these colonialist powers form a bloc within the United Nations in order to defend their position at all times. This has done Belgium's cause enormous harm and it may have caused repercussions in the Congo. What you have pointed out so clearly is of such great importance that I believe that Belgium ought to be careful, because everything she does in the United Nations is watched very closely by the people in the Congo.

Q. I would nonetheless like to put Mr. Lumumba somewhat on his guard against this happy and joyous optimism he feels with regard to the independence promised the Belgian Congo, and tell him to be a bit wary of what he calls colonialism, which is a force that is far from being dead. I would therefore like to ask him if he has any specific measures in mind in the Congo with regard to the whites there. I am going to tell you in plain words that when people here in Belgium speak of the whites in the Congo, they say: "Their time has come, their death knell has sounded, they're going to be 'kicked out on their asses.'" This is the language you hear in the streets.

I understand your feeling and your view of the matter very well. I agree with them completely. But I believe that your movement should nonetheless apply a little pressure with regard to this aspect of the problem by telling the Belgians who are there — above all

the small fry, who, as you have put it so well, often fear for the stable situation they've created for themselves (the fact that their future is secure after two or three contracts) — that you don't want to "kick them out" bag and baggage because you've seen enough of them, as they may imagine.

I must say, in all truth, that I find you overoptimistic, since you seem to believe that independence is going to give the Congolese people their sovereignty. One question immediately arises. We must look at the course events will take. Let us say that the Congolese Parliament is set up. You form a government and your Parliament passes new laws. It is an absolute fact that one of the first things you must do is make sure that Congolese young people have a minimum of education; this is something we have done here too. If you wish to emancipate your people, if you want to raise their level, you must begin by teaching them to read and write.

The second thing, and perhaps this second point is more important than the first, is to raise the standard of living of workers, and here I think you will soon come up against the colonialist powers that be, even if they are not in your government, because to speak of "raising the standard of living" is also to speak of "cutting down the dividends" and thus the profit on capital invested by the great Belgian trusts, such as the notorious Union Minière in Katanga, to mention just one company.

There is no doubt that even though we are independent, we encounter very serious resistance here every time the workers try to secure a better standard of living, and it is bound to be the same in your country as in ours. This, moreover, is obviously the tacit view that we are already running into in this country: "Yes, but once they are masters in their country, how will the Congolese go about getting themselves out of trouble? The first thing they'll do is ask for things, they'll start making demagogic demands. They won't get themselves out of trouble, it'll be a mess, it'll be anarchy . . . it'll be absolute chaos." Certain people are even going to go so far as to say that the day you get your independence you'll tear each

other apart. I'm simply telling you in a very haphazard sort of way what people's opinions are: they're still admittedly very backward in their thinking. But I tell you this so you'll know that that's what people are thinking, and I must tell you that even in government circles, despite the sweet smiles they're giving you, there are many people who are more or less saying: "We're going to have to keep these people on a leash a while longer, we're going to have to toss them a little lump of sugar. . . ." And that's why I'm telling you to keep your eyes open. [*Applause.*]

A. I see your point. As specifically regards the education of the people, this is what the situation is: a year ago, the budget for education was cut in the Government Council, even though the budget for education in a colonized country ought to be the largest item of expenditure. It takes money to train cadres, to train technicians. But instead the budget has now been pared down. But if we have our country in our own hands, the largest budget, the most ample budget will be that for education. There are provisions in our program for sending a thousand students per province to Europe, thus making a total of six thousand students who will attend European universities, specialized schools, and technical and professional schools. And all this will be thanks to funds that will be set aside on a priority basis: for instruction, for the training of cadres, for scholarships. What is being done today? We are planning step by step: in such and such a year we are going to educate university students, the following year we'll do something else, and so on.

