

SPEECH BY CHIEF THE HONOURABLE LEABUA JONATHAN,
PRIME MINISTER OF LESOTHO, AT MATELILE ON SUNDAY,
3RD DECEMBER, 1967

It was in ^{March} February 1868 when Lesotho was placed under British Administration. It was through that incident that we lost our sovereignty in both political and economic matters. Without in any way trying to revive the past unpleasantness or to place the blame on anybody, the truth remains indisputable that the almost hundred-year period of British administration in Lesotho was a period of economic stagnation and lack of progress in implementing national aspirations. Nonetheless, we still are grateful for the protection they have accorded us during all that period, and for the aid which up to now they continue to grant us for our budgetary needs, as also the little they still give us for capital development and economic advancement.

You will recall that it was in October this year when we celebrated the first anniversary of a once more independent Lesotho. The two years preceding the first anniversary of our independence have been years of great difficulties. The first pre-independence year had its difficulties well known to you and which I do not need to recount in this speech. We successfully passed, however, through this period until we gained our independence on the 4th October, 1966. The second year of our term of office was beset with even greater problems. These, too, were successfully resolved, not because of our wisdom and ingenuity but through the wise guidance and assistance of Our Divine Master, God Almighty, Who I invite you all to thank in all sincerity and once again to draw ourselves closer to Him in prayer for further increases of assistance, patience, fortitude, wisdom and foresight, to direct the affairs of this nation to the well-being of the people of Lesotho and to the greater honour and glory of God.

The year 1968 will be the year for striving towards economic viability since political independence without economic viability is an empty shell. It follows, therefore, that this and subsequent years will be very trying years - yet by determination, unity of action and singleness of purpose no doubt success will be achieved in this last lap of the war we have declared against poverty, ignorance and want. Aid we shall continue to receive from any freedom-loving country with goodwill towards us - provided, as I have always indicated,

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