# AMERICANIZING AFRICANIZATION:

# THE CONGO CRISIS, 1960-1967

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by

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AMERICANIZING AFRICANIZATION:
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation provides a concise account of U.S. intervention in the Congo between 1960 and 1967, explaining the decisions made by U.S. policymakers and their Congolese counterparts. It argues that the intervention occurred not only because of a commitment to contain the communist threat, but also because of a commitment to a liberal ideology, one devoted to remaking the world in the image of the United States. By confining the meanings of liberty, equality, and development to an American framework, however, the United States found itself in competition with local leaders' visions for their own country. As a consequence, the intervention not only failed to deliver freedom to the Congolese people, but tragically abetted Mobutu Sese Seko's rise to power, a dictator whose kleptocratic rule removed any hope for meaningful development over a thirty-year period.

# INTRODUCTION

U.S. intervention in the Congo Crisis (1960-1967) marked an unprecedented projection of American power in sub-Saharan Africa. As conventional narratives have argued, fears of a communist takeover provoked the United States to intervene. American policymakers believed Soviet control of the Congo, a country roughly the size of Western Europe and strategically located in the heart of Africa, would lead to the loss of central, if not all of, sub-Saharan Africa. The effects on Europe, and the Western economy at large, would be devastating. In 1959 the Congo alone produced seven percent of the West's tin, nine percent of its copper, forty-nine percent of its cobalt, and sixty-nine percent of its industrial diamonds.[1] John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower's Secretary of State, accurately referred to Africa as "the hinterland of Europe."[2]

But Cold War concerns were not the only factor given consideration by American policymakers. Decolonization had changed the dynamics of the international system. As empires ended, a North-South dimension emerged alongside the East-West competition that had dominated the international scene since the end of World War II. Leaders of Third World nations sought assistance in their quest for political, economic, and social freedom, placing the United States, the so-called leader of the "free world," in the limelight on issues such as self-determination, development, and racial discrimination.[3]

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[1] These minerals, in particular cobalt (used in jet engines), had contributed to the rise of American airpower. Henry F. Jackson, *From the Congo to Soweto: U.S. Foreign Policy toward Africa since 1960* (New York: W. Morrow, 1982), 23; Alfred E. Eckes, *The United States and the Global Struggle for Minerals* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980), 172, 233.

[2] Memorandum of Conversation, 8 October 1958, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter, *FRUS*) *1958-1960*, XIV: 251-253.

[3] Some pertinent examples of scholarship that have addressed this changing dynamic include: Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image*

This dissertation seeks to provide a clear and concise account of U.S. intervention in the Congo, explaining the decisions made by U.S. policymakers and their Congolese counterparts.[4] Like traditional diplomatic histories, it is concerned with the nature and effects of U.S. power.[5] It argues that U.S. intervention in the Congo ended in tragedy (American support for a right-wing dictator) not only because of a commitment to contain the communist threat, but also because of a commitment to a liberal ideology, one devoted to remaking the world in its own image.[6] Adopting the methodology of recent

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*of American Democracy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001); Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation-Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Ryan M. Irwin, "A Wind of Change?: White Redoubt and the Postcolonial Moment, 1960–1963," *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 5 (2009): 897-925; Matthew Connelly, "Taking Off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North-South Conflict During the Algerian War for Independence," *The American Historical Review* 105, no. 3 (2000): 739-769.

[4] One of my motivations for providing a clear and concise account of the Congo Crisis is to provide incentive for historians to include it in the narrative of twentieth-century U.S. foreign relations. In order to achieve this I have boiled it down to its most basic elements, and am aware that leaving out events that are conventionally discussed alongside the crisis, such as the Soviet proposed Troika for the UN in 1961, will concern some scholars.

[5] Implicit in this statement is the belief in the significance and centrality of the state in shaping international affairs, a belief called into question first by social and cultural historians, and most recently by international, transnational, and global historians. While I believe debate on the matter has proved fruitful, I accept Jeffrey Engel's opinion on the matter, "The contemporary scholar must be willfully blind to suggest state power does not matter." Jeffrey A. Engel, "Diplomatic History's Ill-Deserved Reputation and Bright Future," *Perspectives in American History* 50, (Dec. 2012): 41-43; William J. Novak, "The Myth of the "Weak" American State," *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 3 (2008): 752-772; Thomas W. Zeiler, "The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 95, no. 4 (2009); Charles S. Maier, "Marking Time: The Historiography of International Relations," in *The Past before Us : Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States*, ed. Michael G. Kammen(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 355-387.

[6] For a history of the containment policy see, John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982). For other instances where U.S. Cold War concerns led to the support of authoritarian regimes, see Ernest R. May and Philip Zelikow, eds., *Dealing with Dictators: Dilemmas of U.S. Diplomacy and Intelligence Analysis, 1945-1990* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006); David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They're on Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999). For histories explaining how American liberalism and Manifest Destiny affected U.S. foreign policy, see Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995); William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Norton, 1988). For examples of how American liberalism has historically expressed itself as state- or nation-building, see David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government : Race, Empire, the United States, & the Philippines*

international histories, this dissertation also seeks to elucidate the agency of Congolese leaders, treating local actors as subjects, rather than objects, of U.S. power.[7] In this regard, my project is a "joint history," as defined by Frederick Cooper, one that explains the outcome in the Congo as "a confluence of forces, some internal to Africa and some not."[8] As my access to archival sources from the Congo remained limited, I drew upon Congolese voices found in collections published by the *Centre de Recherche et d'Information Socio-Politiques* in Brussels, U.S. government documents, as well as a rich secondary literature on the Congo itself.[9]

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(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006).

[7] In particular, recent scholarship on the Vietnam War has provided an excellent model for elucidating the agency of local actors. It has shown that Third World leaders had their own vision, power, and agency, and that like American actors, were constrained by local politics, where they had to operate amidst factions, seek to create consensus, and were not immune to careerism. Fredrik Logevall, "What Really Happened in Vietnam: The North, the South, and the American Defeat," *Foreign Affairs* 91 (Nov./Dec. 2012): 129-136; Lien-Hang T. Nguyen, *Hanoi's War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Edward Garvey Miller, "Vision, Power and Agency: The Ascent of Ngo Dinh Diem, 1945-54," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 35, no. 3 (2004); Edward Garvey Miller, *Misalliance: Ngo Dinh Diem, the United States, and the Fate of South Vietnam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013). I have previously addressed this topic elsewhere, see William Mountz, "Congolese Agency in the Congo Crisis: Towards a New Narrative" (paper presented at the annual meeting for the World History Association, Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 26-29, 2013).

[8] This summarization of Frederick Cooper's argument is provided by Daniel Immerwahr, "Modernization and Development in U.S. Foreign Relations," *Passport* 43, (Sep. 2012): 22-25, 24. Also see Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Frederick Cooper, "Writing the History of Development," *Journal of Modern European History* 8, (2010): 5-23.

[9] When it comes to local actors' voices, the debate continues on what can and cannot be gleaned from U.S. government archives. But in my opinion, these archives, like European colonial archives, contain voices of local actors that prove insightful to the historian conscious of the agenda behind their collection, preservation, and presentation. For more on this matter see, Matthew James Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), vii-xiv; Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009); Antoinette M. Burton, ed. *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005); Antoinette M. Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home, and History in Late Colonial India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (New York: Verso, 1993); Carolyn Hamilton, ed. *Refiguring the Archive* (Boston: Kluwer Academic, 2002).

Though there are many well-researched and sophisticated works examining U.S. intervention in the Congo Crisis, few have sought to treat local actors as subjects, rather than objects, of U.S. power. For example, interpretations using a traditional Cold War framework, such as Madeleine Kalb's *The Congo Cables* (1982) and Lise Namikas's *Battleground Africa* (2013), portray the Congolese as pawns in part of a larger American-Soviet showdown.[10] Interpretations using a neocolonial or rudimentary Marxist-Leninist framework such as Kwame Nkrumah's *Challenge of the Congo* (1967) and David N. Gibbs' *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention* (1991) portray the Congolese as puppets of Western capitalist interests.[11] Interpretations that have emphasized the role of American liberalism as inspiring U.S. intervention, such as Stephen Weissman's *American Foreign Policy in the Congo* (1974) and Richard Mahoney's *JFK: Ordeal in Africa* (1983), have not treated equally Congolese visions with those of the Americans.[12] Stated otherwise, despite the seemingly wide range of interpretations that exist, they are more alike than they first appear, denying the Congolese the capacity to control their own thoughts and actions.

Applying a framework that accounts for Congolese agency while also drawing upon recently declassified documents from the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson

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[10] Namikas, though, does take into consideration UN and Soviet perspectives, and along with Sergey Mazov, has convincingly argued that the United States overstated the degree of Soviet infiltration in the Congo. Madeleine G. Kalb, *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa--from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York: Macmillan, 1982); S. V. Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956-1964* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010); Lise A. Namikas, *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2013).

[11] Kwame Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo* (New York: International Publishers, 1967); David N. Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention: Mines, Money, and U.S. Policy in the Congo Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[12] Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974); Richard D. Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983). Also see, Larry Grubbs, *Secular Missionaries: Americans and African Development in the 1960s* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009). One exception is John Kent, *America, the U.N. And Decolonisation: Cold War Conflict in the Congo* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

administrations (the latter of which I worked personally with archivists to acquire), provides a new and more nuanced recounting of the Congo Crisis. Chapter one explores the colonial legacy of King Leopold II and Belgium, and the origins of U.S. involvement. It discusses how the problems confronted by the Congolese at independence developed during colonial rule. It then examines Eisenhower's response to the crisis, arguing that his policies accounted for the effects of decolonization in world affairs, and in general were more tactful, if not any less cunning, than previously portrayed.[13] The chapter also argues that Congolese agency is as important as any covert operations carried out by the Americans for understanding Mobutu's first coup in September 1960. It concludes by displaying how the Kennedy administration continued to carry out many of the policies established by the Eisenhower administration. While the new administration embarked on a mission to "modernize" the Congo, it nonetheless accepted the Eisenhower administration's rationale for continuing to plot against Patrice Lumumba, the Congo's first democratically elected prime minister, and using the UN to resolve the crisis in order to keep the Cold War out of the region (i.e., keep the Soviets out).

Chapter two examines the role of the Kennedy administration in the election of Cyrille Adoula as prime minister in August 1961. This was arguably the administration's greatest achievement during the crisis, having maneuvered through a wide range of international and local interests in order to form a consensus that temporarily unified the country. Nevertheless, it ultimately undermined its long-term goals of creating political stability and instilling liberal values by employing bribery, blackmail, and threats that ended up widening the credibility gap between Adoula and the Congolese people.

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[13] See for example, George White, *Holding the Line: Race, Racism, and American Foreign Policy toward Africa, 1953-1961* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).

Chapters three and four examine the secession of the Katanga province that ended in January 1963 after having lasted nearly two and a half years. They argue that Kennedy's political pragmatism, itself a product of American liberal ideology, prolonged the secession, and as a result led to the loss of Congolese support for the Adoula government and the implementation of repressive policies. Furthermore, these two chapters give credit to Adoula and UN leaders, whose actions, rather than those of a reticent Kennedy administration, were responsible for ending the secession.[14]

Chapter five examines the Kennedy administration's nation-building efforts that occurred throughout 1963. It argues that the White House's attempt to right the Congo's economy failed because it ignored the advice of Adoula and other Congolese leaders who recommended a large injection of capital to finance road and bridge development, education, and what we now call micro-financing of indigenous entrepreneurs. The Kennedy administration did almost the complete opposite by implementing an austerity program and focusing on monetary reform. This failure, I argue, left the Johnson administration committed to the Congo with few choices but to create a semblance of stability and withdraw the United States as quickly as possible.[15] Chapter six examines the outbreak of revolts that occurred in 1964 as a result of the deteriorating economic conditions. Congolese revolutionaries declared war against their government, calling for a "*deuxième independence*" (a "second independence"), one that promised social and economic equality, and most importantly, freedom from foreign control. This chapter also

[14] This dissertation is not the first to make these assertions about Adoula and the UN. See, for example, Lise A. Namikas, "Battleground Africa: The Cold War and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2002).

[15] This chapter challenges how the Johnson administration is conventionally portrayed, as abandoning Kennedy's plans to establish a democratic government and modernize the Congo. See for example, Kent.

explains how the political turmoil combined with the Johnson administration's desire to extricate the United States from the Congo led to Moise Tshombe, leader of the Katanga secession, becoming prime minister in June 1964, and Mobutu becoming dictator in November 1965.

This recounting of the Congo Crisis concludes by arguing that the U.S. intervention is critical to our understanding of the current political landscape in the Congo, as well as the nature of U.S. foreign policy.[16] The 1960s were a testing ground for American liberalism. Nowhere had there been more optimism for what American liberalism could achieve abroad than in Africa. And nowhere did American policymakers expend more time and energy on that continent than in the Congo. But American liberalism failed to deliver freedom to that country, leaving long-lasting consequences for the Congolese people to deal with. The decay of the state under Mobutu's rule, for example, contributed to the destabilization of the region and approximately five million deaths since 1998, the year after he left power.[17] The intervention revealed the limits of American ideas and power, and the poverty of American liberalism as a guiding ideology, causing American policymakers to discard it in the 1970s in favor of a *realpolitik* paradigm.[18] As the historian William Appleman Williams observed over fifty years ago, "By its exaggerated confidence in American economic strength and military

[16] In this regard, this study is part of an emerging literature that views events in the Third World as central to interpreting the Cold War (as opposed to being "periphery"). Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 11; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Marilyn B. Young, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 36, (Nov. 2012): 955-961, 961.

[17] Gerard Prunier, *Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Jason Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011).

[18] Ending apartheid in South Africa, as Ryan Irwin has pointed out, was another area where American liberalism had failed in Africa, and as he notes, also contributed to the abandonment of American liberalism as a guiding ideology. Ryan M. Irwin, *Gordian Knot: Apartheid and the Unmaking of the Liberal World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

might, by its own arrogance and self-righteousness, and by its messianic distortion of a sincere humanitarian desire to help other peoples," U.S. foreign policy often tragically committed more harm than good.[19] So it was in the Congo.

[19] Williams, 8.

# CHAPTER ONE:

# BACKGROUND TO CRISIS AND THE ORIGINS OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT

The crisis that unfolded in the Congo after independence had been long in the making. King Leopold II of Belgium claimed the territory as his personal colony in 1885. His quest for profit led to the brutal exploitation of the indigenous population. Colonial agents forced the Congolese by means of kidnapping, mutilation, rape, and murder to collect sap from rubber trees. Much profit was made, but at the expense of ten million Congolese lives. An international reform movement led by the Belgian-shipping-clerk-turned-activist, E.D. Morel, and including the likes of Mark Twain and Arthur Conan Doyle, publicized these atrocities, and as a result King Leopold was forced to relinquish control of the Congo to the Belgian government in 1908.[1]

Picking up the so-called "white man's burden," the new Belgian overlords employed a thoroughgoing paternalism designed to "civilize" the Congolese and prepare them for self-rule. Though the number of atrocities decreased, key elements of Leopold's policies remained in place, and the quest for profit outweighed any commitment by Belgium to prepare the Congo for independence. As Louis Franck, the Belgian minister

[1] Mark Twain, *King Leopold's Soliloquy: A Defense of His Congo Rule* (Boston: P.R. Warren, 1905); Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Crime of the Congo* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1909); E. D. Morel, *Red Rubber: The Story of the Rubber Slave Trade Flourishing on the Congo* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969); William Roger Louis and Jean Stengers, eds., *E. D. Morel's History of the Congo Reform Movement* (Oxford: Clarendon P., 1968); Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 177-291; John Hope Franklin, *George Washington Williams: A Biography* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1998); Sharon Sliwinski, "The Childhood of Human Rights: The Kodak on the Congo," *Journal of Visual Culture* 5, no. 3 (2006): 333-363.

of colonial affairs wrote in 1921, the main goal in the Congo was to develop "the economic action of Belgium."[2]

For over half a century Belgium was able to rule over a territory nearly eighty times its size by employing a strategy of "divide and conquer." It kept the Congolese divided along tribal lines, and exploited these divisions by enabling one ethnic group to gain wealth or power at the expense of another.[3] As a result, tribal identity became imbued with political and class divisions.[4] In this way, African agency also played a role, as some chieftains collaborated with the colonial government to secure wealth and power for their people.[5] The Lunda, for example, were already a powerful tribe in Katanga

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[2] Quoted in Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History* (New York: Zed Books 2002), 33; Georges Brausch, *Belgian Administration in the Congo* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961); Roger Anstey, *King Leopold's Legacy: The Congo under Belgian Rule, 1908-1960* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966); Alan P. Merriam, *Congo, Background of Conflict* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1961); Jean Stengers, "The Congo Free State and the Belgian Congo before 1914," in *Colonialism in Africa, 1870-1960: The History and Politics of Colonialism, 1870-1914*, ed. Lewis H. Gann and Peter Duignan(London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 261-292.

[3] As noted by some scholars, this reliance on traditional chieftains in the Congo, "indirect-rule" so to speak, differed with Belgian rule in Rwanda, where the colonial bureaucracy defined tribes by making distinctions between racial characterizations rather than traditional ethnic identities. This was the case, for example, with the Hutu and Tutsi, whose rivalry has spilt beyond Rwanda's borders and plagued the mineral-rich Eastern Congo with violence. See Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[4] Bogumil Jewsiewicki, "African Peasants in the Totalitarian Colonial Society of the Belgian Congo," in *Peasants in Africa: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Martin A. Klein(Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1980), 45-75; Jean-Luc Vellut, "Mining in the Belgian Congo," in *History of Central Africa*, ed. David Birmingham and Phyllis Martin(New York: Longman, 1983), 126-162; Crawford Young, "Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Class in Africa: A Retrospective," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 26, no. 103 (1986): 421-495, esp. 442-455; John Higginson, *A Working Class in the Making: Belgian Colonial Labor Policy, Private Enterprise, and the African Mineworker, 1907-1951* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Ruth M. Slade, *King Leopold's Congo: Aspects of the Development of Race Relations in the Congo Independent State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962); Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, "The Bourgeoisie and Revolution in the Congo," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 8, no. 4 (1970): 511-530.

[5] Some historians have described African "collaborators" with European colonizers as "selling out," or more specifically, as Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, who originally conceived of the term, have stated, denoted an African "who sacrifices the interests of his nation for his own selfish ends." Adu Boahen proposed a more nuanced definition, and one I accept, arguing that African collaborators formed relationships with Europeans, "not to further the interests of the European imperialists or even to gain their own selfish ends, but to preserve the sovereignty and independence of their states." A. Adu Boahen, "Towards a New Categorization and Periodization of African Reactions and Responses to Colonialism," in *Africa in the Twentieth Century: The Adu Boahen Reader*, ed. Toyin Falola(Trenton, NJ: Africa World

before the arrival of European colonizers, and under Belgian rule were able to retain, and even increase, their power. Moise Tshombe's family, who hailed from Lunda royalty, became millionaires.[6]

Of course the Belgians also relied on more direct means of rule. The most notorious instrument used to control the Congolese was the *Force Publique*, the colonial army. A product of the very doctrine it sought to instill, it used indigenous soldiers from one region or ethnic group to police and "pacify" those of another. While the full effect of forcing Congolese to inflict violence upon each other is difficult to discern, the most immediate result seems to be the continued use of violence by Congolese as a political tool immediately following independence. The constant presence of the colonial administration also likely left an indelible mark on the Congolese psyche. By the time of independence, as the scholar Crawford Young notes, "No Congolese, rural or urban, could have failed to perceive that he was being administered."[7] Additionally, Belgium kept the Congolese isolated from the world, and limited their access to higher education out of fear that that they would be introduced to "radical" notions of independence. When a group of Congolese intellectuals emerged in the 1950s, the colonial government designated them as "*évolués*" ("evolved ones"), and monitored their activities.

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Press, 2004), 341-354, 346, 351; A. Adu Boahen, *African Perspectives on Colonialism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 44; Ronald Robinson, "Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: A Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration," in *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism*, ed. Roger Owen and Robert B. Sutcliffe(London: Longman, 1972), 117-142.

[6] On the Lunda, see Edouard Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian Rule: The Politics of Ethnicity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975). For another example of how Belgian colonialism could affect a specific tribe, see Jan Vansina, *Being Colonized: The Kuba Experience in Rural Congo, 1880-1960* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010). For more on Moise Tshombe, see Moïse Tshombe, *My Fifteen Months in Government* (Plano, Tex.: University of Plano, 1967); Ian Goodhope Colvin, *The Rise and Fall of Moise Tshombe: A Biography* (London: Frewin, 1968).

[7] Crawford Young, *Politics in the Congo: Decolonization and Independence* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), 11.

These efforts to keep the Congolese under control began to backfire by the late-1950s. Decades of colonial oppression—being subjected to violence, coercion, and racism—served to unite the Congolese, who rose up and challenged the Belgians for independence. Patrice Lumumba, a charismatic Congolese postal-clerk-turned-beer-salesman who had become one of the leaders in the independence movement, traveled across provinces delivering rousing speeches demanding freedom for the Congolese people.[8] "We want our country, our great country, to have another face," Lumumba said in front of a crowd of ten thousand in Leopoldville during December of 1958, "the face of an independent and happy people freed from anxiety, fear, and every sort of colonialist domination."[9]

Belgium did not want to part ways with its colony. Even by 1955, after the first wave of decolonization had swept across Asia in the wake of World War II, the Belgians were so confident that their colonial policies were producing a "happy colony" that the only plan under serious consideration to grant the Congo independence proposed another thirty years of colonial rule.[10] The Congo had provided the small European nation with wealth and prestige, and had even become an integral part of Belgian identity, serving to unite the historically divided population of Dutch-speaking Flemish and French-speaking

[8] Biographies on Lumumba: Leo Zeilig, *Lumumba: Africa's Lost Leader* (London: Haus, 2008); Thomas R. Kanza, *Conflict in the Congo: The Rise and Fall of Lumumba* (Rochester, VT: Schenkman Books, 1994); *Patrice Lumumba*, Panaf Great Lives (London: Panaf Books, 1973); Robin McKown, *Lumumba: A Biography* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969); G. Heinz and H. Donnay, *Lumumba: The Last Fifty Days* (New York: Grove Press, 1970); Karen Bouwer, *Gender and Decolonization in the Congo: The Legacy of Patrice Lumumba* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Jean Tshonda Omasombo and Benoît Verhaegen, *Patrice Lumumba: Jeunesse Et Apprentissage Politique, 1925-1956* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998); Jean Tshonda Omasombo and Benoît Verhaegen, *Patrice Lumumba: Acteur Politique: De La Prison Aux Portes De Pouvoir, Juillet 1956-Février 1960* (Paris: Harmattan, 1998). Also see, Patrice Lumumba, *Congo, My Country* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1962).

[9] Patrice Lumumba, "Speech at Lepoldville, December 28, 1958," in *Lumumba Speaks: The Speeches and Writings of Patrice Lumumba, 1958-1961*, ed. Jean Van Lierde (Boston: Little, 1972): 58-68.

[10] Ch Didier Gondola, *The History of Congo* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002), 97-98; Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History*, 81-82.

Walloons behind a colonial mission that could be celebrated by all as *Belgicains*.[11] Extravagant memorials and lavish palaces funded by profits from the Congo adorn Belgium still today. As one economic historian has written, "The Congolese economy was a goldmine for the Belgian investors."[12] Belgium emerged after World War II with a reverse lend-lease credit of approximately $120 million, and could even claim a stake in ending the war, since the uranium used in the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan had come from Congolese mines.[13] For these reasons, even when Congolese activism left Brussels little choice but to grant the Congo independence in 1959, the Belgians plotted to keep control over their soon to be former colony.

Belgium hoped that giving into Congolese leaders' demand for an "*indépendence immédiate*" ("immediate independence") would force Congolese leaders to rely on Belgian assistance to run the state bureaucracy, placing it in a position to receive or exert political and economic influence.[14] After meeting with Congolese leaders in Brussels in January 1960, Belgium agreed to grant the Congo independence on June 30 of that year. Much to the chagrin of the Belgian government, Lumumba, the newly elected Congolese prime minister, dispelled any notion of allowing Belgium to continue to influence affairs in the Congo during his Independence Day speech. "No Congolese will ever forget that independence was won in struggle," he declared, "it was just and noble and indispensable in putting an end to the humiliating bondage forced upon us. That was our lot for the

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[11] Matthew G. Stanard, *Selling the Congo: A History of European Pro-Empire Propaganda and the Making of Belgian Imperialism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012).

[12] Frans Buelens quoted in Guy Vanthemsche, *Belgium and the Congo, 1885-1980* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 185.

[13] Jonathan E. Helmreich, *United States Relations with Belgium and the Congo, 1940-1960* (Newark: University of Delaware Press 1998), 72-73; Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History*, 29.

[14] Belgian leaders also hoped that giving into this demand would allow them to avoid a violent war for independence, such as the then ongoing war in Algeria, which would endanger the lives of expatriates and jeopardize its mining operations.

eighty years of colonial rule and our wounds are too fresh and much too painful to be forgotten…Morning, noon and night we were subjected to jeers, insults and blows because we were 'Negroes.'"[15] Celebrations erupted throughout the Congo when Lumumba finished his speech, which had been broadcast live over radio.

But the celebrations were short lived. Within two weeks, the country was mired in crisis. Seventy-five years of Belgian colonialism had left the country ill prepared for independence. Out of a population of about fourteen million, only about thirty had graduated college. There were no Congolese physicians or military officers, and only one lawyer. Furthermore, Belgian rule had created a disjointed and fragmented society in the Congo. There were approximately one hundred political parties organized largely along tribal lines, and when the struggle for independence was achieved, Congolese unity dissolved.[16]

On July 5, Congolese soldiers in the *Force Publique* mutinied when General Emile Janssens, their Belgian commander, wrote on a chalkboard in front of his troops, "before independence = after independence." Lumumba attempted to calm the soldiers by meeting their demand for better pay and by Africanizing the army. He changed the name of the *Force Publique* to the *Armée nationale congolaise* (ANC), and appointed Congolese officers, including Joseph Mobutu as Army Chief of Staff. The Belgian government deployed troops in the Congo during the mutiny to protect its expatriates and

[15] Patrice Lumumba, "Speech at Proclamation of Independence, June 30, 1960," in *Lumumba Speaks*, ed. Van Lierde (Boston: Little, 1972): 220-224.

[16] Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History*, 66; Alan James, *Britain and the Congo Crisis, 1960-63* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 14; Young, *Politics in the Congo: Decolonization and Independence*, 298; Catherine Hoskyns, *The Congo since Independence, January 1960-December, 1961* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965); René Lemarchand, *Political Awakening in the Belgian Congo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964); Herbert F. Weiss, *Political Protest in the Congo: The Parti Solidaire Africain During the Independence Struggle* (Princeton, N.J.,: Princeton University Press, 1967).

mining operations. Lumumba demanded that Belgium withdraw its troops, declaring the deployment an act of aggression.

On July 11, Tshombe declared the Katanga province independent from the Congo.[17] Though Tshombe had worked alongside Lumumba in Brussels to gain national independence, he believed the only way forward for the Congolese people was by maintaining a close relationship with Belgium. By seceding, Tshombe hoped to pursue this path, and protect his province's affluence from the chaos spreading throughout the rest of the country.[18] Lumumba knew that the secession threatened the survival of the young state. An independent Katanga would take with it a large portion of the Congo's mineral wealth as well as open the door for other provinces to secede. His government incapable of removing the Belgian troops and preventing the secession of Katanga, Lumumba called upon the international community for help.

With only a little over six months left in office, the Eisenhower administration would have preferred that the Belgians resolve the crisis in the Congo themselves. Containing the communist threat was the primary objective of the administration's foreign policy, but preventing the United States from bankrupting itself during the process was a close second. If the crisis had arisen only a few years earlier the administration would have likely supported Belgium in trying to re-conquer its former colony, much like it had supported France in Vietnam during its first term.

But the dynamics of the international system had changed since the beginning of the decade. World opinion had become intolerant of colonialism, and the increasing

[17] Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History*, 98-99.

[18] Katangans had benefitted from the Belgian mining companies located in their province. As one journalist noted, Katangan "workers earned on the average three times as much per capita as other Congolese." Colvin, 21. For more on the secession of Katanga, see Jules Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966).

rhetoric of independence movements propelled the United States, the so-called leader of the "free world," to the fore of international affairs. As it was the administration quickly abandoned its instinctively "hands off policy" out of fear that communism would spread into the heart of Africa.[19] As Eisenhower later recalled, "With a position of leadership in the Free World, we did not want to see chaos run wild among hopeful, expectant peoples and could not afford to see turmoil in an area where the Communists would be only too delighted to take an advantage."[20]

The Eisenhower administration viewed decolonization as a destabilizing force, creating chaos in the international system that the communists would be sure to exploit. According to Eisenhower, Congolese nationalism in particular "resembled a torrent overrunning everything in its path, including, frequently, the best interests of those concerned."[21] Others in the administration shared his sentiment. One member of the National Security Council (NSC) concluded "the best thing for the area would be a plan which did not grant independence for twenty-five years."[22] Only two years prior to the outbreak of the crisis, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles told the Belgian foreign minister that the United States "had spent 50 years preparing the Philippines for independence [sic] and there were times we believed that that had perhaps not been long enough."[23]

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[19] Telegram from the Consulate General at Leopoldville to the Department of State, 14 June 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 275-277.

[20] Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace, 1956-196: The White House Years* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), 572.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 257-258.

[23] Memorandum of Conversation, 8 October 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 251-253.

But Eisenhower was a deft and cunning president.[24] Just as his "well-honed sense of expediency superseded his well-documented condescension toward African Americans and 'the race question,'" as the historian Penny Von Eschen has insightfully written, so too did it supersede his disdain for the Third World's quest for self-determination and racial equality.[25] When Lumumba requested U.S. assistance to help restore order in his country, the Eisenhower administration shrewdly urged him to call upon the UN instead. It knew that the Afro-Asian bloc, a body of newly emerging nations in the UN who clung to the spirit of non-alignment and the guiding principles of the UN itself, would support this decision.[26] The administration was also confident that the United Nations would represent American aims. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold was anti-communist,

[24] In general see, Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader* (New York: Basic Books, 1982); Richard H. Immerman, "Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist: An Agonizing Reappraisal," *Diplomatic History* 14, no. 3 (1990). For an example of this revisionism applied to Eisenhower's diplomacy see, Peter L. Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain, and Egypt, 1945-1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). A similar sort of revisionism, emphasizing an understanding for the subtleties of diplomacy, has also been applied to John Foster Dulles. See for example, Richard H. Immerman, ed. *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990).

[25] The State Department had already begun to recognize the implications of this race war on U.S. foreign policy by the time of *Brown v. Board* (1954). In 1958 the State Department created a separate bureau dedicated solely to Africa, recruited African-Americans to serve as diplomats, and along with other public diplomacy programs designed to counter negative perceptions of American racism, sent African-American jazz artists on goodwill tours abroad, one of which included a performance by Louis Armstrong in Leopoldville in 1960. Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); James Hunter Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 5; Michael L. Krenn, *Black Diplomacy: African Americans and the State Department, 1945-1969* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999).

[26] The Afro-Asian bloc believed in the UN Charter and Universal Declaration for Human Rights, both of which resonated with its pursuit for freedom and equality in the Third World. In fact, the Afro-Asian bloc, who was rapidly accumulating more votes in the General Assembly, was transforming the UN into a forum where it could contest, as the historian Ryan Irwin has argued, "concepts of sovereignty, freedom, and development—long defined in reference to European history." Ryan M. Irwin, "A Wind of Change?: White Redoubt and the Postcolonial Moment, 1960–1963," *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 5 (2009): 897-925, 898. Also see, Ryan M. Irwin, *Gordian Knot: Apartheid and the Unmaking of the Liberal World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

and his three closest advisers on the Congo were American.[27] Furthermore, during 1956 the administration had successfully used the UN in a similar situation during the Suez Crisis.[28] If push came to shove, it knew U.S. purse strings and its veto on the Security Council could be used to win influence over the Soviet Union, the Afro-Asian bloc, and even UN leaders.

Turning over the reins to the UN was also in consonance with the administration's overarching Cold War strategy. While fighting the Cold War, it wanted to keep the United States off the frontlines in order to limit both its liability and expenditures. "We would be completely in error to go in unilaterally," Eisenhower told Secretary of State Christian Herter.[29] The administration believed any "vigorous US action" might draw the Soviets into a showdown, and be misconstrued as preserving colonialism by the Africans, or poaching empire by the Europeans.[30] On July 12 the administration issued a press release explaining the U.S. position. It stated that any assistance by a country to the Congo should be channeled through the UN, and that members of NATO would refrain from contributing soldiers in the UN force.[31] "This should," American Ambassador to the Congo Clare Timberlake told Herter, "keep bears out of the Congo caviar."[32] Indeed, pressure from the Afro-Asian bloc, which was concerned about keeping the Cold War out of the crisis, forced the Soviet Union to accept similar terms, and on July 14 the Security

[27] Ralph Bunche, Under Secretary for Special Political Affairs; Heinz Wieschoff, the Secretariat's African Expert; and Andrew Cordier, the Secretary-General's Executive Assistant.

[28] At that time the UN, with American support, successfully diffused a crisis between the Egyptian nationalist Gamal Abdel Nasser and Britain, France, and Israel, while also keeping the Soviets out of the Middle East.

[29] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation between President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Herter, 12 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 295-296.

[30] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 8 January 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 258-260.

[31] Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 59.

[32] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 10 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 286-288.

Council passed a resolution committing UN military and technical assistance to the Congo with the provisions proposed by the United States.

The resolution also required the immediate withdrawal of Belgian troops. The Afro-Asian bloc had insisted that the Security Council accede to this demand made by Lumumba during his request for UN assistance.[33] While the Eisenhower administration wanted to avoid withdrawing Belgian troops until UN forces arrived, it did not want to take any action that might have delayed getting the "UN force out into [the] field at once." Herter therefore told Henry Cabot Lodge, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, to support the resolution as is. This angered NATO allies. Both France and the United Kingdom abstained from voting on the resolution. The situation reminded both countries of the Suez Crisis, during which they felt the United States, the Third World, and the UN had joined forces to supplant the colonial powers' control over their traditional spheres of influence. Belgium was also livid. Its UN representative told Lodge that it seemed the "US was seeking [to] cut Belgium off and out from [the] Congo entirely, and injuring NATO in [the] bargain."[34]

The Eisenhower administration was coming to realize that the crisis was "intimately, if unhappily" part of a "great-power struggle." Belgium had no intention of leaving its investments and approximately 10,000 expatriates at the disposal of Lumumba. Supporting Tshombe and the secession appeared to be the only way to protect its interests. Meanwhile, the government of the Congo was becoming "violently anti-Belgian," and as Timberlake pointed out, its feelings were not completely unwarranted.

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[33] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 12 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 298-299, n3; Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964*, 62.

[34] Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, 14 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 305.

"Some Belgians…particularly the military," he wrote, "have become completely irrational and in many instances have behaved worse than the worst Congolese." Timberlake believed it was "imperative" the United States wade into this "ugly" situation. On July 17, he wrote to Herter, "We face immediately ahead the need to make a major policy decision which is complex, full of imponderables and charged with fateful portent not only for the Congo but for Africa."[35]

The administration determined that the only way to "salvage" the situation was to have all parties reach common ground.[36] On one hand, it believed Belgium should give up on the idea of an independent Katanga. It knew this position would "seriously offend [the] Belgians as well as other metropolitan powers" and possibly cause a "serious split among NATO powers," but it believed that if Katanga became independent it would lead to the balkanization of the Congo, making the region susceptible to communist subversion.[37] Furthermore, the Afro-Asian bloc would be "enraged," and likely withdraw its troops from the UN force, which would leave the door open for the possibility of a U.S.-Soviet showdown.[38]

On the other hand, the administration wanted Lumumba's government and the Afro-Asian bloc to accept the fact that Belgian technicians would need to remain in the Congo. It knew both would have an "adverse reaction" to this proposal, but it was

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[35] Quotes in Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 17 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 318-320. Also see, Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions, 21 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 344-345.

[36] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 17 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 318-320.

[37] Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions, 21 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 344-345; Memorandum of Discussion at the 451st Meeting of the National Security Council, 15 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 309-312.

[38] Memorandum of Conversation with President Eisenhower, 19 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 328-330; Telegram from the Department of State to the Consulate General at Elisabethville, 16 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 317-318.

convinced that the government of the Congo had "not the slightest idea of what is happening let alone what might be done about it."[39] A Belgian presence, the administration believed, would have the added bonus of denying the area to the communists, and helping to alleviate concerns that the United States was "fostering extinction [of] Belgian interests there or attempting [to] supplant those interests."[40]

The administration, however, was beginning to doubt that any sort of common ground could be reached so long as Lumumba remained prime minister. Not without reason, Lumumba wanted the Belgians out of the country. Belgium had violated the sovereignty of the Congo by deploying troops within its border without permission, and by aiding and abetting the secessionist leader Tshombe. Furthermore, the administration's propensity to view the world through a lens colored by race also made it predisposed to disfavor Lumumba.[41] Rather than see him as a skilled politician who had risen from modest means and created consensus amongst a multitude of political parties, it instead saw him as "irresponsible," "untrustworthy," and "unreliable."[42]

The administration also believed Soviet intervention was much more likely to occur under Lumumba's reign.[43] His threat to invite the Soviet Union to intervene unless the UN removed all Belgian troops from the Congo by midnight on July 19 validated this

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[39] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 17 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 318-320; Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions, 21 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 344-345. Also see, Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 2 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 381-383.

[40] Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions, 21 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 344-345.

[41] George White, *Holding the Line: Race, Racism, and American Foreign Policy toward Africa, 1953-1961* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).

[42] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 274; Telegram from the Consulate General at Leopoldville to the Department of State, 14 June 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 275-277.

[43] Memorandum of Discussion at the 451st Meeting of the National Security Council, 15 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 309-312; Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 274; Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 1 May 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 272-274; Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense Gates, 22 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 346-349.

concern. Afterwards, American Ambassador to Belgium William Burden concluded "Lumumba has now maneuvered himself into position of opposition to [the] West" and "threatens our vital interests in Congo and Africa generally." Burden proposed that the "principal objective of...political and diplomatic action must therefore be to destroy Lumumba government as now constituted" and to "find or develop another horse to back which would be acceptable in rest of Africa and defensible against Soviet political attack."[44] During an NSC meeting on July 21, CIA Director Allen Dulles called Lumumba "a Castro or worse."[45]

In some respects Lumumba was a Castro. Even though he did not subscribe to communist ideology, he sought to regain control over his nation's natural resources and free his people from Western exploitation. Some in the State Department saw Lumumba for what he really was—a nationalist. Hugh Cumming, Director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, argued that Lumumba's famous declaration of July 5—"We are not Communists, Catholics, or Socialists. We are African nationalists."—was "the most accurate summary of his views."[46] Robinson McIlvaine, Consul General in the Congo, tried explaining to the State Department that "Lumumba is an opportunist and not a Communist" and that he was seeking to take advantage of international rivalries in order to obtain genuine independence for the Congo.[47] At the end of July, Lumumba restated his commitment to non-alignment at both the UN and the

[44] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 19 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 330-332.

[45] Memorandum of Discussion at the 452d Meeting of the National Security Council, 21 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 338-342.

[46] Memorandum from the Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Cumming) to Secretary of State Herter, 25 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 355-356.

[47] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 26 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 356-357.

White House.[48] He explained to Herter that "he did not wish the Congo to emerge from a colonial status, only to fall under the domination of some other form of dictatorship or ideological influence." He said that he "knew that the Congo had a friend in the United States because it, too, struggled to obtain its independence."[49]

But the leadership in the administration viewed Lumumba as the main obstacle to U.S. objectives rather than viewing him as a possible friend. Before his visit to the United States it had already withdrawn its support from the prime minister.[50] Herter suggested at an NSC meeting on July 25 that if Lumumba "stayed away from the Congo long enough, he would find he had no government when he returned." Eisenhower responded by saying they should "provide Lumumba with a three weeks tour of the U.S. on a modest basis."[51] Lumumba's alleged request for white female companionship during his stay at Blair House as well as other inappropriate behavior further undermined his position with the administration.[52] Mounting pressure from Belgium also caused the administration to draw back from Lumumba. Already irritated by the lack of U.S. support in the UN,

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[48] Madeleine G. Kalb, *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa--from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York: Macmillan, 1982), 40-41.

[49] Memorandum of Conversation, 27 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 359-366.

[50] Even though Lumumba impressed some in the State Department during his visit, including the venerable Henry Cabot Lodge. A memorandum of a telephone conversation on July 26 between Herter and Lodge reads as follows: "'Lodge said Lumumba is certainly not crazy; that he wasn't getting anywhere so he threatened to call in the Chinese Communists which put the necessary heat on the U.N. to get quick action. Lodge says he knows exactly what he is doing and the only question is whether he can stay in office. Lodge said Lumumba is not a bad man to deal with; that he is a little flighty and erratic in some respects; but he knows exactly what he is doing.' Lodge also stated that he found Lumumba 'interesting and on the whole encouraging' and that if the Secretary gave him a little time, it could pay 'big dividends.'" Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, 26 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 357-359, n2; Also see, Memorandum of Conversation, 27 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 359-366, n7.

[51] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 353-354.

[52] Aside from allegedly requesting a blonde white woman and smoking marijuana in Blair House, he also requested a handgun, and took $150 from a State Department escort to buy leather luggage. Larry Devlin, *Chief of Station, Congo: A Memoir of 1960-67* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2007), 50; Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa: From the Hopes of Freedom to the Heart of Despair: A History of Fifty Years of Independence* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005), 105; Philip E. Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans: John F. Kennedy's Courting of African Nationalist Leaders* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 23.

