CHAPTER FOUR

THE U.S. COMES TO AFRICA

TRY TO imagine 1960. Eisenhower's popular two-term presidency is ticking away. Americans are unaware that another such presidency will not soon follow. They don't know that in Vietnam they are already entering their first losing war. They believe that the people of most countries would welcome the arrival of American troops just about the same way the French did in 1944. After eight years in office, Eisenhower, the general who commanded those troops in 1944, surprises many supporters by worrying publicly about the growing uncontrollability of what he calls a "military-industrial complex" in the United States.

John F. Kennedy, the opposition candidate to succeed Eisenhower, complains instead of a "missile gap." (It later proves nonexistent.) He pledges to repair "our lost prestige, our shaky defenses, our lack of leadership." Over and over he charges that turmoil in Cuba and the Congo is proof of U.S. weakness. He campaigns to beef up the U.S. military to meet "the communist challenge" in such places. He declares the world "half slave and half free," and says it can't continue that way. He doesn't say which half he considers the Congo to be in—or to which half Fulgencio Batista, the deposed anti-communist Cuban dictator, belonged.

1960 sees new fleets of jet-powered Boeing 707's and Convair 880's begin to shrink the country and world. Runways are extended, propeller craft replaced, ocean liners mothballed. Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa swell up offshore, only hours away. These new planes, incidentally, create a need for a previously little-known metal that is vital to jet aviation: cobalt.

And in 1960, the giant central African land known as the Belgian Congo, later as Zaire, arrives on American television screens as something more than the backdrop for a Grade B jungle movie. It is big news. In the *New York Times* index for 1960, the Congo occupies sixteen pages of entries, more than any other country except the United States. By contrast, news of the Soviet Union occupies only six pages, and news of President Eisenhower only eleven.

That the Congo holds nearly 70 percent of the world's known cobalt ore, as well as other vital resources, is not often mentioned to viewers of popular newscasts and newspaper readers. They are thoroughly informed, however, about something else: the Congo, which is about to undergo the very American experience of independence from a European monarchy, has suddenly been threatened by Russians.

It is the current wisdom that the Soviet Union is using devious, illegal, and even violent means to take over that distant land. American journalists, schoolteachers, and elected officials perceive a Russian plot that will deprive the 14 million (1960 figure) innocent savages who live in the Congo of any link with the democratic West, of any hope that they may become a free society. The current wisdom also says that the Congo takeover is part of a Soviet design for world domination, and that if the design isn't stopped now, in Africa, it will become all the more irresistible as it closes in on Washington.

And so the U.S. government, a third of the way around the world, undertakes the burden of repelling this Soviet threat. Some of Washington's countermeasures are disclosed to the voters and taxpayers: U.S. diplomats speak out for a United Nations military force that can step between the Congolese factions. The U.S. government offers money, equipment, and administrators to create the U.N. force. But the government does not tell the American people that it is also arranging a bloody coup d'etat in the Congo, for which the U.N. force will provide a cover.

CONSIDERING the way the Congo was misrepresented to the U.S. public, it's conceivable that the coup, and perhaps even the attendant murders, might have been popularly approved of even if the government had confessed to planning them. Few government or journalistic opinion makers knew much about the leading characters in the Congo drama, or about the long-simmering tribal disputes that formed the context of Congolese political life. Pundits in the U.S. provided one main explanation for what went on—Soviet plotting. The explanation was wrong. Soviet manipulation would have been much easier to handle in the Congo than the problems that really presented themselves.

Editorial cartoonists loved to play with the Soviet theme. The talented and imaginative artist for the *Indianapolis Star* filled his space, frequently on the front page of the newspaper just below the banner headline, with

caricatures of the portly, easily burlesqued, Soviet premier, Nikita Khrushchev, and the skeletal, big-lipped, loin-clothed, cannibal-suggestive black "natives" of the early Hollywood movie cartoons.

In one drawing, Khrushchev was shown cavorting with the natives in a jungle setting under the caption, which was the title of a popular 1940s song, "Bingo, Bango, Bongo, I Don't Want to Leave the Congo." In another, Khrushchev peered at the reader through tall grass, flanked by bone-in-the-nose types. The drawing was shown around the newspaper office with great glee under its original caption: "Ain't nobody here but us niggers." It was published under the caption, "Ain't nobody here but us natives."*

A documentary film on the life of President Kennedy, widely seen on U.S. television, contained only a single brief piece of footage on Africa. It was a scene of Congolese, rioting. Actually, on closer viewing, the film segment showed a couple of hundred African men running, all in the same direction. But the narrator assured the viewer that they were rioting, as Americans would expect Congolese to do.

This was the image that came to replace sixty years of mysteriousness since Conrad wrote *Heart of Darkness*. Perhaps the Congolese were still mysterious, but mainly, now, the Congolese were rioters. During the 1960s, "rioting" became to "Congolese" what "crisp" was to "five-dollar-bill" and "dull" was to "thud." The cliché was laid to rest only when the country changed its name to Zaire.

Time magazine depicted the colonial Belgians as heroes, whose occasional arrival in a village interrupted the sacrifice of innocent human victims in some savage rite. Under the headline "Freedom Yes, Civilization Maybe," *Time* reported that "once Belgian control ends, the self-rule everyone seemed to want will bring with it barbarism and strife."

The *New York Times* story about Congolese independence on June 30, 1960, did note in the second column of type that "the Kingdom of the Congo flourished from the fourteenth century and even exchanged envoys with Portugal, the Vatican, Brazil, and the Netherlands." But the *Times* said this was a "lost greatness," to be found again only with the coming of the Belgians, who "set out to substitute the carpenter's hammer for the tribal drum, introducing the twentieth century overnight to a primitive people divided into many warring tribes."

No doubt some Belgians did bring enlightenment. What the Belgians did mainly, however, was raise export crops, and mine copper and diamonds. (Cobalt didn't become valuable until high-technology uses were developed.) The Belgians laid roads and railroad track only as needed to haul products to the coast for shipping to Europe. Most of the huge colony, the part not of immediate use to the colonizers, was left to its own devices.

Like other colonizers, the Belgians encouraged missionaries to come,

*The author was serving a student internship at the paper at the time.

extending the colonial presence without cost to the colonial government. Many missionaries were dedicated humanitarians who carried literacy and healing where they were needed. Others were social misfits in convenient self-exile from their own countries. At best, missionary work was a haphazard way for a government to provide social services. Often it was an unfair and unacceptable way.

