

# Congo: Congo - 3

*HS L 179:137*



National Library  
of Sweden

Dag Hammarskiölds samml.

L 179: 137

## Congo

Albertville incident - copies cables

- 23 Aug. 1960

(Belgian troops attacked by armed  
Africans in CFL station in Albertville)

Cable received from Byrne, Berendsen, Elisabethville  
dated 23 August 1960

Gheysen informed that Belgian troops in CFL station in  
Albertville had been attacked by armed Africans, had fired in  
self-defence and had wounded one African. We urged that local  
Belgian commanders should be instructed to use maximum restraint  
until they could be withdrawn.

Cable received from Byrne, Berendsen, Elisabethville  
dated 23 August 1960

Gheysen informed that Belgian troops in CFL station in Albertville had been attacked by armed Africans, had fired in self-defence and had wounded one African. We urged that local Belgian commanders should be instructed to use maximum restraint until they could be withdrawn.

Cable received from Byrne, Berendsen, Elisabethville  
dated 23 August 1960

Gheysen informed that Belgian troops in CFL station in Albertville had been attacked by armed Africans, had fired in self-defence and had wounded one African. We urged that local Belgian commanders should be instructed to use maximum restraint until they could be withdrawn.

Cable received from Byrne, Berendsen, Elisabethville  
dated 23 August 1960

Gheysen informed that Belgian troops in CFL station in Albertville had been attacked by armed Africans, had fired in self-defence and had wounded one African. We urged that local Belgian commanders should be instructed to use maximum restraint until they could be withdrawn.

Cable received from Byrne, Berendsen, Elisabethville  
dated 23 August 1960

Gheysen informed that Belgian troops in CFL station in Albertville had been attacked by armed Africans, had fired in self-defence and had wounded one African. We urged that local Belgian commanders should be instructed to use maximum restraint until they could be withdrawn.

Cable received 23 August 1960 from Byrne, Berendsen, Elisabethville:

1. We informed Tshombe that a preliminary inquiry was already being carried out on the spot by our Chief of Staff. Pending his report, we could not accept allegations against Mali troops as established. If his report showed any grounds for complaint we should naturally make more detailed inquiries. We expressed doubt that a joint enquiry was desirable, but reserved a final answer until 10:00 hours local time to-morrow.

2. We assured Tshombe that we were endeavouring, if airplanes arrive from Leopoldville, to lift additional troops to Albertville to-morrow morning.

3. We are seriously handicapped by having only ineffective direct communications with Albertville and by having to rely largely on Belgian and Katangese reports for information.

Cable received 23 August 1960 from Byrne, Berendsen, Elisabethville:

1. We informed Tshombe that a preliminary inquiry was already being carried out on the spot by our Chief of Staff. Pending his report, we could not accept allegations against Mali troops as established. If his report showed any grounds for complaint we should naturally make more detailed inquiries. We expressed doubt that a joint enquiry was desirable, but reserved a final answer until 10:00 hours local time to-morrow.

2. We assured Tshombe that we were endeavouring, if airplanes arrive from Leopoldville, to lift additional troops to Albertville to-morrow morning.

3. We are seriously handicapped by having only ineffective direct communications with Albertville and by having to rely largely on Belgian and Katangese reports for information.

Cable received 23 August 1960 from Byrne, Berendsen, Elisabethville:

1. We informed Tshombe that a preliminary inquiry was already being carried out on the spot by our Chief of Staff. Pending his report, we could not accept allegations against Mali troops as established. If his report showed any grounds for complaint we should naturally make more detailed inquiries. We expressed doubt that a joint enquiry was desirable, but reserved a final answer until 10:00 hours local time to-morrow.

2. We assured Tshombe that we were endeavouring, if airplanes arrive from Leopoldville, to lift additional troops to Albertville to-morrow morning.

3. We are seriously handicapped by having only ineffective direct communications with Albertville and by having to rely largely on Belgian and Katangese reports for information.

Cable received 23 August 1960 from Byrnes, Berendsen, Elisabethville:

1. We informed Tshombe that a preliminary inquiry was already being carried out on the spot by our Chief of Staff. Pending his report, we could not accept allegations against Mali troops as established. If his report showed any grounds for complaint we should naturally make more detailed inquiries. We expressed doubt that a joint enquiry was desirable, but reserved a final answer until 10:00 hours local time to-morrow.

2. We assured Tshombe that we were endeavouring, if airplanes arrive from Leopoldville, to lift additional troops to Albertville to-morrow morning.