Belgium was outraged over Lumumba's visit to the White House.[53] One Belgian newspaper could not believe the Americans had allowed Lumumba, whom some in Europe referred to as the "*sale nègre*," to sleep in the same bed that King Baudouin of Belgium had.[54] The Belgian ambassador to the United States told Herter that the reaction in Belgium "was somewhat similar to that which would occur in the United States if the Belgian Government were to invite Fidel Castro to visit Brussels and accord him a great reception."[55]

As the administration's opinions of Lumumba soured, it was coming to regard Tshombe as a potential ally due to his self-avowed anti-communism and willingness to partner with the Belgians. Rather than "close [the] door" on Tshombe, Herter wanted to make clear that the administration wanted to maintain a "frank and friendly" relationship with him, and that the administration's inability to recognize Katanga did "not constitute any hostility toward Tshombe or his Government."[56] Eisenhower knew that the consequences of supporting Katanga in the current international climate would be too much to bear, but he did not want to take any action that would improve Lumumba's position over that of Tshombe.[57] The Afro-Asian bloc, for example, was calling for the

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[53] Memorandum of Conversation, 28 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 367-370.

[54] Kevin C. Dunn, *Imagining the Congo: The International Relations of Identity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 84.

[55] Memorandum of Conversation, 28 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 367-370.

[56] Telegram from the Department of State to the Consulate General at Elisabethville, 16 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 317-318; Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 11 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 291, n1.

[57] On August 1 he told senior officials while discussing the crisis, "that in the last twelve months the world has developed a kind of ferment greater than he could remember in recent times. The Communists are trying to take control of this, and have succeeded to the extent that students in many cases are now saying that the Communists are thinking of the common man while the United States is dedicated to supporting outmoded regimes." Memorandum of Conference with President Eisenhower, 1 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 377-378. Also see, Telegram from the Department of State to the Consulate at Elisabethville, 4 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 385-386. As the historian Richard Mahoney has noted, during the summer of 1960, the administration had witnessed a series of setbacks: "the loss of Cuba; the expansion of the communist insurgency in Laos; the cancellation of the President's trip to Japan

UN to end the secession, which would permit Lumumba to reassert control over Katanga and remove Tshombe from the political scene. Tshombe had refused to allow the UN force to enter the province to remove Belgian troops. On August 3 he declared that UN troops "will have to fight their way in."[58] A few days later two key leaders of the Afro-Asian bloc, Kwame Nkrumah, president of Ghana, and Sekou Toure, president of Guinea, wrote to the United States demanding a "speedy" withdrawal of Belgian troops from Katanga and "respect for the territorial integrity of that State." Nkrumah warned Washington, "So far as Katanga is concerned, any attempt to detach it from the Congo state in anybody's interest will have the most disastrous consequences not only upon African opinion, but upon the whole balance of political forces in the world."[59]

Facing similar pressure from the Afro-Asian bloc at the UN, Hammarskjold requested another Security Council resolution permitting him to use force to enter Katanga. Belgium and the United States made it clear to him that they believed "the UN should not be any party to the internal conflict in the Congo" (i.e., support Lumumba over Tshombe).[60] Consequently, Hammarskjold, who found it difficult to work with Lumumba, carefully worded the new resolution so as to allow UN troops to use force to enter the province, but to prevent the UN "in any way [to] intervene in or be used to influence the outcome of any internal conflict, constitutional or otherwise."[61] The

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because of leftist riots; the U-2 incident; and most disturbingly, the bitter confrontation between Eisenhower and Khrushchev at their summit meeting in Paris in May 1960." Richard D. Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 41.

[58] Quoted in Kwame Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo* (New York: International Publishers, 1967), 23.

[59] Message from President Toure to President Eisenhower, 7 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 395; Telegram from the Embassy in Ghana to the Department of State, 6 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 390-392.

[60] Memorandum of Conversation, 5 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 386-390; Memorandum of Conversation, 28 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 367-370.

[61] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 412-413.

Security Council passed the resolution on August 9 with the support of the Afro-Asian bloc, the United States, and the Soviet Union.

The resolution infuriated Lumumba. He had hoped to use UN troops to end the secession quickly, since his own army was incapable of the task. The prime minister believed doing so would supplant the mounting domestic pressures facing his government. While in the United States, his opponents had organized protests against him in Leopoldville, the nation's capital, and the diamond-rich province of Kasai had proclaimed independence, adding a second secessionist crisis to the many problems already confronting him. Upon returning home, Lumumba declared a state of emergency and ordered the army into Leopoldville to disperse protestors. He also expelled the Belgian ambassador, believing correctly that the Belgian government had helped organize the protests and was conspiring against him.[62]

To Lumumba the resolution signaled that Hammarskjold was in league with the West and Katanga. Lumumba was half-right. It was obvious that Western nations held more sway in the UN than his government (a reality Lumumba found difficult to accept considering it had been his government that had requested the UN intervention).[63] By no means, however, was the UN in league with Katangan secessionists. The UN, like the United States, was "anxious that Belgians remain to keep [the] economy going," but the white Katangan business community was especially suspicious of UN motives. They, including the head of Union Miniere du Haute Katanga, the largest mining company in the province, claimed that the "UN [was] trying to take Katanga" for other Western

[62] Kalb, *The Congo Cables*, 46; Ludo de Witte, *The Assassination of Lumumba* (New York: Verso, 2001), 18-19.

[63] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 412-413; Memorandum of Conversation, 28 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 367-370.

interests. When the Secretary-General's representative for Economic Affairs met with them, the group greeted him with "curses, spat upon him and called him a criminal." They believed that the "arrival of UN troops would signal [the] departure by whites as well as Congolese business personnel and [that] economic collapse would come."[64]

Nonetheless, Lumumba remained convinced that the UN had betrayed him. On August 14 he sent a letter to Hammarskjold citing the July 14 resolution that stated the UN was supposed to provide military assistance to the Congolese Government in consultation with it. "It is therefore clear," Lumumba wrote him, "that in its intervention in the Congo the United Nations is not to act as a neutral organization but rather that the Security Council is to place all its resources at the disposal of my Government." Lumumba warned that if his government did not "receive satisfaction," it would be "obliged to take other steps," implying that he would rely on assistance outside the confines of the UN to obtain his objectives.[65] The next day he wrote Hammarskjold, "The government and people of the Congo have lost their confidence in the Secretary-General."[66]

This was the breaking point with Lumumba as far as the Eisenhower administration was concerned. His actions now directly jeopardized the cornerstone of U.S. policy in the Congo, keeping the UN in as a means of keeping the Cold War out (i.e., keeping the Soviets out). Under Secretary of State Douglas Dillon summarized what the administration believed would happen if Lumumba got his way:

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[64] Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, 7 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 395-399.

[65] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 412-413.

[66] Quoted in Witte, 14-15.

> We believe UN withdrawal from Congo would prove calamitous. Certain result would be chaos in Congo with Lumumba probably turning to USSR for help. Further result would be intense cold war struggle for control of area with potential danger of conflict spreading beyond Congo. Thus, in our view, issue is much broader than fate of Congo alone.[67]

Lumumba's acceptance of eighteen Soviet transport planes reinforced American perceptions of a possible Soviet intervention. On August 18 the CIA station in Leopoldville cabled Washington that the "Congo [is] experiencing [a] classic Communist effort [to] takeover [the] government. There may be little time left in which [to] take action to avoid another Cuba."[68]

In order to prevent such a scenario from arising, the administration came to the conclusion that Lumumba had to be removed from power. "We were talking of one man forcing us out of the Congo," President Eisenhower said in an NSC meeting on August 18.[69] "A United Nations presence should be maintained in the Congo in the interests both of the Free World and the United Nations, despite Lumumba's efforts, supported by the Soviet Bloc, to expel UN forces," Eisenhower continued.[70] On August 25 an NSC subcommittee discussed "plans for an anti-Lumumba campaign in the Congo." The next day Dulles cabled Lawrence Devlin, the CIA Station Chief in the Congo, that

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[67] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission at the United Nations, 16 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 413-415. Indeed, the CIA had made a laundry list of items explaining how Lumumba's actions would, or have already hurt, U.S. aims beyond the Congo, including the raising of "divisive questions about the direction and unity of Western policy in dealing with rampant anti-colonialist nationalism," damaging the prestige of the UN, and presenting "substantial opportunities" to the communists "for fomenting trouble and extending its opportunities at the expense of the West." Memorandum from the Board of National Estimates to the Director of Central Intelligence (Dulles), 22 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 435-442. Also see, Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions, 20 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 433-434.

[68] One hundred Soviet technicians and one hundred Soviet trucks with spare parts accompanied the planes. It should be noted that Lumumba had requested transport planes from both the UN and the United States, but upon being denied by both requested the planes from the Soviet Union. Quoted in Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa*, 40.

[69] Quoted in ibid.

[70] Memorandum of Discussion at the 456th Meeting of the National Security Council, 18 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 421-424.

> In high quarters here it is the clear-cut conclusion that if (Lumumba) continues to hold high office, the inevitable result will at best be chaos and at worst pave the way to Communist takeover of the Congo with disastrous consequences for the prestige of the UN and for the interests of the free world generally. Consequently we conclude that his removal must be an urgent and prime objective and that under existing conditions this should be a high priority of our covert action.[71]

Timberlake and Devlin believed the best way to remove Lumumba was to encourage his opponents to throw a coup, which would provide the United States and Belgium cover from charges of foul play. Both men were aware of the animosities growing against Lumumba in the Congo, and had suggested earlier that the administration "discreetly…strengthen those moderates who might be a restraining influence at the least and might be expected to replace him, under the most favorable circumstances, with a government much nearer the middle of the road."[72] On August 17 Timberlake had even reported that "I would not, accordingly, be surprised if an attempt is made on Lumumba's life."[73]

Later that month, Lumumba ordered government troops to invade Kasai and put an end to that province's secession. They succeeded, but in the process massacred innocent civilians in what Hammarskjold described as "genocide" against the Luba people. Using the event as a pretext to get rid of Lumumba, the UN urged Kasavubu to dismiss the prime minister.[74] On September 5 Kasavubu did so and told Timberlake and Averell Harriman, who was on a fact-finding mission for presidential candidate John F. Kennedy, that the "population was behind him." He explained that "Lumumba was surrounded by Communist advisers" and that so long as he "remained in power such

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[71] Memorandum from the Board of National Estimates to the Director of Central Intelligence (Dulles), 22 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 435-442.

[72] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 12 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 407-409.

[73] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 17 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 417-419. Also see, Devlin, 95.

[74] Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History*, 102.

perturbation would continue thereby causing [the] country to flounder deeper into political and economic anarchy."[75]

Lumumba, who suspected that this was all part of a Western plot led by the UN, responded by dismissing Kasavubu as president.[76] Privately, Hammarskjold admitted to the Americans that "what he was trying to do was get rid of Lumumba without compromising UN position," and that the "UN command is making an effort to establish the authority of Congo's President Kasavubu and set the stage for an early attempt to remove Lumumba from power."[77] In late-August, Hammarskjold had told them that he considered "Lumumba an impossible person" and that he believed the "situation in [the] Congo would not be straightened out until Lumumba was dealt with."[78] While part of Hammarskjold's reasoning was likely affected by Lumumba's hostility towards him, he had come to believe that the "Katanga problem could and must be resolved once Lumumba was out of [the] way," believing that "there was no Katanga problem between Tshombe and Kasavubu or [Joseph] Ileo [the prime minister's two likely successors] but only with Lumumba."[79] More importantly, he feared that if Lumumba stayed in power that the Belgians and other Europeans would flee, creating a gap that would be "filled by

[75] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 9 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 471-472.

[76] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 7 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 462-463.

[77] Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, 7 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 465-468; Paper Prepared by the President's Assistant Staff Secretary (Eisenhower), 13 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 484-486.

[78] He also told Lodge that Lumumba must be "broken." Memorandum of Discussion at the 456th Meeting of the National Security Council, 18 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 421-424.Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, 26 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 444-446.

[79] Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, 26 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 444-446.

Russians and their friends."[80] Herter let Hammarskjold know that the United States was "with him 1000%."[81]

Then on September 14, General Joseph Mobutu staged his first coup. Shortly after seizing power he expelled Soviet and other Communist Bloc diplomats from the country, and placed what he called a College of Commissioners (university students) in charge of running the government. While it remains unclear if his actions were part of a CIA plot, his own ambition and opportunism cannot be understated.[82] Timberlake cabled Washington that this event had given him "some hope that act one of the Congo drama has ended."[83] But Timberlake warned Washington that even out of government Lumumba "would be a serious threat to peace and reconstruction."[84] Harriman agreed with this analysis. He wrote to Herter and Dillon that

> Lumumba will continue to cause difficulties in the Congo whether he is in control of the government, in jail or released. He is a rabblerousing speaker, a shrewd maneuverer with clever left-wing advisers, aided and encouraged by Soviet and Czech Ambassadors. He is obsessed with his mission to unify the Congo, believes he is the only man who speaks for 80 percent of the Congolese people. If the UN does not do his bidding, he considers it a new form of colonialism. He thinks if he can get his troops into Katanga and the Belgians removed that the people will give him their support. He is confident he can be successful in a civil war if UN keeps hands off. He is of course counting on full support from Soviets.[85]

On September 21 Dulles reported to Eisenhower that "Mobutu appeared to be the effective power in the Congo for the moment but Lumumba was not yet disposed of and

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[80] Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, 5 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 457-460.

[81] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation between Secretary of State Herter and Secretary-General Hammarskjold, 10 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 478-479. Also see, Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, 10 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 475-476.

[82] Lise A. Namikas, "Battleground Africa: The Cold War and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2002), 203.

[83] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 16 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 491.

[84] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 22 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 501.

[85] Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, 3 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 486-487.

remained a grave danger as long as he was not disposed of."[86] Just a few days earlier Eisenhower told Lord Home, the British foreign minister, that he wished "Lumumba would fall into a river full of crocodiles."[87] That same day Devlin received a cable from CIA Deputy Director Richard Bissell, who was in charge of clandestine operations, instructing him to meet a fellow agent in Leopoldville who would identify himself as "Joe from Paris." "Joe," now known to be the chemist Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, arrived in the Congo later that month carrying poison concealed as toothpaste. Gottlieb told Devlin that President Eisenhower wanted Lumumba assassinated. "It's your responsibility to carry out the operation," he told Devlin, "you alone."[88] On September 24 Dulles cabled Devlin, "We wish [to] give every possible support in eliminating Lumumba from any possibility [of] resuming governmental position or if he fails in Leo[poldville], setting himself [up] in Stanleyville or elsewhere."[89]

Meanwhile, the UN, in particular Rajeshwar Dayal, whom Hammarskjold appointed as his personal representative in the Congo, was pushing for a legal government recognized by the Congolese Parliament. While the administration wanted to acquire some form of legitimacy for Mobutu, it opposed convening parliament because it knew Lumumba would have to be allowed to participate and "might very well emerge with stamp of parliamentary approval." Furthermore, the administration was not convinced democracy could work in the Congo. "Fact is," Timberlake cabled the State Department, "Congo is years away from more than [a] facade of democracy…They

[86] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 496-497.
[87] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 495.
[88] Devlin, 94-95.
[89] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 503. A Senate Committee's investigations of intelligence activities led by Senator Frank Church (D-ID) in 1975-76 initially revealed some of the details on the Eisenhower administration's decision to assassinate Lumumba. Senate Select Committee on Foreign Affairs to Study Government Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, 94th Cong., 1st sess., 1975, S.R. 94-465.

obviously cannot practice something they do not understand." He believed that, "Even [the] most sympathetic observers know this country cannot govern itself in any intelligent fashion and that, left to its own devices and without outside aid, could not survive as a national entity."[90]

The administration was convinced that there was not a single Congolese leader capable of running the government effectively. Mobutu, the administration was discovering, was "impulsive," "naïve," and "anti-UN." Kasavubu, whom the administration persuaded Mobutu to keep on as president to ensure some sort of legitimacy, did not want the day-to-day responsibilities of prime minister. Ileo, one possibility for prime minister, it believed lacked the "necessary drive and flair," and Jean Bolikongo, another possibility, was considered too "weak" and at any rate bore a "pro-Belgian tag."[91] Tshombe, whom the administration would have been content supporting in a national role, had declared to Timberlake in late-November that "Katangan independence was fact and they would never resume political association with [the] Congo."[92]

In the midst of sorting out whom the United States should support long-term, Kasavubu had Lumumba imprisoned in Thysville after the former-prime minister escaped from house arrest on November 27. In a plan orchestrated by Belgium, Lumumba was then flown to Elisabethville on January 17, where he was assassinated, buried, exhumed the next day by Belgian officers, and dissolved in acid. Timberlake had warned in August

[90] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 2 November 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 562-565.
[91] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 1 November 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 561-562.
[92] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 28 November 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 600-602.

that "while Lumumba's elimination would remove one problem, it might well create many more."[93] Just as Timberlake had predicted, shortly after news of Lumumba's imprisonment had spread, Antoine Gizenga, Lumumba's deputy prime minister and chief lieutenant, declared himself interim prime minister on December 12. The State Department issued a circular to select diplomatic missions warning that the "result could be eventual Korean-type conflict" if Gizenga received support from the Communists.[94]

"Every time I look at this truly discouraging mess," Timberlake had written that November, "I shudder over the painfully slow, frustrating and costly job ahead for the UN and US if the Congo is to really be helped."[95] Indeed, by the end of Eisenhower's second term, U.S. intervention in the Congo was only gearing up.

On January 20, 1961 the Kennedy administration inherited U.S. involvement in what was by then being referred to as the Congo Crisis. Kennedy maintained the previous administration's commitment to keeping the communists out of the country, but the real impetus driving U.S. intervention under the new administration was "nation-building." Through nation-building the Kennedy administration believed it could overcome the perils caused by colonialism and set the Third World on a path towards what many Americans believed to be the hallmarks of modernity—political and economic freedom—fulfilling in the words of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., one of Kennedy's presidential advisors, the United States' historic "obligation to deal with poverty, repression and injustice

[93] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 17 August 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 417-419.

[94] Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions, 15 December 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 630-631.

[95] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 2 November 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 562-563.

'everywhere in the world.'"[96] Such an accomplishment, the administration hoped, would make the Congo a beacon to newly emerging nations on the African continent, as well as the Third World at large, displaying that democracy and capitalism, rather than communism, could transform former colonies into viable nation-states.

Unlike Eisenhower, Kennedy viewed decolonization as an opportunity to extend American leadership, values, and influence. During what became known as his "Algerian speech," delivered on the Senate floor in July 1957, Kennedy argued that the values of Third World nationalists laid within the realm of the United States' "traditional and deeply felt philosophy of freedom and independence for all peoples everywhere," thus providing the United States an opportunity in "seizing the initiative in foreign affairs."[97] The speech gained the type of notoriety a young congressman with presidential aspirations needed, but it also expressed his belief in the current significance of Africa in world affairs. "Call it nationalism, call it anti-colonialism, call it what you will, Africa is going through a revolution," Kennedy declared in 1959.[98]

On the campaign trail Kennedy referred to the continent 479 times, appointed Chester Bowles, the author of *Africa's Challenge to America* (1956), as his adviser on foreign policy, and repeatedly argued that the United States must ally itself "with the

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[96] Quoted in Richard M. Pfeffer, *No More Vietnams? The War and the Future of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 8-9; Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation-Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

[97] Paying homage to the paragon of liberal internationalism, Kennedy concluded his remarks by quoting a man whose own presidential rhetoric, if not actions, were associated with the right to self-determination: "'Men's hearts wait upon us' Said Woodrow Wilson in 1913, 'Men's lives hang in the balance; men's hopes call upon us to say what we will do. Who shall live up to the great trust? Who dares fail to try?'" Sen. Kennedy of Massachusetts, *Imperialism—The Enemy of Freedom*, 85th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 103 (July 2, 1957): S 10780-10793. Also see, Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[98] Quoted in Arthur M. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 463-464.

rising sea of nationalism in Africa."[99] As some historians have charged, discussing Africa was a shrewd way of attracting African-American voters while skirting the contentious issue of Civil Rights.[100] But Kennedy's commitment to improving U.S.-African relations proved authentic. Seventeen African nations, including the Congo, gained independence the year he was elected, and as president, he dedicated more time and resources to the continent than any previous administration.[101] "What we want for Africa is what Africans want for themselves," said G. Mennen Williams, Kennedy's Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, an "Africa for the Africans."[102]

As such, U.S. intervention in the Congo was central to Kennedy's foreign policy at large.[103] Nowhere had there been more optimism for what American liberalism could achieve abroad than in Africa, and nowhere did American policymakers expend more time and energy on that continent than in the Congo. It marked an unprecedented projection of American power in sub-Saharan Africa, creating a paper trail at the

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[99] In *Africa's Challenge to America*, Bowles put forth many of the ideas Kennedy expressed, particularly that America should return to its "traditional stand on self-determination," and work with "responsible African nationalists" whose interests "closely coincide" with the United States. According to Bowles' memoir, Kennedy had read the book and, "expressed full agreement with my analysis and conclusions." Chester Bowles, *Africa's Challenge to America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956), 96; Chester Bowles, *Promises to Keep: My Years in Public Life, 1941-1969* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 421. Quote from Kennedy's speech in Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964*, 116.

[100] See for example, Thomas J. Noer, "New Frontiers and Old Priorities in Africa," in *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963*, ed. Thomas G. Paterson(New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 253-283, esp. 256; James H. Meriwether, "'Worth a Lot of Negro Votes': Black Voters, Africa, and the 1960 Presidential Campaign," *The Journal of American History* 95, no. 3 (2008): 737-763. For a more nuanced interpretation, see Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 135-171.

[101] Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans.*

[102] Williams made this remark in Nairobi while on his first trip across the continent in February 1961. G. Mennen Williams, *Africa for the Africans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 159.

[103] A cursory glance over the secondary literature, though, would lead one to believe otherwise. While historians have written about the significance of Africa and the Third World to Kennedy's foreign policy, his policies in the Congo remain largely un-discussed in these studies. See for example, Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans*; Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*; Lawrence Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Kennedy Presidential Library second only in volume to Vietnam; surpassing that of Britain, and even of the Soviet Union. As Secretary of State Dean Rusk said in July of 1962, "There was no other problem including Berlin in which [the] President, [the] Secretary and senior colleagues have spent as much time as [the] Congo."[104]

This reappraisal of U.S-African relations, however, did not immediately change American policy in the Congo. Perhaps lending some credence to the consensus school of thought in American politics, U.S. policy initially remained the same. As Ted Sorenson, Kennedy's special counsel, later recalled, "The Kennedy Congo policy was largely an extension of the Eisenhower policy."[105] The new administration continued to use the UN as an umbrella organization under which it could pursue American aims while keeping the Cold War out of the Congo (i.e., keeping the Soviets out). It also supported a unified Congo for the same reasons that the Eisenhower administration had, believing that an independent Katanga would leave the rest of the country ripe for communist subversion as well as draw strong criticism from the Afro-Asian bloc. Because of this, it shared the previous administration's conclusion that the success of U.S. policy was tied to the success of the UN operation. As Kennedy's Director of the Bureau of Intelligence Research at the State Department, Roger Hilsman, later explained, the administration believed that "if anything less than a unified Congo came out of the UN operation the United States would get the blame. It would be on the wrong side of history in African

[104] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 7 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 501-503; John Kent, *America, the U.N. And Decolonisation: Cold War Conflict in the Congo* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 2.

[105] Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 635-636.

eyes; our influence throughout black Africa would be all but destroyed; and the Congo would be only the first of many defeats."[106]

Most surprising, though, was that the Kennedy administration continued to plot against Lumumba in order to prevent him from becoming prime minister. Throughout his presidency, Kennedy proved he would work with African nationalists that Eisenhower had deemed leftists and therefore dangerous, such as Kwame Nkrumah, the president of Ghana, and Sekou Toure, the president of Guinea, but not so in the case of Lumumba.[107] Rather than accept Lumumba's famous declaration made on July 5, 1960—"We are not Communists, Catholics, or Socialists. We are African nationalists."—Kennedy maintained the previous administration's belief that the former prime minister was "a rabble rousing speaker, a shrewd maneuverer with clever left-wing advisers, aided and encouraged by Soviet and Czech Ambassadors" who would "continue to cause difficulties in the Congo whether he is in control of the government, in jail or released."[108]

Unaware that plans made by the Belgian and Katangan governments were already in motion to assassinate Lumumba, the Kennedy administration planned to let him remain imprisoned until a new government was formed. (Mobutu had imprisoned Lumumba in Thysville after he had escaped from house arrest on November 27, 1960.) At best the Kennedy administration wanted a moderate government slanted towards the

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[106] Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), 245-246.

[107] Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa*; Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans*; White, *Holding the Line*.

[108] Memorandum from the Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Cumming) to Secretary of State Herter, 25 July 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 355-356. The venerable statesman and Democratic diplomat, Averell Harriman, who was visiting the Congo on behalf of Kennedy, arrived at this conclusion. Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, 3 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 486-487.

West, and at worse "a more broadly based Congolese Government which would include Lumumba elements but not Lumumba himself as Prime Minister." Either way, Rusk wrote Kennedy, "Only after…a new Congolese Government was established, would all political prisoners, including Lumumba, be released."[109] Remarkably, the administration maintained this position even while it was willing to admit, as Ambassador Clare Timberlake did before a Senate Foreign Relations Committee on February 6, 1961, that "there is not anybody down there really outside of Lumumba who has got the kind of energy and drive and imagination which would let him be Prime Minister in fact, not just name."[110]

The biggest difference then between the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations was that the latter sought to "modernize" the Congo. This commitment to develop the Congo's economy would increase U.S. expenditures and liability in a way that the Eisenhower administration had deemed undesirable. To signal this change of policy, Kennedy announced during his first press conference as president that the United States would "increase substantially its contribution towards relieving the famine in the Congo," promising the delivery of American dry food goods, "and airlifting 1,000 tons of food supplies, seeds, and hospital supplies from a number of African nations to the Congo."[111] Kennedy also created a Congo task force headed by Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs Harlan Cleveland. Cleveland was an academic who specialized in development economics (he had coined the phrase "the revolution of rising

[109] Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 1 February 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 40-41.

[110] Quoted in Kalb, *The Congo Cables*, 223.

[111] John F. Kennedy, "News Conference 1," 25 January 1961, JFK Library Online, accessed December 15, 2011, http://www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Ready-Reference/Press-Conferences/News-Conference-1.aspx.

expectations"), and had experience working with the UN administering aid to countries after World War II.[112]

After having been told by Rusk to "take the ceiling off our thinking as to solutions," the task force recommended to the president on February 1 that the UN take on a greater role in the Congo.[113] Before any steps could be taken to develop the country, the task force believed that "all principle military elements" had to be "neutralized." Specifically, it recommended passing a new Security-Council resolution that would give the UN "authority to bring under control all principal military elements in the Congo," and allow it to "undertake a training program of the Congolese troops." By using the UN to rein in the different military elements in the Congo, the task force believed it would help bring an end to Katanga's secession and prevent the spread of civil war throughout the rest of the country. It also recommended that the UN take on "a greater administrative role" until a government emerged that could effectively "govern and administer."[114] As Rusk later wrote, it was the U.S. position that "the UN had to stop the Congo from disintegrating and at the same time help an independent government emerge that could govern the country."[115]

Rusk also told the president that increasing the role of the UN would have the added benefit "to reorient the United States position so that it will have the support of world opinion generally, and in particular the support of principal segments of opinion in

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[112] Weissman, 129.

[113] As in other foreign policy crises during the Kennedy administration, it remained unclear who officially participated on the task force. The President's personal advisers participated, as well as anyone else Kennedy saw fit to involve, which at this time included the Averell Harriman. Editorial Note, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 24; Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa*, 63; Kalb, *The Congo Cables*, 199-200.

[114] Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 1 February 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 40-41.

[115] Dean Rusk, *As I Saw It* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 277.

Africa and Asia."[116] Upon entering office, the Afro-Asian bloc had been pressuring Kennedy to support an expansion of the UN's authority in the Congo. A letter from Nkrumah dated January 23 warned him that

> the reputation of the United States could be irretrievably damaged in Africa if your powerful nation sits by and watches one of your close military allies—Belgium which is after all dependent on the United States for its defense and to a considerable measure economic existence crumpling up democracy in Africa in flagrant disregard of the unanimous opinion and sentiment of all those African people who are free to express their views.[117]

The Afro-Asian bloc would not have been pleased to know, however, that part of the reason the United States wanted to place "a good deal of the operational machinery…in the hands of the United Nations" was that it believed it "would provide added safeguard against a Lumumba takeover."[118]

Then on February 13, fear of a Lumumba takeover was no longer relevant. Kennedy was informed that the former prime minister had been assassinated. The administration worried that once the news spread it would explode the situation in the Congo. Many in the Third World considered Lumumba to be the legitimate leader of the Congolese, and believed that his ousting had been orchestrated by Western financial interests dedicated to preventing the Congo from achieving a genuine independence.[119] Indeed, protests broke out across the globe. People gathered to mourn the loss of the Congo's fallen leader and to express their outrage in places such as New York, London,

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[116] Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 1 February 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 40-41.

[117] The text of the letter is in Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo*, 98-102.

[118] Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 1 February 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 40-41.

[119] See, for example, the following Foreign Broadcast Information Service Publications: "U.S. May Have Instigated Lumumba Murder," *Radio Progreso*, Havana, 11 February 1961; "Swat Al-Ahrar Deplores Lumumba Death," *Iraq Home Service*, Baghdad, 14 February 1961; "Al-Amal Appraises Congo Situation," *Al-Amal*, Tunis, 14 February 1961; "Hammarskjoeld, West Share Lumumba Guilt," *Egyptian Home Service*, Cairo, 14 February 1961; "Hanoi, VNA, in English to Europe and Asia," *Vietnam News Agency*, Hanoi, 16 February 1961.

Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Cairo, Lagos, and Accra.[120] But many of the protests, like the one staged by African-Americans in the General Assembly during the U.S. Representative to the UN's speech, proved in the end to be largely insignificant, and rather than blowing up the situation in the Congo as the administration had anticipated, then provided an avenue for the United States to expand the capacity of the UN operation as it had originally intended.[121]

The administration used an enraged Afro-Asian bloc as leverage to move NATO allies towards accepting a new UN resolution on February 21 that gave the Secretary-General the power to use force in order "to prevent the occurrence of civil war in the Congo."[122] With this resolution in place, the Kennedy administration could focus on establishing a legitimate government, one that would win approval from parliament, hopefully providing it enough strength to put an end to any further political splintering. This, it believed, was the first step towards developing the Congo; an issue Lumumba's death had hardened the administration's resolve on. Immediately following news of the former prime minister's assassination, Walt Rostow, Deputy Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, wrote a memo to his superior saying that the hope was "to concert our policies and to create a framework within which Congo can be built and its people may begin the long creative task of modernizing their society, in their own fashion."[123]

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[120] Mahoney, 71.

[121] Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans*, 233-234.

[122] Text of the resolution reproduced in Ernest W. Lefever, *Crisis in the Congo: A United Nations Force in Action* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1965), 193-194.

[123] Memorandum from Rostow to Bundy, 15 February 1961, Box 27, National Security File (hereafter, NSF), JFK Library, Boston, Ma. (hereafter, JFKL).

But the question remained, whom would the United States support to become the Congo's next leader so that it could achieve these objectives? The "best possibility," according to Timberlake, was a man named Cyrille Adoula.[124]

[124] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 1 November 1961, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 561-562.

# CHAPTER TWO:

# FORMATION OF THE ADOULA GOVERNMENT

On one hand, the formation of the Adoula government could be regarded as the Kennedy administration's greatest achievement during the crisis. Maneuvering through a wide range of international and local interests, the administration successfully formed a government around Adoula that temporarily unified the country (aside from Katanga). Yet a closer examination reveals that in doing so, it undermined its goal of instilling liberal values in the Congo. Despite lacking popular support, American policymakers nonetheless sought to empower Adoula, and in the process employed bribery, blackmail, and threats that in the long run would only further widen the credibility gap between Adoula and the Congolese people. While the administration celebrated the newly "democratically elected" government in the Congo, the truth was that the United States, in collusion with the Binza group (the clique that had helped orchestrate the coup against the first democratically elected prime minister, Patrice Lumumba), as opposed to the Congolese people, had conceived of and created the Adoula government, and as result helped sow the seeds for further political discord rather than the stability it so desired.

The United States' top priority in the wake of Lumumba's death was to establish a broad-based government in the Congo. More serious than the pressure mounting internationally to resolve the crisis was the situation developing within the Congo itself. As Ambassador Clare Timberlake cabled back to the State Department, "Problems here could scarcely be more complex."[1] Four armed political camps divided the country. Two

[1] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 28 April 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 130-132.

factions competed for national jurisdiction. One resided in the country's capital, Leopoldville, under the leadership of Joseph Kasavubu and General Joseph Mobutu who commanded about 7,000 troops. The other resided in Lumumba's hometown, Stanleyville, under the leadership of Antoine Gizenga who commanded about 5,500 troops. Two other factions sought to secede from the Congo. Albert Kalonji led the secession of the diamond-rich province, South Kasai, and commanded about 3,000 troops. And of course, Moise Tshombe led the secession of Katanga, and commanded between 5,000 and 7,000 troops.[2] The relationship between the UN military force and the government in Leopoldville was also deteriorating. Timberlake reported that an "explosive atmosphere" had developed between the two, and "a spark could touch it off at any minute."[3] As the fog of war rolled in, conflicting intelligence reports on troop movements and skirmishes kept the Congo in a state of panic and the White House on edge.[4] War seemed imminent unless a government uniting these factions could be formed.

During the process of creating a unified government, the Kennedy administration focused on preventing it from being Lumumbist-led. After Mobutu imprisoned Lumumba in September 1960, Gizenga, Lumumba's Deputy Prime Minister, proclaimed that the lawful government of the Congo resided in Stanleyville under his leadership. Christophe Gbenye and Pierre Mulele, both of whom also had held ministerial ranks under Lumumba, served as Gizenga's lieutenants. The Lumumbists, as the historian Georges

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[2] Ernest W. Lefever, *Crisis in the Congo: A United Nations Force in Action* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1965), 51-52.

[3] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 4 March 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 89-91; Editorial Note, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 91-93.

[4] Clifton to Bundy, Memorandum, 3 March 1961, Box 27, NSF, JFKL; Dulles to Clifton, Memorandum, 27 February 1961, Box 27, NSF, JFKL.

Nzongola-Ntalaja noted, were "emotionally committed to obtaining genuine independence, politically and economically, although they were not very clear on how to achieve this goal."[5] In essence, they were "progressive nationalists who sought to create nationally oriented and mass-based political parties, and saw independence as an opportunity for some changes likely to benefit ordinary people economically and socially…they espoused the pan-African ideal of African unity and the Bandung principle of…non-alignment."[6] Because of their appointments in Lumumba's government—the only government to have been lawfully empowered by the constitution—the Afro-Asian bloc and the UN generally considered this faction to have the strongest claim in governing the Congo.

A group of moderates in Leopoldville opposed the Lumumbists in Stanleyville. Nzongola-Ntalaja has accurately described them as "nationalists who tended on the whole to be conservative in their political outlook" and who were willing "to accept Western tutelage."[7] Kasavubu, Ileo, and Adoula were the public face of the moderates, while the real power resided within a clique of ministers known as the "Binza group."[8] Mobutu, Justin Bomboko, and Victor Nendaka were its most influential members, and along with some additional cohorts, controlled the most important government institutions: the army, the central bank, the secret police, the foreign ministry, and the ministry of the interior.[9] Outside the Leopoldville government, Kalonji and Tshombe also subscribed to the moderate platform; in general they opposed the Lumumbists and also

[5] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History* (New York: Zed Books 2002), 96.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., 97.
[8] "Binza" was the name of a suburb of Leopoldville where key members of the group lived.
[9] Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila*, 124-125.

favored working with the West. They, however, desired an autonomous relationship with the central government in order to preserve the wealth and lifestyle their mineral-rich provinces had garnered for them.[10]

The success of a brokered government relied upon finding a prime minister of whom the moderate and Lumumbist political factions would approve, and who appeared legitimate to the Afro-Asian bloc. The State Department also desired the candidate be pro-West, accepting U.S. nation-building plans and opposing Soviet expansion in the Congo. "The problem—and it is not a problem unique to the Congo," Secretary of State Dean Rusk later wrote, "was finding people who could organize and lead a government."[11] The task that awaited the new prime minister was enormous, and would require the greatest degree of political acumen. He would have to hold together a coalition government, end any secessionist movements, and right the economy. As if the stakes were not high enough, the State Department believed that failing to procure an adequate government would adversely affect the rest of the continent. "We believed that what happened in that large, diverse, and complex country in the heart of Africa," Rusk wrote, "was important to the rest of Africa."[12]

The Eisenhower administration initially believed Mobutu could run the country. But during his short-lived dictatorship during the fall of 1960, he proved to be incompetent. In cables back to Washington, Timberlake (an Eisenhower appointee) described Mobutu as "impulsive" and "naïve."[13] The ambassador reiterated these

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[10] Kalonji would eventually ally with the moderates in Leopoldville, while Tshombe steadfastly refused.

[11] Dean Rusk, *As I Saw It* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 281.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 1 November 1961, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 561-562.

observations in an official report, noting that the commissioners Mobutu appointed to run the country were "more interested in high life than in the serious business of providing a government." Furthermore, Timberlake noted that providing Mobutu with the additional money and arms that was being requested would "not cure the disease from which Mobutu's army is suffering but will simply provide expensive aspirin tablets to reduce fevers temporarily."[14]

Supporting Mobutu also placed the United States in an uncomfortable position with the UN and the Afro-Asian bloc. Because Mobutu usurped power without constitutional authority, the UN remained hesitant to officially recognize his regime, jeopardizing further aid from the organization. The Eisenhower administration attempted to address this concern by pressuring Mobutu to name Ileo prime minister. This placed a "fig leaf of a civilian government," as one historian described it, over a rather obvious military dictatorship.[15] Ileo was largely what he appeared to be, a crony of Mobutu, lacking the "necessary drive and flair" to be prime minister, in ambassador Timberlake's words, "and most unlikely to develop political muscle."[16] Even after Kasavubu and Mobutu named Ileo prime minister, UN leaders in the Congo remained hesitant to work with the government, instead favoring the Lumumbist faction, whose claims to legitimacy was less suspect.[17] To briefly sum up, the United States in 1961 concluded

[14] Analytical Chronology of the Congo Crisis, 8 March 1961, Box 27, NSF, JFKL; Also see, Madeleine G. Kalb, *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa--from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York: Macmillan, 1982), 205.

[15] Kalb, *The Congo Cables*, 144.

[16] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 1 November 1961, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 561-562; Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 28 April 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 130-132.

[17] Rajeshwar Dayal, *Mission for Hammarskjöld: The Congo Crisis* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976).

that Mobutu was neither capable to govern the country nor worth the political capital to support him.

With Mobutu no longer considered a viable option for prime minister, the State Department's eyes turned towards President Kasavubu, whose outlook and reputation appeared sound. Since the beginning of the crisis he had made it clear he wanted "a Congolese solution with Western, not Communist help," and during Mobutu's coup, his presidency had remained the "only unchallenged institution functioning."[18] But by this point, Kasavubu had already made it clear that he desired no responsibilities of "real power" and was content remaining president.[19] With Kalonji and Tshombe attempting to secede, the only viable Congolese politician left with any national notoriety was Adoula. After surveying the scene, the State Department eventually agreed with Timberlake "that Adoula seemed to be emerging as a leader who might be able to obtain some Lumumbist support for a moderate government and might well be a more effective Prime Minister than Ileo."[20] In short, he was their "best possibility."[21]

Singled out practically by default, Adoula nonetheless possessed the credentials the State Department desired. He was "moderate," "anti-communist," and willing to work closely with the United States.[22] Although Assistant Secretary of State G. Mennen Williams may have overstated the case when he told Rhodesian leaders, "Adoula had been America's choice for this job from the start," it is clear that the embassy and the

[18] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 28 April 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 130-132.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., n1.
[21] Ibid.; Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 1 November 1961, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 561-562.
[22] Rusk to the President, Memorandum, 3 August 1961, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL.

CIA had developed a relationship with him before Lumumba's death.[23] Lumumbists found Adoula acceptable because he had helped found Lumumba's political party, the *Mouvement National Congolais*, championed a non-aligned foreign policy, and remained unimplicated in Mobutu's coup. Perhaps most important to the Lumumbists, Adoula was genuinely committed to ending Katanga's secession. These characteristics, coupled with his preaching of pan-Africanism and denunciation of colonialism in neighboring Angola, garnered him the support of the Afro-Asian bloc. In both the national and international arena, Adoula truly was a middle-ground candidate, ideally situated for leading a brokered government.[24] As Rusk wrote in a memorandum to President Kennedy, "He is the strongest and most attractive of the moderate Congolese leaders."[25]

But as Timberlake pointed out, there was one major problem ailing Adoula: "He lack[s] broad political support."[26] The decision to empower Adoula reveals an element out of line with the liberal values the administration intended to instill in the Congo. Even though Adoula ideologically bridged the gap between the moderates in Leopoldville and the Lumumbists in Stanleyville, the Kennedy administration and the UN had to work hard at "setting up" his government, brokering alliances amongst the political factions in the Congo as well as mustering public support.[27] In the process of doing so, they employed coercive means, such as bribery, blackmail, and threats. These methods produced short-term results, but did not afford Adoula genuine political support. Once

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[23] Roy Welensky, *Welensky's 4000 Days: The Life and Death of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London: Collins, 1964), 220; Larry Devlin, *Chief of Station, Congo: A Memoir of 1960-67* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2007), 70; Kalb, 145.

[24] Nzongola-Ntalaja, 83.