The best evidence for this assessment is the condition of the Congo after seventy-five years of Belgian rule. At independence, barely a dozen Congolese had graduated college. None of the prominent political figures was among them. Of doctors, lawyers, architects, or military officers there were none. Mobutu himself was just a sergeant until, of necessity and considerable desire, he made a fast rise to general. And in Yalifoka, there were still more drums than carpenters' hammers.

PIERRE Davister, a Belgian, ran a newspaper in the Congo in the 1950s and stayed on through the independence period as an advisor in various capacities both to Mobutu and to Patrice Lumumba, Mobutu's principal political rival. By some accounts, Davister was an undercover agent for the Belgian government. In an interview in his office at a magazine he now edits in Brussels, Davister just smiles at that notion, and says he's saving the details for his own memoirs, now in progress. A lot else, however, he shares.

"Each country there was trying to find a figure through which they could influence the Congo," he says. "Mobutu was taking [money] from Belgian State Security and giving information against Lumumba. Belgium was paying them all. They all needed pocket money. They all did it. Lumumba went to the Czech embassy to get money for information. Mobutu didn't go to the Czechs because he felt his future was more or less informing for the Belgians. But they all went to the American embassy."

Two influential players Davister remembers were Harry Oppenheimer, scion of the family that has controlled the DeBeers syndicate, and thus the world diamond business since early in this century, and Oppenheimer's U.S. business associate, Maurice Tempelsman. "Oppenheimer was clearly tied to the South African government," Davister says. "South Africa was supporting Mobutu because they wanted [to control the prices of] the diamonds. Tempelsman was tied to the American government. They were using these two men as a channel for money to keep the Congo on the Western side. Of course, Tempelsman didn't need *money* from the American government. He was there building his own empire. The same as with Belgium and Union Minière [the mining unit of Société Général du Belgique]."

Tempelsman had been shown around Africa by his father, Leon Tempelsman, a Belgian gem dealer. They came to the U.S. either during World War II or right after it, and started the firm Leon Tempelsman & Son in 1946 when Maurice was seventeen. Somehow they established intimacy both

with the Oppenheimers and with various African rulers. Maurice Tempelsman carried the U.S. flag into the innermost councils of the chief of state not only in Zaire, but also in Gabon and Sierra Leone, and perhaps other countries as well. Mobutu eventually appointed Tempelsman Zaire's honorary consul in New York.

Davister remembers Mobutu walking into his newspaper office barefoot in 1954 to complain about conditions in the army. At the time, Mobutu was still on his rise up the ranks to sergeant, but eventually he left the army to work for Davister. Through the newspaper, Davister says, Mobutu first met Lumumba, Joseph Kasavubu, and other Congolese with ambitions to leadership. Davister even arranged a free trip to Brussels for Mobutu in 1959, under the auspices of a black education organization.

In February 1960, King Baudouin of Belgium invited eighty-one prominent Congolese to a conference in Brussels to chart a course for independence, which was scheduled for June 30. Kasavubu was in and out of the conference alternately boycotting it and trying to influence it. To allow Lumumba to attend, the king pardoned him after he served only three months of a six-month jail sentence passed upon him for inciting a crowd the previous October.

That twenty persons are supposed to have died in a riot after a speech Lumumba made may be some indication of his oratorical vigor, especially considering that he told the judge he had been advocating nonviolence. Lumumba, with professional experience as a postal clerk and beer salesman, had done a brief stretch in the colonial hoosegow a few years earlier for embezzling $2,500 from the post office; he claimed he spent the money on political activities. While working for the post office, he had been a president of a public employee union in the western province, the area around Stanleyville. According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica's* biography of him (other sources don't mention it), Lumumba's Belgian political contacts were with the Liberal party, the most right wing of the major Belgian parties.

As Davister noted, Lumumba was basically taking money from any political interest that would pay him. But he was, in certain ways, oriented more toward the socialist-bloc countries than were his rivals. Or, at least, he was attempting to find some ballast against the force of the Western moneymen. Looking at the outsiders whom Lumumba chose to consult in times of trouble, it seems clear that his main socialist influence in terms of ideas (as opposed to money) wasn't from Eastern Europe at all, but from the more left-leaning of the new African heads of state, particularly Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana.

Nkrumah was still preaching his dream of a pan-African confederation operating under a hazily defined system called "African socialism." The dream was always described idealistically, but always featured Nkrumah as head of the confederation, of course. It was a dream that would impoverish Nkrumah's people and imprison many of them before they finally chased

him out of Ghana one step ahead of a rope in 1966.* But as early as 1958, Lumumba was flown to Ghana (history is blank on the interesting point of who paid for it) to attend something called the All-African Peoples Conference.

THE preindependence Brussels conference of February 1960 settled on a parliamentary system of government for the Congo. Elections were held in mid-May. Elections then in a place like the Congo necessarily differed in some respects from the kind of thing Americans are used to. There was no television. Most people didn't have radios. They couldn't read, even a simple slogan. And even if they had had radios and could read, they used hundreds of different languages. There weren't telephones, and most Congolese lived several days' hard journey from the nearest airport. Most owed their principal political loyalty to their village chief and the tribal councils to which he reported. The chief's powers of persuasion over the ballots in his neighborhood surpassed those of even the most successful Jersey City ward boss. Moreover, where tribes brushed against one another in the same province (as provinces were drawn by the Belgians), violence broke out over who would be preeminent.

Nevertheless, despite these handicaps, elections were held. And they tended to be fair by comparison to other elections in recent African history—which is to say a lot fairer and more honestly contested than the one-party ratifications Mobutu staged in later years. At any rate, the supervising Belgians certified them. And when the ballots were counted, Lumumba's party got more votes than any other, winning 35 of the 137 seats in parliament.

Many factors contributed to this victory. That Lumumba came from a region that was particularly populous and yet not dominated by one strong tribal nation was perhaps most important. He was born to the Tetela tribe, one of many tribes in the east that wanted to keep power away from one of the potentially dominant tribes of the west and south. Lumumba probably also led the field of candidates in charisma. But as for the economic doctrines of Karl Marx or Milton Friedman—or even Kwame Nkrumah—it would be delusionary to think that the candidates themselves, let alone the voters, devoted much thought to them. There's a real question whether any of the scantily educated candidates was literate enough to *read* such philosophy.†

Nor did Lumumba's plurality constitute any kind of national movement. A lot of horse-trading went on before he could form a cabinet, with himself as prime minister, that parliament would vote into office. As part of the bargaining, Kasavubu was given a mostly ceremonial role as president and

*The author traveled extensively through Ghana in 1965 and 1966.

