

American Committee on Africa  
801 Second Avenue  
New York 17, New York  
May 13, 1960

Statement of Kenneth Kaunda

I came out here about a month ago on the invitation of the American Committee on Africa, and I am now about to go back home. I have travelled from coast to coast and in both North and South of this country.

A few days ago I read from newspapers that there had been rioting in some towns on the Copperbelt which resulted in the death of one white woman. Further reports show that tension is still high; that white people are buying more and more firearms; that white people have asked for the resignation of Governor Hone; that Governor Hone has banned my party (UNIP, the United National Independence Party) in the Western Province and has arrested more than 120 Africans including some of my colleagues.

What has led to this very unfortunate, sad, and deplorable situation? At this time I will not know all the facts, probably until I get back home. But it is true to say that Northern Rhodesia has never really been stable politically ever since the British Government imposed Federation on the unwilling Africans just to satisfy a handful of power-hungry settlers in 1953. Last year a new constitution -- another of the many impositions -- was introduced in Northern Rhodesia. It provided 22 seats for 70,000 settlers and only 8 seats for 3,000,000 Africans. Because of the high qualitative franchise which places every white man on the voters' roll on the basis of one-man-one-vote because of his economically strong position, and which excludes Africans from having any effective say in the running of government business, 4 of those 8 seats were taken by black candidates who stood on European tickets.

We of the now banned Zambia African National Congress opposed this constitutional arrangement as unchristian, unethical, impolitic, and unworkable

in an area in which there was mass awakening on the African continent. Our organization was banned. We were arrested and exiled. Some of us were re-arrested, tried, and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, while others remained exiled. We were all released early this year.

All this time has seen political tension in Northern Rhodesia grow. Government has rushed in legislation after legislation, the last of which is called the Public Security Bill. It gives the Governor powers of a complete dictator.

The granting of independence to the Congo after serious riots, the announcement by the Colonial Secretary of negotiations that are to start in London for Nyasaland's conditional advance, the recent changes in Kenya and Tanganyika that provide the first step to national independence and self-determination for Africans have seriously added to the tension.

Well, violence has been reported in the press. I don't know what circumstances surround this. But violence I condemn very seriously as a method of achieving our noble ends. Violence I condemn without reserve and very strongly no matter where it comes from. Distant as I am from my country I wish to appeal to all my people to refrain from any acts of violence and to remain calm no matter how trying the circumstances. "No circumstances can be so trying as to justify violence." Our January Conference endorsed this by 150 votes to 1. I appeal to all of you to control yourselves. Violence is no answer to our problems. I know your aspirations and hopes. I also understand your fears. I am presenting your case before the Hon. Ian Macleod on Tuesday the 17th, and hope to be with you soon after.

Nonviolence is a dynamic and not a dormant force as you all know. We shall employ it to the full if we fail to get what we want by negotiations. But this shall be our strict observation of the meaning of the policy.

We have a strong and very good case. It has won us friends in this country. It has already won us friends in Britain itself. We have the undoubted sympathy of the entire thinking world.

Let us be worthy of this sympathy. We want to take over with grace. It is a noble cause; let us employ noble means.

Lastly, remember seven decades of history watch you! You will remain true to your ancestors and you will not do anything to shame your posterity! The white men in that country and ourselves are today on the altar of judgment. Let the unbiased judges not only say, "The white man there was wrong," but also, "The black man there remained true to himself."

To my American friends I wish to say how grateful I am to all of you for all your friendliness, sympathy, and hospitality that I met with wherever I went.