3. We are seriously handicapped by having only ineffective direct communications with Albertville and by having to rely largely on Belgian and Katangese reports for information.

Cable received 23 August 1960 from Byrns, Berendsen, Elisabethville:

1. We informed Tshombe that a preliminary inquiry was already being carried out on the spot by our Chief of Staff. Pending his report, we could not accept allegations against Mali troops as established. If his report showed any grounds for complaint we should naturally make more detailed inquiries. We expressed doubt that a joint enquiry was desirable, but reserved a final answer until 10:00 hours local time to-morrow.

2. We assured Tshombe that we were endeavouring, if airplanes arrive from Leopoldville, to lift additional troops to Albertville to-morrow morning.

3. We are seriously handicapped by having only ineffective direct communications with Albertville and by having to rely largely on Belgian and Katangese reports for information.

Cable received from Mr. Bunche, Leopoldville,  
dated 23 August 1960

Following received from Berendsen. Reads: "In view of deterioration of situation at Albertville Gheysens has ordered a COY of Belgian paratroopers to proceed to Albertville airport. This for protection of Belgian residents. We are warning Gheysens of gravity from international point of view of any Belgian intervention in the situation. Imperative that we have UN aircraft earliest tomorrow for airlift of additional UN troops to Albertville."

Cable received from Mr. Bunche, Leopoldville,  
dated 23 August 1960

Following received from Berendsen. Reads: "In view of deterioration of situation at Albertville Gheysens has ordered a COY of Belgian paratroopers to proceed to Albertville airport. This for protection of Belgian residents. We are warning Gheysens of gravity from international point of view of any Belgian intervention in the situation. Imperative that we have UN aircraft earliest tomorrow for airlift of additional UN troops to Albertville."

Cable received from Mr. Bunche, Leopoldville,  
dated 23 August 1960

Following received from Berendsen. Reads: "In view of deterioration of situation at Albertville Gheysens has ordered a COY of Belgian paratroopers to proceed to Albertville airport. This for protection of Belgian residents. We are warning Gheysens of gravity from international point of view of any Belgian intervention in the situation. Imperative that we have UN aircraft earliest tomorrow for airlift of additional UN troops to Albertville."

Message from Berendsen, Elisabethville

The following letter from Mr. Tshombé and his Cabinet was delivered to Mr. Berendsen in the evening of 23 August 1960:

J'ai l'honneur, en suite de ma lettre du 23 courant de porter à votre connaissance que les rapports concernant la situation à Albertville deviennent de plus en plus alarmants.

Ceux-ci font état des fait suivants qui auraient été constatés par des témoins oculaires:

Transports d'autochtones dans des camions de l'ONU et leur acheminement vers la ville d'Albertville.

Arrestation d'Européens à des barricades érigées et gardées conjointement par des civils congolais armés et des soldats du Mali.

Distribution d'armes par des soldats du Mali à la population civile congolaise.

Par ailleurs ces rapports font état des menaces de plus en plus graves qui pèsent sur la vie et les biens de la population.

Il semble que des détachements du Mali demeurent étrangement indifférents devant cette grave détérioration de la situation.

Il me paraît opportun qu'une commission d'enquête composée de membres de l'ONU et de mon Gouvernement se rende sans délai sur place afin de vérifier la véracité des faits exposés ci-dessus et qui constitueraient, s'ils devaient s'avérer exactes, une immixtion des troupes du Mali dans les affaires intérieures du Katanga.

D'autre part les rapports reçus ce jour révèlent que certains détachements du Mali échapperaient au contrôle des officiers supérieurs qui assument le commandement de ces troupes. Sans doute faut-il rapprocher cet état de choses des événements survenus dans la fédération du Mali.

Si ces information devaient se confirmer il y aurait lieu à mon sens de procéder sans tarder à la relève de ces troupes indisciplinées qui semblent être d'une part incapables d'assumer le maintien de l'ordre et de la tranquillité alors que l'ONU avait solennellement pris l'engagement de les faire respecter et d'autre part partiellement responsables de la détérioration du climat d'ordre et de la paix qui régnaient avant leur arrivée.

Je vous prie, M. le Représentant, de prendre immédiatement les mesures qui s'imposent pour faire cesser cet état de choses à défaut de quoi mon Gouvernement se réserve le droit d'agir d'initiative.

Je vous prie de croire, M. le Représentant, à l'assurance de ma haute considération".