†Which wouldn't necessarily disqualify them as good leaders. Nkrumah was a highly praised student with a decade of successful university work in the U.S. and Britain, but he fell apart as a leader when he tried to apply abstract ideas to a country totally unprepared for them.

chief of state. All this occurred just a week before independence. Lumumba proclaimed a neutralist foreign policy, though any foreign policy at all was probably not an issue on the minds of his countrymen.

As the only system of national order that any living Congolese had ever known was yanked away, there still was no concept in the Congo of nationhood, let alone participatory democracy. Many Congolese apparently thought that independence would mean a quick role reversal with the Belgians. Workers in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa), the capital, demanded an immediate cash bonus. Some individuals assumed they were now free to murder white men and rape white women, and they did.

Congolese soldiers, barred by the Belgians from military leadership under colonialism, felt a far stronger loyalty to their own tribes than to their nation (as did most Africans), and behaved accordingly. Since soldiers from rival tribes were face-to-face in many provinces, a series of miniwars broke out. Within a week, under the guise of restoring peace, Belgian soldiers were back to killing Congolese in the Congo.

Lumumba, far from seizing power like a man possessed by some vision of utopia, wavered helplessly. To cap off the confusion, on July 11, Moise Tshombe, leader of the Lunda tribe in the Katanga mining province (later Shaba), declared his province an independent country. The Balunda had been largely shut out in the bargaining for national leadership, and since they were sitting on all the copper and cobalt, they decided to make their own deal with the Western buyers. These Western industrial interests had been egging Tshombe on toward succession, hoping to guarantee continued Western ownership of the mines. They promised to supply mercenaries to defend the province against whatever ragtag army Lumumba might assemble to reclaim it.

Lumumba, of course, opposed the secession. For one thing, his government needed income from the mines. For another, leaders of several other provinces were talking about secession, following Tshombe's lead, and if that kept up Lumumba wouldn't have a country left to be prime minister of. He conferred with Nkrumah, and then called for United Nations troops to establish the authority of his government. The troops were sent, under the administration of an American U.N. official, Ralph Bunche (a black, which became important as the situation worsened).

But the U.N. troops didn't have the effect Lumumba sought. The Belgian troops stayed, and while Belgium didn't formally recognize the Balunda secession in Katanga, its troops there seemed to be supporting the secession. These troops included an official army contingent as well as a growing assortment of mercenaries Tshombe recruited. Among the mercenaries, according to a CIA report from Elizabethville, January 17, 1961, were not only Belgian paratroopers but also "former members of German SS and former Italian Fascist soldiers."

In mid-July, after seeing that the Belgians wouldn't leave when the U.N.

force arrived, Lumumba and Kasavubu in a joint announcement asked the U.S.S.R. to watch the situation and consider sending help if "certain Western countries" didn't halt their "aggression." As tension mounted, there appeared a clear split between Lumumba, who repeated the threat to call for Soviet troops, and the parliamentary majority, which wanted neither Belgians nor Soviets in the Congo, but only the U.N.

On July 21, the U.N. Security Council, with U.S. and Soviet support, demanded Belgian withdrawal. Belgian troops did pull out around the capital, though they stayed in Katanga. But within days, Lumumba dropped his threat to seek Soviet aid. (U.S. Secretary of State Christian Herter called the threat a "bluff" from the start, which was a good bet.) Lumumba reasserted his neutrality, signed a big trade deal with U.S. businessmen and took off for an official visit to Washington and an address to the U.N. in New York.

FOR an account of what really happened after that, as opposed to what the American people were told at the time, we are indebted, first, to the 1975 report of the Senate Select Committee to Study Government Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities (the Church Committee), and, second, to Madeleine G. Kalb, who, using the Freedom of Information Act, pried loose copies of much of the secret cable traffic between Washington and its embassies in Leopoldville and Brussels. She recounted these secrets in her 1982 book, *The Congo Cables* (Macmillan).

The cables illustrate wonderfully two fundamental mistakes of U.S. foreign policy then and now. The first is provincialism. Accustomed to the context of big-power diplomacy, no one in the policy-making chain of command could see the Congo for what it really was: a couple of hundred mini-nations, whose people were consumed with the daily chore of warding off hunger. These nations had long been occupied against their will by white people and occasionally forced to do slave labor for whites. Suddenly, under rules laid down by whites, they were proclaimed to be one "country," with common leadership.

The official leaders were a handful of scarcely literate and totally inexperienced men who had little real authority and highly uncertain tenure. Few Congolese trusted each other, and none had any reason to trust any white. The leaders had no example to follow but that of Ghana, which had become an independent country three years earlier and survived. They wouldn't have another example until a large, more stable country like Nigeria (independent in October 1960) or Ivory Coast (August 1960) or Tanzania (December 1961) could emerge.

Apparently without exception, the U.S. officials involved in the cable traffic failed to make the slightest effort toward a sympathetic understanding of all this. They saw the Congo only in American terms, as a player in the cold war with the U.S.S.R.

The second U.S. foreign policy failing, which rises from each batch of

cables like a characteristic fume, is arrogance—an assumption that the U.S. knows what's best for other countries better than they do themselves, and therefore ought to impose its will wherever it finds the power to do so. The CIA people, from director Allen Dulles on down, thought that Lumumba threatened all Africa, even the world. They couldn't wait to bump him off. For blind arrogance, the most strident Leninists in the Kremlin couldn't take a backseat to these Washington policymakers. Richard Bissell, the CIA's deputy director for plans, recalled later, "The Agency had put top priority, probably, on a range of different methods of getting rid of Lumumba in the sense of either destroying him physically, incapacitating him, or eliminating his political influence."

At first, the U.S. embassy in Kinshasa (then Leopoldville) was a little more restrained. It reported to Washington when Lumumba visited the U.S. on July 26, 1960, "Lumumba is an opportunist and not a communist. His final decision as to which camp he will eventually belong will not be made by him but rather will be imposed upon him by outside forces." But by August 17, even Ambassador Claire Timberlake was recommending that the U.S. instigate a coup to remove Lumumba, though the ambassador didn't specifically recommend killing him.

As for the men who ran the U.S. government, Under Secretary of State C. Douglas Dillon told the Church Committee that the National Security Council, including President Eisenhower, believed that Lumumba was a "very difficult if not impossible person to deal with, and was dangerous to the peace and safety of the world." How far beyond the dreams of a barefoot jungle postal clerk in 1956, that in a few short years he would be *dangerous to the peace and safety of the world*! The perception seems insane, particularly coming from the National Security Council, which really does have the power to end all human life within hours.