[25] Rusk to Kennedy, Memorandum, 3 August 1961, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL; Also see Richard D. Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 79.

[26] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 1 November 1961, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 561-562.

[27] Charles de Gaulle, *Memoirs of Hope: Renewal and Endeavor* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971), 255.

appointed, this placed the new prime minister in a tenuous position at best. Without the political leverage of popular support, he often found himself rendered impotent and at the mercy of his patrons.

Arranging an Adoula premiership took several steps. The State Department's decision earlier that year to remove the commander of UN operations in the Congo, Rajeshwar Dayal, had helped clear the way for a non-Lumumbist prime minister. In a public report sent to the Secretary-General in November 1960, Dayal maintained that Lumumba was still prime minister, and condemned Mobutu's dictatorship.[28] As Ambassador Timberlake noted, "Dayal basically wants [a] Parliament-supported government which he can deal [with]."[29] The State Department feared Dayal's sympathies towards the Lumumbists, and viewed his belief that the UN should remain "neutral" in the Congo's political affairs as a roadblock to U.S. policy.[30]

In a high-level meeting in early March 1961, President Kennedy made clear that Dayal needed to be "replaced."[31] Adlai Stevenson, Kennedy's ambassador to the UN, began pressuring Hammarskjold to remove Dayal. Hammarskjold, however, as one historian has written, considered Dayal "something of an alter ego for the Secretary-General," and did not take kindly to the U.S. "criticizing the lack of neutrality of his principal lieutenant in the Congo."[32] Hammarskjold initially refused to remove his "old and trusted friend," arguing to Stevenson "that any action in relation to Dayal that might

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[28] Thomas J. Hamilton, "U.N. Aide in Congo Attacks Mobutu and Belgian Role," *New York Times*, 4 November 1960, 1; "Excerpts from Second Report to the U.N. by Its Representative in the Congo," ibid., 6.

[29] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 1 November 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 561-562.

[30] Dayal, *Mission for Hammarskjöld*, 68.

[31] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 89.

[32] Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa*, 82; Analytical Chronology of the Congo Crisis, 8 March 1961, Box 27, NSF, JFKL.

be construed as bowing to American pressure would be as bad for him and for the UN as it would be for the United States itself."[33]

By April, the State Department ordered Stevenson to be "frank" with Hammarskjold, and to "remind him strongly that if the Congo falls under Communist domination while the UN is sharing major responsibility for the security of the country, the results in US public and Congressional opinion are likely to be extremely damaging to the UN."[34] The statement to the Secretary-General served as a not-so-subtle reminder that the United States funded the bulk of the UN operations in the Congo. Though "the Secretary-General did not take kindly to this demarche," Hammarskjold eventually submitted, but not before driving what he believed to be a hard bargain.[35] In exchange for replacing Dayal, Hammarskjold told the United States it would have to recall Timberlake, who had led the charge in lampooning Dayal's reputation. Dayal submitted a letter of resignation in May, Timberlake returned home in June.[36]

In reality, removing Dayal had cost the Kennedy administration little. Timberlake, a holdover from the previous administration, had fallen out of favor with Kennedy because of recent behavior that had bordered on insubordination.[37] Kennedy replaced Timberlake with Edmund Gullion, a personal friend whose vision for the Third World matched that of the president.[38] McMurtrie Godley, a capable and resourceful diplomat

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[33] Brian Urquhart, *Hammarskjold* (New York: Knopf, 1972), 517.

[34] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 6 April 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 121-122; Analytical Chronology of the Congo Crisis, 8 March 1961, Box 27, NSF, JFKL.

[35] Analytical Chronology of the Congo Crisis, 8 March 1961, Box 27, NSF, JFKL.

[36] Telegram from the Mission of the United Nations to the Department of State, 22 May 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 139-140; Mahoney, 84; Ernest W. Lefever, *Uncertain Mandate: Politics of the U.N. Congo Operation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 80.

[37] Mahoney, 80-81.

[38] Ibid., 108.

who served as counselor at the embassy, took over the responsibilities of the ambassador until Gullion arrived.

The only real fallout that occurred from the removal of Dayal was that it had irked India, an important leader amongst the non-aligned states whose much-needed soldiers were serving in the UN Congo operation. After Dayal's removal some Indian parliamentarians called for the withdrawal of their nation's combat troops from the Congo. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was also offended by the incident, particularly the lampooning of Dayal by the West. Rusk flew to New Delhi and resolved the issue by telling Nehru that the U.S. would support another Indian to replace Dayal at the UN.[39] In the meantime, Hammarskjold divvied out Dayal's former responsibilities amongst several UN officials, appointing Sture Linner from Sweden as Officer in Charge of UN Operations. As CIA Chief of Station Larry Devlin noted, "The selection of Linner could not have been better for the embassy…as he and Mac [Godley] hit it off immediately."[40] Indeed, Godley cabled the State Department shortly after Linner's arrival, "We find UN policy and that of UN representative here identical."[41]

Dayal's resignation coincided with another fortuitous break for the Kennedy administration. In late-April, a newly elected government took office in Belgium in which Paul-Henri Spaak was named Foreign Minister. Spaak, a veteran diplomat and politician, had served as the first Chairman of the General Assembly at the UN and as the Secretary General of NATO. Working closely with the United States throughout his career had earned him the Presidential Medal of Freedom which Kennedy had awarded

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[39] Memorandum of Conversation Between Prime Minister Nehru and Secretary of State Rusk, 30 March 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 114-115.

[40] Devlin, *Chief of Station, Congo*, 156.

[41] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 25 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 170-171.

him earlier that year. Spaak reinvigorated Belgium's relationship with the United States and the UN, which under the previous government had become at best stale and at worst intransigent. As Spaak noted in his memoirs, he met with the U.S. ambassador "several times a week and, at times of crisis, several times a day."[42] The U.S. embassy in Belgium reported that "with the fresh approach which Spaak is obviously bringing to the Congo problem, there seems to be a real opportunity for us to work closely and constructively with the new Belgian Government."[43]

The new Belgian foreign minister told the American ambassador in Brussels that

> the best way for Belgium to preserve her economic and other interests…was for her to make clear to the Congolese Government that Belgium is not trying to control and fetter GOC [Government of Congo] freedom of action but wishes to see a free and independent Congo with which Belgium is willing to cooperate and be helpful on terms of equality and full recognition of Congolese sovereignty.[44]

Spaak announced these new objectives while addressing the Atlantic Council in May, stating that Belgium wanted "a neutral Congo which would respect Western interests" and in which the UN should play "an important part."[45] In essence, Spaak's philosophy and objectives were more or less in consonance with the policies of the Kennedy administration.

With the recasting of characters in the UN and Belgium, the United States launched a well-coordinated campaign in June to pressure every major participant—the UN, Belgium, Britain, France, the various political factions in the Congo, and the Union

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[42] Paul-Henri Spaak, *The Continuing Battle: Memoirs of a European, 1936-1966* (Boston: Little, 1971), 371.

[43] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 5 May 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 132-135.

[44] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 16 May 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 136-138.

[45] Spaak, *The Continuing Battle*, 362.

Miniere du Haut Katanga (UMHK)—to accept and assist in creating a unified government under Adoula.[46]

Rusk cabled Charles Yost, Ambassador Stevenson's deputy at the UN, to make the case to Hammarskjold that an Adoula government was the only way to "ensure success [of the] UN Congo operation."[47] It was the United States' position, Rusk wrote, that the Secretary-General "use his influence towards creation of [a] government of moderate character in which members of Lumumba-Gizenga group would be represented."[48] Hammarskjold, who had already begun charting a similar course for the UN, responded positively. As Yost reported back to Rusk, "On whole I found SYG [Secretary-General] thinking along same lines as we are, maneuvering effectively to produce as sound and moderate government as is possible under circumstances."[49]As Devlin noted, "The Secretary-General was determined to have a parliamentary government—one that would include Gizenga—in place before the next meeting of the UN's General Assembly in New York."[50]

Hammarskjold hoped a lawful government in the Congo would allow the UN to fulfill its mandates, and more importantly, that a government of reconciliation might end Katanga's secession, removing the need for the expensive peacekeeping operation that was draining the organization financially. Hammarskjold rarely supported an expedient solution at the expense of a tactful one, and therefore like the United States he wanted to avoid the creation of a Lumumbist government in the Congo. His interactions with

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[46] For an example of the coordinated effort, see Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 27 June 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 152-154.

[47] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 20 June 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 148-149.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 22 June 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 150-151.

[50] Devlin, 156; Urquhart, *Hammarskjold*, 546-547. Also see Lefever, *Crisis in the Congo*, 52-53.

Lumumba as well as his personal aversion to communism caused Hammarskjold to support Adoula. Gizenga needed to participate in the new government in order for it to appear legitimate in the eyes of the Congolese and the Afro-Asian bloc, but as Yost informed Rusk, "[The] UN was playing its cards to attain [a] moderate political result…apparently having in mind Adoula emerging as Prime Minister and Gizenga having some other post."[51]

These maneuverings in New York resulted in American diplomats and UN officials working in tandem to persuade the decision-makers in Leopoldville that Adoula should be prime minister. As Devlin noted, "The Binza Group, in particular, had a vested interest in whatever new government emerged because they wanted it to be moderate and, ideally, one they could influence."[52] Before returning home, Timberlake warned Washington that "Kasavubu, Mobutu, or any other Congolese," should not be considered "in the pocket."[53] Godley and Linner worked on Leopoldville leaders to support Adoula as prime minister. Godley soft-peddled the issue, highlighting Ileo's inabilities and "pressing the Leopoldville Congolese to agree, between themselves, on a strong formateur (such as Adoula)." According to him, he "never mentioned Adoula by name."[54] Meanwhile, Linner, under heavy pressure from Hammarskjold to get a lawful government in order, was more "forthright" with the Leopoldville leaders. He told them

[51] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 22 June 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 150-151.

[52] Devlin, 155.

[53] Analytical Chronology of the Congo Crisis, 8 March 1961, Box 27, NSF, JFKL; Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 28 April 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 130-132, n1.

[54] Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 15 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 160-161; Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 20 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 166-169.

that naming Adoula prime minister was their best bet for bringing the Stanleyville faction back into the fold and regaining international legitimacy.[55]

CIA covert operations accompanied the efforts of Godley and Linner. As Devlin later wrote, "Linner's argument coincided with the recommendations of a number of our agents and tilted the situation in our direction."[56] Bribes were also used. The White House approved "an expenditure of $23,000 in support of particular activities designed to strengthen the moderate camp in the Congo." As McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, explained to the president, "Very much larger sums have been spent in the past in the same direction, through the same channels and without embarrassment."[57] These means were effective momentarily. The Binza group assented, since Adoula would allow them to maintain their hold on the levers of power in the government. UN officials also enticed the Lumumbists to participate in the formation of a unified government by assuring their protection during the negotiations.[58] After observing Gizenga over the past few months, the State Department concluded that he was "less [of a] threat" than Lumumba, and that as long as he did not end up as prime minister, it was comfortable with him and other Lumumbists participating in the new government.[59]

Persuading Tshombe to participate in the negotiations proved to be the most difficult challenge. In attempting to do so the Kennedy administration, and the world,

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[55] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 20 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 166-169.

[56] Devlin, 158.

[57] Memorandum from Special Assistant for National Security Affairs to President Kennedy, 10 June 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 144.

[58] Catherine Hoskyns, *The Congo since Independence, January 1960-December, 1961* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 366-374.

[59] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 5 June 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 142-143.

discovered just how obstinate he could be. Since U.S. relations with Katanga were strained, the administration urged the UN, Belgium, Britain, and to a lesser extent France, to pressure Tshombe to participate in the formation of a new government.[60] The State Department also exerted what little influence it held over the UMHK by enlisting the help of retired Admiral Alan Kirk, who had developed several contacts with the company while serving as ambassador to Belgium immediately following World War II.[61]

The State Department's method of choice in order to get Tshombe to negotiate was stoking the fire under the Belgian government. State thought that since UMHK was a Belgian company, and it was mostly Belgian expatriates aiding Katanga, that the government of Belgium could use its authority and leverage over both to enlist Tshombe's participation. This placed Spaak in a tough situation. As he later wrote, "For me personally, the Katangan situation was most difficult."[62] On one hand, he was concerned about the "lives of some thousand of my compatriots" and the "legitimate" Belgian interests in the Congo.[63] On the other hand, "He was convinced that those Belgians who wanted to hang on in Congo and exercise predominant influence on the Congolese Government were following a path which was 100 percent wrong."[64] The embassy in Belgium reported to the State Department "insofar as he [Spaak] was concerned, he believed strongly that Belgium should cooperate with the UN. In particular, he felt that the 'political advisors' should be withdrawn as rapidly as possible

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[60] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 27 June 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 152-154; Memorandum of Conversation, 13 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 158-159.

[61] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 18 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 164-165; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 27 June 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 152-154, n4.

[62] Spaak, 378.

[63] Ibid.; Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 16 May 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 136-138.

[64] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 16 May 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 136-138.

and the sooner the better."[65] Domestic public opinion, however, hamstrung Spaak's policies, as did his inability to pressure private citizens affiliated with UMHK. As company representatives liked to tell him, it was "not their policy to exert pressure on political matters."[66]

In July, Rusk ordered his ambassador in Brussels to further pressure the Belgian foreign minister on the matter of removing Tshombe's Belgian advisers in Katanga. The State Department believed these individuals were serving as a negative influence on Tshombe, contributing to his obstinance. "[It] should be made clear to Spaak," Rusk wrote, "that Belgium [is] not moving fast enough on withdrawals."[67] The State Department believed that the withdrawals might "have [an] immediate effect bringing Tshombe around," but at the least "would diminish considerably his independent military capability, one of his major sources of power."[68] At the behest of the Americans, the British ambassador in Brussels also urged Spaak to "bring all possible pressure to bear on Tshombe to cooperate."[69] In the unlikely case that Spaak failed to grasp the seriousness of the situation, the typically droll Rusk reiterated to him in grave terms that

> world attention remains focused on [the] problem and that Western relations with [the] majority of countries of [the] world will be affected adversely if we appear to be standing in the way of national reconciliation in the Congo. The US, for its part, considers that it has a heavy stake in the success of the UN effort to bring the contending factions together.[70]

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[65] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 5 May 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 132-135; Spaak, 361-362.

[66] Hoskyns, *The Congo since Independence*, 373.

[67] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 8 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 155-157.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 15 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 160-161.

[70] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 8 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 155-157.

Spaak's lack of success was not due to lack of effort. Relative to the previous government he had immensely sped up the withdrawals, and though he lacked control over Belgian mercenaries, he declared that the government would "confiscate the passport of any Belgian who continued serving with the Katanga gendarmerie."[71] As far as getting Tshombe to the negotiating table, he met with UMHK officials and urged them to use their "influence with Tshombe to get him to cooperate with Moderates and send representatives to Parliament."[72] Because UMHK also had investors in the United Kingdom, he "urged British influence be exerted in [the] same sense."[73] Spaak even personally cabled Tshombe "indicating why interests of Katanga could best be served cooperating with Moderates in Leopoldville and why GOB [Government of Belgium] opposed separatism."[74]

Despite facing pressure from every major Western nation as well as the UN and the Afro-Asian bloc, Tshombe barely budged. He was especially gifted at palavering, deflecting and avoiding any serious commitment to participate in the formation of a unified government. Conor Cruise O'Brien, the UN representative stationed in Elisabethville, recalled that conversations with Tshombe "were long, frequent and exhausting," and produced "meager and twisted results."[75] Tshombe would say one thing in private, and another in public. "His ambivalent and inconsistent attitude," Spaak observed, "was bound to irritate and worry all those who had dealings with him, even his

[71] Spaak, 363.
[72] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 18 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 164-165.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Conor Cruise O'Brien, *To Katanga and Back: A UN Case History* (London: Hutchinson, 1962), 186.

most ardent well-wishers."[76] In short, Tshombe played his hand close to his vest when dealing with Western interlocutors, and he played it well, forcing even his archenemy, the witty Irish intellectual O'Brien, to note that Tshombe was "quite clever and amusing."[77]

Several elements factored into Tshombe's unwillingness to participate in the formation of a unified government. Ego played a part. Tshombe knew that the international climate prevented him from becoming head of the central government, a position he desired. Factions within Katangan politics also hardened Tshombe's resolve. Reactionary Katangan politicians such as Godefroid Munongo kept the secessionist spirit alive, and pressured Tshombe to do the same.[78] A small but loud group of influential Westerners also cheered Tshombe on, bolstering his belief that the West might eventually come around to his position.[79] Tshombe claimed that the UN also discouraged him from negotiating, since it appeared that UN officials were interfering in internal politics, something the Secretary-General pledged they would not do.[80]

But the most significant factor contributing to Tshombe's intransigence was that he, along with many other Katangans, wanted to preserve their affluence. As one journalist noted, Katanga's "revenues were the envy of poorer provinces."[81] Tshombe, himself a millionaire, represented the *petit-bourgeoisie* that had developed in the colony. Elisabethville, the capital of Katanga, had amenities difficult to find elsewhere in the Congo. Lobster arrived by plane, and there was a golf course, which according to one

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[76] Spaak, 368.

[77] O'Brien, *To Katanga and Back*, 114.

[78] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 18 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 164-165.

[79] See, for example, Box 206-9, File "American Committee for Aid to Katanga Freedom Fighters Correspondence," Series H, Papers of Max Yergan, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, Washington, DC.

[80] Ian Goodhope Colvin, *The Rise and Fall of Moise Tshombe: A Biography* (London: Frewin, 1968), 65.

[81] Ibid., 21.

observer, was "one of the best courses in Africa."[82] When Tshombe said, "A unitary form of government is not possible in parts of a country differing so greatly from each other," he was not just referring to tribal differences.[83] He believed a unified government in a federal system would jeopardize the lifestyle to which Katangans had grown accustom. Katangans feared that the central government, desperate for cash, would redistribute Katanga's wealth across the poorer provinces, and that rejoining the Congo would invite the chaos enveloping the rest of the country into Katanga. As one UMHK official tried to explain to Spaak, they were "obsessed with fear that Katanga would become mired in Congolese political and economic chaos."[84]

Tshombe was a peculiar specimen to contemporary observers. As Mike Hoare, the white South African who commanded Tshombe's mercenaries, noted, Tshombe was "able to understand the African and the European mind at one and the same time."[85] Tshombe had embraced European culture as a youth. His father had been a successful and ambitious entrepreneur, which allowed Tshombe to travel to Belgium when Congolese contact with the outside world was practically forbidden by colonial authorities. He received an education from American Methodist missionaries, joined the Boy Scouts, and conducted business negotiations with Europeans for his father. All of which taught him the social cues of Western society.

Third Worlders interpreted Tshombe's affability and willingness to work with white Westerners as being a "stooge" or a "puppet." An Indian diplomat summed up this widely held opinion when he said, "We knew all about his white advisers. He was not

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[82] Ibid., 64.
[83] Ibid., 22.
[84] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 18 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 164-165, n3.
[85] Mike Hoare, *Congo Mercenary* (London: Hale, 1967), 28.

really an African leader. Tshombe had the mentality of a European."[86] Tshombe certainly sought out white advisers, but as his friend and biographer, Ian Colvin, wrote, "Once the European adviser had offered his information, the decisions of Tshombe took on a rounded, ebullient, almost Churchillian form that was peculiarly his own."[87] It was also true that Tshombe allied with Western imperialists, but a closer examination reveals that he was in cahoots with them only insofar as it served *his* interests. Allying with UMHK, for example, initially benefitted both parties. When the company told him to end the secession, he replied in no uncertain terms, "This company will pay dearly for its treason. We are all set to blow up every Union Miniere installation in Elisabethville, Kolwezi, and Jadotville."[88] Company officials interpreted these threats as "real," fearing the worst.[89]

Tshombe's reputation as a pawn of Western interests derived largely from his own public relations campaign. He embraced and cultivated an image of himself which repulsed Third World nationalists to the same degree it excited conservative white Westerners. He knew aggrandizing himself as an anti-communist, a willing partner for white settlers, and a victim of the UN would garner him support from conservative Western quarters. A master of public and personal diplomacy, his lobbying and propaganda drew him sympathy from foreign dignitaries. In the United States, Richard Nixon, Herbert Hoover, and Barry Goldwater vociferously supported Tshombe.[90] His most ardent American supporter was Senator Thomas Dodd (D-CT), whose activism became a nettlesome thorn in the Kennedy administration's side.

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[86] Colvin, *The Rise and Fall of Moise Tshombe*, 69.
[87] Ibid., 52.
[88] Jules Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 229.
[89] "Tshombe Threatens to Burn," *Sarasota Journal*, 9 January 1963, 1-2.
[90] Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 180-183.

As Tshombe worked to avoid the formation of a unified government, his adversaries grew impatient, and began to move on without his participation. Hammarskjold threatened to cut off UN aid unless a government elected by parliament emerged.[91] Shortly after Hammarskjold's demarche, the Leopoldville and Stanleyville factions agreed to meet to form a government of unity. Tshombe refused to participate, and instead championed the formation of a confederation that would permit Katanga's autonomy. [92] With the opportunity to reach an agreement between the moderates and the Lumumbists at stake, the United States and the UN decided they could no longer wait for Tshombe to come around. The consulate in Elisabethville felt as if "Katangan leaders [were] attempting by every device to split perspective unity of Congo in order to save this province from forceful reintegration into central government system. In their desperation they [are] becoming [an] active menace to US and Western interests in Africa." [93] As the Americans would soon discover, only the use of force could have persuaded Tshombe to participate, an option the UN and the United States were unwilling to entertain at this time.[94]

The UN arranged for Congolese delegates, minus the Katangans, to convene at Lovanium University on July 13 to elect a new government. In an effort to remove any suspicion of foreign involvement or foul play during the conference, thus giving the impression that whatever government emerged was a legitimate product of the Congolese themselves, the conference appeared to be held in total isolation. UN troops sealed off the campus. As Roger Hilsman, Kennedy's Director of the Bureau of Intelligence Research

[91] Henry Tanner, "U.N. Insists Congo Call Parliament," *New York Times*, 4 July 1961, 1.
[92] Gérard-Libois, 149.
[93] Telegram from the Consulate in Elisabethville to the Department of State, 20 July 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 165-166.
[94] Gérard-Libois, 68.

at the State Department, described, "Barbed wire was put up, searchlight towers built, soldiers with dogs patrolled the grounds. No money was allowed inside the grounds, not even blank checks; no liquor, weapons, or even women were permitted inside and none of the legislators were allowed to leave until after an agreement was reached."[95]

But as previously noted, UN officials were pulling for Adoula to be elected prime minister. Linner, along with two other UN officials, Robert Gardiner and Mahmoud Khiary, worked inside the conference to arrange an Adoula outcome. "Ten days before the Government of the Congo was elected," O'Brien wrote, "[Khiary] showed me, written on the back of an envelope, the core of the Government he hoped to see elected: Prime Minister, Adoula; Vice-Premiers, Gizenga, Sendwe, Bolikango. It all came true, except for Bolikango."[96] Knowing that Kasavubu supported Adoula, Linner "urged Kasavubu to visit the conclave, offering to put a helicopter at his disposal."[97] Kasavubu did visit, and according to Assistant Secretary of State Williams, "Saved the bacon."[98] During the conference, American embassy officials were so confident that UN policy mirrored U.S. objectives that they later described it as "really a U.S. operation but using outstanding U.N. personalities."[99]

The CIA also worked for an Adoula outcome. On the eve of the conference, Devlin "met with as many parliamentarians as possible" and "arranged to have the editor of the main newspaper review the potential candidates for prime minister," who

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[95] Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), 251.

[96] O'Brien, 189.

[97] Devlin, 158.

[98] Quoted in Mahoney, 87.

[99] Quoted in Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 147.

concluded, "Adoula was best qualified to head the new government."[100] During the conference, the CIA also discovered a way into the Lovanium fortress. Money and the guarantee of "shiny American automobiles" arrived for key delegates via the sewers.[101]

The Binza group feared a Gizenga outcome as much as the United States, and "pressured" (often bullied) the other Congolese delegates to accept a unified government under Adoula.[102] Mobutu threatened a coup if Gizenga was elected prime minister.[103] His troops remained armed in Leopoldville, breaking the UN's security protocol for the conference.[104] Shortly after that declaration, he threatened to take over the airport, jeopardizing the safety of delegates' return trip, a provision guaranteed by the UN. Gizenga formally protested, but to no avail. Godley and Linner did not approve of Mobutu's "blackmail," but the CIA continued to collude with the Binza group throughout the conference.[105] Devlin had a radio installed in an automobile belonging to a member of the Binza group "to insure communications between us during the meeting."[106]

Aside from several anxious moments in Washington, where it appeared that the conference might dissolve or that Gizenga may be named prime minister, the UN and CIA efforts prevailed.[107] On August 1, 1961, Adoula was named "formateur." The next day, with a vote of confidence from Parliament, Kasavubu named Adoula prime minister. Gizenga would serve as Deputy Prime Minister, and Gizenga's lieutenant, Christophe

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[100] Devlin, 157.

[101] "How C.I.A. put 'Instant Air Force' Into Congo," *New York Times*, 26 April 1966, 1, 30; The scholar Stephen Weissman "generally verified" the *New York Times* article with "a member of the American Embassy." Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo*, 149.

[102] Mahoney, 87.

[103] Henry Tanner, "Kasavubu Tells Lawmakers He Will Nominate Premier," *New York Times*, 28 July 1961, 6.

[104] Kalb, 273.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Devlin, 157.

[107] Mahoney, 86.

Gbenye, would serve as Minister of the Interior.[108] The United States had succeeded in creating a moderate government in the Congo.

The UN and the United States were elated. Hammarskjold sent a letter to Adoula recognizing his appointment as prime minister and informing him that UN aid would "be rendered exclusively to your government."[109] The Congo Crisis had weighed heavily on Hammarskjold the past year. Operations in the Congo had strained the UN financially and created such political discord that the very life of the institution had been threatened.[110] The Secretary-General believed Adoula's election signaled that the end of the crisis was near. In a letter to the Foreign Minister of Egypt, Hammarskjold wrote, "If the solution chosen by unanimous Parliament, as I sincerely hope, proves reasonably stable, it would from my point of view be a signal for the beginning of the liquidation of the UN operation." [111]

In Washington, Rusk noted "Adoula's victory" in passing to the president.[112] Walt Rostow, ever cheery, better relayed the sense of exuberance in the administration. "There is optimism all over town that the Congo situation is on the way toward solution," he wrote Kennedy, "we could be witnessing the most encouraging new development since you became President."[113] In an official speech, Undersecretary of State George Ball said

[108] For an outline of other key appointments, see Hoskyns, 377.

[109] Dag Hammarskjold, "Letter to Prime Minister Adoula after Confirmation of His Government by the Congolese Parliament, 10 Aug. 1961," in *Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations: Dag Hammarskjold, 1960-1961*, ed. Andrew W. Cordier and Wilder Foote (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), 538-539.

[110] Lise A. Namikas, "Battleground Africa: The Cold War and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2002).

[111] Urquhart, 553.

[112] Rusk to the President, Memorandum, 3 August 1961, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL.

[113] Rostow to the President, Memorandum, 4 August 1961, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL.

that the emergence of the Adoula government was, "An act of faith in the democratic process." He declared, "Its legitimacy is unquestioned."[114]

While the administration celebrated the newly "democratically-elected" government in the Congo, the truth was that the United States as opposed to the Congolese people had conceived of and created the Adoula government. Adoula would not have been empowered as prime minister without the backing of U.S. power. Undoubtedly, the execution of American diplomacy was impressive. U.S. policymakers overcame significant obstacles by working with many partners, interests, and factions, and successfully kept the remainder of the country unified, which appeared to be an unlikely possibility when it had inherited the crisis. Such efforts, however, reveal that the Adoula government was far from a product of the democratic process as Ball had claimed.[115] The Americans had colluded with the Binza group, the clique that had orchestrated the coup against the first democratically elected prime minister of the Congo, Patrice Lumumba. Together they bribed and pressured the other Congolese delegates to accept a government of unity.

As a result, Adoula's power remained limited. Binza members retained control over the vital organs of government, and the United States, which had practically created the Adoula government, as the historian Stephen Weissman has written, "Was, in many different ways, part of his government."[116] Adoula knew his policies would need approval and support from Washington for success, and that the Americans could sway the Binza group in his favor, as occurred at Lovanium, or could stand idly by during a

[114] Speech reprinted in, "The Elements in Our Congo Policy," *Department of State Bulletin*, 8 January 1962, 43-50.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Weissman, 208.

coup, as happened to Lumumba.[117] To his credit, Adoula did not always fold in the face of American power. He made the most of the entangled relationship by remaining true to his nationalist sensibilities. While heeding advice from Washington, he at times charted his own path. He knew, even if the Americans did not, that only a speedy end to Katanga's secession would provide him the broad political support necessary for him to remain in power.

[117] According to Devlin, one reason Adoula met frequently with him was that, "I…suspect he hoped that I would warn him if Mobutu or Nendaka turned against him." Devlin, 160.

# CHAPTER THREE:

# BATTLE FOR KATANGA, ROUND 1

Ending the secession provided the only hope for the Adoula government to establish itself as legitimate and to begin to tackle the many problems confronting the Congo. But the international community was divided over how to achieve this. The Central Government of the Congo, the UN, and the Afro-Asian bloc preferred to end the secession quickly with military force. Western countries, particularly Britain, Belgium, and France opposed military action, and preferred instead a peacefully negotiated settlement. Conscious of this North-South division, the Kennedy administration sought to chart a middle-of-the-road solution. This decision is a prime example of how Kennedy's political pragmatism could result in a "politics of inadvertence."[1] His "readiness to negotiate" coupled with Tshombe's ability to palaver boxed Kennedy in, narrowed the president's options, and only further undermined JFK's efforts to create political stability and instill liberal values in the Congo.

Britain and Belgium had been less enthusiastic than the United States and the UN about the formation of the Adoula government. Both had reservations about the new government's ability to create stability in the region. Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Paul Henri Spaak was convinced that neither the UN nor the Adoula government had a "plan for peaceful political reintegration of Katanga."[2] Even though Spaak "was fundamentally and profoundly opposed to the secession," his "aim was to put an end to it

[1] Arthur M. Schlesinger, *The Bitter Heritage: Vietnam and American Democracy, 1941-1966* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 31.

[2] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 12 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 208-209.

without violence or bloodshed."[3] Spaak feared that if military force was used the "situation may deteriorate to [a] point of chaos."[4] The British held similar concerns. As one historian has noted, the British believed that "it was more than likely that the new regime would get very impatient about Katanga's continued quasi-independence."[5] British Foreign Secretary Lord Home feared that reintegrating Katanga with military force would spark "a belt of chaos from Angola, through the Congo, Ruanda Burundi to Kenya." "That," he said, "would be a dreadful prospect."[6]

Adoula's rhetoric warranted these concerns. Upon being named *formateur* on August 1, he told his fellow parliamentarians that he was "determined in the very near future to annul the secession of Katanga."[7] During his first speech as prime minister, he described Tshombe and the UMHK as sabotaging the Congo's independence. "Even if Katanga was a tract of land barren and desolate," Adoula declared, "we would nevertheless continue to regard it as an integral part of our country."[8]

Adoula was also under pressure from the Lumumbists, the Binza Group, and the Congolese people to end the secession. In fact, an agreement to end the secession was the only thing holding the coalition government together. As one scholar has noted, Gizenga's "condition for entering the government was that Adoula should take action

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[3] Paul-Henri Spaak, *The Continuing Battle: Memoirs of a European, 1936-1966* (Boston: Little, 1971), 378.

[4] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 12 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 208-209.

[5] Alan James, *Britain and the Congo Crisis, 1960-63* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 91.

[6] Alec Douglas-Home, *The Way the Wind Blows: An Autobiography* (New York: Quadrangle, 1976), 129.

[7] Catherine Hoskyns, *The Congo since Independence, January 1960-December, 1961* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 378.

[8] "La Declaration Gouvernementale," 2 August 1961, *Congo 1961* (Brussels: C.R.I.S.P.): 422-433.

against Katanga."[9] Adoula informed Hammarskjold in mid-August "that he was already having difficulties with his Cabinet on the Katanga problem and would soon be in danger from its more extreme members if nothing could be done about it."[10] The moderates also felt "strongly about the Katanga secession."[11] The Binza group, who as one historian noted, "Imposed its will on President Kasa-Vubu and Prime Minister Adoula," also wanted the secession ended.[12] So too did the Congolese masses, who attributed the country's dire economic conditions to Katanga's unwillingness to share profits from its lucrative mining operations.

Journalist David Halberstam, reporting for the *New York Times* from the Congo, recounted a humorous story illustrating the everyday pressures facing Adoula:

> There is a photographer here whose telephone has been unusually busy lately. His number is 4600. The business phone of Cyrille Adoula, the new Congolese Premier, is 4800, and there have been some wrong numbers. Each morning and afternoon there are about a dozen phone calls for Mr. Adoula at 4600, and almost without fail the calls are alike. A Congolese gets on the phone. Without confirming that he is indeed talking to Mr. Adoula, he begins. Anyone in this country is delighted to complete any call. The conversation, with increasing excitement, volume and speed, goes like this: 'Ah, my friend Monsieur Adoula. It is very good to talk to with you and I like your Government very much, and it is three months since I am paid, and I need the money and I want the money.' The conversations always end in anger. In the Congo if you want to get paid, you call the Premier. All problems, it appears are his, and there are a lot of problems.[13]

Adoula knew that the key to alleviating these pressures centered on ending the secession. He asked Hammarskjold to use military force to end the secession quickly.[14] The Secretary-General initially rebuffed Adoula's call for action. With a coalition government in place and Western pressure mounting on Tshombe, Hammarskjold

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[9] Hoskyns, *The Congo since Independence*, 553-554; Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 153.

[10] Brian Urquhart, *Hammarskjold* (New York: Knopf, 1972), 553-554.

[11] Henry Tanner, "U.N. Braces for Its Congo Task," *New York Times*, 24 September 1961, E4.

[12] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History* (New York: Zed Books 2002), 124-125. Also see Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 20 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 232-233.

[13] David Halberstam, "New Confidence Evident in Congo,' *New York Times*, 24 August 1961, 13.

[14] Urquhart, *Hammarskjold*, 553-554.

believed that a peaceful settlement would soon be achieved. In early September the Secretary-General traveled to the Congo to help broker such a settlement. "He had it definitely in mind to try to induce Mr. Tshombe to enter into talks with Mr. Adoula," UN Under Secretary for Political Affairs Ralph Bunche later wrote. "He knew that if this could be achieved it might well relieve the Assembly of the necessity of extensive and poisonous debate on the subject of the Congo, which would do neither the Congo nor the UN any good."[15]

Though Adoula's plea for action failed to resonate with the Secretary-General, it caught the attention of Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien, the Irish scholar-activist who was serving as the UN representative in Elisabethville. After witnessing Tshombe's ability to deliberate endlessly, O'Brien was convinced that only a UN offensive would force Tshombe to concede.[16] As an Irishman, O'Brien arrived in the Congo sympathetic to the anti-colonialist position.[17] Interpreting the February Security-Council resolution loosely, he availed himself of the opportunity to end the secession when the Adoula government asked the UN to "expel all foreign civil and military advisers" and serve arrest warrants to several of Tshombe's ministers.[18] As one contemporary observer accurately wrote, O'Brien was

[15] Also see Brian Urquhart, *A Life in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 174; Ralph J. Bunche, "The United Nations Operation in the Congo," in *The Quest for Peace: The Dag Hammerskjöld Memorial Lectures*, ed. Andrew W. Cordier and Wilder Foote(New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 119-138, 134.

[16] Conor Cruise O'Brien, *To Katanga and Back: A UN Case History* (London: Hutchinson, 1962), esp. 263-266.

[17] Ibid., 30-39.

[18] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 11 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 207, esp. n1; Madeleine G. Kalb, *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa--from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York: Macmillan, 1982), 291.

> suddenly in a position of great power at a crucial juncture in the affairs of Africa and of what remained of the British Empire he detested so much, with an international force (which incidentally contained Irish and Indian detachments) at his disposal, this entertaining and bookish man had an opportunity to turn his theories and his dreams into action…Ireland's woes were to be avenged in Central Africa.[19]

On September 12, 1961, O'Brien launched "Operation Morthor" ("*Morthor*" being the Hindi word for "*smash*").[20] Halberstam was embedded in Elisabethville during the offensive. He reported that "fierce fighting," some "hand-to-hand," had quickly turned "Elisabethville into a nightmare city."[21] Katangan forces easily repelled UN soldiers, and operation Morthor came to a halt. As Halberstam observed, the fighting had not been the only dizzying predicament: "It is a curious war in many respects. Essentially it is a war being fought by Africans against Westerners and Asians [Indians]. Yet the Africans are led by white officers—who expound a bitter, die-hard colonialist ideology—and the white men and Asians are being applauded in this fight by many in Africa."[22] What Halberstam had identified (albeit with a "curious" twist typical of events in the Congo during this period) was the North-South dimension of the crisis.

The vituperative onslaught by Western conservatives against the UN in response to the offensive best exemplified this tension. One British MP called O'Brien "a blood-thirsty Dublin corner boy," while another made a wildly fictitious charge "that more Africans were killed as the result of the United Nations operation in Katanga than were

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[19] Roy Welensky, *Welensky's 4000 Days: The Life and Death of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (London: Collins, 1964), 221.

[20]Hammarskjold was en route to the Congo from New York. There is debate about whether Hammarskjold knew about the attack or not. For a detailed account of these events, see O'Brien, *To Katanga and Back*, 251-258; Ernest W. Lefever, *Uncertain Mandate: Politics of the U.N. Congo Operation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 51-56.

[21] David Halberstam, "U.N. Army takes Katanga; Defeats Tshombe Forces in Fight Ending Secession," *New York Times*, 14 September 1961, 1; idem, "Control of Capital Is Still Uncertain—More U.N. Troops Going In," *New York Times*, 16 September 1961, 1; idem, "Confusion and Fear Turn Elisabethville into a Nightmare City," *New York Times*, 17 September 1961, 1.

[22] David Halberstam, "Confusion and Fear Turn Elisabethville into a Nightmare City," *New York Times*, 17 September 1961, 1.

killed throughout the whole of the Congo during the whole history of Belgian rule there."[23] Sir Roy Welensky, the white conservative prime minister of neighboring Rhodesia, described the attack as "the law of the jungle—the right of the biggest to impose his will on the smallest."[24] Even the American Senator Thomas Dodd (D-CT) called O'Brien "a lying Irish playboy," and argued that the UN's policy in the Congo had been determined by Third World nationalists such as Prime Minister Nehru of India who were "preparing the way, step by step, for a Communist takeover in the Congo."[25]

The harshest criticism came from Belgium, whose expatriates had been directly affected by the fighting. Rajeshwar Dayal noted that, "*Libre Belgique* described the events as 'a premeditated crime' and the *Dernière Heure* likened [the UN's] actions to those of the Nazis."[26] Spaak, speaking before the UN, described the operation as "a bid to hunt down the white man."[27] He wrote in his memoirs, "After I had finished, a good many people came up to me to say that they had not heard a European speak out so clearly and vigorously for a long time against the accusations—which had become a sort of ritual exercise—leveled against the former colonial Powers."[28]

Sensitive to this battle between the global South and North, the Kennedy administration publicly supported the UN while privately working for a cease-fire. Even though the administration desired an end to the secession, it believed the risks were too great to continue the offensive. The administration shared the fear of its European allies

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[23] "Foreign Affairs," 17 October 1961, *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, 5th ser., vol. 646, cols. 12-154.

[24] "Rhodesia Unites Sent to Katanga Border," *New York Times*, 14 September 1961, 6.

[25] Senator Dodd of Connecticut, *United Nations Policy in the Congo and the Danger of a Communist Takeover*, 87th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 107 (Sept. 8, 1961): S 18758-18764; Quoted in Richard D. Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 106.

[26] Rajeshwar Dayal, *Mission for Hammarskjöld: The Congo Crisis* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), 269.

[27] Spaak, *The Continuing Battle*, 367.

[28] Ibid., 366.

that the fighting "might start [a] chain of events" in the Congo and then in central Africa, which the UN "could not control."[29]

The Kennedy administration also believed it was necessary to preserve Katanga and its leaders. It was concerned that the "political upheaval in Katanga would seriously endanger [the] possibility [of] Katanga making [the] desired economic contribution to [the] Congo." It also envisioned Katangan leaders "playing a legitimate role" in the government. In particular, the administration believed "Tshombe could provide [a] conservative counterweight needed in [the] Adoula government," and it desired a course of action that would "induce Tshombe's cooperation," rather than one that would "destroy him."[30] The State Department thus concluded that even though "Tshombe has never shown serious interest returning Katanga to [the] Congo," no military action should be used until "all peaceful means toward meaningful reconciliation have been exhausted."[31]

President Kennedy thus expressed his "dismay" about the offensive to the Secretary-General, and ordered Gullion to "press" Hammarskjold "as strongly as is necessary to make certain he accepts and follows through on" a cease-fire.[32] While Kennedy believed that the United States could not let the UN "get licked," he disagreed with others in his administration who argued that the UN should be allowed more time to remove the mercenaries. He ordered the release of a press statement "urging a cease-

[29] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 1 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 201-202.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 15 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 220.

fire," notifying Hammarskjold only after the fact.[33] Later that day Rusk sent a cable to Hammarskjold assuring him that the United States did not want the "UN pushed out of or defeated in Katanga," but insisting that the UN must accept a cease-fire and "create [a] basis for constructive talks with Tshombe."[34]

The demarches from Washington irked Hammarskjold. Though he too had desired a peaceful settlement, he understood that the pressures on Adoula to end the secession threatened the viability of maintaining a moderate government in the Congo. Hammarskjold believed his Western friends failed to comprehend just how delicate Adoula's situation was. He confided in Bunche that "the main reason for complete misunderstanding of UN action is a complete lack of knowledge of the Congo situation and of what would have been unavoidable in case of failure to respond as we did."[35]

The Secretary-General tried to explain to the Americans the pressures being faced by Adoula. He told Gullion that the "UN action [was] unquestionably on behalf [of the] moderates," and that if the "UN had not acted in Katanga Adoula would have been under tremendous pressure from [the] Gizingists."[36] Bunche reiterated this point to Gullion, stressing "that if Katanga [was] not brought under control this would increase pressure on Adoula to [the] point where there would be [a] real danger of [a] Gizenga take-over."[37] Hammarskjold told the Americans that Adoula was the "most purposeful, energetic and

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[33] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 16 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 223-224, n1; Memorandum from Cleveland (IO) to Rusk, 16 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX, Microfiche Supplement: doc. 344.

