
SUBMISSIONS TO THE NAMIREMBE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE (1954)

From D. A. Low (ed.), *The Mind of Buganda: Documents of the Modern History of an African Kingdom*. University of California Press, 1971. © various.

Statement by Bishop J. Kiwanuka to the second meeting of the Conference attended by the Governor, Sir Andrew Cohen, 3 August 1954.

Salient features in our Joint Talks with H.E. the Governor

I should like to inform your Excellency of the inner feelings and thoughts of the Buganda nation so that there may be no misunderstandings in the future. Firstly under the 1900 Agreement Act 5 contemplated Buganda as autonomous in her internal affairs. The principle of repugnancy therein enunciated would otherwise make no sense. The powers of the Buganda Kingdom were to be left unimpaired except where such powers had been expressly surrendered or limited by the terms of the Agreement.

We demand observance of the spirit of the Agreement and the right to make our own mistakes in our own affairs.

Secondly, Buganda is anxious to place the Kabaka outside the storm centre of politics which caused the present crisis.

Lastly, she seeks a solution to the present crisis.

If these three points are settled we shall be able to give to the people a satisfactory account of our work on the Committee.

A Short Historical Review

1. Buganda was never conquered. She asked Britain to protect her until her 'coming of age'. She did not ask to be ruled as a colonial protectorate, but as a unit guided and assisted by the British and as a consideration for this protection the Kabaka and chiefs of Buganda expressly agreed to renounce in favour of Her Majesty the Queen tribute which they formerly exacted from neighbouring territories.

2. As regards her relations with other parts of Uganda, the Baganda would submit that the fact that they ceded their ascendancy over those territories does not mean that they should be placed on the same level with them. In fact in many respects the Baganda are more advanced. I may mention a general fear among the people that in matters of Education there is a deliberate policy to keep the Baganda waiting until the other countries in Uganda shall have reached their present level.

While we agree with Her Majesty's Government over the long-term objectives we submit that the short-term aims should be viewed in the light of the foregoing premises. If the above facts are borne in mind then plainly our requests are not favours or privileges but rather we are asking for what we had before the 1900 Agreement and what falls within the purview of the Agreement. It is time for us to assume full responsibility over our rights.

The Council of Muluka Mutuba I Kabowa, Gombolola of Omukulu we Kibuga, Kyaddondo, to Professor Sir Keith Hancock, Chairman, Buganda Constitutional Committee, 10 August 1954.

[From the minutes and papers of the Buganda Constitutional Committee 1954 in the possession of various of its members.]

We, the undersigned, Members of Muluka Council of Mt: I, in the Gombolola of Omukulu we Kibuga, Kyaddondo, beg to lay before you our submissions as follows:

1. That, our Great Lukiiko's representatives, who had been sent out to the United Kingdom on matters affecting the return of the Kabaka, reported back to the Lukiiko that your coming out here would be the means for the Kabaka's return. On your part, however, you have told us that you had no intention whatsoever of touching on any subject or subjects affecting the Kabaka. We, however, would like to tell you that whatever you and your Committee do, is bound to prove fruitless, unless and until His Highness Kabaka Mutesa II has been returned to us and to his throne of the Buganda Kingdom; because we ourselves do not find him guilty of any crime warranting his deportation. In fact, all of us do still recognize him now as being our only Kabaka. The circumstances under which the Kabaka was deported were no other than his submission of our wishes to the Governor, which is and was one of the former's duties to do, and which he has been doing previously. Still more should you be convinced that whatsoever constitutional changes, that your Committee and yourself, are engaged on can neither be in themselves, nor be recognized, as right, without both the approval and the presence of the Kabaka here in this country. It will be only through the return of the Kabaka that our confidence in the Protectorate Government may be restored.

2. We should like to remind you that the two Agreements of 1894 and 1900, entered into between Great Britain and the Kingdom of Buganda, were negotiated and concluded merely out of mutual friendship, but not as Buganda being the conquered; between a great Nation and a young one, that Buganda should be given peaceful protection and education. Because of this, Great Britain is not at liberty to deprive us of our rulers by sheer force and against our own consent. Should she resort to such a line of action, Great Britain would not be discharging her obligations to us, as undertaken by her. We therefore do urge for the abolition of whatever sections in the 1900 Agreement, whereby the Protectorate Government is, or may be, vested with any high-handed powers for the

dismissal and/or deportation of Native Rulers and for the usurpation of powers of Native Rulers by direct access to their people.

3. The present two-Government system should be done away with, and be substituted by a single power policy only, assisted by the Protectorate Government, because, it is only by this way that we can learn the ways and means of taking charge of our own Government ourselves. Responsibilities, in as much as they affect Buganda alone, such as over land, hospitals, schools, etc., should, therefore, be transferred to Mengo.

4. We are most strongly opposed to our Kabaka's being made a mere supreme Figurehead for the purpose of imitating European ways and customs, so far as it is within the power of the Great Lukiiko alone to elect and/or depose the Kabaka, should he prove useless to us.

5. We do urge that the ministers be elected in the Great Lukiiko and merely be approved by the Kabaka, similarly, that the matter affecting the Sixty (60) Representatives does remain as it is at present.

6. The present procedure, impoverishing our Government and the Country, should be abolished, inasmuch as it is being deprived of sources of taxation revenues, and since it is by the same procedure that we are denied free access to trade facilities.

7. The Uganda Legislative Assembly should draw its powers from Provincial Administrations. Therefore people from various provinces in Uganda should meet and decide how they want that Assembly to be conducted.

8. We most strongly protest against being annexed to Kenya and Tanganyika and we do not accept in any way that European and Asian immigrants into Uganda, should either be regarded as 'Settlers', nor that they should compete for seats on the Legislative Council, as if they were Africans.

9. We do urge for self-government with the least delay, by reasons of the fact that the British were invited here merely to protect and educate us, but not to assume the powers of conquerors over us.