With all the problems the Congo faced, the entire body of U.S. policymakers could focus only on the single problem that probably never occurred to Lumumba or any other Congolese: "to which camp he will eventually belong." Nor did it occur to the U.S. policymakers that if their question were asked openly, the honest reply of Lumumba and most of his countrymen would be, the *Congolese* camp.

The American inability to see events from an African perspective extended to the simplest cultural differences. Dillon, after meeting Lumumba, adjudged him an "irrational, almost psychotic personality," and cited as his first example that Lumumba "would never look you in the eye." Another U.S. diplomat made the same complaint about Kasavubu. In fact, many Africans are taught by tribal tradition that it is deferential to avoid eye contact; Lumumba and Kasavubu might have been fearful, polite, even repectful, rather than psychotic.

Dillon was annoyed that Lumumba, emerging from his meetings in the U.S., thanked and praised his hosts publicly, even though the Americans had resolutely turned down Lumumba's every request for direct (as opposed

to U.N.) help. Dillon feared that Lumumba's public flattery might lead the Belgians to think that the U.S. had betrayed the Atlantic alliance and gone over to the Congolese. In fact, lavish public praise is also a common African custom, and anything less might have seemed impolite to Lumumba. It's also doubtful that Dillon and his colleagues would have been more favorably impressed if Lumumba had exited the State Department complaining to reporters about the lact of cooperation, instead of beaming to them about U.S.-Congolese friendship.

If the well-traveled folk of the National Security Council with their degrees from Wharton and the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies couldn't shed their parochialism, what could rightfully be expected of a displaced African villager? Lumumba certainly had been stupid to suggest bringing in Soviet troops, whether or not he was bluffing about it. But by what logic did anyone expect statesmanship of him? If he suspected that the U.S. would side in the end with the Belgian occupiers rather than the elected Congolese government, he was merely being perceptive. Secretly, the U.S. was doing exactly that. And since Lumumba faced the continued armed occupation of his country by one group of white men, it was not totally illogical of him to confront the problem by scouting around for other white men who were enemies of the occupier.

The Soviets, to be sure, had imperialist visions of their own and volunteered to provide Lumumba arms. A Soviet presence would have been bad news for the Congo, as it has been for other countries the U.S.S.R. has occupied. But Mobutu's two decades in power show that the U.S. presence also was bad news for the Congo. And we were the ones who intervened uninvited, facing no real danger to ourselves.

There was never the slightest indication that Lumumba wanted Soviet troops in the Congo, or wanted peaceful U.S. commercial interests evicted, unless perhaps that became the only way to prevent continued colonial military occupation. There was never the slightest indication that the Soviets would intervene uninvited. And in the unlikely event that Lumumba brought in Soviet troops, other African experience, such as that in Ghana, Guinea, and Egypt, suggest that the Soviets would eventually have been forced out. They never could have matched the staying power of the Belgian-French-U.S. forces, which were still around in the 1980s.

AN interesting example of this continuity is the career of Lawrence Devlin, the CIA station chief in the Congo in the early 1960s. After ensuring that a dictatorship of the U.S. government's liking was entrenched in the Congo, Devlin became manager of Maurice Tempelsman's business interests there. Tempelsman—the billionaire-class* escort of President Kennedy's widow,

*Tempelsman declines to disclose his worth, and because he has never sold stock in his companies to the public he doesn't have any legal obligation to do so. Dun & Bradstreet

as well as the employer of Kennedy's lawyer, Kennedy's son, and Kennedy's CIA station chief—was in the Congo during these years seeking and finding the inside track for future diamond and copper deals. Tempelsman says that's all he was doing. Pierre Davister, the Belgian journalist and reputed covert operator, says Tempelsman was involved in the U.S.'s political manipulations. Devlin, who could shed plenty of light on this, ducks reporters.

Devlin was full of words for Washington policymakers back in 1960, though. "Embassy and [CIA] station believe Congo experiencing classic communist effort takeover [of] government," he wired his headquarters from Leopoldville (now Kinshasa) August 18. "Whether or not Lumumba actually commie or just playing commie game to assist his solidifying power, anti-West forces rapidly increasing power Congo and there may be little time left in which take action avoid another Cuba," he declared. Devlin advised "replacing Lumumba with [a] pro-Western group."

At that time, by U.S. standards, the Congo was certainly in chaos. It was hard to tell who controlled the cities. A man with a gun might represent any of a variety of factions, or even just himself. Lumumba's allies, presumably on his orders, knocked on doors and arrested his enemies (an objectionable practice that the State Department learned to tolerate only later, when the U.S.-installed Mobutu began to door-knock). Congolese troops detained, threatened, and occasionally beat up U.N. personnel, including some Americans (though none was badly injured). No evidence was produced to indicate whether these acts were impulsive or done on orders, and if on orders, whose orders. But the events were making daily headlines.

Back in the hinterland, where Americans didn't go because the roads were too bad, millions of farmers hoed on, little concerned. Chaos in government is recognizable only to those who are used to getting some benefit from government. Very few Congolese fit that description.

But onto the Congo's pile of problems, the Americans heaped their own imported concerns and assumptions, all grim. Devlin certainly wasn't the only culprit. Ambassador Timberlake was convinced that Lumumba was trying to create an atmosphere of terror. "Objective seems clear," he cabled Washington. "Remove the bulk of Europeans and you eliminate effective Western influence. Once Europeans have gone, nationalize their property on simple theory that business and industry must run to keep Congolese em-

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estimates the sales of Leon Tempelsman & Son at $70 million a year, and of Tempelsman's American Coldset Corporation, a Dallas-based manufacturer of diamond drill bits (the world's number two maker of diamond petroleum drilling bits, the company says), at $157 million a year. *Fortune* magazine says the companies pull in $100 million and $30 million respectively. But Tempelsman has many other companies in Europe, Africa, and the U.S. Although Tempelsman says he has no active mining ventures in Zaire, Dun & Bradstreet says he "has participating interests in mining ventures there," as well as in Mexico, though it says the participation is "principally confined to providing management consulting services." It also says his companies trade and broker "actively in a wide range of precious minerals and agricultural commodities."

ployed and if Europeans will not run them Congolese government must. Finally GOC [Government of the Congo] would invite commie bloc experts in to keep business and industry going."