[34] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 16 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 223-224.

[35] Urquhart, *Hammarskjold*, 580.

[36] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 15 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 214-216.

[37] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 16 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 221-222.

capable African he knew with [the] possible exception [of the] Nigerian Prime Minister," but that his political survival nonetheless required ending the secession.[38]

The Secretary-General doubted his efforts had persuaded the Americans just how "difficult" the situation was for Adoula.[39] Bunche shared with the administration a top-secret cable Hammarskjold had sent just before boarding the flight that would crash, taking the Secretary-General's life. It stated that "strong action in Katanga was necessary to avert civil war."[40] Though it would take the Americans over a year to arrive at that same conclusion, they had, by late-September, come to better understand the "pressures" facing Adoula.[41] This was in no small part due to the arrival of Ambassador Gullion, who shared Hammarskjold's confidence in Adoula.[42]

Adoula knew that with the death of Hammarskjold he had lost an important ally.[43] He feared that his recent behavior of colluding with O'Brien to use the UN force to end the secession might had cost him American support. He told Gullion that he considered the United States one of his "few friends," and disingenuously asserted that, "He had never asked [the] UN to undertake war in Katanga."[44] Gullion allayed any of Adoula's fears of being abandoned and acknowledged the "great pressure" he was under.[45] It had become common knowledge that "the followers of Vice Premier Antoine Gizenga…have

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[38] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 15 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 214-216.

[39] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 18 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 228-229; Editorial Note, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 226-227.

[40] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 18 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 228-229.

[41] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State to the, 18 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 229-231.

[42] See for example, Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 13 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 209-212.

[43] Kalb, *The Congo Cables*, 303.

[44] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State to the, 18 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 229-231.

[45] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 20 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 232-233.

been clamoring for Mr. Tshombe's head."[46] As a *New York Times* story reported, "The U.N.'s setback placed the Adoula moderates under immediate pressure from the Soviet-supported Gizenga extremists to send the Central Government army into the field against Katanga to accomplish what the U.N. failed to do."[47] Knowing that Mobutu's forces were more or less ineffectual, Gullion informed Adoula that the United States realized he might have to allow the Central Government's army to "let off steam" by invading Katanga.[48] After two battalions unsuccessfully attempted to invade the province, an informal armistice took place between the two governments.[49]

In the aftermath of the conflict in September, George Ball, who would soon replace Bowles as Undersecretary of State, drew up a new plan to end the secession.[50] In it, Ball identified Tshombe as "the basic problem."[51] "So long as he feels in control of the military situation in the Katanga," Ball wrote, "Tshombe will be unwilling to negotiate for anything but the partition of the Congo."[52] Thus, Ball concluded that U.S. policy "must therefore be directed most immediately to destroying Tshombe's assurances."[53]

Whereas previously the United States had relied on Western allies to pressure Tshombe into negotiations, Ball, dubbed by Kennedy as "Commander-in-Chief for

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[46] Henry Tanner, "U.N. Braces for Its Congo Task," *New York Times*, 24 September 1961, E4.

[47] "U.N. the Vortex," *New York Times*, 24 September 1961, E1.

[48] The State Department believed the "limited capabilities [of the] ANC" would "unlikely" precipitate a civil war." Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 20 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 232-233.

[49] Lise A. Namikas, "Battleground Africa: The Cold War and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2002), 331-332.

[50] After the Bay of Pigs invasion, Chester Bowles began to fall out of favor with President Kennedy. See, Arthur M. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 366-367; Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), 36-39.

[51] Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Ball) to President Kennedy, 23 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 234-237.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.

Congo Affairs,"[54] proposed that the United States take the lead. The United States, Ball wrote, "Must immediately build up UN fighting power to the point where Tshombe will realize he cannot win," and also "strike at those essential elements of Tshombe's strength," particularly "the white population and Belgian mining interests which wish to maintain an essentially colonial control in the Katanga."[55] In particular, the purpose of bolstering UN forces was to "make such a show of overwhelming strength as to persuade Tshombe without the need to employ that strength for anything other than brief local actions." "Beefing up" the UN, Ball also argued, would "demonstrate to Adoula that he is receiving the support necessary to enable him to take a moderate line" and display to the Afro-Asian bloc "that we mean what we say where colonial interests are involved." [56]

The philosophy guiding Ball's new plan was purely Achesonian, relying on a "preponderance of power" from which to negotiate.[57] The flaw in this philosophy, however, quickly became apparent. Escalation could easily turn into action if the opponent called the bluff. As Ball conceded, pursuing the new policy would raise the stakes to such a height that the United States and the UN would be unable to back down in the face of opposition. "If the UN fails to end the Katanga secession," Ball argued, "it will mean the failure of Adoula's policy of moderation," "shatter Afro-Asian faith in the UN," and likely "precipitate a civil war."[58] Even though Ball did not wish the UN to

[54] Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa*, 106.

[55] Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Ball) to President Kennedy, 23 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 234-237.

[56] Ibid.

[57] George W. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs* (New York: Norton, 1982), 19; Robert L. Beisner, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 387-389; Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: Norton, 1969); Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1992).

[58] Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Ball) to President Kennedy, 23 September 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 234-237.

"undertake protracted military operations," relying upon a preponderance of power in order to negotiate helped clear the way for further military action between the UN and Katanga.[59]

Building up UN forces would also take time, consequently providing the secession a longer lease on life. Some within the administration questioned the logic of letting the secession continue. Tshombe after all had immediately re-entrenched himself and displayed no sign of willingness to negotiate. Samuel Belk, a National Security Council staffer, represented several opinions in the administration when he wrote, "The time has come when we must be prepared to see a violation of the cease-fire by Tshombe's forces; possibly followed by some blood-letting."[60] Others, including the president, wondered if in the meantime Adoula was up to the task of staving off civil war with the Lumumbists.[61] Gullion, whom the president trusted, persistently reassured Washington that Adoula could handle the "Gizenga menace."[62]

Before the end of September 1961, the State Department had begun implementing Ball's new plan by shoring up European support. "Top priority instructions" were sent to "London, Paris and Brussels, directing…ambassadors to set forth the U.S. position at the highest level."[63] Persuading European allies to strengthen the UN was no easy task in the wake of the recent UN offensive. Citizens in those countries who disapproved of the UN's actions may not have been in the majority, but they nonetheless had expressed their vehemence loudly. As O'Brien wrote in his memoirs, "When Katanga is hurt, money

[59] Ibid.
[60] Belk to Bundy and Rostow, Memorandum, 4 October 1961, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL.
[61] Mahoney, 109.
[62] Kalb, 304.
[63] Belk to Bundy and Rostow, Memorandum, 26 September 1961, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL.

screams, and money has powerful lungs."[64] He recalled that, "The reaction of 'Press and public opinion' (in the West) to our action was an ear-splitting and almost universal howl of execration."[65] With a little old-fashioned footwork and personal diplomacy, the Americans successfully persuaded the Europeans to accept this new course of action.[66]

Kennedy then took the steps to beef up the UN force. Funds for the UN Congo operation were drying up quickly due to its size and scale, but also because some members (including Belgium, France, and the Soviet Union) were refusing to pay their dues to protest the operation.[67] Rusk devised a plan that would financially sustain the Congo operation through 1963. The United States would buy a $100 million bond from the UN, while other member states would buy a bond matching that amount.[68] Though Kennedy ultimately prevailed on this initiative, the fight with Congress to allocate the money had been contentious. Indeed, the administration's Congo policy was now spilling into domestic politics. Those who opposed the Congo operation joined forces with those who had already opposed the UN on principle. It had required, as special counsel to the president Theodore Sorenson noted, "Considerable White House help" to pass.[69] One historian has even claimed that it was "the President's toughest foreign policy fight on Capitol Hill."[70]

The administration's plan also faced challenges from the Afro-Asian bloc. Hammarskjold's death spurred a new demand for UN action in Katanga. The Afro-Asian

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[64] O'Brien, 261.
[65] Ibid.
[66] The British in particular, required extra coddling in order to accept Ball's plan. G. Mennen Williams was dispatched to make the hard sell to the British Ambassador in the United States. Belk to Bundy and Rostow, Memorandum, 26 September 1961, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL.
[67] Kalb, 308.
[68] Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 11 November 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XXV: 410-412.
[69] Mahoney, 110; Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 522-523.
[70] Mahoney, 110.

bloc blamed the Secretary-General's death on Western "neocolonialists."[71] Furthermore, Hammarskjold's death conjured up the memory of Lumumba, whose own death had inspired the first round of fighting. A newspaper in Addis Abba, the capital of Ethiopia, expressed sentiments which could be found throughout the Third World: "Lumumba dedicated his life to the freedom of his country and the unity of the Congolese people, and Hammarskjoeld [d]evoted his life to the cause of world peace and the service of humanity. Who, therefore, is going to pay for the death of these heroes?"[72] Unable to quell these opinions, the United States voted with the Afro-Asian bloc to pass a UN resolution on November 24 authorizing the new Secretary-General, U Thant, to use force to end Katanga's secession. The administration still desired to avoid a fight, but hoped the resolution would give credence to its threats against Tshombe.

But to the dismay of the administration the resolution quickly unleashed a second round of fighting. Tshombe had interpreted the resolution as a declaration of war, and on December 3 his gendarmes fired upon UN troops in Elizabethville.[73] Since September, UN forces had been reinforced with additional troops and airpower as per Ball's plan. They responded with a counter-attack, placing Elizabethville under siege. "All night and all day," Halberstam reported from Elizabethville, "the only sound apart from the explosions of mortars and the drum-fire of machine guns has been the whine of the sirens on the Red Cross ambulances."[74] UN jets roared overhead, and rockets rained down.[75]

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[71] "Press Denounces Support Given Tshombe," *Lagos Domestic Service*, 21 September 1961, Foreign Broadcast Information Service; "Nasir Sends Mongi Slim Note on Congo," *Cairo Domestic Service*, 24 September 1961, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

[72] "Tshombe Blamed for Tragedy in Congo," *Addis Ababa Domestic Service*, 21 September 1961, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

[73] Namikas, "Battleground Africa," 337.

[74] David Halberstam, "Officials Leaving Katanga Capital," *New York Times*, 17 December 1961, 2.

The confines of the city and occasional undisciplined nature of the troops resulted in ferocious fighting—strafed civilians, shelled hospitals, and a cathedral that came under fire.[76]

The United States stood firmly by the UN during the attack. Rusk argued that not supporting the UN "would destroy for good the image of the US as a supporter of the UN's collective efforts and would open the door to communism in Central Africa by destroying all possibility for continued moderate control in Leopoldville."[77] Even though the administration did not want to "crush" Tshombe, by this point and time it did not mind "breaking Tshombe's teeth."[78] It hoped that the offensive would force him "to talk in good faith" with Adoula about ending the secession.[79] The administration, however, failed to explain this position to the public. The fighting, more intense than in September, had captured the headlines. As one historian has noted, the American public was "puzzled" as to why the UN, an organization dedicated to procuring international peace, was attacking a self-avowed anti-communist.[80] The December 22 issue of *Time* magazine, for example, featured Tshombe on its cover and carried a story sympathetic to his position.[81]

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[75] David Halberstam, "U.N. Jet Attack Key Katanga City and Troop Center," *New York Times*, 12 December 1961, 1.

[76] David Halberstam, "U.N. Troops Shell Katanga Capital," *New York Times*, 15 December 1961, 3.

[77] Quoted in John Kent, *America, the U.N. And Decolonisation: Cold War Conflict in the Congo* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 77.

[78] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, 13 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 310-311; Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 21 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 335-336.

[79] Telegram from the Department of State to Secretary of State Rusk, at Paris, 12 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 306-307; Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, 13 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol. XX: 310-311; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 14 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 315-317.

[80] Mahoney, 120.

[81] "Heart of Darkness," *Time*, 22 December 1961, cover, 18. In opposing the Kennedy administration's policies, Dodd accumulated approximately 23 linear feet of material relating to the Congo.

American conservatives availed themselves of the opportunity to exploit these ironies. Max Yergan, the African-American communist-turned-reactionary, helped organize the American Committee for Aid to Katanga Freedom Fighters. On December 14 the committee published an open letter in the *New York Times* titled "Katanga is the Hungary of 1961." It portrayed Tshombe as pro-West, anti-communist, and the only hope for preserving "law, order and decency."[82] Signatures on the letter included many famous conservatives such as William F. Buckley and Senator Everett Dirksen. Barry Goldwater, Richard Nixon, Herbert Hoover as well as the Young Americans for Freedom, the Committee of One Million, and the John Birch Society also supported Tshombe.[83] The harshest criticism, however, came from the president's own party. Senator Dodd, a liberal-Democrat who had just returned from visiting Katanga, told the *New York Times*, "These policies will not foster unity in the Congo, but chaos. They will not foster reconciliation, but division. They will not foster freedom, but will, if pursued to their logical conclusion, turn the Congo over to Communist imperialism."[84] Dodd's lambasts were just one more salvo against the administration in what the *New Republic* had described as "Dodd's private war."[85]

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This included private memoranda between Dodd and his staff, the itinerary and notes from Dodd's trip to the Congo in 1961, speeches and periodical articles written by Dodd, reports from American missionaries in the Congo, and correspondence between Dodd and Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, Secretary of State Rusk, Tshombe, and Tshombe's representatives. See Series IV: Investigative Files, 1956-1970, Subseries D: Congo, Boxes 249-262, Thomas J. Dodd Papers, Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.

[82] Display Ad 48, *New York Times*, 14 December 1961, 49.

[83] Hilsman, *To Move a Nation*, 253-257; Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo*, 168-169; Mahoney, 118-120; Jules Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 181; David N. Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention: Mines, Money, and U.S. Policy in the Congo Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 133.

[84] W. Granger Blair, "Bomboko Scores Tshombe and Asks Congo Unity," *New York Times*, 8 December 1961, 2.

[85] "Dodd's Private War," *The New Republic*, 18 December 1961, 3-4; Dodd's speeches on the Senate floor have been reprinted in: Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee to

Responding to this criticism, the president dispatched Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs George McGhee to neutralize congressional dissent.[86] Ball also delivered a speech explaining the logic behind the administration's Congo policy, and John McCone, Director of the CIA, persuaded President Eisenhower to issue a statement of support.[87] After the fighting had ended, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs G. Mennen Williams and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs Carl Rowan denounced Katanga's "propaganda machine" and attempted to have Michel Struelens, Tshombe's stateside publicist in New York, removed from the country.[88] These post-facto maneuvers, however, did little to sway public opinion.

Across the Atlantic there was even greater outrage.[89] Jules Cousin, administrative director of UMHK, returned his Medal of Freedom that was awarded to him in 1946 "for Katanga's vital contribution of uranium for the atomic bomb" to President Kennedy. The executive of the vast mining complex said he had witnessed UN troops "killing and wounding blindly…even in hospitals."[90] Conservative Europeans bent on maintaining a sphere of influence in Africa argued that only Tshombe could preserve political and economic stability in the region. As one member of the Conservative Party argued in the British House of Commons, "It is quite obvious that…the United Nations policy is bringing chaos and bloodshed to a part of the Congo where previously there was law and

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Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, *Visa Procedures of Department of State* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1962), 345-374.

[86] Mahoney, 120.

[87] Speech reprinted in George Ball, "Elements of Our Congo Policy," *Department of State Bulletin*, 8 January 1962, 43-50; Telegram from Ball to Kennedy, 16 Dec. 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL; ibid.

[88] Quoted in Lefever, *Uncertain Mandate*, 85.

[89] For additional information on international protests, see Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 174-184; Mahoney, 116-118; Lawrence S. Kaplan, "The United States, Belgium, and the Congo Crisis of 1960," *The Review of Politics* 29, (Apr. 1967): 239-256; Hilsman, 252-257.

[90] "Mining Aide in Katanga Hands Back U.S. Medal," *New York Times*, 15 December 1961, 2; Telegram from MacArthur to Secretary of State, 15 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.

order."[91] These critics warned that if the UN operation was successful, a radical black African nationalism would spill south from the Congo into mineral-rich white-ruled African countries like Rhodesia and South Africa. To their minds, whites would inevitably be hunted down and the Soviets would avail themselves of this opportunity to expand into a region once dominated by the West. The reported atrocities committed by Ethiopian soldiers serving in the UN against white Katangans as well as the deaths of numerous citizens fueled these fears.[92]

Members of the Conservative Party in Britain, however, were more concerned about the United States than the UN.[93] For British Conservatives who had already been weary of the Kennedy administration's anti-colonial rhetoric, U.S. support of the UN during this second round of fighting caused real alarm.[94] As one British editorial noted, "We seem to be back at the situation of the Suez crisis: France and Britain on one side, the United States and the United Nations apparently on the other."[95] Evoking Suez meant more than just remembering a disagreement; to British Conservatives in particular the

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[91] "Congo (Situation, Katanga)," 6 December 1961, *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, 5th ser., vol. 650, cols. 1382-1389.

[92] Mahoney, 116.

[93] Since the end of World War I, Britons favoring empire had been skeptical of U.S. foreign policy towards the colonial world. Woodrow Wilson's and Franklin Roosevelt's emphasis on "self-determination" in the post-war worlds appeared as American eagerness to usurp European empires in the guise of anti-colonialism. James, *Britain and the Congo Crisis*, 133-156; William Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

[94] In March 1961, Biggs-Davison led questioning in the House of Commons on G. Mennen Williams visit to British territories in Africa. Williams had already drawn the ire of British conservatives for being responsible for the "Kennedy's rather insulting pledge…that 'one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny'" during his inaugural address. Biggs-Davison asked the Prime Minister to "tell President Kennedy that British colonial rule is not, and has not been, tyrannical and that Europeans in Africa are not expendable in the interests of American economic expansion." During the debate a Conservative MP reminded the Prime Minister that John Foster Duller, Eisenhower's Secretary of State, had "paid great tribute to British colonial policy." "African Territories (Mr. Mennen Williams)," 7 March 1961, *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, 5th ser., vol. 636, cols. 252-253.

[95] "Press Divided on U.K. Stand on Katanga," *London General Overseas Service*, 14 December 1961, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

event represented the usurpation of part of the British Empire by the United States. Indeed, some right-wing MPs argued that the American "copper lobby" was guiding the creation of the Kennedy administration's policies. One Conservative MP even chided a Socialist MP for not discussing "Transatlantic copper interests and certain elements on Wall Street" while "discussing the great financial interests who may be interested in these affairs."[96]

This dissent did not alter the administration's support for the UN action, though it did make it difficult for the United States to openly collaborate with European governments. While Spaak and British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan publicly denounced the UN offensive, their governments quietly worked with the Americans to draw up plans for a peaceful settlement. By this point in time, Britain and Belgium had accepted the American position that "the Adoula government must be kept from collapsing" and had "drafted a possible basis of negotiations between Adoula and Tshombe."[97] The United States coordinated another big push, similar to the one behind Lovanium, to bring Adoula and Tshombe together. On December 13 Kennedy and Rusk laid out the plan: "Our Western friends should use their influence with Tshombe…while we worked on Adoula, then Bunche might get the two parties together."[98] The hope was that both parties could be persuaded "to accept the Belgian-British document as a basis for agreement."[99]

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[96] "The Congo," 14 December 1961, *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, 5th ser., vol. 651, cols. 634-764. Also see Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention*, 138-139.

[97] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, 13 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 310-311; Telegram from the Department of State to Secretary of State Rusk, at Paris, 12 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 306-307.

[98] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, 13 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 309-310.

[99] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, 13 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 310-311; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 13 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 312-313.

In what one historian has aptly described as activating the "old-boy network," the administration also worked to pressure Tshombe. Bundy asked his friend Admiral Alan Kirk to lobby on behalf of the administration to UMHK officials.[100] Kirk, who represented "several large Belgian corporate interests," contacted the president of UMHK and asked him "to use every possible pressure available to persuade Tshombe to agree to…meet Adoula."[101] Kirk reported back to Bundy that "this he readily agreed to do—without any hesitation."[102] The fact that the UN offensive threatened UMHK facilities helps explain why company officials desired to obtain a cease-fire. Indeed, by December 14, UN troops backed by air power overran Tshombe's forces. Tshombe cabled the Kennedy administration requesting a cease-fire as UN jets strafed targets near his house: "I confirm my desire to negotiate with Mr. Adoula the various aspects of this problem. I request your good offices as a broadminded and Christian man for the purpose of appointing a capable negotiator and putting a stop immediately to this useless bloodshed."[103]

The Kennedy administration welcomed Tshombe's plea for a cease-fire.[104] Kasavubu and Adoula, however, did not. This caught the administration off guard. It had assumed that after placing all that diplomatic, military, and congressional effort into getting Tshombe to come to the table, that Kasavubu and Adoula would accede to U.S. plans. But both men were convinced that Tshombe could not be negotiated with, and saw the cease-fire as a missed opportunity to end the secession once and for all. Kasavubu

[100] Mahoney, 121.
[101] Ibid.; Letter from Alan G. Kirk to Bundy, 14 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.
[102] Letter from Alan G. Kirk to Bundy, 14 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.
[103] Telegram from Tshombe to Kennedy, 14 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.
[104] Telegram from Ball to Leopoldville, 15 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.

was "at first obdurate" about the idea.[105] He cabled Kennedy that "only complete application of [the] Security Council resolution could eliminate foreign influence and mercenaries which are [the] actual cause of disorders and troubles in the Congo," and that he "should like very much to see United States support to [the] United Nations continue in accordance with the wishes of the Congolese peoples for reestablishment of order and legality."[106]

The president responded to Kasavubu by telling him "that the forthcoming talks between Prime Minister Adoula and Mr. Tshombe will help bring peace and order to the Congo."[107] After this statement from Kennedy, Gullion also worked on Kasavubu. He argued that the "US had made [an] enormous decision in favor of [the] Congo with considerable strain on our alliances," and that "as head of state he [was] responsible for [the] integrity of [the] state."[108] Gullion, a Kentuckian who framed the Congo Crisis in terms of the American Civil War, told Kasavubu, "It was up to him to act like Lincoln."[109] Kasavubu appreciated being likened to Lincoln, and soon after agreed that the cease-fire should be accepted.

Adoula on the other hand, was not persuaded as easily. When rumors of a cease-fire arose, the prime minister pleaded with Gullion "that [the] US refrain from any move for [a] cease-fire in [the] Katanga operations and that it discourage other powers from

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[105] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 15 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 318-319.

[106] Telegram from Gullion to Secretary of State, 16 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.

[107] Telegram from Ball to Leopoldville, 17 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.

[108] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 15 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 318-319; Mahoney, 109.

[109] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 15 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 318-319.

doing so."[110] Adoula tried to argue that a "cease-fire would turn [the] Congo over to [the] East," and more importantly that it "would plunge [the] country into full crisis. His [government] was already severely tried and would surely fall."[111] Adoula was in fact placating Gizenga in eastern Congo when Tshombe's request for a cease-fire arrived in Washington.[112] Even so, the State Department expected a speedy reply from Adoula and did not exclude the possibility that he was "stalling while military operations continue in Elisabethville."[113] U Thant, who was also not keen on ending the operations, continued the offensive. He ordered an airstrike against UMHK facilities where Katangan forces were garrisoned.[114]

Kennedy's patience was wearing thin. On December 17 he told Ball, "I believe it vital that Adoula be obliged to respond immediately to cease-fire telegram."[115] Later that day, Bundy cabled Ball: "President desirous proceed cease-fire and negotiations as rapidly as possible. Do not let GOC [Government of Congo] delay us."[116] This pressure from the president translated into a two-hour conference in which Gullion spoke in the starkest of terms to Adoula. "I told Adoula," Gullion said, "that if he did not go to the meeting US continued support could not be promised."[117] The prime minister relented and agreed to meet Tshombe at an abandoned airfield in Kitona.

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[110] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Embassy in France, 13 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 307-308.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Venezuela, 16 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 320-321.

[113] Ibid.; Telegram from Ball to Leopoldville, 15 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.

[114] Telegram from Bundy to Kennedy, 18 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL; Namikas, 339.

[115] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Colombia, 17 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 322, n1.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 18 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 325-327.

While the Department officially wanted the negotiations to "be worked out by [the] Congolese themselves," Rusk nevertheless reminded Gullion that it was of "paramount importance" that the negotiations reach "some agreement."[118] "In view [of the] special responsibility and relationship we have assumed toward Congo, and Kitona in particular," Rusk wrote, "we have [a] major stake in [the] outcome [of the] negotiations."[119] The administration feared that if the negotiations broke down it would "only favor [the] extremists and would lead [the] whole country into chaos."[120]

Gullion's task was difficult. Neither party wanted to be there. Days before the meeting, Tshombe attempted to undermine Adoula's position by arguing to Rusk that Adoula's neutralism made the Congo susceptible to a "communist influx."[121] Rusk told Gullion to stress to Adoula that the United States "expects him to demonstrate his statesmanship and leadership by seizing this opportunity [to] unify [the] Congo without further bloodshed."[122] Rusk was more forthright in the message he wanted stressed to Tshombe: "Choice for Tshombe is cooperate with Adoula or go into oblivion."[123] Delegates nevertheless took to storming out of the negotiations, bags in hand, no sooner to be ushered back in by Gullion or the UN mediator, Bunche. As at Lovanium, the

[118] Telegram from Rusk to Gullion, 18 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL; Also see, Telegram from the Department of State to Embassy in the Congo, 19 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 327-328.

[119] Telegram from Rusk to Gullion, 18 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.

[120] Telegram from the Department of State to Embassy in the Congo, 19 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 327-328.

[121] Telegram from Tshombe to Rusk, 15 December 1961, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.

[122] Telegram from the Department of State to Embassy in the Congo, 19 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 327-328.

[123] Ibid.

Americans and UN officials (which again included Robert Gardiner and Mahmoud Khiary) intensively worked the corridors.[124]

The negotiations concluded at 2:30 a.m. on December 21 with the signing of the Kitona accords.[125] Tshombe agreed to end the secession by recognizing the Central Government's authority over all parts of the Congo and pledging to respect the UN resolutions.[126] Gullion feared, however, that the "arduous marathon" of negotiations had been for naught.[127] "The biggest monkey wrench," Gullion warned, was Tshombe's claim that he had not been fully empowered to negotiate on behalf of his government.[128] Gullion believed Tshombe would seek to obtain a repudiation of the agreements by telling his government that the UN and United States had "coerced" him into signing them.[129] In Washington, the Kitona accords were nonetheless seen as another breakthrough. Celebrations were quickly muted, however, when Gullion's warnings came to pass. As soon as Tshombe returned to Katanga he renounced the negotiations and re-entrenched himself.[130]

Failing to end the secession only brought more problems for Adoula. Many Congolese questioned whether he was capable of bringing an end to the secession. Furthermore, being occupied by the secession left him little time to focus on the many other problems confronting the Congo, especially the faltering economy. As economic conditions worsened and the secession continued, Adoula's political base, tenuous to

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[124] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 20 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 331.

[125] Declaration Signed at Kitona by the President of the Government of the Province of Katanga (Tshombe), 21 December 1961, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1961*, 871-873.

[126] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 334.

[127] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 21 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 335-336.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Kalb, 322.

begin with, began disintegrating. More and more Congolese turned towards the Lumumbists who promised to make good on the failed promises of independence. Meanwhile the Kennedy administration remained committed to Ball's plan to negotiate a peaceful settlement. Adoula on the other hand, convinced by Tshombe's actions at Kitona, had already decided that his own future, as well as that of his country, depended upon ending the secession with military force. Until that opportunity arose, he would be forced to adopt repressive policies as well as rely more heavily upon aid from the United States in order to stay in power. Before his death in September, Hammarskjold correctly predicted that large amounts of American economic aid "would mean the kiss of death" for the Adoula government.[131] Indeed, the open relationship between the Central Government and the United States was partly responsible for igniting the Lumumbist revolution that was about to break out.

[131] Memorandum from Belk to Rostow, 23 August 1961, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL; Also see, Mahoney, 109.

# CHAPTER FOUR:

# BATTLE FOR KATANGA, ROUND 2

The Kennedy administration remained committed to ending the secession through the peaceful means of negotiations even in the aftermath of the failed Kitona accords. It did, however, employ a new strategy designed by Undersecretary of State George Ball to increase the pressure on Tshombe and make him more amenable to negotiate in earnest. Ball's plan consisted of employing economic sanctions against Katanga and having European governments, Tshombe's only possible allies, make clear to the rebellious provincial president that his political survival was dependent upon participating in a unified Congo.[1] Implementing this plan proved to be a challenge for the administration. European allies, the UN, and Adoula opposed Ball's strategy. British and Belgian officials believed placing too much pressure on Tshombe would lead to a third round of fighting, a scenario both governments wished to avoid since anti-American and anti-UN sentiments were running high amongst their constituents. Adoula and the UN were also facing the potential loss of public support, but in their case needed Katanga to reintegrate quickly in order to fulfill their promises and maintain legitimacy.

Kennedy's political pragmatism naturally led him to pursue a middle course between these extremes. Lawrence Freedman, who has extensively studied Kennedy's decision-making in foreign policy, has said that Kennedy often sought to "keep options

[1] Many of the features of this plan had already been outlined by Ball at Kitona. Declaration Signed at Kitona by the President of the Government of the Province of Katanga (Tshombe), 21 December 1961, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1961*, 871-873; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 22 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 342-344; Telegram from the Department of State to President Kennedy, at West Palm Beach, Florida, 23 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 344-346; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, 29 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 348-349.

open for as long as possible" and "play for time." Freedman also notes that Kennedy believed that the realities of the Cold War made it necessary to avoid a fight whenever possible, since even the smallest military conflict could potentially escalate into an apocalyptic showdown between the superpowers.[2] This logic succeeded during the Cuban Missile Crisis, perhaps saving humanity. But applying the same calculus to the Congo produced disastrous results for the United States, the Adoula government, and most of all, the Congolese people. The middle-ground Kennedy sought did not exist. The time for decisive action had arrived. Putting off the decision to reintegrate Katanga by force set U.S. policy adrift, and lent to the rise of a repressive government in the Congo instead of one guided by liberal principles.

As soon as the fighting ended in December, Adoula's political base began to disintegrate, as many Congolese questioned whether he was capable of ending the secession. The Kennedy administration was forced to pursue "all possible measures to strengthen Adoula politically" so that he would be able to "resist nationalist extremist pressures" that were demanding the prime minister use military force to reunite Katanga.[3] This U.S. assistance included $15 million in financial aid (approximately $113 million in 2011 dollars), supply of transport planes, and training of the army.[4] "The CIA station in Leopoldville," as one historian has noted, "was given the green light to neutralize Adoula's adversaries, either by buying them off or by purging them."[5] Larry Devlin, CIA Station Chief in the Congo, later wrote, "We were compelled to step up our political

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[2] Lawrence Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 5.

[3] Telegram from the Department of State to President Kennedy, at West Palm Beach, Florida, 23 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 344-346.

[4] Ibid.; Relative value of dollars taken from MeasuringWorth.com, accessed December 2, 2013, http://www.measuringworth.com.

[5] Richard D. Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 114.

action operations." "Around this time," he recalled, "I was handling twenty-two agents and/or collaborators."[6]

Adoula's complicity in these policies is best exemplified by the arrest of Antoine Gizenga, Lumumba's former deputy prime minister, who had joined Adoula's government at Lovanium on the condition that Adoula end the secession of Katanga. After UN forces had been halted in December before fully defeating Tshombe, Gizenga returned to Stanleyville to lead a revolution to take control of the Central Government. The Congolese Parliament passed a resolution demanding Gizenga return to the capital, but Gizenga ignored it, openly defying the authority of the government.[7] The Kennedy administration wanted Gizenga dealt with before Adoula's scheduled visit to the United States in early February 1962. The administration was coordinating Adoula's trip to help raise congressional support for the president's $100 million bond proposal to fund UN operations in the Congo. Gizenga's defiance undermined both the UN's and administration's position that supporting Adoula provided the best opportunity to unify the country and prevent a communist takeover. Dealing with Gizenga "is most important to his stature in [the] US," Rusk noted, "and will be helpful to him as well as to [the] Dep[artment] in dealing with Congressional and press questions."[8] For Adoula, removing

[6] Larry Devlin, *Chief of Station, Congo: A Memoir of 1960-67* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2007), 203.

[7] Madeleine G. Kalb, *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa--from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (New York: Macmillan, 1982), 327; Lise A. Namikas, "Battleground Africa: The Cold War and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2002), 332.

[8] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 6 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 358.

the alleged "communist" Gizenga was an opportunity to endear himself to the United States while protecting his own political flank at home.[9]

Because the Afro-Asian bloc was closely monitoring what became referred to as "the Gizenga affair," the State Department told Adoula that whatever decision he made concerning the deputy prime minister, "It is essential it be his[,] and utmost precaution [must be] taken [to] avoid any impression of U.S. participation."[10] When Gullion asked Adoula, "Could he assure me that Gizenga was and would continue to be excluded from public life and would be punished," Adoula said, "There was no question about this."[11] Parliamentarian immunity, though, prevented Gizenga's arrest. Adoula knew that attempting to lift this immunity would open "Pandora's box," allowing chaos to ensue as "Parliament degenerated into vendettas in which everyone tried to lift each other's immunities."[12] Adoula also knew no harm could come to Gizenga, even the announcement of a prolonged jail sentence might "make a Lumumba out of him."[13] The State Department agreed, noting that if the deputy prime minister became a martyr it would have the "most unfortunate repercussions," jeopardizing not only the balance of moderate politics in the Congo, but also the United States' relationship with the Afro-Asian bloc.[14]

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[9] David Halberstam, "Gizenga Ousted by Party Group," *New York Times*, 10 January 1962, 6; Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 206-208.

[10] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 21 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 366-367.

[11] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 25 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 368-370.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 21 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 366-367, n2; Kalb, *The Congo Cables*, 329.

[14] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 21 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 366-367, n1.

Gizenga ended up providing Adoula a way out of this difficult situation. He allowed troops loyal to him to clash with Central Government forces. Adoula accused Gizenga of fomenting civil war.[15] Parliament agreed, and censured the deputy prime minister with a vote of 67 to 1.[16] A fellow Lumumbist declared that Gizenga was "no longer a nationalist."[17] Adoula requested that the UN return Gizenga to Leopoldville under its mandates to "preserve law and order in [the] Congo…and…to use force if necessary to prevent civil war."[18] The UN obliged, and Gizenga was placed under house arrest. While Adoula was in New York assuring UN members that no harm would come to the former deputy prime minister, he approved orders to have Gizenga secretly imprisoned on a small island off the coast. Adoula received a 76 to 10 vote of confidence from Parliament for his handling of the affair.[19]

With Gizenga temporarily removed from the scene, Adoula set off for Washington. Most of Adoula's time in the U.S. capital was spent discussing the retraining of the national army.[20] As Kennedy noted during Adoula's visit, it would be "highly desirable" to have "a faithful and efficient force which could take over at the time when the United Nations pull out."[21] The administration believed that an effective military force was the surest way to protect the Central Government against leftist dissent. It also believed bolstering Adoula's forces would expedite the reintegration of

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[15] Kalb, 328.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.; David Halberstam, "Assembly Censures Gizenga," *New York Times*, 16 January 1962, 9.

[18] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 13 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 359-360.

[19] Even so, Gizenga remained an important figure in Congolese politics. As Katanga's secession continued, and Adoula was forced to take additional measures to stay in power, Gizenga became more-or-less a living-martyr for Lumumbists to rally around. Along with a propaganda campaign conducted by the Soviet Union, they would continue to clamor for his release. Kalb, 335, 338, 353.

[20] Memorandum of Conversation, 5 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX, Microfiche Supplement: doc. 359; Memorandum of Conversation, 5 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX, Microfiche Supplement: doc. 360; Namikas, "Battleground Africa," 344.

[21] Memorandum of Conversation, 5 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 374-378.

Katanga by causing Tshombe to negotiate in good faith.[22] The administration, though, was hesitant to bolster the Congo's armed forces *carte blanche*. "It is of utmost importance," Rusk wrote, "that Adoula not be tempted to overreach himself in expectation of more US and UN support than can be furnished." The prime minister had already impressed upon the president that "it might be better to consider liberating Katanga by a continuation and intensification of the Government's own police action."[23] The State Department preferred Adoula assume a more "statesmanlike approach," a "conciliatory attitude" that would accept the efforts made by Tshombe to reintegrate and "avoid giving Katangan extremists excuses for urging non-implementation."[24] Rusk wanted to make clear to Adoula that he was "not in [the] driver's seat."[25]

In order to achieve this, the State Department devised a strategy that used military aid as a carrot to lure Adoula towards negotiations with Tshombe. This allowed the administration to influence the Central Government, which was in desperate need of military assistance. The American strategy resulted in the piecemeal delivery of military aid. The first U.S. mission to assess the needs of the Central Government's army, for example, would not be sent until July 1962.[26] This ongoing process aggravated the tensions that existed between Adoula and the United States concerning U.S. policies toward the crisis at large.

Adoula knew that ending the secession quickly provided the only real hope of securing his government against leftist dissent. Drawn-out solutions to deal with Katanga

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[22] Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa*, 114.

[23] Memorandum of Conversation, 5 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 374-378.

[24] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 26 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 346-347.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo*, 212.

would only undermine his position at home. Adoula continued to deliver this message while in the United States. "Ever since my government was formed," he declared in front of the UN General Assembly in New York City, "it has proclaimed its firm determination, its unswerving intention, to end the Katangese secession and all other attempts at diversion." The secession had to be ended, Adoula declared, "Whatever the consequences, by whatever means."[27] He continued to advocate this position in Washington. "The Katanga question," Adoula told Kennedy, "is the essential question for the Congolese."[28] Adoula knew the Americans would be the ultimate arbiters of the matter and that they and their allies wanted a peaceful solution. He told them, however, that they must "take into account the time factor."[29] "One must not create too much impatience," he continued, "among those who are seeking for a rapid resolution of the conflict."[30] He told them that Tshombe had taken these considerations into account and was in fact "playing for time hoping that the circumstances will allow him to reach for some solution which would preserve Katangan separatism."[31] Tshombe, he warned, "Cannot be trusted."[32]

The UN also believed that Tshombe was trying to delay any serious negotiations, knowing that time was on his side. UN officials tried to convince the Americans that more immediate and forceful action was needed to end the secession. They told the administration that even with the U.S. bond the present level of expenditure on UN operations in the Congo could not be maintained after the end of 1962 and that "Tshombe

[27] Address by the Prime Minister of the Congo (Adoula) before the U.N. General Assembly, 2 February 1962, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962*, 830-834.
[28] Memorandum of Conversation, 5 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 374-378.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.

is undoubtedly playing on this fact."[33] Because of this, U Thant told the Americans that the UN must comply with Security Council resolutions that called for the removal of Tshombe's mercenaries and that it was planning to expand its presence in Katanga to hasten this process.[34]

The Americans brushed aside these pleas, and informed the Secretary-General that the United States did not want a "third round" and "that the U.S. Government would not condone troop movement outside of Elisabethville if there was the slightest chance that they would result in renewed fighting."[35] They "strongly urged" the UN to show the "greatest patience on this point and allow time for other pressures, financial and political, which are being exerted on Tshombe, to take effect."[36] Thant demurred, and acknowledged that he could not move his troops "without an airlift…which only the USAF [United States Air Force] can perform."[37]

The Americans ignored these warnings from Adoula and the UN that Tshombe was vying for time because the leadership at the State Department—Rusk and Ball—believed that Tshombe was a "moderate capable [of] being influenced by good advice to follow [the] Kitona outline toward [a] reintegrated Congo."[38] They believed that if Tshombe had really been "fooling" them, "such insincerity should have been apparent by

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[33] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 16 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 388-390.

[34] Telegram from the Consulate in Elisabethville to the Department of State, 9 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 386-387, n3; Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 16 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 388-390.

[35] Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Cleveland) to Secretary of State Rusk, 19 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 390-391.

[36] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 16 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 388-390.

[37] Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Cleveland) to Secretary of State Rusk, 19 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 390-391.

[38] Telegram from the Consulate in Elisabethville to the Department of State, 9 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 386-387.

now."[39] "It is vital to our interests," Rusk stated, "that [the] Kitona agreement be implemented."[40] From the perspective of the United States, "a renewal of fighting would be interpreted as a collapse of the Kitona agreement, which had been a major effort of the administration, and that the whole issue of a fighting UN, which had so deeply divided U.S. and Western opinion would again be reopened with dangerous, if not fatal, effects on the bond issue."[41]

The Kennedy administration's public support of the UN during the last round of fighting had made the United States immensely unpopular in Europe. "The fires of anti-Americanism," Ball noted, were "burning with a gem-like flame."[42] Furthermore, "serious differences" arose over the strategy the Americans now proposed to their European counterparts.[43] The Americans promised to keep Adoula on the "right track and on his feet" if the British, Belgians, and French worked on persuading Tshombe to reintegrate.[44] In particular, the Americans wanted the Europeans to help limit Tshombe's economic resources and to deliver the message that "if he stalls on negotiations with Adoula, his economic and financial position will only deteriorate."[45] The State Department developed a plan to put economic pressure on Tshombe, which, as Rusk noted, "May appear to Katanga secessionists to be sanctions," but were "in fact [a] series of measures necessary to achieve economic integration which would necessarily

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 26 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 346-347.

