

April 11, 1961

STATEMENT BY KENNETH KAUNDA, PRESIDENT, UNITED NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE PARTY OF
NORTHERN RHODESIA

Once again I have had the opportunity of being invited by the ACOA to make addresses at Africa Freedom Day Rallies in Washington on the 15th and here in New York on the 17th.

I gratefully accepted this invitation because I feel it important that the American government and public should know at first hand what is happening in British controlled Central Africa and what informed African opinion is. No time would be more appropriate for carrying on such a mission than this when Africa and all her friends are taking stock of what has been achieved and what remains to be done as the FREEDOM MOVEMENT sweeps across the entire continent like a wild bush fire. It is, further, a suitable time for me to try and create a body of public opinion that is favorable to us and our cause at the U.N. among various African delegations and all sympathetic groups.

Northern Rhodesia, a British Protectorate which was forced into the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953, has recently been in the news because of an important conference which was called late last year to decide the constitutional future of the country. This conference ended in a deadlock in London due to un-called for and unconstitutional interference by the Federal Prime Minister, Sir Roland (Roy) Welensky. Sir Roland Welensky, who for the last ten or so years has continuously hoodwinked the world into believing he was genuine about his partnership policy, has just revealed his political and moral bankruptcy by refusing to allow a healthy change from minority to majority political control as was obviously envisaged by the British Colonial secretary Hon. Iain McLeod.

The result of this unwarranted interference has been political indecision leading us into a serious economic stalemate that is hitting everyone in the country and it can, therefore, be said honestly that Sir Roland Welensky and all his satellites have consciously rejected a great opportunity of bringing prosperity, happiness, and racial harmony for their own selfish ends.

On the other hand, although the basic thoughts that guide us are nationalistic, we are sufficiently broad-minded as to accept the various elements that make up the country of Northern Rhodesia and of the inter-dependence of these various elements on each other. The temper of the African people is ready for a peaceful and graceful change. It is not a change for selfish reasons. It is a change in which they intend to respect the rights of all other peoples in the world and will surely lead to a policy of mutual respect, complete trust and permanent harmony between all our people in Northern Rhodesia.

I cannot think of a stronger assurance that one can have than that we will endure as a nation.

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