While Lumumba's actions were consistent with that thesis, they were also consistent with the thesis that he was trying to rid his country of all foreign control and make it truly independent. Or that he wanted the Congo allied with other African powers and independent of non-African forces. Or that he didn't really know where he was headed. He may have been in it for the money. Africa has had more than its share of petty tyrants. In other words, Ambassador Timberlake attached a cerebral design to Lumumba's actions (or lack of them) that there's no reason to believe was present.

Even it one accepts the thesis that Lumumba was scheming with the Soviets, however, no one ever suggested that the Soviets were intervening in the Congo (at least to that point) by any means other than persuasive oratory, certainly a legitimate tactic. Lumumba was the elected leader of the Congo under a process devised and certified by the Belgians. The only charge that Washington could level against him was that he had made a policy choice that the State Department disapproved of, and that he was using subterfuge to carry out the policy because the Western powers prevented him from carrying it out openly.

Moreover, even if Timberlake was right in gauging Lumumba's machinations and designs, it still didn't mean that the interests of the U.S. people were threatened—the interests of Maurice Tempelsman and the Morrison-Knudsen Company, yes, but not the interests of the average American. Those interests were to be able to consume Congolese raw materials at a fair price and sell U.S. products in fair competition on the Congolese market. Unless the U.S. declared itself the military enemy of the Congolese government, there was no reason to believe that this basic trade would stop.

Timberlake said Lumumba was acting on the direction of "anti-white, pro-communist" Ghanaian advisors. But throughout Nkrumah's socialist rule of Ghana, the U.S. continued to buy cocoa at will and Ghana continued to import American products. In fact, the price of cocoa fell while the price of U.S. manufactured goods rose in the Nkrumah years, so that the time that a U.S. worker had to spend on the assembly line in order to earn enough money to buy his youngster a chocolate bar actually diminished.

In socializing their country, the Ghanaians certainly wrought inefficiency upon themselves. But this was the Ghanaians' problem, and they eventually reacted by dumping Nkrumah.* Under Mobutu, the Congo would suffer even

*A lot of people have speculated about the CIA's role in the coup that overthrew Nkrumah in 1966. The Church Committee would have learned about that, but didn't report on it. The most authoritative source available is probably John Stockwell, a veteran CIA officer in Africa, in his 1978 book, *In Search of Enemies* (W. W. Norton & Co.). Stockwell states that the CIA's civilian oversight board, the 40 Committee, rejected every

more stringent government controls and more inefficient production, but because of repeated intervention by the U.S. and its allies, Mobutu couldn't be dumped.

As for the possibility that the Congo would become a permanent Soviet satellite, the example of Ghana provides a good answer for that, too. Nkrumah's overthrow was no doubt mourned by the Soviets. But they didn't respond militarily. They probably weren't capable of doing so effectively. Nor would they have been in the Congo. The Soviet military and civilian advisors whom Nkrumah had invited to Ghana departed hastily, making their way to the airport through crowds of jeering Ghanaians eager to see them go. Eight Soviets were reported killed in the coup.

Back in 1960 (as today), many Third World ambassadors at the U.N. joined the Soviets in regular anti-American propaganda tirades. The apparent naiveté of many Third World countries toward communism could be attributed to their having been exposed to Western colonialism but not yet to Soviet colonialism. Though wrong, their views were understandable. The U.S., however, made no effort to understand. And in the end, the socialist rhetoric was self-defeating. The leftist propaganda only drowned out any voices of reason in the U.S. Hawkish tempers were inflamed.

The Soviets were indeed hypocritically selective in their support of self-determination for nations. They had shown no concern for self-determination when they trampled on the rights of Hungary a few years earlier. But in accusing the U.S. and other Western countries of violent, unprovoked intervention in the Congo, the Soviets were absolutely right. And in the end, for all the Soviet speechmaking, it was the U.S. that deceitfully manipulated the U.N. in the Congo.

IMMEDIATELY after Devlin's "classic communist takeover" cable arrived on August 18, Dulles relayed Devlin's thoughts to the National Security Council. Dulles declared that Lumumba was "in Soviet pay" (indeed, Lumumba apparently *was* in Soviet pay, as well as in U.S. pay and Belgian pay—as were his political rivals).

Eisenhower had just held a press conference in which he said that the U.N. was the chief hope for restoring stability to the Congo. It would appear

proposal for a U.S. action to oust Nkrumah. It encouraged the CIA station chief in Accra to keep close contact with Nkrumah's high-ranking potential enemies in order to gather intelligence, which, of course, is the CIA's job. The station chief did it well, and apparently had advance knowlege of the coup, which allowed the U.S. to recover some Soviet equipment. But Stockwell says, "CIA cables and dispatches infer that all contacts with the plotters were undertaken solely to obtain intelligence on what they were doing." That is a perfectly appropriate role for the CIA to play. The important thing is that the coup apparently was conceived, developed, and carried out independent of the U.S., and it certainly appeared, on the ground at the time, to have the overwhelming support of the Ghanaian people.

the president was lying to the voters. At the National Security Council, he responded to Dulles's announcement with an implicit or explicit order for Lumumba's forceful removal, by assassination if necessary. The exact words weren't recorded. Robert Johnson, NSC staff member from 1951 to 1962, testified before the Church Committee that Eisenhower's words "came across to me as an order for the assassination of Lumumba. . . . There was no discussion; the meeting simply moved on. I remember my sense of that moment quite clearly because the president's statement came as a great shock to me."

To us all, one would hope. What would the reaction be to news that Lumumba had ordered a member of his U.N. mission to kill Eisenhower? Lumumba had much more to fear from the U.S. than the U.S. had to fear from Lumumba. Yet there is no evidence that Lumumba sought to bring harm to a single American head. Nor is there evidence that the Soviets committed any violence during the crisis, or threatened to start any. (The Soviets certainly have initiated violence and employed assassination elsewhere—which is something the U.S. could marshal international outrage against much more effectively if our own hands were clean.)

Under Secretary of State Dillon, recalling that same August 18 National Security Council meeting, didn't remember that Eisenhower's assassination order was "clear cut," though he allowed that Eisenhower might have said, "We will have to do whatever is necessary to get rid of him [Lumumba]." Dillon also said that Dulles could have reasonably accepted such a remark from Eisenhower as an assassination order, "because he [Dulles] felt very strongly that we should not involve the president directly in things of this nature. And he was perfectly willing to take the responsibility personally."

Here we ascend to yet a scarier plateau. Dulles may have been acting on his own. To find in the U.S. Constitution authorization for the CIA director to "take the responsibility" for murdering other countries' prime ministers is even more difficult than to find authorization for the president himself to do so.

