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ADDRESS TO THE NATION BY THE PRESIDENT, DR. A.
MILTON OBOYE, ON RADIO UGANDA AND U.T.V., ON
WEDNESDAY, 8TH OCTOBER, 1969.

Fellow citizens:

In three hours' time we shall say goodbye to the seventh year of our Independence. That year was characterised by the question "Where do we go from here?" The answer which the people of Uganda take into the eighth year of our Independence is that we must do more than we have done before in the consolidation of our Sovereign status so as to enable Uganda to move faster to her goals. We must particularly, in the eighth year of our Independence, concentrate on the promotion of human understanding amongst the people of Uganda, education of the rural population and urban workers, as well as students, in knowing more and more about Uganda, and in the creation of economic institutions controlled by the people and managed by them.

During the seven years of Independence the people of Uganda as a whole have shown their capacity to run the biggest business in Uganda - the Government of our country. The demonstration of that capacity is another pillar of strength which I urge you, fellow citizens, to promote further in the management of our National affairs covering both Government and non-Governmental institutions.

While I admit that Government must be controlled by the people, I must also urge the people of Uganda that for their own good it would be wrong to allow other institutions not controlled by the people, to develop and to decide on whatever they do, irrespective of the interests and the wishes of the people as a whole. One of the pillars of the type of Government the people of Uganda wish to establish, is that the Government must be run by the majority with safeguards for the minority. This is a noble idea

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we must take into the eighth year of our Independence, and I can promise you that the Government of Uganda will do everything possible to see the idea further implemented.

The important matter in the implementation of this idea rests on the effectiveness of the voice and the participation of the people in Government institutions. In the past many citizens of this country have not interpreted the word "people" correctly. It was interpreted in a manner which excluded some citizens of Uganda from being amongst the people to have a voice in governmental institutions. In the same way, the word "majority" was equally misinterpreted and where a faction or groups of one kind or another banded together to support a particular policy or measure - not necessarily for the good of Ugandans a whole - we have tended to accept that phenomenon as the voice of the people. On the other hand, leaders of such factions have always known that within the factions they lead members are not allowed to disagree with the opinions of the leaders. In the eighth year of our Independence I urge every citizen of Uganda, man and woman, young and old, to free himself or herself from the clutches of factionalism so as to join that noble band of free citizens resolutely marching forward to the goals of Uganda, without the inhibition of the powers of the past over his or her mind and body.

That being the course of our progress, it follows that the citizens of Uganda must participate in the organisation and the structure of the economy of Uganda as the main controllers and managers of our economy. It is wrong for the citizens of Uganda as a whole to control their Government and to leave the control of their economy in the hands of a minority. The new road of the eighth

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year of our Independence can be stated simply: the control of the Government by the people as a whole and the control of the economy of Uganda by the citizens of Uganda. We must reject the idea, tendency and practice whereby our economy is controlled by a minority with or without safeguards for the majority.

A few of our politicians who talk about democracy have tended to hide away from the people of Uganda the fact that we must not only have political but also economic democracy. Fellow citizens, you have all heard or read statements by such persons about how the Government should be controlled; or about the wickedness of the Government and how frustrating to the interests of the people the parastatal bodies are. The people who say those things always advocate that they have a ready answer, and their instant answer has always been that they themselves must be in Government, and that once they are in Government there will be no suffering and everything will be in plenty - schools, hospitals, roads, bore-holes, houses and all manner of amenities will spring up overnight; jails will be empty - there will be no more crime; everybody will get a job; prices of our commodities, such as sim-sim and beans, coffee and cotton, maize and matoke and all that we produce, will be multiplied several-fold - everybody will be rich and there will be no more poverty. We have had in abundance that kind of cheap talk or writing, before and since Independence. I am exceedingly happy that as we now enter into our eighth year of Independence the majority of the citizens of Uganda have no respect for such daydreams.

I cannot promise Heaven to the people of Uganda in the eighth year of our Independence. Even if it were within my power to promise you Heaven I would not do so. I prefer that we walk or run to Heaven rather than dream about/.....

about being in Heaven. The dream may be exhilarating, but we cannot sleep and dream all the time. We have to wake up sometime and when we do so it will be only to find that the exhilaration of the dream has not removed the realities of our present situation. The only dream I will accept and urge upon the people of Uganda to accept, is that while awake, in full possession of all our faculties, we resolve to attain through hard work certain ends. Having laid down and decided upon the ends to be achieved, we must know that the end is always the first in intention and the last in execution. That means that decision on goals comes first, but the realisation of the goals comes later and after considerable work has been done.

All of us who may be asking the question "Where do we go from here?" should be clear in our minds on what is meant by "we". In seven years of Independence an increasing number of citizens have shown considerable determination to look at Uganda as a whole in their various activities. Their number is increasing. The word "we", therefore, in the question we are asking at the moment represents the totality of the citizens of Uganda and not a section of it.

Before Independence and immediately thereafter, the citizens of Uganda, their well-wishers and even their enemies, saw our country as the leading country in Africa which believed in tribalism and religious differences as the major elements in politics. Through a mixture of evolutionary and revolutionary activities during the last seven years, these factors are no longer the powers that they used to be.

