

February 18, 1961

**Instructions of N. S. Khrushchev to the CPSU CC
Concerning the Preparation of a Letter to Asian and
African Countries About a Reorganization of the UN**

Citation:

"Instructions of N. S. Khrushchev to the CPSU CC Concerning the Preparation of a Letter to Asian and African Countries About a Reorganization of the UN", February 18, 1961, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, f. 52, op. 1, d. 346, ll. 106-113. Contributed by Sergey Radchenko. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/300909>

Summary:

Khrushchev criticizes UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld for failing to prevent the murder of Patrice Lumumba, arguing that those who enabled the conditions for his death share responsibility. He calls for the reorganization of the United Nations to ensure equal representation for all countries, asserting that its current structure serves the interests of colonial and imperial powers rather than newly independent states.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

RGANI. F. 52. Op. 1. D. 346. L. 106-113. Original. Typescript

Instructions of N. S. Khrushchev to the CPSU CC Concerning the Preparation of a Letter to Asian and African Countries About a Reorganization of the UN 18 February 1961

[We] need to touch on the question of the United Nations more broadly. The question of the Congo has been decided. Lumumba has been killed - this was their main goal, because there is no such figure¹⁵ right now. The murder of Lumumba was agreed to beforehand, journalists blurted this out this, and it slipped into the press. This was an American idea for creating an Ilio^{16b} (?) government. When the government was created there was no need to kill Lumumba then for there to be no contrast. Now there is no longer a premier of a legally-elected parliament.

b SIC. Obviously, [Joseph] Ileo was meant.

We speak of Hammarskjold not only because he killed Lumumba¹⁷. Time erases the scars caused by misfortune. The problem is there was already an agreement about this in order to kill Lumumba when Lumumba invited the UN troops and Hammarskjold, fulfilling the decisions of the Security Council, sent these troops and actually deprived the government headed by Lumumba of the ability to run the country. That is why this plot of the colonial imperialist powers was organized as soon as they saw that the realization of these plans of the colonizers was impracticable with the Congo, as a result of which the Prime Minister of the Congo, Lumumba, correctly understood the need to win full independence of his country and liberation from the Belgians. And when he raised this question, since every government and people have this right and should have raised [it], then they proceeded to deprive it of the ability to control the country, putting in stooges like Tshombe. Katanga¹⁷ was actually separated [from Congo]. The Belgians gave Katanga weapons, their officers, advisers, that is, they preserved the colonizers' system. They actually replaced the main representative of the colonial power, Belgium, with a stooge not from the representatives of the Belgian colonizers, but a black from the local population.

Nehru needs to be told about this. We immediately understood this scheme, and therefore we spoke at the General Assembly, criticizing the UN actions and mainly the actions of Hammarskjold. It was already distinctly clear them what tactic the colonizers and imperialist powers would employ, using the United Nations in the solution of the difficulties which arose in the area of international questions which needed to be solved through the UN. We saw that with their actions the UN demonstrated most clearly that it was being used by the imperialist monopolistic circles of the colonialist and imperialist powers in their own interests. And if we, the socialist countries and the countries which observe a neutralist policy, had accepted this in silence then [we] would find ourselves bankrupt people unable to assess the situation and unable to draw conclusions.

What policy are the colonial and imperialist powers now pursuing to the advantage of monopoly capital? Right now they want to replace the obsolete form, the form of crude, open colonial imperialist policy with a more disguised form, that is, they want to disguise their goal of the oppression, subjugation, and exploitation of peoples and the riches of these countries through stooges. And always many traitors and turncoats will be found among all peoples. Here they found Kasavubu, Tshombe, and Mobutu. These are little people, the dregs, who are ready to serve not their own people, but those who pay them. And the colonizers pay them.

On what money do Kasavubu, Tshombe, and Mobutu live? From what money does Mobutu pay his bandits which he sent to stifle the Congolese people? Who pays these people? Everyone know that Belgium pays. And not only Belgium. We aren't naming the others, but you yourselves understand the sources here are quite broad because Belgium is not just pursuing the policy of Belgian colonizers, but is also pursuing the policy of colonization of those powers which essentially support colonizers. This was clearly identified in the solution of the problem about granting independence to colonized peoples. Here a watershed was quite sharply made - who is for freedom and who is against freedom. But the colonial policy is so bankrupt right now that they didn't even dare to openly vote against granting independence, they abstained. But

what is such an abstention by the most important countries of the imperialist and colonial camp? This means that they do not share this decision, but once they do not share it, they will then oppose this movement. But here the results here were long in coming. They have begun right now to more actively pursue a new attack on the people who are fighting for independence. The murders of Lumumba and others are brazen terroristic acts against the liberation of colonial peoples.