The day after Eisenhower talked to the National Security Council, CIA deputy director Richard Bissell cabled station chief Devlin to go ahead and replace by force the legally constituted government of the Congo—a nation with which the United States was not at war and had no cause to be.

RATHER than risk direct action, the U.S.'s representatives first sought to work through others. As they sold their program, they presented the Congo's neophyte leaders with a first lesson in the American philosophy of constitutional government. Ambassador Timberlake and his deputy, Frank Carlucci (who rose to a high CIA post under President Carter and became number two man in the Defense Department under President Reagan) visited Joseph Kasavubu, Lumumba's chief political rival. Kasavubu had accepted the role of president, or ceremonial head of state, in a prein-

dependence compromise with Lumumba, who had beaten Kasavubu in the election.

Now Timberlake and Carlucci asked Kasavubu to stage a coup. He refused.* Then Devlin, the CIA man and thus more sneaky about it, met with President Kasavubu's Congolese allies, who approached Kasavubu and proposed that Kasavubu authorize *them* to kill Lumumba. The Church Committee didn't disclose who these allies were, though considering Devlin's close relationship with Mobutu, it's a good guess he was one of them.

By this time, Mobutu was out of journalism and back in the army as a colonel. The Church Committee report refers to Devlin's meeting "a key Congolese leader"—in her book Mrs. Kalb flatly identifies him as Mobutu—and says Devlin "urged arrest or other more permanent disposal" not just of Lumumba, but also of his allies, Deputy Prime Minister Antoine Gizenga and Minister of Education Pierre Mulele. This was no longer just an assassination; it was to be a full-scale bloodletting worthy of a Shakespearean curtainfall.

The fledgling Congolese leaders, so desperately needing an example to follow, were being instructed by the world's leading proponent of liberty and democracy on how a political system ought to work: you kill your legally elected rivals and seize power. The prospects of free society in Africa may have been crippled by those discussions as much as by any number of troop-laden aircraft. For awhile, Kasavubu stunningly refused the American entreaties to junk the Congo's six-week-old constitutional democracy, even though to agree would have allowed Kasavubu to take power under American protection.

"I confess I have not yet learned [the] secret of spurring Kasavubu to action," Timberlake moaned to Washington by cable on August 19.

*When I first called Carlucci to inquire about this, he asserted that asking Kasavubu to oust Lumumba was "very different from asking him to stage a coup. Kasavubu had the statutory authority to dismiss the prime minister" under the Congolese constitution, Carlucci said. A search of several libraries turned up only one set of excerpts from the original Congolese constitution, in a book edited by Jean-Paul Sartre, admittedly with a pro-Lumumba bias. A reading of the pertinent clauses reveals that while Article 22 did give the president the power to "appoint and dismiss the prime minister," Articles 17, 19, and 20 make pretty clear that this power was ceremonial, much as the power the queen of England has to perform similar chores. (Carlucci had compared it to the stronger power wielded by the president of France, but the words I found didn't bear him out.) Read the relevant clauses in a second phone call, Carlucci conceded that this had been "an issue at the time," and that it was "not without controversy. The State Department was comfortable in the interpretation that Kasavubu could dismiss Lumumba," he said. He cited an independent legal authority for this interpretation; the authority was a Belgian. All other accounts I have read, both from 1960 and more recently, justify the version I have presented. The Sartre book is *Lumumba Speaks*, published by Little, Brown & Company in 1972.

Lumumba soon revealed what it took to spur *him* to action. That happened when he sought U.N. assistance to oust the Belgians, and to establish his government's authority in the two secessionist provinces, Katanga (copper-cobalt) and Kasai (diamonds). The U.N. command refused. It said the U.N. troops were there to maintain peace, which seemed to mean the status quo, which seemed—to Lumumba at least—to mean secession. To put down the secession, Lumumba turned to the Soviets, who promised one hundred trucks and ten aircraft, with crews and weapons. Pending their arrival, Lumumba requisitioned five leftover Belgian civilian aircraft, and immediately dispatched an expedition to Kasai to restore authority over the independence-minded Baluba tribe. The expedition was then to move on to Katanga to rope in the Balunda. That was August 24, 1960.

Back in the U.S., where only a few college professors understood the difference between Baluba and Balunda, the secessionist movements came to dominate intellectual debate between liberals and conservatives. The liberals wanted the mining revenues to benefit all the Congolese people, and they misunderstood this to be the position of the Bakongo, Bangala, and Lulua tribes. The conservatives wanted to help local entrepreneurs avert socialization of their property, and they misunderstood this to be the position of the Balunda and Baluba tribes.

Thus, from his office in New York, William F. Buckley, Jr., looked at Katanga and saw the spirit of Edmund Burke in the eyes of the secessionist Balunda, while across town Eleanor Roosevelt favored the Bangala and Bakongo to move in. The situation in Kasai was less publicized, but in general, the followers of Mr. Buckley championed the Baluba while those of Mrs. Roosevelt sided with the Lulua. It was as if a production by the Topeka High School Thespian Society of a locally written drama were suddenly invaded by Edmund Wilson, Walter Kerr, and Rona Barrett, all arguing over the proper objectives of the theater and seizing one or another amateur actor by the collar, and shaking and haranguing the poor student to twist his performance to justify a particular theatrical philosophy. The pressure on men like Lumumba, Kasavubu, and Tshombe must have been enormous, if they weren't too bewildered to understand it.

Bewildering things happened. Lumumba one day demanded that the U.N. remove all white troops from its peacekeeping force, then a few days later withdrew the demand. He belatedly apologized for the beating up of eight Canadian U.N. workers by Congolese troops. He closed down a newspaper that had written unflatteringly of him. The Soviet Union delivered a shipload of wheat to Leopoldville, only to discover that no one had ever built a flour mill in the Congo. The embarrassed Russians had to reload the wheat and ship it out again. Far more serious, Lumumba's military expedition against the Baluba in Kasai turned into a massacre of hundreds, maybe thousands, of civilians.

And oh, if Mrs. Roosevelt had known what the U.S. was really up to! Even Buckley might have blanched. Dulles himself cabled Devlin (the CIA

station chief who would soon become Tempelsman's mining and mineral agent) giving him almost carte blanche, and $100,000 of the taxpayers' money, to wreak havoc. Lumumba's "removal must be an urgent and prime objective," Dulles cabled. He authorized Devlin not only to stage a coup, but to take "even more aggressive action if it can remain covert.... We realize that targets of opportunity may present themselves to you," he said, and authorized Devlin to "carry out any crash programs on which you do not have the opportunity to consult HQS."