[41] Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Cleveland) to Secretary of State Rusk, 19 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 390-391.

[42] Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State (Ball) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (McGhee), 2 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 350-351.

[43] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 17 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 363-365.

[44] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, 29 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 348-349.

[45] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 21 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 340-341.

accompany implementation [of a] political settlement on [the] basis [of the] Kitona accord."[46]

The State Department knew it would need the help of UMHK to implement its plan. The Americans believed UMHK officials could sway Tshombe to end the secession, and if need be, cut off any company revenues funding his rebellion. Enlisting UMHK's help, however, would not be easy. State Department officials had strongly criticized the company during the last round of fighting. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs had implied that the UMHK was supporting "a clever big-money campaign to convince Americans that they ought to support Katanga's secession."[47] Assistant Secretary of State G. Mennen Williams made similar accusations in a speech reviewing U.S. policy in the Congo.[48] Company officials categorically denied these comments and accused the administration of "doing everything possible to make cooperation by UMHK difficult if not impossible."[49]

In an effort to make amends with the company, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs William McGhee suggested on television that neither of these comments represented the official view of the State Department.[50] Ball wanted it made "emphatically clear" that "it isn't in our long-range interest to run European business out

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[46] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 22 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 342-344; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 17 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 365-366.

[47] E. W. Kenworthy, "2 U.S. Officials Denounce Katanga for Propaganda," *New York Times*, 28 December 1961, 1.

[48] Address by the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams), 27 December 1961, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1961*, 874-881; Also see, Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 2 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 351-353, n3.

[49] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 1 January 1962, Box 29a, NSF, JFKL.

[50] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 2 January 1962, Box 30, NSF, JFKL; Also see Kalb, 322-323.

of the Katanga."[51] He sought to "get word" to UMHK that "we were going to do what we could to help them keep their operations going in Elizabethville and the Katanga; that we thought it important that they remain and flourish there; but that of course their continued prosperity would depend upon a peaceful Congo which could only be secured through a reintegration of the Katanga."[52] As Rusk further pointed out, U.S. support of the company would be on the condition that it "be prepared [to] collaborate with [the] UN and central government."[53]

It became obvious to the Americans that the only real chance of persuading UMHK to join their effort was if Britain and Belgium persuaded the company to do so.[54] Britain and Belgium, however, were so adamant about preventing another round of fighting that they themselves found the American strategy unacceptable. The British were even calling on the Americans "to get UN troops out."[55] At the heart of European fears was that "too much pressure" might lead to the "destruction" of Tshombe and in turn the "collapse" of the local government in Katanga.[56]

Both allies tried to impress upon the Americans that Tshombe was his own man and "would not agree to terms he didn't like."[57] The British told the Americans that they "doubted economic pressure on Katanga would have much effect" and that there was a limit "to which threats, shows of force and forms of pressure will achieve their objectives

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[51] Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State (Ball) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (McGhee), 2 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 350-351.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 2 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 354-355.

[54] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 2 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 351-353; Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (McGhee) to Secretary of State Rusk, 5 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 356-357.

[55] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 28 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 338-339.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

if applied to Tshombe at [the] present time."[58] Rusk directly asked Lord Home, "who [can] be expected to have influence on Tshombe?"; the Foreign Secretary replied, "No one."[59] The Belgians also "strongly disagreed" that UMHK was the "key to Katanga integration."[60] Spaak told the Americans that he considered Tshombe "undependable and unreliable" and that "he may be stalling for time in hope eventually he can establish some form of independent or semi-independent state perhaps within some form of federation with Northern Rhodesia and others."[61]

Catching wind that the Americans were seeking to mobilize his allies against him, Tshombe took the initiative and proposed a meeting with Adoula.[62] "This small step," Devlin recalled, "raised the hopes of Secretary Rusk and the Washington and European factions that favored a peaceful solution."[63] As one historian has noted, "Tshombe had calculated correctly that a positive attitude toward talks with Adoula would appeal to the United States and diminish the pressure for strong UN action to implement the Security Council resolutions and remove the remaining mercenaries in Katanga."[64]

Tshombe was being informed by Michel Struelens, his lobbyist in the United States, that due to opposition in the U.S. Senate and elsewhere in the states, that he should continue to stall and play for time.[65] Spaak warned the Americans that "Tshombe has great confidence in what Struelens cables him" and that if the administration was

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[58] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, 29 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 348-349; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 17 January 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 363-365.

[59] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 28 December 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 338-339.

[60] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 4 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 401-405.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Kalb, 339-340.

[63] Devlin, *Chief of Station, Congo*, 198.

[64] Kalb, 340.

[65] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 3 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 399-401.

"unable to curb Struelens' activities all the other efforts Belgium and the United States are making to bring about Katanga reintegration through an Adoula-Tshombe meeting may be nullified."[66] Adoula's cabinet members were puzzled as to why the Americans permitted Struelens, a foreigner, to conduct activities in the United States that undermined the administration's policies while at the same time the administration had pressed them to silence Gizenga, a member of Parliament. Rusk awkwardly explained to Adoula that Struelens' activities did not violate U.S. law due to the "long US tradition of freedom [of] speech."[67]

The Americans nonetheless hoped that Tshombe's willingness to negotiate would lead to a success tantamount to Lovanium. They requested that Robert Gardiner and Mahmoud Khiary serve as UN mediators between Adoula and Tshombe, remembering how both had been "useful catalysts in these palavers vide Kitona and Lovanium."[68] The State Department also drew up a position paper for Adoula that focused on the "nuts and bolts measures of integration."[69] Even though Adoula told Gullion he would "negotiate hard" and "was prepared to listen to anything Tshombe had to say," he admitted that his "heart 'did not exactly flutter' at [the] anticipation of positive results."[70]

Tshombe and Adoula met in Leopoldville on March 18. By the end of the month the talks had reached an impasse, and soon after they dissolved.[71] News of the failed

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[66] Telegram from the Embassy in Belgium to the Department of State, 4 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 401-405.

[67] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 7 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 501-503.

[68] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 22 February 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 394-397.

[69] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 15 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 407-409.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 24 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 410-413. For a summary of the discussions between Adoula and Tshombe see, Report of

negotiations did not go over well in Washington. The State Department believed if the talks were not reconvened the Soviets and Afro-Asian bloc would demand UN action to forcefully reintegrate Katanga. "This," Ball wrote, would place the "UN in [the] middle of [a] contest between supporters [of] radical action and Western members who will be unable agree to [the] use of UN forces for this purpose. The Congo, the US, and the UN can only suffer severe damage in the process." [72]

Meanwhile Adoula's political power was eroding, and he became desperate to end the secession. He told Gullion that he had "failed his mandate from [the] Lovanium Parliament and his relations with [the] West may be responsible."[73] Because of this, the prime minister feared a Parliamentary reprimand, possibly even censure.[74] Adoula's frustration stemmed from the fact, Gullion wrote, that "no one has been able [to] tell Adoula how or when unification could be accomplished without force."[75] Adoula believed that Tshombe was "playing for bankruptcy of [the] UN and on recognition out of pure apathy of de facto independence of Katanga."[76] Furthermore, despite the UN Security Council resolutions and European diplomatic pressures, Tshombe continued

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the Officer-in-Charge of the U.N. Operation in the Congo (Gardiner) to the U.N. Acting Secretary-General (Thant), 27 June 1962, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962*, 863-869.

[72] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 24 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 413-416.

[73] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 18 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 419-421.

[74] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 24 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 410-413.

[75] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 18 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 419-421.

[76] Ibid.

bolstering his forces.[77] Adoula told the Americans that this could not continue and that he had to do something "even if he had to turn to Satan himself."[78]

Adoula allowed rumors to circulate that he was planning to visit Moscow that May. He also indicated that he would call upon the Afro-Asian bloc to end the secession with force or even attempt to end it himself with Central Government forces. It is likely that Adoula was only attempting to goad the Americans into action, but doubts lingered in his mind as to how committed the United States really was to ending the secession. Adoula began to believe that the cease-fire in December and the ensuing Kitona agreement, both of which prevented the destruction of Tshombe without achieving the reintegration of Katanga, had merely been orchestrated by the United States to get "Tshombe off the hook."[79] In short, Adoula was losing faith in the Americans. He told Gullion that the "US and UN (which he considers as one) have no longer the will, the strategy, nor the means to help him unify [the] Congo."[80] In frustration he even told the ambassador that the "US and UN were in final analysis aiding Tshombe."[81] Even members of the Binza group were expressing "disappointment" with the United States and the UN for failing to support the Central Government. [82]

Gardiner tried to temper Adoula's comments to the Americans by telling them that "Adoula feels he is on [a] rock with Tshombe and [the] tide is rising; Tshombe has a

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[77] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 24 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 423-426.

[78] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 24 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 410-413.

[79] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 18 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 419-421.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 24 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 410-413.

[82] Ibid.

boat and he doesn't."[83] But even Adoula's most ardent American supporter, Gullion, described the prime minister's actions as "rash."[84] The fact that Adoula threatened the use of tactics that had led to the assassination of Lumumba nonetheless reveals the level of desperation he felt.

The State Department was not pleased by Adoula's antics and seemingly "extremist" solutions.[85] While the Americans believed Adoula represented "a centripetal force in [the] Congo, working for [a] result which is in US interest, whereas centrifugal forces which would be set in motion by Katanga separatism would only profit those who are hoping this fly-wheel will break up,"[86] Ball and Rusk questioned the sincerity of his efforts in the last round of negotiations knowing that he had been bent on ending the secession by force.[87] The State Department wanted to get Adoula "back on the rails" to prevent any "further rash steps which could exacerbate [an] already difficult situation."[88] It was time to flash a sign of support to get the prime minister in line with U.S. policy.[89]

The United States Information Services, the division of the State Department responsible for public diplomacy, increased its "publicity operation" to deflect Lumumbist criticism and shore up support for Adoula.[90] The Congo Parliament also

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[83] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 24 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 423-426.

[84] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 18 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 419-421.

[85] Ibid.; Also see Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 24 March 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 410-413.

[86] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 18 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 419-421.

[87] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 24 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 423-426.

[88] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 20 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 421-423.

[89] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 18 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 419-421.

[90] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 5 May 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 440-442.

voted on May 7 to strip Gizenga of his parliamentary immunity.[91] Considering that the United States had been "in on" Gizenga's arrest, it would not be a stretch of the imagination to assume the Americans played some role in this maneuver as well.[92] The most decisive action on Adoula's psyche, however, was a personal letter from the president assuring the prime minister of American support.[93]

While the letter lifted Adoula's spirits, he continued to press the Americans for a specific date by which results from the negotiations could be expected. He warned that "these talks could not continue much longer without general disintegration of his position" and that while he was not a "fool" under Communist influence (he had put to rest any rumors of visiting Moscow after receiving the letter from Kennedy), prolongation of the talks would likely result in "positive actions and disagreeable surprises," which the Americans interpreted as the intervention of the Afro-Asian bloc or the Soviet Union.[94] Adoula promised that he "was going to keep trying to save [the] country but warned he might be powerless [to] prevent disaster if efforts [to] reintegrate Katanga [were] not successful."[95]

The display of American support nonetheless reinvigorated Adoula, and he agreed to reconvene the talks with Tshombe on May 24. On June 26, Tshombe walked away from the negotiations unwilling to sign a joint communiqué with Adoula highlighting the "progress" made. Tshombe flaunted his defiance by orchestrating a celebration of Katanga's Independence Day on July 10. The administration publicly condemned the

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[91] Kalb, 343.
[92] Weissman, 207.
[93] President to Prime Minister Adoula, Letter, undated, Box 28, NSF, JFKL.
[94] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 29 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 432-435.
[95] Ibid.

event, stating that it was "in violation of the spirit and purpose" of the recent negotiations.[96] A week later Tshombe staged a mass demonstration surrounding a UN roadblock in Elisabethville. Thousands of Katangan women and children stood screaming at the UN troops, taunting them, and eventually attacking them with rocks. The UN troops drove the mobs back with tear gas and clubs. The Katangan government attempted to frame the event as an act of UN aggression.[97] Rusk privately told a columnist of the *New York Times* that the Secretary-General "wasn't too wrong when he referred to Tshombe and his group as clowns."[98]

Adding insult to injury, it had come to light that that Tshombe had been attempting to create an alliance with Lumumbist politicians.[99] The rebellious provincial president believed he could create a coalition with Lumumbists who charged that Adoula was being "teleguided by the United States."[100] A member of the Binza group told the Americans that Tshombe had "bought out the Senate."[101] This information was especially concerning since the CIA had already noted "a sharp drop" in parliamentary support due to the prolongation of the secession.[102]

Tshombe's actions, coupled with a stern warning from the Binza group that the Adoula government would be "overthrown" unless new pressures were placed on Tshombe, had finally convinced Rusk and Ball that the pressure had to be increased on

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[96] Statement Read to Correspondents by the Director of the Office of News (White), Department of State, 10 July 1962, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962*, 872.

[97] David Halberstam, "10,000 Katanga Women Storm a U.N. Roadblock," *New York Times*, 18 July 1962, 1.

[98] Kalb, 346.

[99] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 7 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 501-503; Also see Jules Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 267.

[100] "Congo's Reshuffled Cabinet Gets a Vote of Confidence," *New York Times*, 17 July 1962, 4.

[101] Quoted in Kalb, 346.

[102] Devlin, 199.

Tshombe in order to obtain his cooperation.[103] Rusk finally conceded, "Just being impatient with clowns is not good enough."[104] Ball agreed, believing the recent series of events demonstrated "Tshombe's complete intransigence."[105]

Rusk and Ball now wanted a plan with "a specific solution around which [the] UN, our principal allies and US public opinion can rally." They believed the best way to stop this dangerous "drift" caused by U.S. policy was to increase economic pressures on Tshombe.[106] Both statesmen, however, still wanted to avoid the possibility of a fight.[107] A CIA report had argued that a military conflict with Katanga would "likely bring about conditions of such disorder that the prospects for unity and an orderly political and economic development of the Congo would be further reduced."[108] "With everything else on our plate," Rusk wrote, "we do not need protracted guerilla fighting in [the] Congo."[109]

Undersecretary of State McGhee was appointed in early August to draft a course of action along the lines of what Ball and Rusk had proposed. McGhee's plan would ostensibly become known as the "Thant Plan." The State Department knew that if it was officially presented as a "U.S. Plan" world opinion would "kill it in a hurry."[110] In his memoirs, McGhee recalls that whenever he discussed the plan with Thant, the Secretary-

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[103] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 7 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 501-503.

[104] Telegram from the Secretary of State to the Department of State, 23 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 514-515.

[105] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 21 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 512-514.

[106] Record of Understanding, undated, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 525-527.

[107] Telegram from the Secretary of State to the Department of State, 23 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 514-515.

[108] Special National Intelligence Estimate, 16 May 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 450-451.

[109] Telegram from the Secretary of State to the Department of State, 23 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 514-515.

[110] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 15 August 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 552-553.

General would smile and say, "You mean, the so-called U Thant Plan."[111] The plan proposed imposing economic sanctions against Katanga if Tshombe did not accept terms outlined in the Kitona agreement. The main threat centered on a boycott by all nations of Katangan copper. Persuading the UMHK to divert its funds away from Tshombe and into the Central Government was another significant aspect of the plan. "Plain fact is," McGhee wrote, "that income of UMHK subsidizes Tshombe's secession and intransience." [112]

The Belgians endorsed the plan; the British on the other hand, did not. Lord Home, the British Foreign Secretary, called it a "profound mistake."[113] Since late April British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan had said, "The U.K. could not tolerate another military action."[114] He admitted to the president that this posed "quite a dilemma," because even he knew that "if Tshombe believes we would not use force, he would be under no pressure and would just stall."[115] The prime minister's quandary did not get far with the president. Kennedy was irate about Britain's lack of cooperation.[116] The administration believed that Tshombe would only take the plan seriously if the West stood united behind it. Despite this setback, the Americans pressed forward by revealing the plan to Thant and Adoula. Neither were overjoyed by it, but they both supported it knowing that they were in no position to challenge the United States—the UN's and Adoula's fiscal patron. Indeed, Adoula was informed, "Increased Western aid, subject to

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[111] George Crews McGhee, *On the Frontline in the Cold War: An Ambassador Reports* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997), 155.

[112] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 24 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 519-522.

[113] Quoted in Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa, 141*.

[114] Memorandum of Conversation, 28 April 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 430-432.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Mahoney, 141.

controls, would be given if he accepted [the] proposal and [a] re-unified Congo resulted."[117]

After reviewing the draft, Thant said he was "becoming uncertain and even doubtful of [the] determination behind [the] current attempt to find [a] peaceful Congo settlement."[118] Adoula shared these sentiments. After Tshombe's acts of defiance in July, Adoula wrote an emotional plea to the president:

> The disappointments which I am unceasingly confronted with in this affair have considerably affected my morale. My political opponents are profiting from them in order to propagandize against the Government to the extent that the population more and more is losing confidence. For my part, I am becoming pessimistic, if not desperate. I wonder if it would not even be preferable to abdicate my duties if a solution is not forthcoming in the next month.[119]

Adoula concluded by imploring, "Believe me, my dear President."[120]

The faltering economy only added to the mounting political pressures confronting Adoula. Charges from the Lumumbists and the Afro-Asian bloc that the secession was affecting the viability of the Congo rang true. "Tshombe's miserable policy," an editorial in Addis Abba, the capital of Ethiopia, declared, "has also caused the Congo to lag behind its equals, for we are all aware how far it is behind those countries which obtained their independence when it achieved its own freedom."[121] In early May, Williams reported from the Congo that "scatteration" of U.S. aid prevented it from reaching sectors of the economy most in need. He suggested that the United States supply additional funds

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[117] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 24 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 519-522.

[118] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 17 August 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 554-556.

[119] Letter from Prime Minister Adoula to President Kennedy, undated, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 517-518.

[120] Ibid.

[121] "Tshombe Blamed for Tragedy in Congo," *Addis Ababa Domestic Service*, 21 September 1961, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

for "education, roads, transport, and private capital investment" and place more U.S. personnel at the disposal of the UN's civil operations.[122]

By late May, the Director of the African Department at the International Monetary Fund reported "a grave financial crisis in the Congo far more serious than had been previously reported."[123] The IMF suggested the United States provide $55 million in aid over the next four months to limit the crisis.[124] By June, Rusk had come to the conclusion that "economic stabilization in the Congo is inseparable from a political solution."[125] Williams agreed, pointing out that his own informal poll amongst politicians, professional men, students, and others throughout Congo indicated that many believed resolving the Katanga secession was the "key to all other problems."[126] As a result of these new concerns, the Thant Plan was delivered to Tshombe on August 24, who was given ten days to respond before economic sanction against Katanga went into effect. Tshombe accepted the terms of the Thant Plan on September 3.[127]

Meanwhile, Adoula could not fathom another round of negotiations as his country was disintegrating economically. The prime minister believed Tshombe had accepted the conditions of the Thant Plan just as he had accepted the Kitona agreement, with no intention of following through. To appease Adoula, who at this point saw force as the

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[122] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 5 May 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 440-442.

[123] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 1 June 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 471-472, n1.

[124] Ibid.; Also see Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 31 May 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX, Microfiche Supplement: doc. 365. This report also gave credence to earlier studies suggesting that the reintegration of Katanga would not necessarily resolve the economic problems facing the rest of the Congo that had heretofore been ignored. Report of Philip N. Klutznick, undated, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL; Lynn Bolinger, "The Katanga Dilemma: The Pending Debacle and Its International Security Implications," 14 August 1961, Box 27a, NSF, JFKL

[125] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 10 June 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 479-481.

[126] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 5 May 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 440-442.

[127] Kalb, 349-351.

only option capable of ending the secession, the State Department delivered another round of aid. Eight million dollars for import financing and non-combative military equipment consisting of 20 jeeps, 25 radio sets, and 15,000 C rations arrived for the Central Government's use. [128] On September 10, the UN sent letters to Adoula and Tshombe urging them to take steps towards national reconciliation.[129] Tshombe ignored the request.

Having watched Tshombe's defiance and unwillingness to negotiate in good faith, a group in the State Department referred to as the "Africanists"—Gullion, Williams, and Bowles—had grown sympathetic to Adoula's position. In late August and early September they had begun arguing that only a show of force would motivate Tshombe to negotiate. They pressed Rusk and Ball to bolster the UN forces, even though such an action risked the outbreak of fighting. Gullion, in particular, led the charge. He wrote Rusk that "there is no good putting forth this plan if we are not prepared to accept its implications and back it up" and that time was now working against the U.S. goal of maintaining a moderate government in the Congo.[130] Gullion argued that it was the "use of force indecisively which has permitted [the] situation to spin out so dangerously."[131] "Of course we all abhor [the] possibility of further bloodshed," Gullion wrote Rusk, "but

[128] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 4 September 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 570-573.

[129] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 574; Letter from the Officer-in-Charge of the U.N. Operation in the Congo (Gardiner) to the Prime Minister of the Congo (Adoula) and the President of Katanga Province (Tshombe), 10 September 1962, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents*, 890-893.

[130] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 28 August 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 562-566.

[131] Ibid.

collapse of [the] UN plan because nations fail to take steps in a time of less risk may well cause blood to flow later."[132]

Rusk and Ball, who were still unwilling to risk the possibility of war, chastised their colleagues for portraying the situation in such stark terms. "It is not the purpose of the UN," Rusk wrote Gullion, "to reintegrate Katanga by military force or to wage a Carthaginian effort to destroy Tshombe."[133] It was Rusk's position that if the present attempt did not succeed at reintegrating Katanga then "we must be prepared for reexamination of situation with a view to developing new tactical possibilities of securing peace in Congo and withdrawal of UNOC [UN Operations in the Congo] without creating chaos or seriously disturbing relations with our allies or with Afro-Asian Bloc."[134] In short, Rusk concluded that a military solution would open up a "tortuous path" with a "most unpromising answer at [the] end of [the] road."[135] Ball also thought "Gullion's wires were hysterical."[136] He felt that the Africanists lacked "a single tough-minded fellow," and were producing a lot of "mush" on a problem that was "way over-due."[137]

Rusk decided it would be best to send McGhee to the Congo to "review the situation," in part because the secretary and the president distrusted Gullion's and Williams' opinions, but also because the administration was under pressure from "US

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[132] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 31 August 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 568-570.
[133] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 19 August 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 556-557.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 27 August 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 561.
[136] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 551-552.
[137] Ibid.

right-wing support for Tshombe" to investigate the Africanists' claims.[138] As principal author of the Thant Plan, Rusk also wanted McGhee to assist in the mediations between Adoula and Tshombe. Once in the Congo, McGhee's reports ended up confirming the Africanists' portrayal of the situation. McGhee's meetings with Adoula were dominated by requests for "military goods," while his meetings with Tshombe were rife with threats, including the "possibility of another Algeria" if an economic boycott was enacted.[139]

McGhee's overall evaluation was that there was "no firm basis for assurance" that the Thant Plan could be accomplished. Informing this opinion was the undersecretary's realization that the UMHK could not influence Tshombe as the department had previously believed, and that to a certain extent, the company remained hostage to the Katangan government, lest its defiance bring destruction to its mining operations.[140] McGhee's recommendation was to "prepare a contingency plan involving stronger measures in support of Adoula to be applied in the event we are forced to conclude that Adoula and Tshombe cannot work out their differences by agreement and carry out the Plan."[141] The McGhee mission helped to legitimatize the Africanists' position, and

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[138] Paper Prepared by Acting Secretary of State Ball, undated, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 594-597; Also seem Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 23 September 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 578-579, n1, n2.

[139] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 28 September 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 589-590; Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 29 September 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 591-593; Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 4 October 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 600-603; Telegram from the Consulate in Elisabethville to the Department of State, 4 October 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 603-606, n2; Telegram from the Consulate in Elisabethville to the Department of State, 4 October 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 606-608; Telegram from the Consulate in Elisabethville to the Department of State, 6 October 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 608-611; Telegram from the Consulate in Elisabethville to the Department of State, 7 October 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 611-614.

[140] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 29 September 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 591-593.

[141] Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (McGhee) to President Kennedy, 22 October 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 635-638.

created some momentum within the administration to end the secession even if it meant risking war.

The Soviet Union's attempt to place nuclear missiles in Cuba in October 1962, however, halted this momentum. In the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis Kennedy sought to avoid any bold diplomatic maneuvers that might spark another confrontation between the superpowers. He told his advisers, "With the recent developments in Cuba…there could not be any consideration at this time of military action in the Congo on the part of the United Nations forces."[142] Furthermore, Kennedy felt compelled to display his gratitude for British and Belgian support during the United States' recent showdown with the Soviet Union by lessening the pressure on both allies to support economic sanctions against Katanga (a policy both countries had opposed).[143]

The consequences of these decisions were devastating for the Adoula government. As the Central Government appeared incapable of ending the secession, rebellion spread once again in the province of Kasai, and a new opposition party was founded in the province of Kivu, the *Mouvement de Resistance Congolais*, whose *raison d'être* was to overthrow the Adoula government.[144] Adoula's decisions to arrest Christophe Gbenye (one of Gizenga's lieutenants who had served as Adoula's minister of the interior but who had recently rejoined the Lumumbists), and to declare a state of emergency in Leopoldville, which by *de facto* prorogued Parliament and prevented their issuing of censures against members of his government, did little to curb dissent.[145] The crumbling economy, which rebellious Congolese attributed to the secession of Katanga

[142] Memorandum of Conversation, 31 October 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 641-643.
[143] Devlin, 202; Kalb, 358.
[144] Namikas, 363.
[145] Kalb, 330; Weissman, 200-201.

and the UN's inability to apply economic sanctions, fueled resistance movements. Meanwhile, Tshombe continued to bolster his forces by creating an air force with planes from South Africa.[146]

By November, unrest had spread across the Congo. Adoula's situation had become perilous. Lumumbist pressure forced Adoula to grant amnesty to Gbenye and allow parliament to reconvene.[147] Lumumbists were also calling for the release of Gizenga. Adoula's tactics had broken apart the coalition upon which his government had been formed at Lovanium.[148] As one historian has noted, of the 23 ministers who left Adoula's cabinet in 1962, 15 were Lumumbists.[149] The Binza group again warned the United States that the Adoula government was about to fall.[150] On November 25, Adoula barely escaped a vote of no confidence. CIA money had likely been used to "rent" parliamentarians to prevent it from passing.[151]

Adoula was completely exasperated. Gullion reported that the prime minister was "in a sad state at present."[152] Fatigue had set in, and Adoula's attempt to keep up a "bold front" was "unconvincing."[153] Driven to tears during a conversation with the American ambassador he said, "He had never been so discouraged as at present."[154] "He had been idiotically patient sticking with [the] UN," he continued in an emotional outpouring, and "went on to say that [the] US must bear heavy responsibility for [the current] state of

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[146] Namikas, 363.

[147] John Kent, *America, the U.N. And Decolonisation: Cold War Conflict in the Congo* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 121.

[148] Namikas, 366-367.

[149] Weissman, 201.

[150] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 26 November 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 678-682; Kalb, 360.

[151] Devlin, 204; Weissman, 201.

[152] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 30 November 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 701-703.

[153] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 26 November 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 678-682.

[154] Ibid.

affairs since [the] US [was] dominant in [the] UN. [The] UN had been brought into [the] Congo at US suggestion and [the] US controlled [the] tempo of its actions; now he was having to pay for all the delays which had been imposed upon him."[155] "In a way," Gullion reported, "he is pleased to see matters come to a head even if it means personal reverse."[156] Adoula was again seriously contemplating resigning.[157]

Gullion was blunt with his colleagues in Washington, "Failure to solve Katanga will mean the end of an Adoula authority which is already becoming shadowy."[158] Doubt spread amongst members of the Central Government that the United States and UN were committed to ending the secession.[159] Adoula told Gullion, "Survival of his policies required…visible proof that [the] US and UN were going to end Katanga secession or let him do it."[160] The Afro-Asian bloc also shared the Central Government's doubts. U.S. Representative to the UN Adlai Stevenson cabled Rusk on November 26 that since the UN had refused to take "effective action" against Katanga the Afro-Asian bloc had "for some time believed that UN presence in [the] Congo…has in fact been serving to protect Tshombe."[161] The Secretary-General, feeling the brunt of Afro-Asian pressure, was also losing patience with the Americans. Stevenson warned Rusk, "There remain probably no

[155] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 30 November 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 708-710.
[156] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 26 November 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 678-682.
[157] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 30 November 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 708-710.
[158] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 26 November 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 678-682.
[159] Namikas, 363.
[160] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 26 November 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 678-682.
[161] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 26 November 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 685-686.

more than 2 or 3 weeks to convince him [Thant] and [the] Africans that Belgium and [the] U.S. really mean business."[162]

Even Ball, who believed Adoula had not done his part to procure a peaceful reconciliation, now conceded, "We must recognize that position of the present government in Leopoldville, and Adoula specifically, is so eroded that it cannot take actions required as long as Parliament remains millstone around his neck."[163] With the fall of the Adoula government appearing imminent, Kennedy issued a joint statement with Spaak threatening "severe economic measures" against Katanga in a "very short time."[164] In the next few days, U.S. planes also transported 3,800 Indonesian troops to the Congo to bolster UN forces.[165]

Kennedy asked his advisers for a re-examination of U.S. policy.[166] Their memorandum delivered to the president on December 13 concluded, "The basic assumption of our present Congo policy…has turned out to be wrong."[167] They argued that the administration had erred in believing that Tshombe would reintegrate Katanga "by persuasion and diplomacy backed up by threats of economic action."[168] Underpinning these arguments, however, was the conclusion that the administration had not been "building an effective Central Government in Leopoldville."[169] "A largely irresponsible Parliament and a flabby administration," Kennedy's advisers wrote, "are not

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[162] Ibid.

[163] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 12 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 720-722.

[164] Max Frankel, "U.S. and Belgium Warn Katangese of 'Severe' Steps," *New York Times*, 28 November 1962, 1.

[165] Kalb, 360.

[166] Editorial Note, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 716-717.

[167] Memorandum for President Kennedy, 13 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 729-733.

[168] Ibid.

[169] Ibid.

good enough as a political framework."[170] In this way, the administration shifted part of the blame onto Adoula. The memorandum noted, "Adoula is the best leader on the horizon, but we should be helping to develop other political leadership."[171] This was the beginning of the end for Adoula. He had become a scapegoat to both the Americans and Lumumbists for the recent setbacks. The United States would soon abandon him in favor of a more "effective" government less accountable to parliament.

Roger Hilsman, head of the Intelligence and Research Bureau at the State Department, outlined the possible alternatives for U.S. policy at this juncture. "The real choices," Hilsman reported, "are only two: (1) forced integration or (2) disengagement."[172] Out of those two choices, it was deemed that only "forced integration" was acceptable. As Kennedy's advisers explained to him, "Because United States and UN policy have for all practical purposes been indistinguishable, the Organization's failure in the Congo would be a major failure of this Administration's policy and would seriously undermine the peacekeeping role of the United Nations."[173]

Kennedy's political pragmatism—"Avoid getting boxed into a corner; keep options open for as long as possible; maintain lines of communication to opponents as well as to friends."—had disastrous results in the Congo.[174] As the memorandum to the president outlined, everything had come to a head:

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[170] Ibid.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Memorandum from Hilsman (INR) to Ball, 11 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX, Microfiche Supplement: doc. 393; Also see, Memorandum from the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kaysen) to President Kennedy, 13 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 727-728.
[173] Memorandum for President Kennedy, 13 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 729-733.
[174] Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars*, 5.

> For there is growing evidence of serious deterioration in the Congo—the danger of flare-ups in local fighting, the growing Afro-Asian pressure for forceful UN measures, the Secretary-General's strong desire for a minerals embargo, the continuing financial drain on the UN, the almost certain withdrawal of a big Indian contingent at the end of March, the instability and administrative flabbiness of the Adoula Government, and the latent threat of Soviet bloc military assistance to the Central Government if a continuation of Katanga's secession were to make moderate politics impossible in Leopoldville.[175]

Negotiating had left Kennedy with the only option he had wished to avoid. It was clear that the United States could no longer "bluff" about a show of force.[176]

Kennedy continued to follow his political rules—"When the time comes to strike, be prepared to strike hard."[177] In a National Security Council meeting on December 17 the president said he wanted "no fight if we can't win."[178] The Joints Chiefs of Staff, who approved of a military intervention, reported that the UN forces would need additional air power in order to defeat Katangan forces.[179] While several countries volunteered fighter aircraft, one of the Joint Chiefs explained why the fighter aircraft should come from the United States: "What we had was a political, rather than a military, problem in the use of force…The military part of the job could be done by any force. It was the political part that required U.S. force." [180] Ball clarified this position to the president:

> Needless to say, the presence of U.S. forces—or even the clear knowledge that U.S. forces were available for this purpose—would be a significant pressure on Tshombe and his associates. Tshombe could interpret this decision in no other way than as proof that any resistance on his part to the UN…would be met by a devastating counter blow.[181]

Thant prevented the injection of U.S. combat forces (even amidst strong American pressure).[182] Nevertheless, the administration continued the effort to "show

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[175] Memorandum for President Kennedy, undated, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 743-746.
[176] Memorandum for President Kennedy, 13 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 729-733.
[177] Freedman, 5.
[178] Editorial Note, 17 December 1962, *FRUS: Congo Crisis, 1961-1963*, vol. XX, 750-752.
[179] Memorandum for President Kennedy, 13 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 729-733.
[180] Memorandum for the Record, 14 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 734-737.
[181] Memorandum for President Kennedy, 13 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 729-733.
[182] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation between Kennedy and Ball, 15 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX, Microfiche Supplement: doc. 400; Draft Telegram to USUN, 15 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX, Microfiche Supplement: doc. 401.

Tshombe we mean business."[183] The United States took immediate steps to bolster UN forces in Elisabethville and secured four million dollars to facilitate a "rapid buildup" of Central Government forces.[184] The Defense Department also dispatched Major General L.W. Truman (a cousin of the former president) to assess the capabilities of military forces in the Congo.[185] Adoula was ecstatic about the visit of General Truman, which he considered "indispensable" since it "was a visible demonstration of USA desire to help resolve Congo problems."[186] Katangans, Lumumbists, and the Soviets decried the visit as a brazen act of American intervention.[187] "The announcement of the Truman mission," as one scholar has written, "touched off a demonstration of some 100 Katangan students, African and European, against the American consulate in Elisabethville."[188]

Thant took advantage of the American *volte-face*, and used the opportunity to employ economic sanctions against Katanga. The British and Belgians also fell into line. Lord Home vocally protested the UN's actions, but did not act to stop them. Meanwhile, Spaak declared Tshombe a "rebel."[189]

Tshombe knew the political winds had shifted against him. Even though the Americans tried to assure Tshombe that they did not want to destroy him and only sought "to bring his province back into the Congo under his own leadership," Tshombe

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[183] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 17 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 753-754.

[184] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 17 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 752-753.

[185] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 17 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 752-753, n1.

[186] Telegram from the Army Attaché in the Congo to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 24 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 784-785.

[187] "The Congo and the Cold War," *New York Times*, 26 December 1962, 6.

[188] Ernest W. Lefever, *Crisis in the Congo: A United Nations Force in Action* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1965), 106.

[189] Gérard-Libois, *Katanga Secession*, 270, n35.

nonetheless felt isolated.[190] In desperation, on December 19 he declared that he would "resort to a 'scorched earth' policy rather than accept reintegration by force."[191] On December 28, tensions between UN troops and Katangan gendarmes boiled over into hostilities.[192] UN generals had contingency plans for just the occasion. They launched "Operation Grand Slam" when Tshombe's forces failed to allow UN troops to move freely throughout Elisabethville. As Rusk noted, the "outbreak of shooting caught everyone by surprise."[193] UN troops quickly overran Katangan forces at Elisabethville. Tshombe fled across the Congo-Rhodesian border to Salisbury.

On January 1, Tshombe returned to Katanga and requested a cease-fire. Thant refused to negotiate with Tshombe, saying that he saw "no need for further discussions."[194] The Americans and their European allies scolded the Secretary-General for his comments. Not only did they want to prevent the destruction of Tshombe, but from their perspective, driving him back to the negotiating table had been the purpose for the show of force. The Americans told the Secretary-General to halt the offensive so that negotiations could be resumed between Adoula and Tshombe.[195] Thant reluctantly agreed and cabled UN forces to hold their positions. Gardiner, however, who was head of UN operations in the Congo, declared, "We are not going to make the mistake this time of

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[190] Telegram from the Department of State to the Delegation at Nassau, 19 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 770-773.

[191] Gérard-Libois, 271.

[192] Memorandum from the Department of State Executive Secretary (Brubeck) to the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kaysen), 28 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 788-789.

[193] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, 31 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 799-800.

[194] Statement Issued by U.N. Headquarters, 2 January 1963, *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962*, 918; Also see, Memorandum from the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kaysen) to President Kennedy, 2 January 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 802-803.

[195] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 30 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 797-798.

stopping short," and continued the UN advance into Jadotville, where the UMHK's headquarters were located.[196]

The Americans believed the UN was in "disarray" and that the Secretary-General had lost control of his forces in the field.[197] The West feared that if the UN continued its advance that Tshombe might implement his "scorched earth" policy, destroying the mines, factories, and power plants needed to rebuild the country's economy.[198] Gardiner nevertheless continued his advance to Kolwezi, and soon afterwards defeated Tshombe. Thant defended Gardiner's decisions, arguing that UN commanders had made battlefield decisions which were in accordance with good military practice" and had contributed to the "remarkable success."[199]

On January 14 Tshombe declared that he and his ministers were "ready to proclaim to the world that the Katanga secession is ended."[200] Throughout the crisis, American policymakers had viewed the Katanga secession in terms of their own North-South war. Now that the secession had ended, their goal was to pursue a "Lincolnesque solution," rather than "the two decades of 'reconstruction' which followed his death." Gullion in particular wanted to prevent the creation of a "Mason-Dixon line" with "all KATS [Katangans] on one side of [the] line and all ANC [The Central Government's army] on [the] other."[201] The Americans impressed upon Adoula that their mission had

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[196] Kalb, 368.

[197] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, 3 January 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 808-809.

[198] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation between Secretary of State Rusk and Secretary-General Thant, 9 January 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 820-822, n2.

[199] Lefever, *Crisis in the Congo*, 109-110; Bernard J. Firestone, *The United Nations under U Thant, 1961-1971* (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2001), 8; Ramses Nassif, *U Thant in New York, 1961-1971: A Portrait of the Third UN Secretary-General* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 99.

[200] Gérard-Libois, 276.

[201] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 4 January 1963, *FRUS: Congo Crisis, 1961-1963*, vol. XX, 811-813.

"not been aimed at destroying Tshombe," but rather at the "incorporation of South Katanga under its own leadership into a federal Congo."[202] While the Americans made it clear that Tshombe would not get a "free ride back to Katanga power," they urged Adoula to grant Tshombe amnesty.[203] In his New Year address, Adoula, with heavy consultation from the State Department, drew upon words from Lincoln's second inaugural: "With malice toward none."[204]

Meanwhile, Tshombe sought to make peace with the Americans. He told the American consul in Elisabethville that he sought the basis for a "good relationship" with the United States and "wished [to] make clear [that the] past was definitely buried as far as he [is] concerned." He admitted that the "US had won and he had lost." "He now wished," the consul reported, "to cooperate with the US in the development of Katanga and the Congo," in particular to "concentrate on economic development" and "attracting foreign investment." The consul informed Tshombe that while American policymakers believed "his policy had been in error," the United States had not been "moved by rancor or desire for retribution." To the Americans, this war had strictly been waged in Clausewitzian terms, "politics by other means." Now that it was over it was believed that Tshombe could help in the reconstruction of the nation by serving as a powerful ally to reunite Katanga, helping to restore the economy, and preventing the spread of leftist movements. [205]

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[202] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 30 December 1962, *FRUS: Congo Crisis, 1961-1963*, vol. XX, 797-798; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 3 January 1963, *FRUS: Congo Crisis, 1961-1963*, vol. XX, 809-811.

[203] Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations, 30 December 1962, *FRUS: Congo Crisis, 1961-1963*, vol. XX, 797-798.

[204] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 3 January 1963, *FRUS: Congo Crisis, 1961-1963*, vol. XX, 809-811.

[205] Telegram from the Consulate in Elisabethville to the Department of State, 8 February 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 835-837.

Adoula did not share the Americans' desire to make amends with Tshombe. Though he granted Tshombe amnesty, he did not offer him a position in the government. Tshombe calculated that the Adoula government would fail to resolve the economic and political problems facing the Congo, and decided to wait in Spain until the opportunity arrived to replace Adoula as prime minister. Meanwhile, his mercenaries took refuge in Angola. Tshombe lurking about in Europe compounded the problems hanging over Adoula's head. As Gullion correctly observed, "So long as Tshombe lives, Katanga separatism is not dead."[206]

In Washington, the administration was elated about the end of the secession. The president commended his advisers: "A little sense of pride…is in order."[207] McGhee wrote the president, "You were firm in your determination that the Katanga secession be ended. At the same time you sought to prove to the world that every possible peaceful means of solution was tried before forceful means were applied." McGhee's comments only describe half the story. The president had been "firm" in his determination to end the secession, but McGhee's remark that the president had pursued "every possible peaceful means" was a euphemism for the administration's inability to commit to a plan of action. Indecisiveness rather than firmness had been the hallmark of Kennedy's foreign policy in the Congo during 1962.[208]

From Leopoldville, as Devlin wrote, it appeared that "fate rather than careful planning in Washington eventually resolved the Katanga problem."[209] But it was not fate.