As for the funds for this, well, we will have them because for the moment we are receiving almost no benefits from, or an insignificant share of, all our wealth and all our raw materials, everything that constitutes the sources of revenue of the nation. But if we take over our country tomorrow, the national revenue will be devoted exclusively to improving the living standards of the workers. How can we be expected to improve the living standards of workers when we have a colonial power that siphons off all the profits? I agree with you absolutely. . . .

Q. Can you tell me the figures on the distribution of revenue in the Congo?

A. Unfortunately, I am not an economist. I don't know what these figures are, but they have been published.

MR. ARONSTEIN. Only one study has been made of the distribution of revenue in the Congo, the one made by the Central Bank of the Belgian Congo and of Rwanda-Burundi and published some time last year. Out of an annual total revenue of sixty billion, half goes to the Congolese and the other half to private companies and taxes. This is roughly the distribution. These statistics can perhaps be disputed, however, because they are extremely hard to come by.

JEAN VAN LIERDE. This same very depressing set of statistics tells us that 30,000 Europeans working in the Congo have incomes equal to or higher than 1,200,000 black wage earners. So we must be very wary, because the government's position, even that defended by Mr. P. H. Spaak, was that in actual fact the Congo cost Belgium money. But a lengthy 500-page thesis, published by a professor at the University of Brussels, proved that the Congo had never cost Belgium anything. . . .

PATRICE LUMUMBA. And that's true. The Congo is the only colony in the world that has made the mother country richer, whereas everywhere else it has been the mother countries that have poured untold amounts of money into developing their colonies. . . .

Q. How was the "single status" received by Africans?

A. "Single status" was warmly welcomed only by the agents of the government, because it did not benefit employees in the private sector at all. Looking back, I know that it did not arouse any great enthusiasm, despite everything; but what has happened now? There has been a downgrading of functions. Those who were appointed as legal draftsmen or territorial agents did not perform the same functions as European draftsmen of the same rank. So I have seen draftsmen in Leopoldville who don't want to be called that, who say: "I'm just an ordinary clerk, they've played a dirty trick on us,

there's nothing in it for us at all, we've simply been given a fancy title. They took us on so as to play politics, but from the point of view of prestige, we don't perform the same functions as European draftsmen." As a result, the "single status" is losing all meaning and is no longer valued even by those who have benefited from it. And I have spoken to the minister about this.

Q. Did he seem to agree?

A. Yes, because he didn't know anything about it. I told him how it was, because these are little things that happen every day in the Congo that he has no knowledge of. He has to be told.

Q. Mr. Lumumba, he would do well to take us on as advisers. Does he have good black advisers?

A. I don't think so. The only advisers he has are Europeans who mislead him.

Q. I don't know if the natives, or rather those who live in native villages, are part of these masses.

A. In what area of activity?

Q. Are you speaking of the political aspect? You were saying that the masses all backed you. We would like to know if youngsters are that enthusiastic about independence and liberation, even in the villages.

A. Yes, in the villages as well. That is why I have said that we were planning to organize groups in the villages in the months to come. In the large villages, we are counting on organizing chapters to be headed by agronomists, by medical assistants, by teachers, as rapidly as possible. As soon as I return to the Congo, we are going to teach the masses, if our finances permit, because if we do not do so (and thus far we have not), there are colonialists in the interior who will keep trying to set the rural populace against the urban populace. . . .

Q. Mr. Lumumba, I would like to ask you if you are planning to extend your activities to Rwanda-Burundi. Have you already had contacts with people there?

A. Yes, we already have a nucleus in Rwanda-Burundi. There

are 36,000 Congolese in Rwanda-Burundi. They have written us to say that they naturally do not enjoy the same rights as the natives of the country, but that they have gotten a foothold there and that something must be done. We are in constant contact with people in Rwanda-Burundi. At the Luluabourg Congress there were two representatives who had come by car all the way from Rwanda-Burundi to Luluabourg, which proves how aware they are of this problem. There was one Congolese and one Rwandese. The Rwandese who was there raised the possibility of forming a federation between the Congo and Rwanda-Burundi once the two countries became independent. So we already are engaged in action that has reached quite far down among Congolese living in Rwanda-Burundi.