A CIA scientist, Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, was assigned to produce a poison that, in the words of his testimony to the Church Committee, "was supposed to produce a disease that was... indigenous to that area and that could be fatal... either kill the individual or incapacitate him so severely that he would be out of action." Then reports came that Lumumba, visiting an airport, had encountered some American U.N. workers who had been beaten up by Congolese soldiers, and had failed to aid them. Ambassador Timberlake cabled Washington that he hoped the incident "has removed any lingering trace of the fiction that we are dealing with a civilized people or a responsible government in the Congo."

In early September, something swung Kasavubu over to the U.S. idea of dumping the democracy. Maybe it was the arrival of the first Soviet planes and advisors, maybe the bloodletting in Kasai, maybe continued pressure from the U.S. But on September 5, he went on national radio and announced he was dismissing Lumumba as prime minister. He said he had asked Joseph Ileo, another politician the Americans had been talking to a lot, to form a new government.

Not only was this coup prompted by the U.S., it was openly assisted by the U.N. Before going on the air, Kasavubu had discussed his plans for at least two days with the highest ranking U.N. official in the Congo. By this time, Ralph Bunche had resigned in disgust, but he had been replaced by Andrew Cordier—another American. Moreover, the Kasavubu aide who had given Cordier full details about the coup in advance was A. A. J. van Bilsen—a Belgian!

After Kasavubu made his announcement, Cordier had U.N. troops seal off the radio station and all airports. The radio station and the airport are about the only physical manifestations that many Third World governments have, and seizure of them is often all it takes to carry out a coup. Cordier said the seizure of the radio station and airports in the Congo was a neutral act, but, in fact, it wasn't neutral. Kasavubu could and did cross the Congo River and use the radio in Brazzaville, the capital of the Congo Republic, which three weeks earlier had become independent from France and was still closely tied to Paris. Lumumba had no radio. Moreover, Lumumba's most loyal troops and political supporters were out-country, and with the airports closed, they couldn't reach Leopoldville. Leopoldville was Kasavubu's base, and was already filled with the troops most loyal to his government.

Still, Lumumba fired back. He declared that he was sacking Kasavubu—

something he was no more empowered to do than Kasavubu had been empowered to sack him. Then Lumumba went before both houses of parliament. Once more, to the consternation of the U.S. manipulators, the elected parliamentarians threw their overwhelming support to Lumumba as prime minister. But they also insisted on holding on to the constitutional democracy by refusing to recognize Lumumba's firing of Kasavubu. So it went for a week, confusingly, noisily, but peacefully.

Except that all during that week, Joseph Mobutu had been meeting intensely with Kasavubu at the president's house, as well as with Devlin and other Americans, and with Davister. On September 10, Cordier, the American U.N. official, produced $1 million in U.N. funds to meet the back pay owed to the garrison of Congolese troops in Leopoldville, and Mobutu and two generals personally passed it out. The loyalty of troops was bought with U.N. cash.

On September 12, Lumumba was arrested and held for three hours by troops loyal to Mobutu, then released. The next day, Kasavubu fired the army commander, who reportedly was responsible for Lumumba's release, and installed Mobutu in his place. On September 14, Mobutu announced that the army, now under *his* command, was taking over the government until January 1. Kasavubu, apparently neither surprised nor upset, cooperated by announcing that he was suspending parliament.

This obviously coordinated plot was almost certainly American in origin. Though Mrs. Kalb's cables contain no smoking-gun-type admissions of U.S. responsibility, she reports from other sources that the army takeover was financed by Western governments. Two State Department officials who worked intensely on Congo-Zaire policy have said* that the U.S. designed the September 14 coup and selected Mobutu for the job. The State Department's official document, "Analytical Chronology of the Congo Crises," tacitly admits this. The document refers to a plan "to bring about the overthrow of Lumumba and install a pro-Western government." Then it says, "operations under this plan were gradually put into effect by the CIA."†

Ambassador Timberlake was exuberant at the collapse of Congolese democracy. "Even the local clerks who worked for Lumumbavitch are being methodically arrested," he cabled Washington cheerily on September 16, as the Congolese finally learned the meaning of political freedom, U.S.-style. Timberlake described Mobutu—who after a decade of public service would credibly come to call himself the third-richest man in the world—as "completely honest." And he accurately forecast that the next day Mobutu would kick the Soviet and other East bloc embassies out of the Congo.

Then Mobutu, at Devlin's suggestion, tried to arrest Lumumba. But Ghan-

*In interviews with me, under a promise their names would not be disclosed.

†See Stephen R. Weissman, "The CIA Covert Action in Zaire and Angola," *Political Science Quarterly*, Summer 1979.

aian U.N. troops guarding the house where Lumumba was staying barred Mobutu's men. The U.S. and Belgium had lost command of the supposedly neutral U.N. mission. Rajeshwar Dayal, an Indian diplomat, who had taken over from Cordier as chief, declared that he was working on a compromise that might restore Lumumba to the government.

Washington jumped ten feet at the mere possibility. On September 19, agent Devlin received a cable announcing that Dr. Gottlieb, the poison specialist, would be there in a week, using the code name "Joe from Paris." Dulles sent a personal note saying, "We wish give every possible support in eliminating Lumumba from any possibility resuming governmental position." Washington had just supported a U.N. resolution banning anyone's sending soldiers or weapons to the Congo. The resolution passed. But apparently, in Washington's eyes, Gottlieb and his little vials didn't count.

Devlin told Mobutu to arrest and murder Deputy Premier Gizenga. Mobutu's troops hauled Gizenga in, but U.N. troops intervened and freed him. Lumumba was under effective house arrest, protected by a cordon of U.N. troops surrounding his quarters. Devlin tried to infiltrate the tight ring of associates who visited Lumumba, hoping to slip him the poison, but failed. One effort, the Church Committee learned, was to have someone inject the poison into Lumumba's toothpaste. Here again, the simplest knowledge of Africa might have saved the CIA some trouble; Africans commonly don't use a toothbrush or toothpaste, but clean their teeth with a piece of soft, aromatic wood known as a chew stick.

Devlin asked Washington for an additional CIA man to help the infiltration. In case it failed, he also requested that "HQS pouch soonest high powered foreign make rifle with telescopic scope and silencer. Hunting good here when lights right," he said.