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[206] Memorandum from the Ambassador to the Congo (Gullion) to President Kennedy, 6 April 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 849-851.

[207] The President to Gullion, Williams, Cleveland, McGhee, Letter, 21 January 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.

[208] McGhee to the President, Letter, 22 January 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.

[209] Devlin, 203.

Actions by Adoula, the UN, and the Afro-Asian bloc contributed to the end of the secession. They knew only force would persuade Tshombe to reintegrate. Even though Adoula had been handcuffed to the Americans, dragged behind their policies until he was mentally, physically, and politically spent, his persistence to end the secession by force prevailed. The actions of UN officials, especially those who courageously ignored the administration's demarches to halt the offensive, were also important. The UN too had been handcuffed to U.S. policy via "generous" funding from the United States, but had nonetheless overcome American dithering.[210] The support for Adoula from the Afro-Asian bloc and the Africanist faction in the State Department also kept the possibility for a show of force viable.

Unfortunately, ending the secession did not result in creating the basis for a sustainable moderate government as the administration had supposed. Kennedy's indecisiveness—his pursuit of a "pragmatic" solution—had already doomed the future of the Congo. The prolongation of the secession resulted in an economic crisis and the implementation of repressive policies against the Lumumbists. Both of these factors generated a new radical fervor amongst the Congolese, which in turn inspired further repressive responses by the Americans. The administration's determination to hold a vital center in the Congo set loose a pair of countervailing forces—reactionary and radical—generating a vortex in which the country would be torn asunder.

[210] In a Daily White House Staff Meeting on December 28, Bundy and Kaysen reiterated that "it was necessary for the United States to obtain political control over any military operations which developed; in other words, if the United States is going to furnish critical materiel and perhaps civilian technical personnel, the United Nations should not expect merely to say, 'Thank you very much,' and then ignore us…we should tell the United Nations that they must have a political plan…to parallel their military plan…the United States will not furnish critical materiel and personnel under a political carte blanche to the United Nations." Memorandum for the Record, 28 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 787-788.

Adoula would soon discover that his decision to partner with the Americans had made him partially responsible for this new outbreak of chaos. Even though Adoula had challenged Kennedy's indecisiveness to end the secession, he had nonetheless colluded with the Americans to crack down on the Lumumbists. Doing so made him appear to be an American lackey, and ultimately impeded his ability to resolve the problems now facing his nation. Many Congolese blamed Adoula for his inability to end the secession quickly and resolve the economic problems plaguing the nation. Adoula's perceived "incompetency" coupled with his "cozy" relationship with the Americans served to harden Lumumbists' resolve, unifying them and legitimizing their ideology for a Congo free from foreign control.

At the same time, the Americans blamed Adoula for his inability to hold the center in domestic politics. Adoula had become an unviable political option in both the eyes of the Congolese and the Americans. Both had come to think of him as "incompetent." His rejection by the Americans was of particular consequence. It paved the way for Tshombe to become prime minister, and Mobutu to become dictator. Thus, it was at this crossroads in 1962 that the likelihood of establishing a national government based on liberal principles faded from the realm of possibility.

# CHAPTER FIVE:

# NATION-BUILDING

"Now that the UN Congo force has established its freedom of movement throughout Katanga, plans need urgently to be worked out for…establishing the further 'nation-building' programs that will be necessary to get the Congo off the world's crises agenda," Secretary of State Dean Rusk wrote President Kennedy on January 24, 1963.[1] This was the moment the Kennedy administration had long awaited. U.S. intervention in the Congo under its watch had been motivated by more than keeping the Cold War out of Africa or preventing Katanga from seceding, two tasks it had now achieved. The real impetus driving U.S. foreign policy in the Congo was "nation-building," and more specifically, the ideology of American liberalism from which that concept derived. The United States wanted to prove to newly emerging nations on the African continent, as well as the Third World at large, that democracy and capitalism, rather than communism, could overcome the problems caused by colonial underdevelopment. At the beginning of 1963, the Kennedy administration viewed the Congo not only as "the centerpiece in a new American approach to Africa in the increasingly vital Cold War struggle," as the historian John Kent noted, but also as the centerpiece in a new American approach to the anti-colonial struggle occurring across the Global South.[2]

The task before the United States was enormous. During his inaugural address in August 1961, Cyrille Adoula had described economic conditions in the Congo as

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[1] Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 24 January 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 833-834.

[2] John Kent, *America, the U.N. And Decolonisation: Cold War Conflict in the Congo* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 150.

"catastrophic." By 1963, the situation had degenerated further. Preoccupied by the secession of Katanga, the Central Government and its Western allies had neglected the economy and the problems caused by colonial underdevelopment. Capital flight, the absence of a managerial class, a deteriorating transportation network, a decreasing tax base, increasing expenditures, and lack of government oversight resulted in rampant inflation, high unemployment, and widespread corruption. Even the UN civilian operation, which had brought in hundreds of administrators and technicians from around the globe, had made little progress in halting the economic decay. Between 1959 and 1964 the gross domestic product declined by eight percent.[3]

The plummeting standard of living caused widespread disaffection with the Central Government. Many Congolese had expected independence to improve their lot in life. As one individual remarked in 1962, "Before Independence, we dreamed that it would bring us masses of marvelous things. All of that was to descend upon us from the sky…Deliverance and salvation…But here it is more than two years that we have been waiting, and nothing has come…On the contrary, our life is more difficult, we are more poor than before."[4] As a result, many Congolese lost faith in the national government, placing their hopes in local politics and/or leftist politicians who assured the masses that their socialist agendas could deliver on the unfulfilled promises of independence.

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[3] David Halberstam, "New Confidence Evident in Congo,' *New York Times*, 24 August 1961, 13; Norman Cousins, "Report from the Congo," 3 February 1962, *Saturday Review*, 12-16, 30-34; ibid., 145, 153, 162-163; Lise A. Namikas, "Battleground Africa: The Cold War and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2002), 395; David N. Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention: Mines, Money, and U.S. Policy in the Congo Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 146-147.

[4] Quote in Renee C. Fox, Willy de Craemer, and Jean-Marie Ribeaucourt, "'The Second Independence': A Case Study of the Kwilu Rebellion in the Congo," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 8, no. 1 (1965): 78-109, 91.

In order to preserve the Central Government's authority, and prevent the Congo from fragmenting along class lines, Adoula would have to right the economy. Believing that the problems of colonial underdevelopment were too big for the Congo to overcome alone, he was convinced that the path toward development required a partnership with the West, particularly with the United States. By 1963, Adoula no longer viewed the Americans through rose-colored glasses. They had frustrated his attempt to end the secession quickly, which had weakened him politically by making him unpopular amongst the Congolese people. Being forced to rely on American support and policies to stay in power further alienated him from leftist and even moderate politicians who came to view his "coalition" government as a front for the United States and the Binza group. Nevertheless, Adoula knew that the Kennedy administration shared his goal of transforming the Congo into a viable nation-state.

Rusk designated Assistant Secretary of State Harlan Cleveland to head a small group to visit the Congo, assess the assistance needed for "the nation-building phase," and develop a plan to coordinate the delivery of this aid between the Government of the Congo, the UN, Belgium, and the United States.[5] Cleveland was an appropriate choice for the assignment given that he was considered an expert in development economics (having left the Deanship of the Maxwell School of Public Affairs at Syracuse to join the administration) and had served as an administrator during the delivery of aid to Europe, China, and Southeast Asia after World War II.[6]

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[5] Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 24 January 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 833-834.

[6] Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 129.

Cleveland spent thirteen days (January 31 to February 12) traveling the Congo and consulting with Congolese, British, Belgian, and UN officials. Upon returning home he submitted a report to Rusk totaling over one hundred pages (not including eight annexes). According to Cleveland, there were three key obstacles as the country entered the so-called nation-building phase. The first was an "underdeveloped political system," which prevented Adoula from procuring popular support and taking any "rigorous actions" as prime minister. The second was the expensive yet ineffectual national army, the *Armée Nationale Congolaise* (ANC), which lacked discipline and loyalty. The third was uncontrolled government spending, which Cleveland argued was the major cause of inflation in the country. "More than external aid," Cleveland concluded, "success of a nation-building effort in the Congo depends on developing the administrative fiber to tame the national army, get the fiscal system under control, and construct a political system featuring a strong executive."[7]

Summarizing the options for the president, Rusk stated that "the central problem of concern we can do something about are the retraining of the Armee Nationale Congolaise (ANC) and the provision of technical and economic aid as part of a vigorous program of financial and economic stabilization." In total, Cleveland estimated that the Government of the Congo would need $175 million to function the next year, and suggested that the United States should contribute $80 million of this through PL 480 (the "Food for Peace" program), grants for import assistance, and loans. So that the United States would not be overburdened by its financial commitment to the Congo, Rusk told the president that it would be necessary to create an aid consortium under the "UN

[7] Harlan Cleveland, "Proposals for U.S. Policy in the Congo," 20 February 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.

umbrella"—a plan designed to use the UN as a "cover" to deliver Western aid in order to prevent direct competition between the United States and the Soviet Union from occurring in the Congo (i.e., "keeping the Cold War out")—in which Belgium, the United Kingdom, West Germany, the European Economic Community, as well as others would contribute. While Rusk noted that fiscal reform would fall on the shoulders of Adoula, who would have to be "courageous" in carrying out an austerity program, he told the president that the United States would seek "to get maximum leverage from our assistance and to exercise direct U.S. leadership to see that the necessary steps are taken by the Congolese and by the United Nations."[8]

Two problems ultimately undermined the administration's efforts to build a democratic and prosperous Congo via Cleveland's plan. First, by focusing on inflation instead of colonial underdevelopment, Cleveland was treating the symptoms rather than the cause of the economic crisis. Cleveland acknowledged that colonial underdevelopment was a problem in the Congo. Portions of his report read as if they had been lifted from FDR's New Deal. He recommended, for example, the "launching of a public works program to reduce unemployment" and to "rehabilitate the vital transportation network." He also discussed the need for a better education system, noting that there were only 400 high school graduates in 1962 and that "90% of all the Congolese children who start in school soon fall back into illiteracy." It is curious then why Cleveland ultimately recommended implementing an austerity program that would undermine the Central Government's ability to address these structural problems. Secondly, emphasizing the role of a strong army served to undermine the administration's goal of creating a democratic society. When a political problem arose as

[8] Rusk to the President, Memorandum, 21 February 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.

a result of the poor economic conditions, for example, the administration often relied on the army rather than Parliament to provide a solution, helping to clear the way for the rise of a military dictator.[9]

More plainly, Cleveland's report exemplified the administration's hubris, believing *it* could transform a nation into a democratic and capitalist society. In this way, the administration approached nation-building in the Congo with an optimism akin to which FDR approached the New Deal and Woodrow Wilson approached the League of Nations. In the face of what appeared to be insurmountable problems, their optimism sprang from the exceptionalist creed of American liberalism, that the United States could fulfill, in the words of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "An obligation to deal with poverty, repression and injustice 'everywhere in the world.'" "[It] is an old idea," Schlesinger noted, "rekindled by Woodrow Wilson in 1917-1920 and enlarged by World War II into a kind of global New Dealism."[10] The Kennedy administration believed it could solve the Congo "paradox," and even concluded that "on balance, the Congo is going the way of free choice and not coercion," that

> it does seem that in spite of the absence of trained people, the vacuum of effective government, the laborious and inefficient administration, the distorted educational system, the lack of communications; in spite of too much army, too little civil government and practically no experience in politics; in spite of the fact the government spends 5 francs for every franc it collects in revenue, and depends on external aid for approximately 50% of its imports—despite all these undoubted facts…confidence in the nation's future…is justified. The Congo will get from here to there—from the seemingly impossible conditions in which it finds itself to the conditions which are possible in a couple of decades—with intensive education and a strong government.[11]

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[9] Harlan Cleveland, "Proposals for U.S. Policy in the Congo," 20 February 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.

[10] Richard M. Pfeffer, *No More Vietnams? The War and the Future of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 8-9.

[11] Harlan Cleveland, "Proposals for U.S. Policy in the Congo," 20 February 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.

Optimism should not be frowned upon, but it appears to have caused the Kennedy administration to underestimate the problems confronting the Congo to its own detriment, and to that of the Congolese people.

In addition to Cleveland's mission, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs G. Mennen Williams also visited the Congo during February as part of a high-profile three-week tour across the African continent. The main purpose of Williams' trip was to signal U.S. commitment to the development of the Congo now that the secessionist crisis had ended. His speeches also attempted to convey to the Congolese that the United States understood the source of their frustrations. "For almost three years the Congolese people have endured much suffering and privation, while political divisions and turmoil were obscuring the promise of its independence," Williams said in a speech in Leopoldville. "The United States," he said, "is ready to help the Congo in the development work it will have to undertake. In cooperation with the United Nations…we are prepared to help the Congo as it emerges from the political struggle toward an era of economic and social development." He reiterated the administration's belief that the Congo would make "an important contribution of African and world progress and stability" once it was "on the road of future progress and prosperity."[12]

Williams' official report, submitted to Rusk on March 7 after visiting the Congo, shared Cleveland's optimism for the country, underscoring that "the Congo is a potentially rich country and, given massive aid and technical assistance for the next two years or so, can become self-sustaining." But also like Cleveland's report, Williams' recommendations appeared to undermine the administration's stated objective to promote

[12] "Williams Hails New Era for the Congo," *Leopoldville Domestic Service* [English translation], 13 February 1963, Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

"free choice" and a democratic society. Williams was convinced, for example, that "the record of the Congolese Parliament is one of dangerous irresponsibility and incompetence" and that "so long as Parliament remains in session, the continuation of moderate government and Western presence in the Congo is constantly endangered."[13]

Williams' accusations were not entirely unwarranted. While traveling in the Congo he had witnessed how Parliament's decisions had led to the starvation of part of the population of Leopoldville and helped fuel tribal hatred when a petty political dispute prevented the delivery of food throughout the city.[14] But rather than propose a political solution to solve these types of problems, Williams underscored the need for a stronger military, emphasizing the possibility of public disorder, and with scant evidence, the possibility "of a Bloc-oriented government, and Soviet intervention." Like Cleveland, Williams recommended the implementation of the Greene Plan, which had been proposed by Col. Michael J. L. Greene after a trip to the Congo in July 1962. Greene recommended a reduced but more effective army of 25,000 soldiers that would be trained by a multinational program.[15]

Williams also emphasized the need for the United States to take a multi-lateral approach in assisting the Congo. He was clearly in tune with the reality that American public support for nation-building in the Congo was dwindling. As he wrote to Rusk, the end of Katanga's secession "led to a public and Congressional impression that the Congo problem is now solved." Even if this "misunderstanding" could be addressed, Williams pointed out, there would still be difficulties enlisting congressional support "not only

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[13] Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 7 March 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 839-844.

[14] "Williams Tours Leopoldville," 16 February 1963, *New York Times*, 2.

[15] Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 7 March 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 839-844.

from those whose primary concern is with aid programs generally, but also from those Congressmen who evidenced a great interest in the Katanga issue and who considered Tshombe the most reliable bastion against communism in central Africa."[16]

Indeed, in early 1963 Republicans adopted Democratic Senator Thomas Dodd's criticism of the administration's handling of the Congo Crisis as they challenged the allocation of funds for foreign aid in the president's proposed budget to Congress. Such criticism was compounded by the influential journalist Arthur Krock of the *New York Times*, who continued to lambast the administration's Congo policy in his weekly column, and Michel Struelens, Tshombe's publicist, who continued his work in New York City.[17] Williams therefore recommended, "Making every effort to get Belgium and other countries to increase their share of this aid." While it was generally accepted that the United States would still have to make a substantial contribution, the hope was to approach nation-building in the Congo multi-nationally and perhaps even to persuade Belgium to take the lead in delivering technical assistance.[18]

Even though Spaak was pleasantly surprised to learn that the United States for once wanted Belgium to take the lead in something in regards to the Congo, enlisting Belgian support, as well as that from other Western countries, proved to be no easy task. The defeat of Tshombe had upset many Europeans, especially those in the financial sector. While the Kennedy administration was eventually able to procure a verbal commitment from Belgium to assist in implementing the Greene Plan, the settlement of pending legal disputes over financial claims between Belgium and its former colony

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[16] Ibid.

[17] See for example Arthur Krock's column, "In the Nation," *New York Times*, 7 January & 21 January, 1963, 6.

[18] Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 7 March 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 839-844.

(officially referred to as the *contentieux*) prevented the immediate delivery of any such assistance. Adoula, for his part, sought a quick rapprochement with Belgium. On February 20, he made a conciliatory gesture by traveling to Elisabethville, the capital of Katanga, in order to meet with business and community leaders. He then traveled to Brussels to confer with Spaak in person. While Spaak appreciated Adoula's effort to rehabilitate relations between the two countries, no quick solution existed to resolve the *contentieux*, and the matter dragged out for over a year.[19]

Seeking rapprochement with Belgium also cost Adoula credibility with African nationalists. The State Department reported in a memorandum to Bundy that "although the trip to Belgium was most successful from the international point of view, Adoula is now accused by the opposition not only of being an American stooge but what is more serious being a Belgian one."[20] Similarly, Adoula's remark at the end of his trip to Brussels, "You need us, and we need you," as well as the announcement of a multi-million dollar U.S. aid package in the form of agricultural products which occurred about the same time signaled to Kwame Nkrumah, the Prime Minister of Ghana and a key leader of the Pan-African movement, that Adoula "was becoming controlled by the American and Belgian ambassadors"; that both countries were seeking to "maintain stooges in charge of the administration throughout the country" in order to "secure economic domination."[21] While this loss of sympathy from African nationalists probably did not cost Adoula in terms of foreign assistance, it did cost him politically. His growing

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[19] "Adoula Welcomed Warmly in Katanga," *New York Times*, 21 February 1963, 3; Anthony Lukas, "U.N. Troops Rush to Katanga City to Quell Rising," *New York Times*, 22 February 1963, 1; Kent, *America, the U.N. And Decolonisation*, 161; Paul-Henri Spaak, *The Continuing Battle: Memoirs of a European, 1936-1966* (Boston: Little, 1971), 380.

[20] William B. Connett, Jr. and William H. Brubeck to Bundy, Memorandum, 21 March 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.

[21] Kwame Nkrumah, *Challenge of the Congo* (New York: International Publishers, 1967), 224.

reliance on the West drew charges that he was part of neo-colonialist plot, and strengthened his opposition within the country, the Lumumbists, making his position, according to the State Department, "At best shaky."[22]

Adoula, however, probably felt as if he had had little choice but to rely upon Western aid. Ties with the communist bloc had long been severed, and bi-lateral aid from African countries or the soon-to-be created Organization of African Unity would not come close to meeting the level of assistance needed to right the economy.[23] Furthermore, a beleaguered UN, which the Congo Crisis had nearly destroyed because of Soviet opposition in 1960, had taken the life of its Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold, and had now placed on the verge of bankruptcy, was raring to pull out.

Secretary-General U Thant was under great pressure from the Soviet Union and the UN's Congo Advisory Committee to withdraw UN troops.[24] Brian Urquhart, the head UN representative in the Congo, believed that the United Nations had achieved its objectives and that by March 1963 "the prospects in the Congo seemed encouraging for the first time since 1960."[25] That same month, the UN brigade from India, which was considered "the mainstay of the Congo force in terms of fighting capability and discipline," began withdrawing, and the UN notified the United States that it would cut its forces from 13,360 to 6,000 by July 1.[26] "Urgent appeals to stay on," Urquhart noted, "were received from many quarters which had, in the past, been consistently critical of

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[22] William B. Connett, Jr. and William H. Brubeck to Bundy, Memorandum, 21 March 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.

[23] The Organization of African Unity would be founded in May 25, 1963.

[24] Letter from the Soviet Representative at the United Nations (Fedorenko) to the U.N. Secretary-General (Thant), 2 March 1963, *American Foreign Policy Current Documents, 1963*: 659-661; Namikas, "Battleground Africa," 82.

[25] Brian Urquhart, *A Life in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 195.

[26] Kent, 157.

our efforts."[27] Indeed, UN troops were unquestionably the most reliable military force in the country, and many in the West considered them an important source for stability.

The Kennedy administration in particular viewed an extension of the UN commitment necessary "to hold the country together."[28] The Joint Chiefs of Staff said that a minimum of 8,000 UN troops would be required in order to achieve this. As discussed above, both Cleveland and Williams recommended that UN forces stay until the ANC could be retrained and reorganized. Consequently, the Kennedy administration persistently lobbied U Thant to keep UN forces in the Congo. It tried to persuade the UN that it had not achieved its objectives, arguing specifically that Tshombe, who still had 8,000 armed gendarmerie at his disposal and was "still hankering after secession."[29] Indeed, rumors were swirling that one of Tshombe's chief mercenaries, Jean Schramm, "was telling his European acquaintances that he and his friends would be back in force in Elisabethville after the departure of the UN."[30] By late March the UN itself was becoming concerned about a "possible fourth round in Katanga in [the] making."[31] Though U Thant remained "highly dubious about the continued financial drain on the UN," this information helped persuade him to keep UN troops in the Congo until the summer of 1964.[32]

In the meantime, Adoula was losing domestic support. The high unemployment, rampant inflation, and widespread famine across the country made him an easy target for

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[27] Urquhart, *A Life in Peace and War*, 195

[28] Memorandum for the Record, 27 March 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 845-847; Also see, Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 7 March 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 839-844.

[29] Memorandum for the Record, 27 March 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 845-847.

[30] Kent, 162.

[31] Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 6 April 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 847-848, fn1.

[32] Arthur M. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 484.

political opponents. When Parliament reconvened in March, the House elected officers opposed to Adoula. Washington became so concerned about Adoula's ability to stay in power that they wondered if he would choose "military paternalism over continued legality."[33]

On March 27, 1963 Kennedy met with his advisers in the Cabinet Room of the White House to discuss the situation. Ambassador Edmund Gullion told the president that Adoula's political position was weak: "The question of whether Adoula can make the necessary accommodations with his opposition to survive remains open." Explaining how this situation had come to pass, Gullion put his finger on the heart of the matter: "Local pocketbook issues have been much more important in working against Adoula than the end of secession has been in working for him." "It is very important," Gullion recommended, "that the U.S. give aid rapidly now in order to help overcome the economic problems, and thus save Adoula." Gullion reiterated, "There are no alternatives to keeping Adoula or someone close to him in power. We have examined them all, and none are appealing."[34]

Even during this dire situation, Kennedy's experts remained optimistic, assuring the president that because of the potential of the Congo the country would be fine in one to two years. Robert West, the U.S. AID representative in Leopoldville, who had first come to the Congo as an MIT researcher in 1959 and was a professor of economics at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, told the president that though exports from the country were now less than $200 million in two years it "should reach $450 million a year." West also noted that he agreed with Gullion that "the need for aid

[33] Quote in Kent, 152.
[34] Memorandum for the Record, 27 March 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 845-847.

to permit industries to get up to full capacity was clear," but he emphasized that "when they did, the country could be self-sufficient."[35]

Gullion, who had been in the minority before in urging the president to move more quickly to end the secession, did not share the optimism of his colleagues. On April 6 he sent a memorandum to the president stating that it was "doubtful that as much as $75 million to match our contribution will be forthcoming from other donors."[36] In an effort to limit criticism from the Soviet Union that the Congo had become an American client-state and to improve the likelihood of gaining congressional approval for the requested funds, the administration had continued to adhere to the UN model used during Katanga's secession that limited the United States from contributing more than 50% of the funds for the Congo (in this case an estimated $150 million dollars). Gullion also began to question Adoula's ability to govern. In late March the ambassador reported that "in addition to showing the erosion of his own political position," Adoula "also has shown signs of physical exhaustion."[37]

Indeed, Adoula needed support. The floundering economy strengthened his political enemies. Many in Parliament were demanding Antoine Gizenga, one of Lumumba's former lieutenants, be released from prison. The administration pressured Adoula to forbid Gizenga's return, but Adoula pointed out that because of the Congo's constitution "there was no legal way he could prevent Gizenga from returning to [the] Congo." Adoula took the opportunity to remind the administration of how his own previous requests that the United States deport Michel Struelens, Tshombe's publicist in

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[35] Ibid.

[36] Memorandum from the Ambassador to the Congo (Gullion) to President Kennedy, 6 April 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 849-851.

[37] William B. Connett, Jr. and William H. Brubeck to Bundy, Memorandum, 21 March 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.

New York, had been denied. "This was [the] type of problem which was a price paid for democratic institutions," he told Gullion.[38]

Other problems arose for Adoula as well. Tshombe was still lurking in the political shadows, plotting his return to the Congo. On April 6, Rusk warned the president that "there are disturbing reports of the continued presence of Tshombe's mercenaries and military equipment in Northern Rhodesia and Angola."[39] That same month, a raid by the Central Government on an apartment owned by Tshombe revealed plans for Katanga to secede again once UN forces had departed. Captured documents specifically showed payments to mercenaries and lists of equipment, including planes (a particularly effective weapon in the Congo).[40] Gullion also reported that Tshombe had "secretly consulted with Portuguese authorities in Angola" on the matter.[41]

In light of the various forces mounting against Adoula, Gullion recommended that the administration continue to "press him to carry out measures we have already urged on him to unify the country, improve internal security, curb inflation, fight unemployment, and check corruption," but also "help him in the formation of a new political party, the unification of the labor movement and the creation of a loyal and effective propaganda apparatus and the development of public works projects."[42] The administration seemed content to focus on political issues, specifically those related to keeping Adoula in power, rather than solving economic problems. The U.S. Information Agency (USIA) spread

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[38] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 10 April 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 851-852.

[39] Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, 6 April 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 847-848.

[40] Kent, 158.

[41] Memorandum from the Ambassador to the Congo (Gullion) to President Kennedy, 6 April 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 849-851.

[42] Memorandum from the Ambassador to the Congo (Gullion) to President Kennedy, 6 April 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 849-851.

propaganda via radio, films, and pamphlets that supported Adoula, and explained that solutions to the economic problems would take time to go into effect.[43] "If necessary," Gullion recommended, "we should support the Adoula Government in taking strong measures to deal with an irresponsible Parliament."[44]

The prime minister also worked to improve his situation. On April 17 he widened the composition of his government to include more members from the Abako and Conakat political parties. Abako played a leading role in organizing the independence movement, and it now controlled the urban areas of Leopoldville that had been in unrest throughout periods of Adoula's rule. Conakat was formerly headed by Tshombe, and consisted of representatives from Katanga, whose help Adoula needed to reintegrate the province and remove the possibility of a second secession. Unfortunately for Adoula, neither the Americans' "propaganda apparatus" nor his effort to make a more inclusive government (which still excluded leftists associated with Gizenga or Lumumba) did little to improve his situation. On April 20, Parliament passed a vote of no confidence.

Adoula's inability to govern as well as perceptions that he was a Western stooge were also causing the Congo to fragment politically. By May, there were twenty-five political parties represented on average by four members of Parliament per party.[45] Re-provincialization also contributed to this fragmentation. By June 30 twenty-one provinces replaced the original six. Adoula hoped the creation of additional provinces would force provincial leaders to rely on the Central Government, as traditional bases of support

[43] Kent, 148.

[44] Memorandum from the Ambassador to the Congo (Gullion) to President Kennedy, 6 April 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 849-851.

[45] Kent, 159.

would be divided.[46] The plan backfired. Re-provincialization both diffused the Central Government's authority and created numerous territorial disputes, which the Central Government now had to arbitrate.[47]

By May the Kennedy administration had come to the realization that its policies were making little headway and if anything the situation was backsliding towards chaos. Williams wrote Rusk on May 13 admitting that "the Congolese economy is today in greater need of urgent stabilization measures than at the time of the Cleveland Mission in February." He reported that inflation continued, predicting an injection of 1 billion francs ($20 million) each month, and that foreign exchange controls had not improved, estimating a balance of payments deficit of $60 to $80 million for 1963. Williams also reported that the administration's efforts to obtain increased aid from Europe had failed. They were far from their goal of raising $75 million, and were still trying to persuade Belgium to increase its commitment from $5 million as well as obtain another $30 million from the United Kingdom, Germany, the European Economic Community, and other countries. In the midst of this growing economic turmoil, Williams worried that the Congolese Parliament, which had "proven more unruly than useful," would "continue to pose a threat to the stability of the executive branch as long as it is in session."[48] After the vote of no confidence in April, the Kennedy administration sought to create a national party that would assist Adoula in consolidating his power. The CIA helped fund the

[46] Namikas, 395.

[47] Crawford Young, *Politics in the Congo: Decolonization and Independence* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), 550-551.

[48] Information Memorandum from Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 13 May 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 852-856.

creation of the *Rassemblement des Démocrates du Congo* (RADECO), but it too failed to achieve political unity.[49]

The administration responded to these setbacks by seeking to strengthen the army. Having failed to occur under the aegis of the UN, the United States pressed Adoula to request bi-lateral assistance to expedite the reorganization and modernization of the ANC. On May 12, Adoula sent a letter to U Thant notifying him that the Congo was requesting direct assistance from the United States, Belgium, Norway, Canada, Israel, and Italy for help on this matter.[50] Comments made by Rusk at a press conference only a few weeks prior now appeared hollow:

> I believe the events there have underlined the basic wisdom of the decision made by President Eisenhower not to let that particular country be caught up in a bilateral engagement between the two great power blocs in the so-called cold war but to put that problem into the hands of the United Nations, in order to keep that kind of conflict out of Africa and to give the Congolese a chance to work out their own future.[51]

Ironically, another consequence of the decision to overhaul the ANC bi-laterally was that General Joseph Mobutu's position in Congolese politics would increase immensely, even though he had been one of the main reasons why UN attempts to modernize the ANC had failed.[52] Concerned about losing influence over his soldiers, he had sought to prevent interaction between UN advisers and the army. He urged instead that technical assistance be limited to equipment. While the Kennedy administration was aware of Mobutu's role in preventing the UN's reorganization of the ANC, it had recently been impressed by his "prompt and courageous action" in quelling a mutiny by

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[49] Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo*, 210.

[50] Letter from the Prime Minister of the Congo (Adoula) to the UN Secretary-General (Thant), 12 May 1963, *American Foreign Policy, 1963*: 664-665; Information Memorandum from Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 13 May 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 852-856.

[51] Remarks made by the Secretary of State (Rusk) before a Meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, 18 April 1963, *American Foreign Policy, 1963*: 663.

[52] Namikas, 344.

the Leopoldville police on May 3. As Williams pointed out, breaking up the mutiny in the capital city showed some sign of strength from the Adoula government.[53]

Later that month Mobutu toured American military installations for two weeks as a guest of the U.S. Army. At that point no bilateral agreement had been signed between the United States and the Congo, and Belgium and Israel had been the only other countries to pledge some sort of assistance. At the end of his tour, Mobutu met with Kennedy on May 31 to discuss the details concerning U.S. military assistance to the Congo. In general, it was concluded that the United States would assist in training the officer corps and would provide *matériel* such as trucks and radios. When pressed by the president if he "could maintain order after the UN's departure," Mobutu replied without hesitation "that he could if he could get U.S. military aid immediately."[54]

Towards the end of their conversation, the president and Mobutu moved out into the White House Rose Garden for pictures. Kennedy used the opportunity to woo Mobutu, telling him in earshot of the press, "General, if it hadn't been for you, the whole thing would have collapsed and the Communists would have taken over." Mobutu also wanted to send a message to the president albeit in an eccentric fashion the world would soon grow accustom to. He told Kennedy that he "personally wanted to take parachute training for four weeks at Fort Benning and for two weeks at the Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg." When the president asked him whether he thought he could be gone from the Congo for such a length time, Mobutu replied that he had had the opportunity to receive similar training from France, but that he "wished to come to the US instead," and

[53] Information Memorandum from Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 13 May 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 852-856.

[54] Memorandum of Conversation, 31 May 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 858-862.

that "after all he had been in the United States already for a couple of weeks."[55] Mobutu wanted to make clear that he had thrown his chips in with the Americans, and more importantly, to reassure the president that he would be a strong ally, someone who could maintain power even while abroad (an opportune moment to be deposed).

The scene of Kennedy and Mobutu in the Rose Garden should not be construed as the United States choosing Mobutu to lead the Congo, as is a commonly asserted. While it indicates his increasing role in the Congo, it did not symbolize a new relationship between him and the United States. The Kennedy administration was not convinced Mobutu could deliver on his promise to cooperate in reorganizing and modernizing the ANC. Indeed, once back in the Congo Mobutu returned to his old ways, requesting programs of modernization while obstructing the ones focused on retraining. His failure to integrate the Katangan gendarmerie into the ANC during that summer, an issue that had then been lingering on for over half a year, also remained a serious point of contention.[56]

By June 30, the fourth anniversary of the Congo's independence, the situation had improved little under Adoula's rule. Adoula addressed the obvious in his Independence Day speech: "The return of South Katanga in the Republic has not eliminated our problems as if by magic." "All the immense tasks that await us," he went on to say, "will nonetheless not prevent us from pursuing an avant-garde African politics." Aware that the West was looking to decrease its commitment to his country, Adoula used his speech as an opportunity to reach out for additional support. He had always viewed himself as a Pan-Africanist, and he knew that the future of the Congo would depend on its interactions

[55] Ibid.
[56] Namikas, 383-385; Kent, 155, 161-162.

with the rest of the continent. He made clear that the Congo "rejected political isolationism" and "remains open to all currents of trade."[57]

By mid-July, the UN had spent $37 million on civilian operations in the Congo since 1960, with an additional $19 million budgeted for the remainder of 1963. The total commitment of $56 million as well as 1,149 full time specialists ranging from meteorologists, social workers, and postal service experts, according to a UN press release, "Surpassed anything ever undertaken by the United Nations or its specialized agencies in a single country."[58] This report was part of a larger reassessment of the UN's commitment in the Congo. UN officials knew the organization could not continue to divert such a large portion of its resources to that country alone. Secretary-General U Thant wanted the January 1 troop removal followed up by a yearlong phase out of the civilian operation.[59]

The United States' own reassessment of the economic situation in May led to a re-vamped austerity program. On July 20 the United States suspended new grants to finance imports and public works "in an effort to force far-reaching fiscal and economic reforms." While other categories of aid remained, such as the Food for Peace program and contributions to the UN Congo fund for technical assistance, the two categories being cut accounted for about half the American aid program that had "totaled about

[57] Cyrille Adoula, "Discours à l'occasion du troisième aniiversaire de l'indépendance," 1 July 1963, *Congo 1963* (Brussels: C.R.I.S.P., 1964): 22-25. Adoula had other reasons to dedicate such a large portion of his speech to African nationalism. His willingness to cheer on African nationalism was one of the qualities that had initially attracted the Kennedy administration to him. The administration did not want the United States to be ostracized by a group they viewed to be the future leaders of Africa for their policies in the Congo. Furthermore, Adoula's interest in Angola's independence in particular stemmed from his desire to keep a close eye on Tshombe, who had been rumored to be working with the Portuguese to depose him. See, Memorandum from Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 13 May 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 852-856.

[58] UN Press Release, 5 July 1963, Box 383, NSF, JFKL.

[59] Brubeck to Bundy, Memorandum, 25 July 1963, Box 383, NSF, JFKL.

$73,000,000 in the year to June 30." The hope was that halting this aid would pressure Adoula to take "steps that would make such aid effective," such as "other monetary and foreign-exchange controls," and "reduction in the budget deficit," which was viewed as "the major cause of the runaway inflation." Other Western countries including Belgium, Britain, West Germany, and Canada followed the United States' lead in reducing aid.[60]

While the intent of the austerity program was to get the Congo's economy and government back on track, focusing on government expenditures instead of addressing the problems caused by colonial underdevelopment exacerbated an already reeling economy. Specifically, suspending this aid prevented "improvements to roads, bridges, airports and public buildings," the infrastructure desperately needed to get the economy moving again. Similarly, cutting down grants in finance imports to $20,000,000 in order to meet an estimated $60,000,000 worth of needs, did little to help create an effective tax-base that could have been used to permanently replace those funds.[61]

Whatever hopes the Congolese people held in the United States to transform their country into a prosperous and democratic nation began to slip away once the austerity program took effect. On August 3, 1963, Albert Loumanza, a member of the Congolese parliament, sent a letter to President Kennedy explaining the hardships confronting the 150,000 constituents he represented. Even though the people in his district were "very hardworking," he wrote the president, they nonetheless found "it very difficult to cope with the cost of food, clothing, schooling, travel and housing." Loumanza went on to explain how the problems caused by colonial underdevelopment created this situation in which many Congolese "no longer have any way of acquiring the necessary money to

[60] J. Anthony Lukas, "2 Funds to Congo Suspended by U.S.," *New York Times*, 21 July 1963, 1.
[61] Ibid.

pay for their basic needs." "With the departure of the vast number of Europeans after the Congo accepted a badly prepared-for independence," he explained, "the peasants, due to the neglect of the merchants, have no way to sell their agricultural, fishery and other alimentary products." "As a result of the foregoing," he continued, "schooling has become non-existent for numerous children whose parents no longer have the means to keep them in school."[62]

Loumanza wrote the president that his constituents "unceasingly request me to serve as their direct and lawful intermediary with a great nation that could help them solve their unhappy financial difficulties," that they "have been studying the extent of aid given by the United States to underdeveloped countries during the past several years," and were "well aware, as is the rest of the world, of your great qualities as a Chief of State." "Your exalted name," Loumanza wrote, "is known even to the simple peasants in the interior of our country." Because of this, Loumanza appealed to the president for help. First for those living in his district, and if the president was unable to provide that, perhaps he would consider "a direct, personal and private request" to provide him and his family with 10,000,000 francs. "Government subsidies," he explained, "do not begin to cover our needs." They could not return the infrastructure in which products were delivered to market, or a school system that had been closed for nearly three years he explained. Loumanza's conclusions reflected the fears, doubts, concerns, and desperation felt by many Congolese at this time: "We see at present absolutely no possibility for us to improve our present situation, which seems only to be growing worse—much to the detriment of any progress as regards to our own interests and those of our children."[63]

[62] Albert Loumanza to the President, Letter, August 3, 1963, Box 29, NSF, JFKL.
[63] Ibid.

By the time Loumanza's letter arrived in Washington, the Kennedy administration was itself debating what the future of U.S. aid to the Congo would look like. "The fundamental question on which policy clarification will be sought," Williams wrote Rusk on August 13, "is the question of the role of the US in the Congo over the next one to two years." While "the US plays a leading role in Congolese affairs," and "American funds, personnel, and prestige have been heavily committed in the Congo," there was, Williams wrote to Rusk, "A basic question as to the desirability of increasing our commitment and influence." Despite the fact many in the administration believed that "the degree of success which had been achieved to date can be very largely ascribed to the great effort the US has made," many also accepted that "the Congo continues to be plagued with serious difficulties," and were afraid these problems—"Rampant tribalism, the division of the country into 21 provincettes, a nearly runaway inflation, a costly defense establishment which contributes little to law and order, a central government with little authority in outlying areas, an incompetent bureaucracy"—would "all contribute to a situation which can again easily become a matter of profound international concern."[64] The last thing anyone wanted was a second international crisis like that of the Katanga secession.

The dilemma facing the administration was how to disengage from the Congo while preventing such a crisis from occurring. Some, such as Williams, argued that, "Belgium should take primary responsibility and play a leading role in the rehabilitation in the Congo." "With its large economic stake in the Congo and approximately 30,000 Belgian nationals there, not to mention the moral obligation of helping assure the future

[64] Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Williams) to Secretary of State Rusk, 13 August 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 865-868.

of its former colony," Williams wrote to Rusk, "Belgium should be expected to provide a large proportion of the technicians and aid which the Congo desperately needs." Others, such as Ambassador Gullion, had "considerable doubt" about the future role of Belgium in the Congo. Gullion believed that Belgium would "defend its financial interests in the Congo," at the expense of pursuing "policies which will be in the best interest of the US in this important part of Africa," and that "an increase of Belgian influence, in place of US and the UN, could involve real strains on Belgian-Congo relations and on Adoula's ability to manage radical policy elements." Additionally, Gullion believed, as did others in the administration, that it was the United States, guided by American liberalism, which held the solutions to these problems. Belgium rule, they knew, had led to these problems in the first place.[65]

But in light of political and economic solutions that seemed to be failing, and with "storm clouds ahead on the Congo horizon," the solution that became seen as the most viable was creating a stronger military. Even those who believed American nation-building could still succeed conceded that more time was needed, and that creating and maintaining a strong military presence in the Congo would provide stability until those policies could take effect. The Kennedy administration took the first step down this slippery slope when it decided that retaining the UN forces in the Congo was necessary. "At least until the army retraining program is well under way," Williams argued.[66] On August 22, Adoula requested U Thant extend the stay of UN troops through the first half of 1964.[67] On September 16, Thant denied Adoula's request, informing him that the UN

[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Letter from the Prime Minister of the Congo (Adoula) to the U.N. Secretary-General (Thant), 22 August 1963, *American Foreign Policy Current Documents, 1963*: 667-668.

did not have the needed funds (no less than $25 million) to permit the UN force to stay six months past December 31.[68]

Anticipating that the UN might deny Adoula's request, the administration had already begun making preparations for the president himself to lobby for an extension during his visit to the UN to address the General Assembly on September 20.[69] Upon arriving in New York, Kennedy met privately with Secretary-General Thant and Under Secretary for Political Affairs Ralph Bunche urging them to support an extension of UN troops. Behind the scenes, Cleveland and Charles Yost, Adlai Stevenson's deputy, worked to compose a resolution that would provide funding for the continuation of the military and civilian operations.[70] The pinnacle of this effort occurred during President Kennedy's address to the General Assembly, "I believe this Assembly should do what is necessary to preserve the gains already made [in the Congo] and to protect the new nation in its struggle for progress." "Let us complete what we have started," he declared.[71]

Kennedy's appeal, as well as the behind-the-scenes efforts of his staff, paid off. On October 18 the General Assembly approved Adoula's request for the UN troops to remain in the Congo through June 1964. It is ironic, however, that the administration used Kennedy's speech, which was supposed to be celebrating both U.S. and UN nation-building efforts, to request an extension of military forces in the Congo. It was an

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[68] Letter from the U.N. Secretary-General (Thant) to the Prime Minister of the Congo (Adoula), 16 September 1963, *American Foreign Policy Current Documents, 1963*: 668-669; Report of the U.N. Secretary-General (Thant), 17 September 1963, *American Foreign Policy Current Documents, 1963*: 669-676.