But right now they want to cover themselves with phrasemongering speeches of peace-loving, benevolence, not stirring up the Cold War, stopping military conflicts, etc. in order to reconcile with the fact of their murder of Lumumba and to create such conditions for [their] stooges to take over. That is, they want to achieve their goal, but to cover themselves with phrasemongering declarations so we yield to these false assurances and agree with them. Of course, we would show ourselves to be short-sighted politicians who don't understand the logic of things, who yield to the persuasion and influence of false arguments, which say one thing and do another. As Stevenson said in his speech, if after Kennedy came to power the United States of America had actually wanted to really restrain the colonizers of Belgium then Lumumba would not have been murdered. But they would not have been any motives for this, therefore they not only did not take any steps, but simply connived. As a rule, every robber who has committed his dirty deed with a knife or crowbar justifies his actions in order to find some arguments to find some extenuation and leniency from the court and the public. We cannot tolerate this infamous act which was committed through the UN, through official representatives, [and] through the Secretary-General. This Hammarskjold killed Lumumba. For a murderer is not the person in whose hands the knife or revolver was put, but the person who allowed this. At the invitation of the government of the Congo Hammarskjold sent troops which were to have defended the government and the prime minister. These same troops, as soon as they arrived, were immediately used against Lumumba and against the government; airfields were blockaded, the operation of radio stations was interrupted, and they were deprived of communications with the provinces. The Prime Minister did not have the ability to even get an aircraft to come to the UN, to the organization which he asked to give him aid by sending troops. What is this? It means that when these troops were sent Hammarskjold already knew how they would conduct themselves. Of course, not Hammarskjold himself, but the executors of the will of those who support the colonial imperialist countries which are guided by the interests of the colonizers and the interests of the monopolists, who want to continue to oppress and exploit and colonial and underdeveloped peoples who have received independence.

The murderers need to be judged. The investigation is a maneuver of the colonizers and imperialists in order to drag out the investigation and seek time to erase the intensity and grief which was caused the freedom-loving peoples of all countries by the murder of Lumumba. And then a minor figure will be found in the person of a captain will be found or they will say that they were unable to find the murderers, that this occurred as a result of the spontaneous indignation of the residents of a village, etc. We know that these were experienced killers, from among those who openly seize colonies and control these colonies through stooges, who turn to killing people they don't like who resist them. Their methods have already been known for decades and centuries, they are described in literature.

It is necessary to reorganize the structure of the UN in order for the Cold War not to flare up, to preclude a "hot war". Whether it is Hammarskjold or someone else, but with the existing structure it will all the same be a stooge of the colonial and imperial powers who will reflect their interests, the only difference being that in what form or with what tactics it will be accomplished. For the United Nations to be an international body all countries in this international body should have equal opportunities [for] managing this body and its activity. We do not seek advantages for the socialist camp to dominate other groups of countries in the UN, but we don't want to permit the representatives of any group to dominate us as exists right now as was clearly and crudely demonstrated with Congo.

But this is only a beginning. Our position, which was presented at the General Assembly, and our proposals about the need to reorganize the UN have shown the correctness of our criticism and our proposals even more clearly. Therefore whoever

wants the United Nations to actually live, who thinks that the UN in [its] present form has outlived itself, that right now it is becoming open to the diktat of the colonizers and imperialists who are supported by monopoly capital, who wants to actually ease the international situation and adopt decisions which would not harm the three groups of countries which have formed at the present time, is one who should support the proposal to reorganize the United Nations.

Mr. ...a I would like to present the point of view of our government completely frankly inasmuch as we firmly hold to this position. Whether this will find understanding right now or not is difficult to say. If not, we regret this, but all the same we will not yield. We cannot be in such an Organization and thereby create the appearance that it is an international organization and is guided by international interests. This would only serve as a front for the colonial countries, for the imperialist countries which are guided by the interests of monopoly capital.

a The ellipsis is in the text of the document.

The colonizers have created their own organizations - NATO, SEATO, and CENTO¹⁹. In the Congo Belgium pursues not only its own policy, it is the policy of Britain, France, and the policy of allies in NATO, SEATO, and CENTO.

The imperialists are testing their forces in Congo right now. They want to return this colony to Belgian rule, but with stooges from among the Congolese, which are President Tshombe, Mobutu, and others. If they are successful this will cheer them up and cause even greater brazenness for an attack along an entire front against all the colonial peoples of Africa and Asia which have received their independence.

Therefore we should display the will to fight and the skill to look into this intricate policy of the colonizers, who speak sweetly. It is no accident that the Americans are adopting the statement of T. Roosevelt, "Speak softly, but carry a big stick", right now. This is also a demonstration in fact: they methodically give sweet speeches, speaking softly, but they thrust a revolver and knife into the bodies of peoples who are fighting for their independence, who are actually economically enslaved by the monopolists. This is especially obviously clear in the examples of the fight against Cuba, which is pursuing a policy of political and economic independence as a result of a revolution.

The document should be drawn up diplomatically, without insults, without verbal abuse, in order not to give grounds for a protest or non-acceptance of this document.