Q. Mr. Lumumba, I would like to ask you: Are you more or less free to publicize your efforts, your point of view in the cities and communes of the Congo? Do you have the right to organize meetings and hold public conferences?

A. Yes, we have the right to do so, but very often we are persecuted. You remember the telegram I sent to the minister, which was published in all the Belgian newspapers. In order to be able to hold a public meeting, it is necessary to ask the permission of the first burgomaster, and very often he demands to be told the number of organizations, their names, their addresses, and frequently there is such red tape as having to announce the approximate number of people who will attend the meeting—though not because there will be a great many of them—and we are often the object of this severe sort of harassment.

I am of course able to report that we have freedom when the meetings are private. In such a case, we do not need permission.

In the large cities there is a little more freedom, but in the interior there is none at all. I know a clerk who has just been given a prison sentence, or received one some time ago, because he tried to organize a chapter of the MNC in Inongo. He was hauled into court and got into all sorts of trouble. So you see that this is no guarantee in the Congo.

Q. Would you have more freedom in Belgium than in the Congo?

A. Absolutely. . . .

*During his stay in Brussels, Lumumba sent a correction to the Christian-Democratic daily of Leopoldville.*

#### LETTER TO THE COURRIER D'AFRIQUE

Brussels, April 28, 1959

Dear Sir:

Re: *Correction*

A Belgian subscriber to your paper who attended the lecture I gave on April 22 at the Free University of Brussels has just passed on to me — along with an expression of his indignation — the April 24, 1959 issue of the *Courrier d'Afrique*, in which you printed an *inaccurate* summary of this lecture.

What is even more serious and borders on malice is the fact that you allowed yourself singularly to distort my words.

This scarcely surprises me, for I am quite aware of the sly campaign being waged against me in the Congo, either directly, or in underhanded ways. And for good reason! Because along with other freedom fighters, I wish to defend our people's cause.

An all-out effort can be made to destroy us, but in the end the truth always wins out. The people themselves will see what is happening. I now have irrefutable proof.

The third paragraph of the article published in your paper contains this extremely curious phrase (invented out of whole cloth by my detractors): *The head of the MNC also vigorously protested against the attitude of the leaders of the Abako, criticizing them in particular for humiliating their black brothers.*

Everyone who attended my lecture in Belgium was astonished to see such bad faith on the part of the leader of the colonial press.

As a matter of fact, everyone knows that in the course of my lecture I severely criticized, not the leaders of the Abako but rather:

(1) the statements made in Brussels by Mr. Van Hecke, the burgomaster of Leopoldville, who called blacks "frenzied fanatics" and

(2) the leaders of the Interfédérale, who took it upon themselves to attack the leaders of the Abako, in particular Mr. Kasavubu, Mr. Kanza, and Mr. Nzeza.

I protested the fact that the leaders of the Interfédérale had allowed themselves to be maneuvered by the whites into humiliating their Bakongo brothers, when all of us must unite to build our country.

I also protested against the fact that no Bakongo burgomaster was invited to accompany the group of notables visiting Belgium at present. I called such a discriminatory policy to the attention of His Excellency the Minister.

Moreover, in the course of the lecture delivered on Friday, April 24, by His Excellency Minister Van Hemelrijck, I called upon him publicly to make it possible for Mr. Kasavubu and all the political exiles to return to the country. The latter must be allowed to resume their normal life in the country. Their contribution is necessary in order to set up the new institutions that have been announced.

His Excellency the Minister answered me in the affirmative and I thank him for his understanding attitude.

Many circles in Belgium appreciated the position I publicly took in favor of the leaders of the Abako, and the entire Belgian press took notice of it.

How could I have possibly defended my Bakongo brothers and demanded that they be allowed to return to the Congo, and at the same time condemned them?

The Belga Agency, which you cite in the dateline of your dispatch, denies that I made the false statements you attribute to me.