[69] Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 6 Sep. 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 868-870; Memorandum of Conversation, 9 September 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 870-871.

[70] The plan was to have the Nigerians, who were deemed the "best ball carriers for ONUC financing proposition," to present it to the General Assembly. Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, 20 September 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 872-874.

[71] John F. Kennedy, "Address Before the 18th General Assembly of the United Nations," in The American Presidency Project, 20 September 1963, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=8032.

admission of sorts that their efforts to transform that country into a viable nation-state had failed. Likewise, Kennedy's words, "That people must be free to choose their own future, without discrimination or dictation, without coercion or subversion," appear hollow in light of the fact that the speech was motivated politically to procure a military solution in the Congo, a course leading away from a path of development and towards a military dictatorship. The ostensible commitment to the "pursuit of peace," which President Kennedy waxed poetic about during his address, was in regards to the Congo, a farce.[72]

In early October, Kennedy met with Belgian Foreign Minister Paul Henri-Spaak at the White House to discuss the progress of the ANC retraining program. The Kennedy administration was not convinced that the program was proceeding quickly enough. Spaak told the president that "until now progress had been slow but there were better prospects for the future." George Ball, Acting Secretary of State while Rusk was traveling abroad, also informed the president that UN troops would be staying on for the first six months of 1964. While the president was "glad" to hear this, Spaak warned him that the "Adoula Government is weak and the administration is bad." Speaking frankly, Spaak told the president that, "In his view a democratic parliamentary system is not the best one for the Congo at the present." "It is hard for Adoula to take decisions," Spaak told the president, and that if the Congo Parliament gave "full powers to Adoula" it "would enable him to govern more effectively."[73]

The next week Adoula traveled to Washington to discuss the ANC re-training program as well as the economic reforms his government was trying to implement. Adoula impressed upon the president that the army needed *matériel*, and assured him that

[72] Ibid.
[73] Memorandum of Conversation, 4 October 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 875-876.

the Congo government would "apply all our efforts to be ready when the UN departs." "The paramount problem," Adoula told the president, "was bringing about the economic recovery of the country." While in Washington Adoula also met with representatives from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) who wanted to develop a monetary reform program that could be started the following month. Adoula believed, however, that sending "people back to growing crops" was more important than monetary reform. He told the president that the only way this could occur was if the infrastructure was improved, particularly the roads. "If the interior could be reached, then cash crops could move," Adoula said. Otherwise, the people of the Congo, he said, "Would revert to a very low level of subsistence agriculture." Adoula warned, "The rural people had to see an improvement in their standard of living, and commodities and consumer goods had to be available to them." Before leaving, Adoula thanked the president for the aid the United States was providing, and told him that "even though some propaganda circles may attempt to distort the nature of American aid and make it appear that the US is trying to establish its rule over the Congo, the people understand that the assistance comes from the American people."[74]

Adoula recognized the economic problems confronting his country better than the Western experts clamoring for austerity. He knew economic recovery required massive foreign assistance in order to put the infrastructure in place to get the economy moving again, a message he tried to impress upon the president during their meeting. Adoula struggled, however, to convey his vision for the Congo, or the steps necessary to achieve it, to the Congolese people who meanwhile were growing impatient with his government

[74] Ibid., fn3.

as the economy continued to tank. This hindered his ability to overcome the perception that U.S. aid was buying control over his government, which to a certain extent was true.

Unable to acquire the vast fortune needed to overcome the problem of colonial underdevelopment, the deepening economic crisis continued to lead to the fragmentation of the country, dividing it along class cleavages whose origins could be traced back to the maldistribution of the colonial government. Wealthy provinces moved to protect their assets, as they had done shortly after independence in 1960. Rumors of secession stirred once again in Katanga, where production of copper had risen by 5 percent from 1962, and production of cobalt had risen by 20 percent compared to pre-independence numbers. The province of Kasai essentially withdrew from the nation as well by selling its steady production of industrial diamonds on the black market.[75] More dramatically, a wave of revolutions broke out across the poorer agricultural-based provinces where the effects of the economic crisis were most severe. Led by Lumumbists, whose namesake had been assassinated by the Belgians for pursuing genuine independence (i.e., a Congo free from foreign influence), the revolutions sought a "*deuxième independence*" (a "second independence"), delivering on the failed promises of its first: better pay, improved housing, free education, and most importantly, freedom from foreign control.[76]

The first of these revolutions occurred in the western province of Kwilu, which had once been a major producer of palm oil, but now was plagued by increasing costs of living, unemployment, and government corruption. In July 1963, Pierre Mulele arrived in the province to lead a peasant revolt. At the time of independence, Mulele had helped found the *Parti Solidaire Africain* (PSA), a party politically left of Lumumba's

[75] Kent, 162-163, 173.

[76] Fox et al., "'The Second Independence': A Case Study of the Kwilu Rebellion in the Congo," 78-109.

*Mouvement National Congolais* (MNC). When Lumumba was overthrown, Mulele fled the country, eventually arriving in China where he studied Mao's strategy of guerrilla warfare. The Central Government discovered his training camps in September.[77]

The next month, while Adoula was in Washington, opposition leaders from the eastern provinces of the Congo gathered across the river from Leopoldville in the (formerly French) Republic of Congo's capital Brazzaville, which had just witnessed the coup of its Western-leaning president, Fulbert Youlou. From there they announced the creation of the *Conseil national de liberation* (CNL), an umbrella organization to coordinate the revolutions in the east committed to the overthrow of the Adoula government. They declared Christophe Gbenye their leader, and their army, the *Armée Populaire de Libération* (nicknamed the "*simbas*"), was led by Gaston Soumaliot, Nicolas Olenga, and Laurent Kabila, and was especially active in the impoverished provinces of Orientale and Kivu.[78] Orientale's economy suffered from the decline of cotton growth that had dwindled since independence. Kivu, as the historian John Kent has written, experienced harsher conditions:

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[77] Sean Kelly, *America's Tyrant: The CIA and Mobutu of Zaire* (Lanham, Md.: American University Press, 1993), 93-94; Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History* (New York: Zed Books 2002), 128-129; Ludo Martens, *Pierre Mulele and the Kwilu Peasant Uprising in Zaire* (London: Zed Books, 1993).

[78] Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila*, 128; Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention*, 148; Emizet F. Kisangani, *Civil Wars in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 1960-2010* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012), 65-92; Crawford Young, "Rebellion and the Congo," in *Protest and Power in Black Africa*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg and Ali Al Amin Mazrui(New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 968-1011; Benoît Verhaegen, *Rebellions Au Congo* (Bruxelles: Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques, 1966); Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, Alain Forest, and Herbert F. Weiss, *Rébellions-Révolution Au Zaïre, 1963-1965* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987); Fox et al., "'The Second Independence': A Case Study of the Kwilu Rebellion in the Congo," 78-109; Herbert F. Weiss, *Political Protest in the Congo: The Parti Solidaire Africain During the Independence Struggle* (Princeton, N.J.,: Princeton University Press, 1967); Namikas, 384, 404-405; Kent, 165-166.

> In 1959 the province was estimated to have over a million livestock, primarily pigs, but in the following three years four-fifths had been lost, with the production of milk reduced by the same amount…The story of vegetable production was even more depressing, as before independence 12,000 tons of potatoes and 23,000 tons of other fresh vegetables were produced which supported some 15,000 small farmers. By 1963, the collapse of organized purchasing and the failure to maintain vehicles and a viable transport system had virtually eliminated the market and reduced production to nothing more than that for local consumption. Fishing on Lake Kivu had also failed to bring in a small fraction of the pre-independence catch in both the modern and traditional sectors.[79]

At this same time, leftist leaders in Brazzaville who supported the CNL, and the overthrow of the Adoula government, which they viewed as hostile to their own leftist political system, demanded higher wages for laborers in Leopoldville since the economies of two cities were intertwined due to their close proximity (about two miles). These demands helped set-off strikes in Leopoldville, where two-thirds of the population was unemployed and labor unions, which had expected Adoula to be more receptive to their demands as a former labor leader had become exasperated with the Central Government's inability to rein in the ruinous economy. A mutiny in the ANC, which occurred about this same time across the country in the city of Luluabourg, further indicated that Adoula had lost control of the country.[80]

When everything seemed to indicate that leftists would overthrow Adoula, a twist of events typical in the Congo took place. The right-wing Binza group used the outbreak of protests as an opportunity to assume power. Members of the group had become disappointed with Adoula due to the fact that his efforts to create political unity had caused him to disperse patronage that had traditionally been awarded to them.[81] Furthermore, the Binza group had interpreted Adoula's inability to secure an aid package in Washington as a signal that the United States had given up backing the prime

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[79] Kent, 163-164.

[80] Memorandum from the Department of State Executive Secretary (Read) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), 25 October 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 880-881; Gibbs, 146-147; Kent, 166.

[81] Kent, 159; Namikas, 397.

minister.[82] Upon Adoula's return to the Congo, members of his cabinet presented him with a "state of exception" decree. It imposed martial law and placed a triumvirate in charge of the Congo. In effect, Defense Minister Jerome Anany would rule. Kasavubu signed the decree on October 21. Shortly after, Anany arrested the labor leaders responsible for the strike and expelled Soviet bloc embassies that were suspected of abetting the strikers. While "none of the moves seem to be directed against Adoula," a memorandum from the State Department to McGeorge Bundy noted, "The trend of events leaves Adoula on the sidelines with the initiative and control in other hands."[83]

Many in the Kennedy administration had been frustrated at one time or another with Adoula as prime minister, but the idea of supporting a "strong man" in Anany gained little support. The administration did not doubt Anany would be "vigorous" and "decisive" in his decision-making (qualities it longed for in Adoula), or that he would be "well-disposed toward the U.S." It was concerned, however, by his overall ability to govern, which Ambassador Gullion believed would be "obscurantist, arbitrary, primitive, totalitarian, willful and [garble—irresponsible?]," as well as what supporting Anany would do to the United States' image in the Third World. As Gullion noted, supporting Anany "would make short work of [the] non-alignment policy," an image the United States had taken great care to cultivate.[84] Since the United States intervened in 1960, the goal had been ostensibly to keep the Cold War out of the Congo, and under the Kennedy administration in particular, to use the intervention as an opportunity to gain support from

[82] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 4 November 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 883-884.

[83] Memorandum from the Department of State Executive Secretary (Read) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), 25 October 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 880-881.

[84] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 28 October 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 881-883, fn3.

non-aligned countries. The State Department warned Bundy that the arrest of the labor leaders as well as the expulsion of the Soviet bloc embassies "will tend to identify the Congolese Government with the West and thus make it a target for criticism from the more 'neutralist' of the Afro-Asian countries."[85]

As a result of these concerns, the Kennedy administration opted to continue supporting Adoula, concluding that "despite [his] faults, we have [a] credible international figure."[86] Ball ordered Gullion to reassure Adoula and the Binza group that the United States' "attitude toward Adoula has not changed."[87] McMurtrie Godley, the former Counselor at the embassy who was now serving stateside as Director of the Office of Central African Affairs at the State Department, also traveled to the Congo to reiterate this message. During Godley's meetings on November 2 and 3, the Congolese leaders professed to believe that the United States had decided the Adoula government was a "lost cause" and that it "was proceeding to transfer its support to an opposition group led by jailed labor leaders." Mobutu, Godley noted, appeared to be the "most worried" of the leaders, all of who were suffering from an "acute case of jitters." According to Godley, they had even "dreamed up" that the United States might be planning an operation similar to the "coup d'état in Vietnam" in which only a couple days prior Ngo Dinh Diem, the U.S.-backed president, was assassinated.[88]

After these meetings with Godley, Gullion met with Adoula and three key members of the Binza Group, Mobutu, Minister of Justice Justin Bomboko, and Victor

[85] Memorandum from the Department of State Executive Secretary (Read) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), 25 October 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 880-881.

[86] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 4 November 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 883-884.

[87] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 28 October 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 881-883.

[88] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 4 November 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 883-884.

Nendaka, head of the *Sureté* (the secret police). Gullion tried to dispel any "suspicion" that the United States had given up on the Adoula government, and especially what he called "hallucinations" about "U.S. intrigue with labor leaders." He assured them that the United States supported an Adoula-led Congo government, referring to the "US stake of 350 million dollars in [the] Congo." Attempting to correct any confused signals sent by the administration about U.S. support for Adoula, he told them that it "had recently furnished to Adoula material for his forthcoming speech citing aid he could expect from US."[89] Gullion had previously shown them "a clipping on the attitudes of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee showing an inverse relation between foreign aid and dictatorial acts," and explained to them that "aid to the Congo could be jeopardized" if such a government arose.[90] Furthermore, he pointed out "that while US citizens could understand closing of parliament and reasons for state of exception (in view [of] threat to state)," they "should realize what kind of people we were; that principal support up to now for US policies in support of UN and Adoula came from just those sources which extreme dictatorial action could alienate."[91]

At the end of their meeting the spokesman for the group, Bomboko, reiterated "their continuing firm solidarity with Adoula," as well as their commitment to the constitution and elections. Gullion reported that between him and Godley, they had successfully let the Binza group know it could not take the United States "for granted," and that they had increased the Binza Group's "understanding of their dependence on Adoula or rather on Adoula's reputation in [the] outside world." Gullion did note,

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[89] Ibid.

[90] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 28 October 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 881-883, fn3.

[91] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 4 November 1963, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 883-884.

however, that "despite [the] group's renewed conviction that they need Adoula, they have never shown less concern for him than in last few weeks."[92] As the historian Lise Namikas has eloquently written:

> The events of November completely undermined any credibility Adoula still enjoyed at home or abroad. To the Congolese leftists, the ascendency of the Binza group meant that Adoula would never be free to respond to their demands. Without any pretensions of a non-aligned foreign policy, African and communist states were no longer inclined to try and seek any improvement in relations with Leopoldville. Instead, when the opposition movement began to pick up force, radical African states came to their aid. The central government now turned to an even greater reliance on the United States.[93]

The loss of Adoula politically signaled the failure of U.S. nation-building in the Congo. Despite the amount of energy, expertise, and resources the administration poured into the Congo, it proved unable to right the economy and establish a democratic government built around a moderate politician. Rather than initially accept the blame the administration pointed to the limits of Adoula, who in its words failed to deal with "Bantu politics."[94] Adoula certainly had his flaws. He proved unable to convey his vision for the Congo to the Congolese people, and convince them that working with the United States was a joint effort in state-building rather than a neo-colonialist plot. But ultimately it was the failure to right the economy that rendered Adoula impotent. Without a moderate politician in power, and with the Central Government now more than ever before forced to rely on support from the United States to survive, a vicious cycle was unleashed in the Congo that perpetuated the agendas of both revolutionaries and reactionaries. As charges of neo-colonialism rang true, the Lumumbist-led revolutions spread. Their success ultimately led the United States to abandon its plan to create a

[92] Ibid.
[93] Namikas, 401.
[94] Weissman, 208.

liberal society in the Congo, opting instead to support a strong executive that would keep the Congo within the West's orbit.

# CHAPTER SIX:

# THE RISE OF MOBUTU

By the fall of 1963, the failure of the Kennedy administration's liberal aspirations had helped set the Congo on a leftist course. Unable to right the economy, and having denied Adoula the opportunity to be an equal partner in the state-building process, the United States had inadvertently legitimized the call by Congolese leftists for a "second independence," one which sought to make good on the failed promises of its first independence for an improved standard of living, and most importantly, freedom from foreign control. In short, Kennedy had left Johnson in an unenviable situation, one with little opportunity for keeping the Congo within a Western sphere of influence without undermining the liberal values that had motivated U.S. intervention to begin with. Johnson feared the overthrow of the Central Government would lead to the fragmentation of the Congo, possibly creating a seedbed for communism in the heart of Africa. Such an event would signify the defeat of nearly four years of U.S. policy that had sought to keep the country unified. Like Kennedy, Johnson also feared such an outcome would end the West's access to the Congo's mineral resources.[1]

To ensure these fears did not materialize, the Johnson administration set aside aspirations for creating a prosperous and democratic Congo, and focused instead on pursuing the policies of his late predecessor of securing a strong executive and strengthening the army. The hope was that by doing so the administration could create a stable and unified Congo under leadership friendly to the West, which would allow the

[1] John Kent, *America, the U.N. And Decolonisation: Cold War Conflict in the Congo* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 172.

United States to divest itself of what it deemed a hopeless situation. This course of action signaled not only the failure of liberal aspirations, but also provided the opportunity for what the historian Frederick Cooper has described as a "gate-keeper" to emerge in the Congo; someone who could extend government authority across the nation, gaining control over, and guaranteeing access to, the country's natural resources.[2] The United States' willingness to partner with a "gate-keeper" laid bare the underpinnings of American ideology, above all else a commitment to capitalism.[3]

By the time the dust had settled in the aftermath of President Kennedy's assassination in November 1963, the situation had deteriorated quite drastically in the Congo. Widespread disaffection with Adoula and the Central Government helped the Lumumbist-led rebellions gain popularity and spread across the country during the first-half of 1964. Adoula's inability to provide an improved standard of living for the Congolese people as well as his seemingly open collusion with the United States to implement what many deemed to be reactionary policies against Lumumbists, which extended back to the imprisonment of Antoine Gizenga in January 1962 up to the more recent exclusion of Lumumbists from the "broadening" of his government in April 1963, had made him extremely unpopular. Similarly, the "state of emergency" during which the right-wing Binza group temporarily seized power may have prevented the downfall of the Central Government, but further alienated it from the Congolese masses. "Like Spanish moss," the CIA accurately described in February 1964, "the present Congo Government

[2] Frederick Cooper, "Writing the History of Development," *Journal of Modern European History* 8, (2010): 5-23, 18.

[3] Kent, *America, the U.N. And Decolonisation*, 172.

has its roots in the air, not in the Congolese hinterland," and Adoula, it continued, "has no personal political following."[4]

The Johnson administration was most concerned about the growing popularity of Pierre Mulele, who was leading a Maoist-inspired revolution in the western province of Kwilu. Mulele had spent the fall of 1963 politically educating and training in the art of guerrilla warfare a cadre of Congolese schoolteachers, nurses, clerks, and disaffected teenagers known as *jeunesse*. In January 1964 Mulele launched his rebellion, attacking foreign missionaries and palm oil production centers owned by the multinational conglomerate Unilever. Armed with machetes, axes, arrows, and lances, his victories over UN forces and the Central Government's army, the *Armée Nationale Congolaise* (ANC), in January and February, caused his reputation to take on mythical proportions, inspiring rumors that those who fought for him were protected from bullets by magic.

Aware of Mulele's training in China, the Johnson administration labeled him a "communist" and moved quickly to end his rebellion. At the "request" of the Congolese government, the United States dispatched Lieutenant Colonel William A. Dodds, a counter-insurgency expert who served as an advisor to the Congolese Government and an observer for the Joint Chiefs of Staff who were keeping a close eye on the situation. In violation of the UN resolution the United States had helped pass in February 1961 that forbade the deployment of foreign military personnel not under UN command, the CIA arranged for mercenary Cuban exiles to pilot T-6 aircraft armed with .30 caliber machine guns and air-to-ground rockets against Mulele's forces. The introduction of airpower had the desired effect in terms of military success. Meanwhile, Mulele had difficultly

[4] CIA Memorandum, 20 February 1964, Box 81, Country File, National Security File (NSF), Lyndon B. Johnson Library, Austin, Texas (hereafter LBJL).

extending his rebellion beyond the boundaries of the Kwilu province. The fact that social class and ethnic identity were intertwined in the Congo hindered the spread of his class-based revolution. By the end of February the rebellion in Kwilu had been largely suppressed, even though Mulele, with a $10,000 reward on his head, evaded capture until 1968.[5]

As the rebellion in the west was winding down, the rebellion in the east was just getting under way. Led by Christophe Gbenye, Gaston Soumaliot, Nicolas Olenga, and Laurent Kabila, the *Conseil national de liberation* (CNL) had used the sanctuary it found in Brazzaville in October 1963 as an occasion to seek additional international support. Though they acquired little munitions or matériel, by January 1964 they received permission from Tanzania, Uganda, and Burundi (three nations affiliated with communist China) to set up camps along the eastern border of the Congo from which they could stage their assault.[6] While Western intelligence confirmed that little material support was actually making it to the Congo, the growth of revolutionary activity led the Johnson administration to conclude that the country was "destined for continued crisis."[7] In February 1964 the CIA reported, "Even assuming that rough standards of security can be maintained for a time, it is difficult to see any satisfactory solution for the West in the Congo, even with heavy Western financial contributions and strong Western diplomatic backing of the central government."[8]

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[5] Ironically, the planes and Cuban pilots resided at the same facilities as the UN. Kent, 171-172; Sean Kelly, *America's Tyrant: The CIA and Mobutu of Zaire* (Lanham, Md.: American University Press, 1993), 96-97; Frank Villafaña, *Cold War in the Congo: The Confrontation of Cuban Military Forces, 1960-1967* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 78.

[6] Lise A. Namikas, "Battleground Africa: The Cold War and the Congo Crisis, 1960-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2002), 404.

[7] CIA Memorandum, 20 February 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL; Kent, 173.

[8] CIA Memorandum, 20 February 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

During April, Soumialot and Kabila led the CNL's army, the *Armée Populaire de Libération* (PLA or "*simbas*"), into what had recently been the Kivu province. Re-provincialization, the decline in prices of agricultural products, and recent flooding of Lake Tanganyika had made conditions in the province ripe for revolution. Before launching his attack Soumialot spread leaflets into the region highlighting the ineptness of the Central Government. This resulted in some Congolese joining his ranks, including workers from a local sugar refinery owned by the Belgian company, *Sucrerie et raffinerie de l'Afrique Central*.[9] The PLA's victories in the province attracted international attention and were cheered on by Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, and most notably, China.[10] "If we can take the Congo," Mao Zedong purportedly said that April, "we can have all of Africa."[11]

The Johnson administration became especially concerned by the sudden outbreak of international support for the CNL. The last thing it wanted was a second international crisis similar to the Katanga secession. On April 9 a special high-level interdepartmental group created to deal with counterinsurgency met to examine the situation in the Congo as well as the growing internal security problem in the rest of Africa. In attendance were Under Secretary of State Averell Harriman, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus Vance, CIA Director John McCone, NSC Staff member Michael Forrestal (the son of former Secretary of Defense James Forrestal), AID Deputy Administrator William Gaud, and a representative for Joint Chief of Staff Chairman General Maxwell Taylor. The group recommended providing "direct US

[9] Kent, 174-176.

[10] Paul-Henri Spaak, *The Continuing Battle: Memoirs of a European, 1936-1966* (Boston: Little, 1971), 385.

[11] Quoted in Chi-ping Tung and Humphrey Evans, *The Thought Revolution* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1966), 223.

assistance to African internal security forces (police and military)."[12] In late-April, President Johnson followed this advice by upgrading the U.S.-supplied air force in the Congo. Six T-28 fighter aircraft, six H-21 helicopters, and ten C-47 transport planes, would be sent to replace the T-6s.[13]

On May 15, the CNL took the city of Uvira, an important crossroads into Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi, and into Tanzania across Lake Tanganyika. Soumialot established his headquarters there, and named himself head of the government in eastern Congo. Shortly thereafter the rebellion spread southward into the province of North Katanga. The ANC prevented Soumialot from taking Bukavu, the capital of Kivu, but were ambushed in the village of Luberika on May 30. The rebels killed the ANC commander, and Central Government soldiers fled back to Bukavu or across the border into Rwanda. The ANC "completely caved in," Lt. Col. Dodd reported back to Washington.[14] On June 15, the president was informed that "militarily the Congo army (ANC) has been almost a complete failure in the Kivu rebellion; well armed troops are being routed by Pygmies carrying spears and machetes." General Mobutu, the ANC's leader, was described as "vain and lazy."[15] Intelligence from the State Department confirmed that the ANC had no one to blame but itself, reporting that there was "no real evidence of foreign intervention or supply" to the Lumumbists from places like Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, and China.[16]

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[12] Draft National Security Action Memorandum, undated, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXIV: 279-280.
[13] Brubeck to the President, Memorandum, 20 April 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[14] Kent, 174-176, 178.
[15] CIA Memorandum, 17 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[16] For quote in sentence see Kent, 177. Also see, Brubeck to the President, Memorandum, 15 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL. In June 1964 China's *People's Daily* commented that, "An excellent revolutionary situation is emerging on the vast expanse of the Congo." But despite these remarks, and other rhetorical support, material aid from China was minimal. Maoist ideology believed revolution could not be exported, and the Chinese were careful to avoid situations that would cause Africans to accuse

The ambush at Luberika finally persuaded Mobutu that foreign experts were needed to train the ANC. Under the direction of the United States, the Israelis began training two ANC battalions, the Italians began training an air force, and the Belgians provided an additional 80 officers, bringing their total contribution up to 200. The United States also sent "mobile training teams," and in addition to the aircraft it had previously committed arranged for the transfer of four armored vehicles.[17] But the situation did not improve overnight for the Central Government. The CIA reported to the president on June 12 that "the Congo, on the eve of its fifth year of independence, seems headed at a minimum for a period of increasing instability and possibly a total breakdown of governmental authority."[18] While the CIA pointed out that "the immediately pressing problem is military," it argued that the "long-term solutions for the security problem must be political."[19] A few days later the president received a memorandum from the National Security Council (NSC) stating that Adoula, who was once deemed by the Americans to be the "best possibility" to serve as prime minister, was now "completely indecisive and

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them of interfering in local politics. Like the United States, China also believed that the Congo was fraught with tribal rivalries, and that there appeared to be no leader that could form political unity. "The situation is favorable, but the leadership is weak," a Chinese government memorandum argued. Alan Hutchison, *China's African Revolution* (London: Hutchinson, 1975), 113; "The Congo Situation and Its Development, 27 Jan. 1961," in *The Politics of the Chinese Red Army: A Translation of the Bulletin of Activities of the People's Liberation Army*, ed. James Chester Cheng(Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, 1966), 179-181; Emmanuel John Hevi, *The Dragon's Embrace: The Chinese Communists and Africa* (New York: F. A. Praeger, 1967), 102; Bruce D. Larkin, *China and Africa, 1949-1970: The Foreign Policy of the People's Republic of China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 71.

[17] Kent, 179, 182.

[18] CIA Memorandum, 12 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[19] CIA Memorandum, 17 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

incapable of action."[20] With Adoula "at the low point of his power and prestige" the Johnson administration decided to abandon him.[21]

The United States had steadfastly supported Adoula between August 1961 and July 1964. Ensuring Adoula's election to power at the Lovanium conference had arguably been the Kennedy administration's greatest achievement. During the period of Adoula's rule, as one scholar has noted, "The United States pumped $178.6 million of economic aid into the Congo."[22] Adoula was also supported by the CIA through propaganda, the "renting" of members of parliament, and the creation of a nation-wide party, *Rassemblement de Démocrates du Congo* (RADECO). Of course this aid did not have the desired effect. Many Congolese were aware that the "regime was largely supported by American financial aid," which made it difficult for Adoula to overcome charges that he was an American lackey or neo-colonial stooge.[23] The fact that he employed repressive policies against Lumumbists further reinforced this image, and worked against him while trying to expand whatever little grass roots base he had to begin with. Being unable to establish a popularly elected government with Adoula at its head further signified the failure of U.S. nation-building in the Congo.

The Johnson administration believed what was now needed most was a government with popular support. "Adoula—who with UN and US help has kept the Congo in the Western camp for three years—has many virtues, including the rare one of honesty," the CIA noted, "but he has no popular following, and only now is making tepid

[20] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 1 November 1961, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 561-562; Brubeck to the President, Memorandum, 15 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[21] Brubeck to the President, Memorandum, 15 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[22] Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 205.

[23] Catherine Hoskyns, *The Congo since Independence, January 1960-December, 1961* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 474.

moves to promote a national political party."[24] Certainly Adoula was not the only person to blame for his failure to garner popular support. Had he been treated as an equal partner by the Kennedy administration both he and U.S. nation-building plans in the Congo might have been successful. If Kennedy, for example, had listened to Adoula's recommendation to end the Katanga secession quickly instead of letting it drag out for over two and a half years, Adoula might have gained the popularity that thereafter eluded him. Similarly, if Kennedy had followed Adoula's recommendation to focus on the problems caused by colonial underdevelopment to resolve the economic crisis rather than implement an austerity program, than perhaps the worst aspects of the crisis could have been mitigated and the Lumumbists would have attracted fewer supporters. Without this American support, though, Adoula's government stood little chance of survival. Adoula's willingness to become bedfellows with the Americans cost him more than he had anticipated. As Stephen Weissman has insightfully written, "The American government not only supported Adoula; it was, in many different ways, part of his government. *It was very directly involved in his successes and failures*. [original emphasis]"[25]

With the failure of the Adoula regime and the country on course for further disaster "some hitherto unacceptable alternatives" became "more palatable" for the United States.[26] American eyes turned towards Moise Tshombe to lead the Central Government. Tshombe was the former leader of Katanga's secession that the United States had opposed between 1960 and 1963. Since his defeat, he had been plotting his return while in a self-imposed exile in Spain. As the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) noted, he established himself as "a lodestone for those

[24] CIA Memorandum, 17 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[25] Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo*, 208.
[26] CIA Memorandum, 17 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

with grievances against the Adoula regime," and "attracted a mélange of political supporters, ranging from members of the ragtag CNL to the politically respectable ABAKO." "These politicians," INR noted, "sense in Tshombe a new political winner."[27] A new political group emerged, the African Democratic Committee (CDA), which included members of the Binza group. The CDA pressured President Kasavubu to appoint Tshombe as prime minister.[28] The Binza group did not trust Tshombe, but unable to salvage the situation themselves, saw an opportunity to exploit Tshombe's unbridled quest for power. Their ploy was to support Tshombe's return, which would pit their two enemies (Tshombe and the Lumumbists) against each other. They hoped that the two would exhaust their resources on each other, possibly paving the way for a member of the Binza group to take power.[29]

The United States also found Tshombe to be an appealing candidate to lead the Congo. First and foremost, he appeared to have a wide range of political support in the country. The Johnson administration also believed a Tshombe premiership would draw in Belgian support and help the United States to unburden itself of the crisis. As the CIA noted, "Brussels…has helped him in the past, and may do so again."[30] The Americans were now convinced that only Belgium could right the economy and help create stability in the country. As the CIA reported, the "vast Belgian business interests and the tens of thousands of Belgians who are presently in the country still form the backbone of the Congo's economy." Even through the crisis, the report continued, "Most of the large

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[27] Bureau of Intelligence and Research Memorandum, 30 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[28] Indeed, it was this loss of the Binza group's support that helped persuade the Johnson administration to abandon Adoula. CIA Memorandum, 17 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[29] Ian Goodhope Colvin, *The Rise and Fall of Moise Tshombe: A Biography* (London: Frewin, 1968), 145-160.

[30] CIA Memorandum, 17 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

Belgian commercial enterprises in the Congo have continued to prosper."[31] With Tshombe as prime minister, the Americans believed the pending legal disputes over financial claims between Belgium and its former colony, officially referred to as the *contentieux*, would be settled. This in itself was one of the major issues preventing Belgian aid. Additionally, with the UN forces scheduled to withdraw at the end of June, the Johnson administration believed Tshombe might be able to enlist Belgian military assistance, as well as his own 3,000 gendarmes and white mercenaries.[32]

Sensing that the time had arrived for his return, Tshombe indicated in a press interview on June 10 in Paris that he was "ready to return," stating, "I cannot allow my country, with its natural resources and its economic potential, continue, badly led, to slide into chaos and anarchy."[33] Tshombe arrived in Leopoldville on June 26. Mobutu greeted him at the prime minister's residence allegedly saying, "You, Tshombe, are the only solution."[34] On July 6 Kasavubu asked Tshombe to form a new government.

A clever politician in his own right, Tshombe was aware that the Binza group and President Kasavubu considered him a political rival. He distanced himself from both, and instead relied on many of his former advisers that had served him during the secession, including Godefroid Munongo, his chief lieutenant.[35] Combined, Tshombe and Munongo controlled 8 out of 18 posts in the cabinet, and rather than rely on the ANC which was controlled by Mobutu, the new prime minister preferred using forces loyal personally to him.[36] Tshombe arranged for the return of approximately 3,000 Katangan gendarmes, and

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[31] CIA Memorandum, 26 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[32] CIA Memorandum, 17 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[33] Ibid.; "Tshombe Plans to Go Back to Congo after Amnesty," *New York Times*, 11 June 1964, 8.
[34] Moïse Tshombe, *My Fifteen Months in Government* (Plano, Tex.: University of Plano, 1967), 14.
[35] Colvin, *The Rise and Fall of Moise Tshombe*, 200-201.
[36] Namikas, "Battleground Africa," 415.

reestablished contact with the South African mercenary, Major "Mad" Mike Hoare, who had fought for him during the secession.[37] As Undersecretary of State Harriman pointed out to Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs McGeorge Bundy, Tshombe's exclusion of "many ambitious politicians from his government, especially the Binza group" has resulted in "growing political opposition with the Binza group, particularly General Mobutu, and President Kasavubu." Harriman warned of a possible "coup by the Binza group or Mobutu."[38] Indeed, by late July rumors were already swirling in the Congo that a possible "Mobutu/Anti-Tshombe coup was brewing."[39]

Nor did the arrival of Tshombe as prime minister immediately put the United States at ease over the Congo. Lumumbists' victories continued throughout July. The Johnson administration arranged for four C-130s with 56 parachutists from Fort Bragg, as well as three to five B-26s to be sent to the Congo by August.[40] The increased air attacks, however, did not always produce the desired effect. As one rebel in the eastern city of Uvira declared to a journalist, "Look, we are a people who fight for liberty with spears and clubs. You, the powerful Americans, are crushing us with bombs and planes. God

[37] Harriman to Bundy, Memorandum, 4 August 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL; Mike Hoare, *Congo Mercenary* (London: Hale, 1967).

[38] Harriman to Bundy, Memorandum, 4 August 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[39] Telegram from Embassy in Congo to the Department of State, 30 July 1964, Box 87, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[40] Brubeck to the President, Memorandum, 20 June 1964, Box 81, NSF, LBJL; Brubeck to the President, Memorandum, 15 June 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL; Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo*, 239; idem, "The CIA and U.S. Policy in Zaire and Angola," in *American Policy in Southern Africa: The Stakes and the Stance*, ed. René Lemarchand (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981), 381-432; Piero Gleijeses, "`Flee! The White Giants Are Coming!': The United States, the Mercenaries, and the Congo, 1964-65," *Diplomatic History* 18, no. 2 (1994): 207-237, 219-220; Andrew Hudson, *Congo Unravelled: Military Operations from Independence to the Mercenary Revolt* (Solihull: Helion, 2012).

will judge you! God will punish you."[41] Shortly after this incident the rebels began taking Westerners hostage in retaliation for, and protection from, air raids.[42]

On August 5, PLA forces under the leadership of Olenga defeated the ANC to take control of Stanleyville, the capital of the Orientale province and the third largest city in the country. Soumialot took the American Consul, Michael Hoyt, hostage, and established the CNL's headquarters in the U.S. consulate.[43] Meanwhile, Olenga gathered American and European hostages from amongst the approximately 1,500 foreigners in the city.[44] On September 5 CNL leaders established the People's Republic of the Congo (PRC), an alternate government dedicated to overthrowing the Tshombe regime. They declared Stanleyville (the birthplace of Lumumba) as the new capital, and named Gbenye president, Soumialot as defense minister, and Thomas Kanza as foreign minister.[45]

Despite this disastrous event for the Central Government and the United States as well as reports that over one-sixth of the Congo was in rebel hands, President Johnson did not want to increase American involvement in the Congo.[46] Johnson did not share the same level of interest in Africa as his predecessor, and he found the Congo being forced onto his agenda at the same time as the Gulf of Tonkin incident in Vietnam.[47] In an NSC meeting held on August 11, Johnson made it clear that "direct American involvement in

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[41] Anthony Lukas, "Congolese Rebel Condemns U.S. for 'Intervention' in Civil War," *New York Times*, 13 June 1964, 6.

[42] Kelly, *America's Tyrant*, 101.

[43] Namikas, 421-422; Michael P. E. Hoyt, *Captive in the Congo: A Consul's Return to the Heart of Darkness* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2000).

[44] Of the 1,500 foreigners in the city approximately 600 were Belgian and 30 were American. Fred E. Wagoner, *Dragon Rouge: The Rescue of Hostages in the Congo* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 1980), 2.

[45] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History* (New York: Zed Books 2002), 133.

[46] Brubeck to Bundy, Memorandum, 11 August 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[47]Namikas, 424; Terrence Lyons, "Keeping Africa Off the Agenda," in *Lyndon Johnson Confronts the World: American Foreign Policy, 1963-1968*, ed. Warren I. Cohen and Nancy Bernkopf Tucker(New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 245-278.

the Congo should be considered only as an extreme last resort." He accepted his advisers' recommendations to pressure European allies to take the lead on the matter. Rusk told the president, "The job can be done on a small scale if done now, and it should be put squarely to the Europeans as their responsibility." Soon after, presidential pressure to send troops to the Congo was applied via Harriman on Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs.[48] Spaak told Harriman that public opinion in his country would not tolerate a Belgian-led military intervention. He was willing, however, to arrange for the return of Col. Frederic Vandewalle, and other "technical advisers" (i.e., mercenaries), to the Congo. (Vandewalle had previously served Tshombe as a military adviser during the secession.) The United States helped foot the bill and arrange transportation for the mercenary force.[49]

With the arrival of the mercenaries, Tshombe's forces had put the rebels on their heels by October. This turn of events proved bittersweet for the Johnson administration. The American press had increased coverage of events in the Congo, and there were reports that the Lumumbists were torturing white hostages in Stanleyville in response to the Central Government's victories.[50] U.S. officials were concerned about the possibility of further repercussions if Central Government forces advanced on Stanleyville. There was little evidence that Tshombe's forces were capable of carrying out a rescue operation. In August, Tshombe had requested that the United States "send three parachute

[48] Brubeck, Memorandum, 11 August 1964, Box 1, NSC Meetings, NSF, LBJL.

[49] F. Vandewalle, *L'ommegang: Odyssée Et Reconquête De Stanleyville, 1964* (Bruxelles: Le livre africain, 1970); Gleijeses, "`Flee! The White Giants Are Coming!': The United States, the Mercenaries, and the Congo, 1964-65," 207-237; Namikas, 426.

[50] Intelligence Cable, 14 October 1964, Box 82, Country File, NSF, LBJL; Belk to Bundy, Memorandum, 27 October 1964, Box 83, Country File, NSF, LBJL; Tad Szulc, "Tide in Congo War Believed Turning in Regime's Favor," *New York Times*, 5 October 1964, 1; "Congo Fears Rebels May Kill Hostages," *New York Times*, 16 October 1964, 2.

battalions to Congo…to retake and hold Stanleyville, Albertville, and Uvira."[51] By mid-October, the Johnson administration began contemplating such a mission in order to rescue the hostages.

The Johnson administration knew that conducting such a rescue operation would incense African nationalists across the continent. Furthermore, it wanted to avoid committing American combat troops in the Congo.[52] "Looking beyond the immediate military problem and the problem of our hostages," William Brubeck, a member of the NSC staff, wrote the president on November 9:

> Our aim is to avoid the US again being involved so deeply in the Congo. We are trying to get the other Africans to take over the Congo problem politically; we are trying to get the Belgians to take responsibility, with the US limited to a supporting role, in helping the Congo; we want to withdraw our military assistance and leave it to the Belgians; we want to pressure Tshombe to make a sensible political compromise among the forces in the Congo, and not get stuck propping up Tshombe in an authoritarian regime without any power base in the realities of the Congo.[53]

Because of these concerns, when the United States decided to carry out a rescue operation it spun it as a "humanitarian" mission. This was somewhat disingenuous. The primary objective of what was labeled operation *Dragon Rouge* was to rescue hostages, but it was carefully coordinated with Central Government forces and CIA paramilitary operatives to break the back of the Lumumbist insurrection. Thus, when U.S. planes dropped 320 Belgian paratroopers over Stanleyville before dawn on November 24 to free the hostages, Central Government troops and CIA operatives simultaneously converged on rebel positions. On November 26, a similar though smaller operation, *Dragon Noir*, took the city of Paulis (approximately 250 miles north-east of Stanleyville), rescuing

[51] Telegram from the Embassy in the Congo to the Department of State, 15 August 1964, Box 81, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[52] McCone to Bundy, Memorandum, 18 November 1964, Box 83, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[53] Brubeck to the President, Memorandum, 9 November 1964, Box 83, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

more hostages and depriving the rebels of another key base. Both operations concluded by the end of the month having evacuated 2,000 foreigners.[54]

World reaction to *Dragon Rouge* was, as a CIA memorandum noted, divided "ideologically along both North-South and East-West lines."[55] Besides the expected protests from the Soviet Union and China, many parts of the Third World erupted in anger. They viewed the operation as a neocolonial action, seeking to thwart the genuine independence sought by Congolese nationalists. U.S. embassies came under attack or were defaced in Nairobi, Prague, and Moscow. Thousands more rallied in protest in Belgrade and China. In Cairo, demonstrators burned to the ground a library that had been built as a memorial to President Kennedy.[56] Ahmed Ben Bella, President of Algeria, referred to the operation as a "crime."[57] President of Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser, also denounced it, and Che Guevara of Cuba condemned the operation before the General Assembly at the UN.[58] All three of those leaders' nations responded by sending aid to the rebels through Uganda, Sudan, and Tanzania, which bordered the Congo and sympathized with the Lumumbist cause. Guevara, desirous to be at the forefront of the world revolution, led a force of approximately 100 Afro-Cubans into the Congo.[59]

The recently formed Organization of African Unity (OAU) was particularly incensed, and did not allow Tshombe to participate with other African heads of state at its upcoming summit. The OAU felt betrayed because Jomo Kenyatta, Prime Minister of

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[54] Wagoner, *Dragon Rouge*, 2, 178, 183-189, 197; Namikas, 436.

