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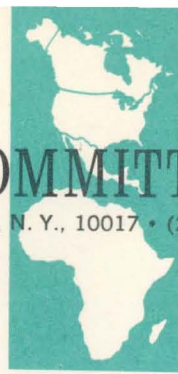
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publishers of AFRICA TODAY

# AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA

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August 13, 1964

Dear Friend:

We have just sent the following telegram to President Johnson, Secretary of State Rusk, and Ambassador Stevenson:

"We deplore unilateral decision to send US Army and Air Force personnel to Congo. This commits US to involvement in African struggle in new dimension. If US troops are fired upon defending transport planes, they inevitably are involved in shooting war. We cannot afford new Vietnam in Africa. This action designed to increase already great suspicions of US intentions in Africa, especially by African states. Tshombe can only win support for his government among African states by creating a new image of freedom from outside control and devotion to struggle for independence in Southern Africa. US should press for solution to Congo crisis within OAU and UN."

I have just returned from six weeks in Africa, including several days in the Congo. In my consultation with African leaders outside the Congo, including such respected men as Kenneth Kaunda, Prime Minister of Northern Rhodesia, I found real dismay because of the events bringing Tshombe into power in the Congo. Nothing could be designed more to damage American prestige and intentions in Africa than the course which our government is following of sending even a small military contingent to try to bolster Tshombe's regime.

As our telegram says, Tshombe must create a new image of himself among African leaders if he is to win their support. He must make clear that he is not the tool of outside interests. He must unmistakably take a stand for freedom in South Africa and the Portuguese territories.

The role for the US at this time is to urge the Organization of African Unity to do what it can to keep the cold war protagonists from calling the tune in the Congo. There are many factors that could lead to a new Vietnam in Africa.

I hope you will give this urgent consideration and send a message to the President urging that military personnel be withdrawn.

Sincerely yours,

*George M. Houser*  
George M. Houser