Nobody in Uganda was ever given a choice as to what tribe he or she should be born into, and none of us has/.....

has the power to order in what tribe a child should be born. It follows, therefore, that to reject or to favour a citizen of Uganda on the basis of his or her tribe is to reject Uganda; and to reject Uganda, on the other hand, is to reject Africa and to reject one's own identity. He who sees Uganda as consisting only of his immediate tribe or family of tribes reduces the size of Uganda and sets himself as a tribal imperialist.

The implications of religious differences as a factor in politics are not exactly the same as those of tribal bigotry. The first point to realise is that with religion persons belonging to different faiths will be found in every district in Uganda. It follows, therefore, that even if we take any area of Uganda where persons belonging to a particular religion constitute the majority in that area, no district of Uganda can geographically be described as the land of such and such a religious faith. There are even families whose members belong to different religions. The sensible thing to do, and which we must take with us into the eighth year of our Independence, is to give all people of Uganda belonging to different religions full freedom of worship, and to accept each and every citizen irrespective of his religion; and, above all, to give all citizens equal opportunities in the great task of Nation-building.

I am most grateful to the leaders of the Christian faith and the Muslims who have advocated and shown by their actions that Uganda can be a strong, united and prosperous Nation, undivided by religious differences. The Uganda Christian Council, in this respect, is one of the foremost Nation-building institutions that we take with us into the eighth year of our Independence.

That I have said so far are matters which have been with us since the day of Independence. Some of them will/.....

will certainly go with us into the eighth year of Independence. The main resolution which I urge upon you, the citizens of Uganda, is the pumping of the purchasing power back to the people, and to break the present economic system where the people produce and a minority gains considerable wealth because of the control that the minority has in the distribution of that wealth.

In the eighth year of our Independence we must, as a people, take stronger measures towards the attainment of that goal. We must break the present paradox of an almost infinite capacity of the people to produce, and a definite inability to control and distribute the wealth they are producing. Further institutions to enable the people to control and manage the economy of Uganda will have to be introduced, and you, fellow citizens, must begin to condition yourselves to doing business in such a way that you can plough back your earnings in further development.

As far as the Government is concerned, I can promise you that we will strengthen the parastatal bodies and where there are weaknesses everything will be done to remove those weaknesses. On the main issue as to whether or not they are necessary, the Government decision is definite and clear - they must exist. They are the instruments of the people in the control of our economy.

We must not surrender the control of our economy to a few people. Remember the form of Government we all wish to establish in Uganda; a Government controlled by the majority - that is democracy. We must, in the eighth year of our Independence, take further measures to introduce economic democracy. As in the case of Government, our economy must in the long run be controlled by the majority. The resolution I urge you to pass tonight is that we, the people of Uganda, shall control our Government and our economy.

I say all this "FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY".

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MESSAGE BY H.E. THE PRESIDENT ON THE OCCASION OF
THE EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF UGANDA INDEPENDENCE AT
KOLOLO AIRSTRIP, KAMPALA - 9TH OCTOBER, 1969

Fellow Citizens:

Once more I stand here, for the eighth time, on this ground and spot where we regained our freedom and started to march along the road to build our dignity and prosperity. This time I address you with more confidence than I have ever done before.

In seven years we have learnt a lot and all the time we were sustained by our own native confidence in our Country and in ourselves. Because of that confidence we now start our eighth year of Independence determined to do more for the achievement of the goals we have set for the unity and the prosperity of our Country. The evolutionary and revolutionary activities of the last seven years have now set for us a definite challenge. The challenge to think and to do more about and to do much more for the Common Man.

This is not a challenge I address to any particular group of citizens. It is a challenge to all the people of Uganda. It is a challenge to the Common Man to think more and more about himself and to do more than he has done before to improve his standard of living. It is a challenge to those amongst us who have had the benefit of high education. The challenge to them is to use that education for the benefit of the Common Man. The challenge extends to all leaders of our Country - political or otherwise - to use their positions in the guidance, service, welfare and advancement of the Common Man.

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As we enter into the eighth year of our Independence, I urge all of you to recognise and to identify two types of persons in Uganda who constitute our backbone and our strength, and upon whom depends our image here and abroad. First comes the rural population. The task that all of us must undertake to enable this group to rise above their present standard is difficult but not impossible. Amongst them will probably be found elements of traditionalism. We must assist them to free themselves from the hold of traditionalism. The most important task, however, that will have to be done in connection with the rural population, strange as it might sound in the ears of those who do not know the situation, is that they must be taught to want things, or at least to feel their wants and to demand their rights. For that purpose mass education of a different type than what we have had hitherto will have to be introduced. The second group of persons are the urban workers. They are relatively articulate and they are demanding. They must not be allowed to be the prey for demagogues and capitalists.

The proposed "Move To The Left" strategy will aim in the main at the upliftment of the working population in rural and urban areas. The eighth year of our Independence, therefore, must be seen as the year of the peasants and the workers. In order to give the peasants and the workers full opportunity for development, the eighth year of Independence must also be the year of ruthless uprooting of feudalism which may still be in our society.

Fellow citizens, in the words of our motto: "FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY", I ask for your support in this great and noble cause.