With the appointment of Rajeshwar Dayal, a real neutralist, to replace Bunche and Cordier in running the U.N. operation, the U.N.'s active cooperation with U.S. policy stopped. Dayal recognized only Kasavubu as a legitimate Congolese authority. He refused to choose between Mobutu and Lumumba. In New York, the U.S. warned Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld, Dayal's boss, that if the U.N. tried any compromise that would restore Lumumba to power, the U.S. would make "drastic revision" of its Congo policy, implying unilateral military action. The U.S. would not tolerate the return of Lumumba, the only man ever to hold office by legitimate vote of the Congolese people.

The U.S. State Department thought itself much more capable than the Congolese voters of choosing a suitable prime minister for that country, though there was debate about who it should be. The department's Charles Bohlen agreed with Hammarskjöld that Joseph Ileo was the man. Timberlake objected that Ileo didn't have the "necessary drive and flair," and proposed Cyrille Adoula. Adoula, who had come up through the CIA-connected labor unions, was another member of the small elite recognized by the whites as

leaders. The department suggested yet a third choice, but Timberlake insisted on Adoula.

Timberlake also objected to the State Department's plan to reconvene parliament as a vehicle for legitimatizing its appointment. Timberlake was nervous that the parliamentarians might rebel against Washington's stooge. He pointed out that Lumumba "would have to be allowed to participate in session of parliament as a deputy. There is always danger that no matter how firm opposition line up, Lumumba oratory plus threats can turn it into victory for himself." In other words, if the Congolese were allowed even the least say in the matter of who would be their prime minister, they might once more, as always in the past, pick Lumumba instead of rubber-stamping Washington's candidate.

Then Timberlake added a wonderfully (if unintentionally) ironic observation, that the Congolese lacked the "ability to produce anything resembling democratic government until they have been taught.... They obviously cannot practice something they do not understand.... Furthermore, I do not believe democracy can be imposed on any people overnight..."

Fortunately, a military dictatorship could be imposed, and Timberlake assured Washington that the "town was crawling with" Mobutu's troops. In mid-November, they did battle with U.N. forces, leaving four dead, in a successful effort to eject the Ghanaian ambassador. On the night of November 27, sensing that the stalemate was about to be resolved against him unless he acted, Lumumba had some friends sneak him past the troops who were guarding him. He took off for Stanleyville to try to regroup his political forces. His escape touched off a massive manhunt, and Devlin reported that he helped Mobutu's government set up roadblocks to catch the fugitive en route. Now that Lumumba was out of U.N. protection, Mobutu's men with Devlin's help could get their hands on him.

Lumumba was captured and returned to Leopoldville, where U.S. news agencies photographed him badly beaten and bloody. Ambassador Timberlake voiced hope that the news agencies "could be prevailed upon to suppress" the film, but it was shown anyway. Timberlake continued to try to organize a civilian government around Adoula.

The African and Asian members of the U.N. had become more and more upset over Lumumba's treatment, and Timberlake suggested that "a government with more claim to legitimacy [than Mobutu's] would make it easier" for Washington to deal with this neutral bloc. Besides, there was now an opposite pole around which the socialist countries could cluster, because Lumumba's aide-de-camp, Antoine Gizenga, proclaimed that he was now running the Congo from a new capital in Stanleyville. A planeload of Soviet aid, some of it military, arrived there.

That Soviet planeload, however, was a doubtful match for the U.S.'s one-man reinforcement squad that had been sent in answer to Devlin's call for

help. Code named WI/ROGUE, the new U.S. agent was described by the CIA as an "essentially stateless soldier of fortune, a forger and former bank-robber . . . a man with a rather unsavory reputation, who would try anything once, at least." Washington described him as "a general utility agent [assigned to] (a) organize and conduct a surveillance team; (b) intercept packages; (c) blow up bridges; and (d) execute other assignments requiring positive action. His utilization is not to be restricted to Leopoldville."

The CIA instructed Devlin that WI/ROGUE "is indeed aware of the precepts of right and wrong, but if he is given an assignment which may be morally wrong in the eyes of the world, but necessary because his case officer ordered him to carry it out, then it is right, and he will dutifully undertake appropriate action for its execution without pangs of conscience. In a word, he can rationalize all actions." This is the man Washington sent to teach the Congolese about democratic government.

WI/ROGUE promptly went to Stanleyville and unwittingly tried to recruit another CIA operative, code named QJ/WIN, to join an "execution squad" for a salary of $300 a month. QJ/WIN didn't tell WI/ROGUE that he was already part of an execution squad, and working for the same government. Instead, QJ/WIN just declined the offer and reported it to Devlin. It is not known who else WI/ROGUE may have recruited or whom he may have executed.

Meanwhile, relations with the U.N. worsened as Mobutu began flexing his muscles and sabotaging the U.N. force's movements. Under U.N. and other international pressure, he still held Lumumba under relatively humane conditions. But on January 13, 1961, that changed. There were rumors of a pro-Lumumba mutiny in the army. President Kennedy was scheduled to take office in Washington, and Mobutu may have suspected that Kennedy would be less partial in Congolese politics than Eisenhower was. Mrs. Kalb reports that Kasavubu tried to strike a last-second deal with Lumumba, whereby Lumumba would have accepted a subordinate role in government; she says Lumumba turned it down.

At any rate, Lumumba never saw a Kennedy presidency. On January 17, Mobutu and Kasavubu did to Lumumba something just as bad as turning him over to WI/ROGUE, QJ/WIN, or Dr. Gottlieb. They packed Lumumba, and two aides who had been arrested with him, on a plane to Katanga. They sent along some goons who bruised the prisoners up pretty thoroughly en route. And they delivered the three men to Moise Tshombe, head of the Balunda, against whom Lumumba had recently sent an ill-disciplined and massacre-prone army.

The last reliable accounts of Lumumba alive came from Swedish U.N. troops at the Elisabethville airport that day. They reported seeing the prime minister being kicked and beaten by a group including Tshombe's soldiers and their Belgian advisors.

On February 13, Tshombe's government announced that Lumumba and

the two aides had escaped and been murdered by villagers. Tshombe declined to identify the village—for fear of reprisals, he said. In November, a U.N. commission reported that Lumumba and his aides were probably killed right after they arrived in Elisabethville on January 17, probably in Tshombe's presence, possibly by Belgians. It blamed Kasavubu for turning the three men over to their enemies in the first place. Unaware of the unrelenting pressure on Kasavubu and Mobutu, the commission didn't cite the role of the United States.