[55] Rowan (USIA) to the President, Memorandum, 27 November 1964, Box 84, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[56] Wagoner, 191.

[57] CIA Memorandum, 25 November 1964, Box 84, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[58] Rowan (USIA) to the President, Memorandum, 27 November 1964, Box 84, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[59] Villafaña, *Cold War in the Congo*; Ernesto Guevara, *The African Dream: The Diaries of the Revolutionary War in the Congo* (New York: Grove Press, 2000); Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

Kenya, had been mediating talks in Nairobi on behalf of the organization between Kanza, the Foreign Minister of the PRC, and U.S. Ambassador to Kenya, William Attwood. The OAU accused the United States of negotiating in bad faith. While the Johnson administration denied this, saying it had been most concerned about the well-being of the hostages, there is evidence to suggest that the NSC did not believe the rebels were capable of negotiating, and continued the talks only in order to keep tabs on the safety of the hostages "as the trap closes in Stanleyville."[60]

Carl Rowan, an African-American journalist who directed the U.S. Information Agency, led the Johnson administration's attempt "to generate understanding and sympathy for the operation." Rowan's agency produced 360 newscasts in 38 languages for the Voice of America, distributed 5,000 prints of photographs taken from the rescue operation, and even produced a 40-page booklet and a 15-minute television program, all of which sought to highlight rebel "atrocities."[61] The media blitz did little to dissuade those convinced of a Belgo-American plot to control the Congo. The protests and pledges of support to the Lumumbists breathed new life into the crisis.

In January 1965 Robert Komer, Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, became Johnson's new point man on the Congo. Komer sought to replace what he had judged to be "*ad hoc*" policymaking with a "systematic and coordinated approach."[62] His goal was "to disengage somewhat from the Congo and get it off the

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[60] "The Congo—Problems for Decision," Memorandum, no date, Box 84, Country File, NSF, LBJL; Brubeck, Memorandum, 11 August 1964, Box 1, NSC Meetings, NSF, LBJL; William Attwood, *The Reds and the Blacks: A Personal Adventure* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967); Catherine Hoskyns, *The Organization of African Unity and the Congo Crisis, 1964-65* (Dar-es-Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1969), 33-37; Howard M. Epstein, *Revolt in the Congo, 1960-1964* (New York: Facts on File, 1965), 168-169.

[61] Rowan (USIA) to the President, Memorandum, 21 December 1964, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[62] Komer to Harriman, Memorandum, 12 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

crisis list, while still keeping our legitimate friends in power."[63] He feared, however, that a Lumumbist counter-offensive was looming. "I very much fear that we're in the eye of the storm over the Congo," he wrote in mid-January. "The present deceptive lull strikes me as most likely a buildup period, during which those aiding the rebels are preparing a major counteroffensive to retake Congo Orientale."[64] Komer's concerns about a counteroffensive were based on intelligence reports that described Stanleyville as an "isolated, dead city," surrounded by 6,000 rebels, where the economy had become "paralyzed," and Central Government forces were "guilty of serious excesses against the Stanleyville population, including robbery, rape, murder and beatings."[65]

His plan, as he explained to Johnson, was to "get some kind of a political umbrella erected over the Congo, to help forestall a rebel counter-offensive and to protect us against military overcommitment [sic]."[66] Specifically, he believed using the OAU would provide "an African way to reach an African solution of an African problem." "If it only gets underway," he wrote Bundy, "we can disengage discreetly behind its cover, and with a fairly good chance of retaining in Leo[pold]ville a government which serves US and Belgian interests. It may or may not include Tshombe, but at the moment he's still front runner."[67] If this was not achieved, he believed the United States would either be "sucked into another war, or have to retreat ignominiously."[68]

It should be noted that even though Komer's plan relied on finding a political solution, he increased military measures and attempted to apply economic sanctions

[63] Komer to the President, Memorandum, 8 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[64] Komer to Harriman, Memorandum, 12 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[65] Intelligence Telegram, 18 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[66] Komer to the President, Memorandum, 8 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[67] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 26 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[68] Komer to Harriman, Memorandum, 12 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

against the Lumumbists. "It seems to me that we must exhaust every resource to forestall resumptions of a rebel offensive," he wrote in January. He suggested threatening countries supporting the rebels (particularly Algeria and Egypt) with the discontinuation of U.S. aid. "I am not suggesting that our Embassies should use this as an official line," he wrote Harriman, "rather, this thought could be dropped in casual conversations (thinking out loud about the future), as well as being planted via…unofficial channels."[69] Komer also widened the military campaign against the Lumumbists. He expanded the list of targets for air raids, approving planes to "hit truck convoys and arms depots in 'villages.'" The rebels, he argued, were using villages as "safehavens [sic]," and he believed this was a necessary measure (albeit a "desperate" one) to "scare off rebels before their counteroffensive starts." "We can always change back later," he wrote Bundy, "we're already so damned that any likely increase in anti-US propaganda would be marginal." He was convinced that "big civilian casualties" were unlikely, since "everybody dives for bush when our planes come over."[70]

The Johnson administration, however, pursued finding a political solution most vigorously, as it believed doing so provided the best opportunity for the United States to disengage from the Congo. In this regard, Komer saw Tshombe as a potential obstacle. If the OAU was going to provide a political umbrella under which the United States could eventually disengage, Tshombe would have to take great strides in improving his relations with the organization's members who in general disapproved of the Congolese prime minister. Ben Bella, for example, referred to him as "a walking museum of colonialism," and many other African nationalists viewed him as "a white imperialist

[69] Komer to Harriman, Memorandum, 19 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[70] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 18 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

puppet."[71] Komer knew that it "may require some pressure on Tshombe to get him to make the necessary gestures to get more African states on his side," that making "concessions" to this group of Africans who had opposed him for the past four years would be "painful."[72] Turning to the OAU for help would also come across as a sign of weakness on Tshombe's behalf.[73] Over the years, Tshombe had carefully constructed his image as a strongman, once telling an American consul that the "hard facts of African politics" was that "Africans appreciate only two things: Force and money."[74] Asking Tshombe to act otherwise was asking him to act against his own political instinct.

Looking out for Tshombe's political career, however, was not the United States' first priority. "The important thing," Komer wrote to Bundy, "is to find a way to close out this affair without letting it escalate (or US get over-committed), yet in a way in which we clearly 'win.'"[75] Komer thus insisted that Tshombe improve both his own and his government's "acceptability in Africa."[76] He sent this message to Tshombe through Michel Struelens, Tshombe's publicist in New York and personal representative to the U.S. government. "Washington," Komer warned Struelens, "could not get out of step with all the rest of Africa in order to back Tshombe." Komer wanted Tshombe to know that, "We couldn't make Tshombe acceptable to the rest of Africa by our efforts alone—it was really up to him and Kasavubu, as Africans talking to Africans, to do this job." Komer promised that the United States would support and aid Tshombe "so long as that

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[71] Record by Komer, Memorandum, 5 January 1965, Box 87, Country File, NSF, LBJL; Quoted in Gleijeses, "`Flee! The White Giants Are Coming!': The United States, the Mercenaries, and the Congo, 1964-65," 207-237, 212.

[72] Komer to the President, Memorandum, 8 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL; Komer to the Bundy, Memorandum, 8 February 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[73] Komer to Harriman, Memorandum, 12 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[74] Telegram from the Consulate at Elisabethville to the Department of State, 29 September 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960*, XIV: 512-514.

[75] Komer to the Bundy, Memorandum, 8 February 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[76] Komer to Harriman, Memorandum, 12 January 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

government did its best both to restore domestic stability and free institutions and to improve its image in Africa."[77]

By March 1965, Komer's plan had made some progress. Tshombe had gained some support at the OAU session held that month in Nairobi.[78] Relations between Belgium and the Congo had also improved. Tshombe had made a deal in Brussels to restore Belgian aid. The Americans were of course happy to have the Belgians "out in front again."[79] The Lumumbists' rebellion had also quieted down. Hoare and his mercenaries were succeeding in cutting off the Lumumbists' supply lines through Uganda and Sudan, and internal problems within the CNL (largely an incoherent revolutionary ideology as well as the egos of its leadership) had led to the splintering of the group.[80] Burundi, through which China had been supporting the rebels, had also experienced a pro-West coup, and had expelled the Chinese ambassador from Bujumbura, the country's capital.[81]

Komer was not one, however, to underestimate his enemy, telling Bundy, "All these swallows don't make a spring."[82] Even by late March 1965, Komer and his assistant, Harold Saunders, a NSC Staff member, feared that Tshombe's forces were "too thin to hold against another big rebel push." The constant fear of a Lumumbist offensive only increased the Johnson administration's urgency to put "together an African political umbrella for the Congo." "This is the only sure way to turn off aid to the rebels," Saunders argued to Bundy. "All this won't solve the Congo problem," he continued, "but

[77] Komer, Memorandum, 5 January 1965, Box 87, NSF, Country File, LBJL.
[78] Saunders to Bundy, Memorandum, 24 March 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[79] Komer to the Bundy, Memorandum, 7 February 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[80] Saunders to Bundy, Memorandum, 24 March 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[81] Komer to the Bundy, Memorandum, 7 February 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[82] Komer to the Bundy, Memorandum, 7 February 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

it might bring the level of instability within ranges the Congolese can manage and we can accept."[83]

By the end of March, though, another problem arose. A power struggle between Kasavubu and Tshombe was emerging. "The Congo couldn't afford domestic political strife before it had even won the war," Komer wrote. It was imperative, he believed, "That Tshombe and Kasavubu continued to work together."[84] In May, the first national elections since independence were held. The Congolese reaffirmed Kasavubu as president and Tshombe as prime minister, but the elections that month signaled that the balance of power was tilting in favor of Tshombe. "Tshombists" had won 90 out of 166 seats in Parliament. As one journalist noted, this was "a larger majority than that of Lumumba in 1960."[85] Rumors began circulating that Tshombe was going to contest Kasavubu for the Presidency in 1966. This kept the power struggle between Kasavubu and Tshombe "smoldering."[86]

The U.S. embassy took a "very strong line not only with Kasavubu and Tshombe but with other political leaders," pointing out that the United States believed it was "absolutely essential Kasavubu and Tshombe reach [a] political truce for [the] good of [the] country."[87] But by the end of August the relationship between Tshombe and Kasavubu had only become more strained. As Komer informed Bundy, "As we move toward damping out the rebellion, jockeying of the politicians over the spoils has precipitated a new crisis."[88] Even though many considered the elections to have been

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[83] Saunders to Bundy, Memorandum, 24 March 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[84] Komer, Memorandum, 31 March 1965, Box 2, Intelligence File, NSF, LBJL.
[85] Colvin, 205.
[86] CIA Memorandum, 1 July 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[87] Telegram from Embassy in the Congo to Department of State, 7 July 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[88] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 31 August 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

"free and fair," rumors circulated that Kasavubu was planning to dismiss Tshombe as prime minister.[89] "A Kasavubu/Tshombe split would be a minor disaster, which could really set us back and mess up our quiet little victory," Komer warned Bundy.[90]

The CIA was also reporting that as Kasavubu and Tshombe "concentrate their energies on fighting one another, the Congo's basic problems are neglected." While the agency believed the mercenaries could "keep the lid on any rebel activity," it warned that, "Unless the political leaders turn their attention from infighting to solving the problems which caused the rebellion in the first place, the now relatively dormant insurrection may eventually reawaken."[91] Fearing this scenario, Komer had it impressed upon "both men that they have to stick together lest they hang separately." Komer believed the Congo needed "both Kasavubu (as the symbol of legitimacy and the political boss of the key Leo[pold]ville area) and Tshombe (as by far the best P[rime] M[inister] in sight and the leader of Katanga)."[92]

The warnings from the Americans, however, fell on deaf ears. On October 13, Kasavubu dismissed Tshombe as prime minister. "The heart of the problem," Saunders wrote to Bundy, "has been that Kasavubu is beyond our grasp, and Tshombe listens as much to his go-it-alone Belgian advisers as he does to us."[93] "Our push to keep them together," Saunders went on, "failed because Kasavubu just isn't sensitive to the kind of leverage we have. His main interest is staying in power, which he does by manipulating the levers of tribal politics. He shows little concern for governing sensibly, so he couldn't

[89] As Nzongola-Ntalaja notes, "Of 135 Parliamentary districts, the results were contested in five only." Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila*, 145, 273.
[90] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 5 August 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[91] CIA Memorandum, 26 August 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[92] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 31 August 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[93] Saunders to Bundy, Memorandum, 13 October 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

care less whether we cut aid or pull out some planes."[94] "If Tshombe is really out," Saunders warned Bundy, "the next job will be to keep him from going the Katanga route again."[95]

After dismissing Tshombe, Kasavubu revealed just how deft a politician he could be. He appointed another Katangan prime minister, Evariste Kimba. By doing so, as Saunders noted, he was "trying to preserve the Leopoldville-Katanga 'axis,' which holds together the Congo's two main power centers."[96] Additionally, while visiting the OAU summit in October Kasavubu promised to remove the mercenaries from the Congo. This was a well-calculated way of targeting the strength of Tshombe's power while bolstering his position amongst the pan-Africanists. During this period, Kasavubu also took strides to boost his relations with the Binza group, and in particular with Victor Nendaka, who headed the secret police (the *Sûreté*).[97]

The removal of Tshombe placed the Johnson administration in a difficult situation. Komer wrote to Harriman, "I feel in my bones that, just as we close off the tag end of the last rebellion, we're sliding into another all too familiar political crunch that could tear the Congo wide open again. Tshombe is not just going to sit back and bide his time."[98] The Johnson administration would have preferred to continue to support Tshombe because it had invested much in the former prime minister. As pointed out by Komer, the United States had "repeatedly made it crystal clear that we back Tshombe personally as PM [Prime Minister]," and as a result had been "practically calling the

[94] Saunders to Bundy, Memorandum, 16 October 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[95] Saunders to Bundy, Memorandum, 13 October 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[96] Saunders to Bundy, Memorandum, 16 October 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[97] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 22 November 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL; Nzongola-Ntalaja, 146.
[98] Komer to Harriman, Memorandum, 25 October 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

signals for Tshombe and providing him with everything we thought he needed—money, arms, advisers."[99] Komer also had no doubt that Tshombe was a better leader than Kasavubu. In his opinion, Tshombe was "the one Congolese leader since independence that has demonstrated any ability to govern."[100]

But as Komer noted, "If we backed Tshombe now we'd be going—for the first time—against our principle of legitimacy. We'd be backing the outs against the ins."[101] As Komer suggested, the United States since the Eisenhower administration had consistently backed the Central Government. This is why, for example, the United States had opposed Tshombe between 1960 and 1963. Furthermore, in Komer's eyes, Tshombe was expendable. While Tshombe had done a better job than most from the perspective of the Johnson administration, Komer noted, "His success in quelling the rebellion was due largely to US logistic (C-130's) and…support. In short, we backed him to the hilt both militarily in the Congo and by a major diplomatic and propaganda effort to improve his image elsewhere in Africa and to cut off outside support for the rebels." Komer was committed to the larger objective of the United States more than to Tshombe; "to put the Congo on its political and economic feet so we can eventually disengage." While he agreed "Tshombe probably would give the Congo the best government in sight," he knew "other options" remained open.[102]

At the end of October, Komer had urged the State Department to make contingency plans in case the then emerging rift between Kasavubu and Tshombe became irreparable. Rather than be "at the mercy of the Congolese," he wrote to Harriman,

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[99] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 31 August 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[100] Komer, Memorandum, 1 November 1965, Box 19, Files of Robert W. Komer, NSF, LBJL.
[101] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 22 November 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[102] Record by Komer, Memorandum, 1 November 1965, Box 19, Files of Robert W. Komer, NSF, LBJL.

"wouldn't you agree that we should start contingency planning *now*. [original emphasis]"[103] Komer believed Mobutu was the "key" to the problem, that the general could "force a compromise" between Kasavubu and Tshombe.[104] "We have been providing limited aid to certain other personalities," he wrote to Bundy. "We've in fact been seeking to influence the so-called Binza group to play ball," that is to say, support Tshombe as prime minister.[105] But the Binza Group, and Mobutu in particular, were not simply American stooges. As the first U.S. Ambassador to the Congo, Clare Timberlake, had warned the State Department at the outset of the crisis in 1961, "Kasavubu, Mobutu, or any other Congolese" should not be considered "in the pocket."[106]

Mobutu, with Machiavelli's *The Prince* literally on hand, availed himself of these political divisions and began plotting a coup.[107] When rumors of a possible coup reached Komer, he was not taken aback by the idea. Abandoning Kasavubu, whom he viewed as a poor governor, appealed to Komer.[108] Abandoning Tshombe on the other hand would be a more substantial loss. Saunders was convinced that Tshombe looked "like the best man to govern," but also concluded that, "Mobutu wouldn't buy him as president." The last thing the Johnson administration wanted was another political imbroglio in the Congo. Ultimately, Komer, Saunders, and Ambassador G. McMurtrie Godley decided to back Mobutu. As Saunders wrote, "We could either back him in a coup or let him put together the best formula he can and get behind it…He controls the army (with our help). He has shown himself the most sensible leader in the current mess. At the moment, he knows the

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[103] Komer to Harriman, Memorandum, 25 October 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[104] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 22 November 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[105] Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 31 August 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[106] Analytical Chronology of the Congo Crisis, 8 March 1961, Box 27, Country File, NSF, JFKL.
[107] Larry Devlin, *Chief of Station, Congo: A Memoir of 1960-67* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2007), 232.
[108] Saunders to Bundy, Memorandum, 16 October 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

ins and outs of the situation better than we do."[109] Komer and Saunders began putting together a "baksheesh" for Mobutu through the 303 Committee (the secret NSC group created by Bundy to coordinate covert affairs).[110]

On November 24, 1965, Mobutu declared himself head of the government. Kasavubu, realizing he had few options available to him, publicly accepted Mobutu as leader of the Congo.[111] The Congolese, tired of the political infighting, celebrated Mobutu's bloodless coup.[112] Tshombe, outmaneuvered, left for Brussels in December. At first he believed Mobutu would soon tire of the task of governing and recall him as prime minister. By the summer of 1966, Tshombe realized no such call was coming.[113] He began planning a revolt against Mobutu to be carried out by his mercenaries and sympathizers in Katanga. The Johnson administration caught wind of Tshombe's plans, and aside from wanting to prevent further political turmoil in the Congo, saw an opportunity to increase its influence over Mobutu.

The Americans were concerned that they did not have the complete loyalty of the new president, and as a result they had been seeking opportunities in which to ingratiate the new dictator to the United States. Six weeks earlier, for example, they had informed him of a possible coup being organized by his opponents. Mobutu used the information to stifle it. Ed Hamilton, an NSC staffer, wrote to Walt Rostow, who had replaced Bundy as Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, suggesting that the United States "very quietly give Mobutu the information we have" on the coup being

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[109] Saunders to Komer, Memorandum, 23 November 1965, Box 2, NSC Meetings, NSF, LBJL.
[110] Ibid.; Komer to Bundy, Memorandum, 22 November 1965, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[111] Crawford Young and Thomas Turner, *The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 52.
[112] Nzongola-Ntalaja, 145.
[113] CIA Memorandum, 11 February 1966, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

planned by Tshombe. This, Hamilton believed, was of course in the best interest of the United States. If Tshombe pulled off the revolt, Hamilton warned, "It will…put us back into a Congolese Civil War." Such a result, Hamilton argued, would have disastrous effects across most of Africa, and worse yet, could "create serious pressure for us to move in." With the Vietnam War on their hands, the Johnson administration wanted to avoid a situation where it would have to commit troops. Furthermore, Hamilton warned, "If Mobutu finds out that we know about his plot and have not told him, it will cut our influence substantially."[114]

Upon being informed by the Americans, Mobutu stifled the revolt, and convicted Tshombe in absentia of high treason. Undeterred, Tshombe began planning a second revolt, but on June 30, 1967 his chartered plane was hijacked and he was taken to Algeria where he was imprisoned.[115] Once word of Tshombe's kidnapping arrived in the Congo in early July 1967, the mercenaries and sympathizers he had begun amassing revolted. Initially caught off guard, Mobutu requested assistance from the United States. Unwilling to send combat forces, the Johnson administration instead sent three C-130s to provide much needed logistical support.[116] By November the remainder of Tshombe's forces had been defeated. Cyrus Vance, Deputy Secretary of Defense, reported to Rostow that a high-ranking Congolese official had said the C-130s "had been an important and very positive turning point in Mobutu's thinking toward the West." This same official said,

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[114] Hamilton to Rostow, Memorandum, 13 July 1966, Box 85, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[115] Who organized Tshombe's kidnapping still remains a mystery. Shortly afterwards, though, the Director of the FBI sent a telegram to the President, and the Directors of the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency, telling them that Col. Hubert Julian, the larger-than-life Trinidad-born African-American aviation pioneer from Harlem, had been "authorized to offer one million US dollars to be deposited in a bank in Switzerland for the personal use of Gamal Abdel Nasser for interceding for the release of an individual. (Possibly Moise Tshombe)." Telegram from Director of the FBI to the President, Sec. of State, Director of CIA, Director of Defense Intelligence Agency, 3 July 1967, Box 86, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[116] Rostow to the President, Memorandum, 14 July 1967, Box 86, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

"The importance of sending these planes was not so much a sign of US support, which was of course important, but was the feeling of awe and fear that the USG [U.S. Government] could and would send mighty and irresistible instruments of war on quick notice."[117]

Indeed, U.S. support of Mobutu during the revolts consummated the client-state relationship between the United States and the Congo, which provided the former an ally in the heart of Africa throughout the end of the Cold War. It is important to note, however, that Mobutu's rise to power had not been pre-ordained by the CIA during the period between 1960 and 1964, and that while the conditions of the Cold War contributed to his rise to power, local events, particularly the political split between Kasavubu and Tshombe in 1965, were a much more important factor. Had Mobutu not taken the initiative to present himself as a third option at this juncture, the United States would have likely ended up backing Tshombe. In short, while it can be concluded that the Johnson administration enabled Mobutu to take power, Mobutu's own actions helped determine the final outcome.

Once Mobutu was in power, the Johnson administration continued to support him despite his penchant for undemocratic and illiberal policies. "We believe," Executive Secretary of the Department of State Benjamin Read wrote Rostow, "it is in our interest to continue our efforts to support the Congolese Government so that it can maintain its policy of close friendship and collaboration with the United States."[118] As U.S. involvement in Vietnam increased, the Johnson administration was happy to divest itself of the Congo under a regime that would bring political stability and a friendly

[117] Vance to Rostow, Memorandum, 14 July 1967, Box 86, Country File, NSF, LBJL.
[118] Read to Rostow, Memorandum, 1 December 1967, Box 86, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

government to the West. But as Rostow wrote the president, "No one is betting we've seen the last of these mercenary adventures or that Mobutu will have an easy time holding the country together even without outside interference. But at least we've bought some more time; for the Congo, that's worth celebrating."[119] For those who have examined the history of the Congo, however, buying "more time" at the cost of empowering Mobutu proved nothing to celebrate.[120]

[119] Rostow to the President, Memorandum, 25 April 1968, Box 86, Country File, NSF, LBJL.

[120] See for example, Michela Wrong, *In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz: Living on the Brink of Disaster in Mobutu's Congo* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001); Young and Turner; Jason K. Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011).

# CONCLUSION

U.S. intervention in the Congo Crisis is critical to our understanding of both the nature of U.S. foreign policy and the current political landscape in the Congo.[1] The 1960s were a testing ground for American liberalism.[2] Nowhere had there been more optimism for what American liberalism could achieve abroad than in Africa. And nowhere on that continent did American policymakers expend more time and energy than in the Congo.[3] But American liberalism failed to deliver freedom to that country. By confining the meanings of liberty, equality, and development to an American framework, the United States found itself in competition with local leaders' visions for their own country. As a consequence, the intervention not only failed to deliver freedom to the Congolese people, but tragically abetted Mobutu Sese Seko's rise to power, a dictator whose kleptocratic rule removed any hope for meaningful development over a thirty year period.

Certainly the actions of other international actors and Congolese leaders also affected how events unfolded. For example, the Binza Group colluded with the United States to keep Patrice Lumumba out of power, and to have Cyrille Adoula elected as prime minister in 1961. Belgian and Katangan leaders conspired to have Lumumba

[1] In this regard, this study is part of an emerging literature that views events in the Third World as central to interpreting the Cold War (as opposed to being "periphery"). Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 11; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Marilyn B. Young, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 36, (Nov. 2012): 955-961, 961.

[2] Not just abroad, but at home as well. See Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time: From World War II to Nixon, What Happened and Why* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

[3] As Secretary of State Dean Rusk said in July of 1962, "there was no other problem including Berlin in which [the] President, [the] Secretary and senior colleagues have spent as much time as [the] Congo." The event created a paper trail at the Kennedy Presidential Library second only in volume to Vietnam; surpassing that of Britain, and even of the Soviet Union. Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Congo, 7 July 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963*, XX: 501-503; John Kent, *America, the U.N. And Decolonisation: Cold War Conflict in the Congo* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 2.

assassinated that same year. Moise Tshombe partnered with the Belgian business community to help sustain the secession of Katanga, and the UN used a military force comprised of Ghanaian, Irish, and Indian soldiers to end to it in 1963. China, Algeria, and Cuba supported the Lumumbist revolution that broke out afterwards, which was crushed by a Belgo-American paratrooper operation. In short, decolonization of the Congo occurred at the intersection of local and international politics, and can only be understood in the context of both.[4]

Nevertheless, the United States played a larger role than most throughout the crisis. Because of its superpower status, bearer of the title "leader of the free world," and large amount of economic assistance (by far the most provided by any one country), it wielded an incredible amount of influence amongst international and local actors. The most significant consequence of this was how it affected the formation of the Congolese state. Despite its intention to create a liberal society, an authoritarian government emerged in large part because the U.S. intervention consistently defied the liberal values it sought to instill. Beginning in 1961, the Kennedy administration adopted Eisenhower's policy to keep Lumumba, the first democratically elected prime minister, out of power. Rather than view Lumumba as a nationalist desiring freedom from foreign control, and a skillful politician who had managed to garner public support in a country rife with ethnic factions, it saw him instead as a communist-leaning rabble-rouser whose objectives threatened those of the United States.

[4] Indeed, as the historians Daniel Immerwahr and Frederick Cooper have stated while describing the history of post-colonial Africa in general, the outcome in the Congo can only be understood as a "confluence of forces, some internal to Africa and some not." Daniel Immerwahr, "Modernization and Development in U.S. Foreign Relations," *Passport* 43, (Sep. 2012): 22-25, 24. Also see Frederick Cooper, "Writing the History of Development," *Journal of Modern European History* 8, (2010): 5-23.

That same year the Kennedy administration used threats, bribery, and blackmail in order to have Adoula elected prime minister. Adoula, for his part, believed partnering with the United States provided the only hope for the Congo to overcome the problems caused by colonial underdevelopment. American policymakers, however, refused to listen to his recommendations, ignoring his pleas to end Katanga's secession quickly and to invest in the Congo's infrastructure. Had American policymakers listened to Adoula, the failure of U.S. nation-building efforts in 1963, which led to an outbreak of leftist revolts, might have been averted. Rather than focus on improving the political and economic conditions that sparked the rebellion to begin with, the United States responded by strengthening the Congolese army, and recommended Adoula carry out a series of repressive policies in order to remain in power. Lastly, during Mobutu's coup in November 1965, the Johnson administration could have chosen to back Tshombe, who after free and fair elections in May received signs of popular support from the Congolese people.[5] While some would have rightfully questioned Tshombe's ability to foster a democratic culture in the Congo, it would have at the least empowered an effective administrator.

Of course few American policymakers dwelled on these missed opportunities. Some, including several prominent liberals, were even pleased by what they had achieved. Former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs G. Mennen Williams, wrote in 1969 that "nation-building has gone forward," and "that the Congo, once one of President Kennedy's major crises, is beginning to recede quietly from the list of most

[5] Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History* (New York: Zed Books 2002), 145.

acute world trouble spots."[6] Two years later, Chester Bowles, Kennedy's first Undersecretary of State and one of the leading architects for U.S. policies in the Third World, wrote that the Congo "celebrated the tenth anniversary of its independence in 1970 in an atmosphere of stability and hope," due to "the role of the United Nations, large inputs of United States economic assistance and the emergence of able leadership from…Joseph D. Mobutu."[7] Similarly, in 1987 Brian Urquhart, who had served as Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold's Special Representative in the Congo, pointed out that while many considered the intervention a "synonym for failure," it had maintained the territorial integrity of the Congo while preventing an American-Soviet showdown in Africa. "If the Congo had broken up or become an East-West battleground," Urquhart asked, "would the Congolese, or world peace for that matter, have been better served?"[8]

Nevertheless, there were others who had been disappointed by the outcome, especially Mobutu's rise to power. As Secretary of State Dean Rusk wrote, "That was not what we had worked for."[9] The historian Stephen Weissman notes too that, "[Adlai] Stevenson and some of Kennedy's White House assistants were disillusioned by the Congo experience."[10] Reflecting on the event in 1971, Paul-Henri Spaak, who served as the Belgian foreign minister throughout most of the crisis, and who had been committed to carrying out the Kennedy administration's vision for the Congo, put his finger on the crux of the matter. "Our cardinal mistake in Africa," he wrote, "was to try to induce the Congo to follow a policy fashioned after our own image. In this respect we—as so many

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[6] G. Mennen Williams, *Africa for the Africans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 102-103.

[7] Chester Bowles, *Promises to Keep: My Years in Public Life, 1941-1969* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 429.

[8] Brian Urquhart, *A Life in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 196.

[9] Dean Rusk, *As I Saw It* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 280.

[10] Stephen R. Weissman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960-1964* (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 285-286.

before us—pursued what one might call 'democratic imperialism'."[11] Indeed, by the end of the crisis, American liberalism had revealed itself to be more like the European imperialism that had preceded it than a revolutionary force for freedom. Its quest to impose liberal values proved to be at odds with the local populace's desire for social, political, and economic equality. By the close of the decade, this proved true not only in the Congo, but also throughout the Third World, recasting the United States in the eyes of many, as the historian Ryan Irwin has noted, from "leader of the free world" to that of the "New Empire."[12]

This revelation resulted in profound consequences for both the United States and the Congo. Confronted with the ironies of liberal ideals, policymakers in the 1970s were no longer convinced that an adept foreign policy could be fashioned around such principles. They instead adopted a *realpolitik* paradigm that more or less defined U.S. interactions with the world for the next decade. Willing to acknowledge the limits of American power and ideas, policymakers who adopted this realist outlook sought the creation of client states in the Third World that relied on authoritarian governments to contain communism and ensure Western access to raw materials.[13] In the Congo, this

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[11] Paul-Henri Spaak, *The Continuing Battle: Memoirs of a European, 1936-1966* (Boston: Little, 1971), 400.

[12] Ryan M. Irwin, *Gordian Knot: Apartheid and the Unmaking of the Liberal World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 13. Indeed, the consequences of this led to worldwide protest of American power. See, Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003); Niall Ferguson et al., eds., *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

[13] Certainly this transition began in the late-1960s when some modernization theorists began to accept the possibility that military dictatorships could serve as a necessary step towards development, and can specifically be observed in the Congo when Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Robert Komer took over U.S. decision-making in 1965. Daniel Immerwahr, "Modernization and Development in U.S. Foreign Relations," 22-25; Bradley R. Simpson, *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S.-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008); Frank L. Jones, *Blowtorch: Robert Komer, Vietnam, and American Cold War Strategy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2013). For studies displaying how realism shaped U.S. foreign policy in the 1970s, see Fredrik Logevall and Andrew Preston, eds., *Nixon in the World: American*

meant support for Mobutu.[14] Even President Jimmy Carter, whose brand of foreign policy relied on a human rights framework, found his administration left with little choice but to support the dictator in order to protect American interests.[15] Mobutu, aware of this new American outlook, played up the communist threat in central Africa, particularly in neighboring Angola where a civil war raged throughout most of the 1970s and 1980s, in order to ensure U.S. support throughout the remainder of the Cold War.[16]

For the Congolese people, Mobutu's reign would come to symbolize the unfulfilled promises of independence. It is no coincidence that some Congolese compared

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*Foreign Relations, 1969-1977* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Joan Hoff, *Nixon Reconsidered* (New York, NY: BasicBooks, 1994); Jeremi Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007); Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), esp. 239.

[14] Gotz Bechtolsheimer, "Breakfast with Mobutu: Congo, the United States and the Cold War, 1964-1981" (Ph.D. diss., The London School of Economics and Political Science, 2012); Sean Kelly, *America's Tyrant: The CIA and Mobutu of Zaire* (Lanham, Md.: American University Press, 1993); Charles G. Cogan et al., "The Congo, 1960-1963: Weighing Worst Choices," in *Dealing with Dictators: Dilemmas of U.S. Diplomacy and Intelligence Analysis, 1945-1990*, ed. Ernest R. May et al.(Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), 49-87; Michael G. Schatzberg, *Mobutu or Chaos?: The United States and Zaire, 1960-1990* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1991).

[15] President Jimmy Carter was forced to support Mobutu during the Shaba Wars (1977-1978) when Katangan gendarmes who had been in exile in Angola attempted once again to secede. ("Shaba," meaning "copper," is what Mobutu had renamed the Katanga province.) Piero Gleijeses, "Truth or Credibility: Castro, Carter, and the Invasions of Shaba," *The International History Review* 18, no. 1 (1996): 70-103; O. Y. E. Ogunbadejo, "Conflict in Africa: A Case Study of the Shaba Crisis, 1977," *World Affairs* 141, no. 3 (1979): 219-234; Michael G. Schatzberg, "Military Intervention and the Myth of Collective Security: The Case of Zaire," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 27, no. 2 (1989): 315-340. For examples of how Jimmy Carter attempted to use a human rights framework to shape his foreign policy, see Andrew J. DeRoche, "Standing Firm for Principles: Jimmy Carter and Zimbabwe," *Diplomatic History* 23, no. 4 (1999): 657-685; Kenton Clymer, "Jimmy Carter, Human Rights, and Cambodia," *Diplomatic History* 27, no. 2 (2003): 245-278; David F. Schmitz and Vanessa Walker, "Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights: The Development of a Post–Cold War Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 28, no. 1 (2004): 113-143; Douglas Brinkley, "The Rising Stock of Jimmy Carter: The "Hands on" Legacy of Our Thirty-Ninth President," *Diplomatic History* 20, no. 4 (1996): 505-530; Robert A. Strong, *Working in the World: Jimmy Carter and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000). Of course not all scholars agree that Carter's foreign policy relied upon a human rights framework. Some have argued, for example, that his foreign policy relied upon a realist framework. See, Victor McFarland, "The Oil Crisis of the 1970s: An International History" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2013); Gaddis Smith, *Morality, Reason, and Power: American Diplomacy in the Carter Years* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1986).

[16] Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 156-190; Colette Braeckman, *Le Dinosaure: Le Zaïre De Mobutu* (Paris: Fayard, 1992).

his rule to that of the Belgians.[17] As the historian Frederick Cooper has written, no word had better captured "the hopes and ambitions of Africa's leaders, its educated populations, and many of its farmers and workers in the post-war decades better than 'development.'" "Its simplest meaning," he goes onto write, "conveys a down-to-earth aspiration: to have clean water, decent schools and health facilities; to produce larger harvests and more manufactured goods; to have access to consumer goods which people elsewhere consider a normal part of life."[18] Mobutu's kleptocratic rule ensured that the Congolese people would never obtain such a quality of life. The state and economy became so decayed that many Congolese referred to it as "*le mal zaïrois*" ("the Zairian disease"), producing conditions so hazardous to one's health that even six years after Mobutu left power the average life expectancy was only forty-seven.[19] Indeed, it is difficult to disagree with the journalist Michela Wrong's assessment that, "Whatever bloody deeds were carried out on his orders, this will always constitute Mobutu's worst

[17] This is most famously portrayed in the painting, "*Colonie Belge*"(ca. 1974-1976) by Tshibumba Kanda Matulu. For more information, see Johannes Fabian, *Remembering the Present: Painting and Popular History in Zaire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 291-292.

[18] Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, 91.

[19] "World Development Indicators: Democratic Republic of Congo," World Bank, accessed November 7, 2013, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN/countries/CD-ZF-XM?display=graph; Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila*, 141-170; Winsome J. Leslie, *Zaire: Continuity and Political Change in an Oppressive State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993); John Frank Clark, "Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire as a Nondemocratic Presidential Leader," in *Africa's Second Wave of Freedom: Development, Democracy, and Rights*, ed. Lyn S. Graybill and Kenneth W. Thompson(Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1998), 81-102; Peta Ikambana, *Mobutu's Totalitarian Political System: An Afrocentric Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Crawford Young and Thomas Turner, *The Rise and Decline of the Zairian State* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); V. S. Naipaul, "A New King for the Congo: Mobutu and the Nihilism of Africa," in *Vintage Naipaul*(New York: Vintage, 2004), 88-128; Crawford Young, "Zaire: The Unending Crisis," *Foreign Affairs* 57, no. 1 (1978): 169-185; Jacques Vanderlinden, ed. *Du Congo Au Zaire, 1960-1980: Essai De Bilan* (Bruxelles: Centre de recherche et d'information socio-politiques, 1980); Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, ed. *The Crisis in Zaire: Myths and Realities* (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1986); Guy Gran, ed. *Zaire: The Political Economy of Underdevelopment* (New York: Praeger, 1979).

human rights violation: the destruction of an economy that quashed a generation's aspirations."[20]

Such dire conditions also contributed to the current crisis in eastern Congo, what some scholars have called "Africa's World War." Since 1998, the year after Mobutu left power, approximately five million people have died there. While recent literature addressing this latest crisis dwells on the lingering effects of Belgian colonialism or even the Cold War conditions that helped Mobutu remain in power, this dissertation has sought to serve as a prescient reminder of how American liberalism—well intentioned though it may have been—produced equally calamitous results for the Congolese people.[21] Recent calls for the United States to intervene in the current crisis should be carefully weighed against this history, as perhaps should all potential U.S. interventions claiming to make the world a better place.[22] As the historian William Appleman Williams observed over

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[20] Michela Wrong, *In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz: Living on the Brink of Disaster in Mobutu's Congo* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001), 315.

[21] Jason K. Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2011); François Ngolet, *Crisis in the Congo: The Rise and Fall of Laurent Kabila* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Thomas Turner, *The Congo Wars: Conflict, Myth and Reality* (New York: Zed Books, 2007); Filip Reyntjens, *The Great African War: Congo and Regional Geopolitics, 1996-2006* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); John Frank Clark, ed. *The African Stakes of the Congo War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Gérard Prunier, *Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). For studies on the economic dimensions of the crisis see, Peter H. Eichstaedt, *Consuming the Congo: War and Conflict Minerals in the World's Deadliest Place* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2011); Michael Wallace Nest, François Grignon, and Emizet F. Kisangani, *The Democratic Republic of Congo: Economic Dimensions of War and Peace* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2006). For a more intimate account of the wars in the Congo, see Bryan Mealer, *All Things Must Fight to Live: Stories of War and Deliverance in Congo* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2008); Ben Rawlence, *Radio Congo: Signals of Hope from Africa's Deadliest War* (London: Oneworld, 2012). The consequences of Belgian colonialism can be examined in Chapter One. As for other examples of the negative consequences produced by a realist U.S. foreign policy, see Chalmers A. Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000); Jussi M. Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[22] Some scholarship has already begun to examine the problems and ill effects of Western intervention in the Congo. See, Theodore Trefon, *Congo Masquerade: The Political Culture of Aid Inefficiency and Reform Failure* (New York: Zed Books, 2011); Claude Kabemba, "The Democratic Republic of Congo: The Land of Humanitarian Intervention," in *The History and Practice of Humanitarian Intervention and Aid in Africa*, ed. Bronwen Everill and Josiah David Kaplan(New York: Palgrave

fifty years ago, U.S. foreign policy often tragically commits more harm than good "by its exaggerated confidence in American economic strength and military might, by its own arrogance and self-righteousness, and by its messianic distortion of a sincere humanitarian desire to help other peoples."[23] So it was in the Congo.

Macmillan, 2013), 140-157. Séverine Autesserre, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[23] William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Norton, 1988), 8.

APPENDIX 1:

Map of the Congo, 1960


(Modification by Jason Tyler and William Mountz of "Democratic Republic of the Congo: Small Map of the Republic's Provinces at the Independence" © 2006 by Denis Jacquerye, used under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/.)

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# VITA

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