



September 17, 1960

On the Question of Congo (Dictated by N.S. Khrushchev)

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Summary:

Khrushchev condemns Congolese colonizers for using "dirty tactics" to topple the democratically-elected leader of newly-independent Congo, Patrice Lumumba. He says that while they may have succeeded today, the people of Congo will rise again and reclaim their government

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On the issue of Congo

(dictated by Cde. N.S. Khrushchev, 17 September 1960)

Need to say something to this effect: the Congolese people of Congo gained independence and elected a parliament that established a government. This government received the parliament's trust. As soon as the colonialists realized that this government, from the first days of its existence, had set a course to pursuing policies of independence and sovereignty for its state and was focused solely on the interests of the Congolese people, who had gained independence, the colonialists deployed all means available to overthrow this government, and to create a situation when they can form a puppet government that, under the guise of an independent state and government, would essentially carry out the will of the colonialists and their accomplices. And the colonialists have achieved their goals today. To our great disappointment, the colonialists accomplished this, as they always do, through crude methods and direct interventions. They did this dirty colonialist work with the hands of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Hammarskjöld, and his apparatus. [They] paralyzed the government. It is unprecedented that the troops, who were sent to assist the government at the [government's] request, seized an airfield and radio stations, disrupted the functioning of the country and its way of life; that these troops created [favorable] conditions for the puppet in Katanga to mobilize his forces against the legitimate government elected in accordance with all the rules of a democratic state.

But, dear colonialists, your vision is short-sighted. Today you celebrate your victory. But this is a feast [unreadable]. Today you have won, but with this victory, you are removing the veil from the eyes of the colonized peoples, who will see that their independence can only be achieved by force and through struggle against the colonialists. You are doing everything to preserve the colonial chains. The people, in their turn, will not stop halfway; they will mobilize their efforts, and then beware, dear colonialists, the people will act with greater foresight, and with the understanding that the struggle for independence is indeed a challenging one, with many obstacles to overcome, and that there is a need to distinguish between friends and foes.

The colonialists and their lackeys say that Lumumba is a communist. Lumumba is not yet a communist, he is simply a man who wants to serve his people and free them from colonial oppression.

All this will turn against you down the road. The struggle started by the Congolese people cannot be stopped; it may be slowed down or delayed, but it will break through with even greater force, and the people will not be stopped by anything until they achieve their complete liberation.

We, the Soviet Union, welcome and applaud the colonized peoples in their struggle for independence and, on our part, will do everything in our power to provide moral and material support to the colonized peoples in the fight for their freedom and independence.

The legitimate government and parliament were dispersed. And this was done with the support of the countries that call themselves the free world.

Zakharova