

THE KING AND THE CONSTITUTION

STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER
IN THE SENATE ON THURSDAY, 7TH MARCH, 1968

The circumstances which led up to the signing of a written undertaking by His Majesty the King on the 5th January, 1967, are well known to Honourable Members. From the beginning His Majesty has been disinclined to submit to the provisions of the Constitution. His attitude has led to a gradual deterioration in the relationship between himself and his Ministers. One of the direct consequences of this was the disturbance of the 27th December, 1966, which led to bloodshed and loss of life.

In your presence and in the presence of members of the Cabinet His Majesty promised in writing the following:-

- "1. I shall co-operate with my Government abiding at all times by the provisions of the Constitution, and that I shall not convene or address any public meetings anywhere, other than those convened on the advice of my Government, which is responsible to the Nation for my acts. Where Fitsos have been organised by my Government, I shall deliver an address prepared for me by my Government.
2. There will be no person whatsoever - including Chieftainess 'Mampoi Makhoala - who will freely enter the Palace grounds in Maseru or Matsieng without prior permission by Government; furthermore my departure from the Palace will be known and arranged for by Government as it is the body responsible for my security.
3. Again, I accept the undertaking to remove Chief Reentseng Lerotholi, who has been nominated by me to administer on my behalf the Ward of Matsieng and also other caretakings which fall directly under me; the reason being that he has been proved by the College of Chiefs as the person responsible for the spread of confusion in the country.
4. If in the declared opinion of the Government it is evident that I have failed to carry out any of the terms of this undertaking and declaration, I freely and voluntarily agree that this declaration shall forthwith come into operation as a formal act and instrument of abdication by me of all my powers, rights, privileges and immunities as King of Lesotho without the necessity of any further act on my part."

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