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CIA during the Congo Crisis

Political Action and Paramilitary Operations, 1960-1968

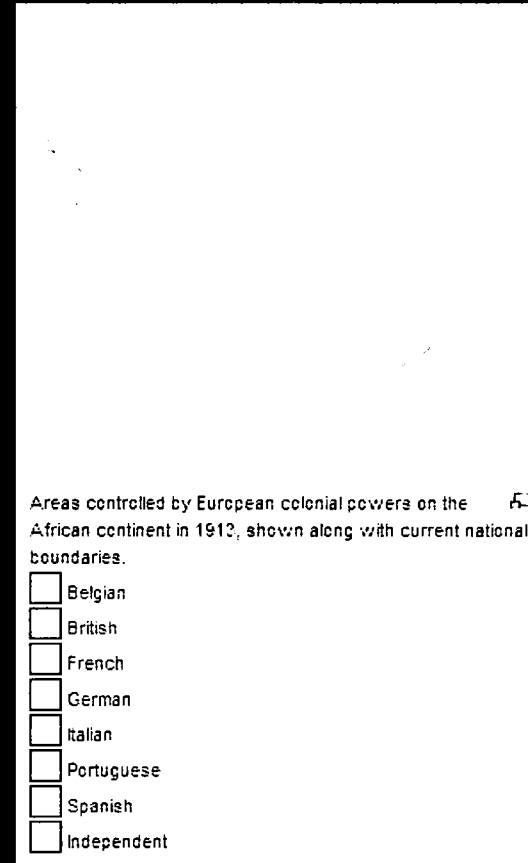
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Belgium and the "Scramble for Africa"



King Leopold II



Areas controlled by European colonial powers on the African continent in 1912, shown along with current national boundaries.

- Belgian
- British
- French
- German
- Italian
- Portuguese
- Spanish
- Independent

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**“The wind of change is blowing through this continent.
Whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness
is a political fact.”**

--British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, February 1960



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“The President observed 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...in many cases [people] are now saying that the Communists are thinking of the common man while the United States is dedicated to supporting outmoded regimes.”

**--President Eisenhower's remarks at NSC meeting,
August 1960**

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Communist Strategy in Africa

Paid little attention to Africa before 1960

By early 1965, Communist countries had:

- Established over 100 diplomatic, consular, and trade missions
- Extended over \$850 million in economic grants and credits
- Set up front organizations, cover entities, agents of influence, and clandestine assets
- Provided assistance to anti-Western groups directly and through proxy allies

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Congo as a Cold War Prize



Huge, newly independent country strategically situated in contested region
Valuable natural resources

“If Congo deteriorates and Western influence fades rapidly, Bloc will have a feast and will not need to work very hard for it.”

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The Operational Environment

>905,000 square miles, 1/4th the size of
United States

14 million+ population; <100,000
Europeans

>200 ethnic groups and 4 major tribes

<20 college graduates in entire country

Heavily dependent on Belgians to
maintain infrastructure, services, security

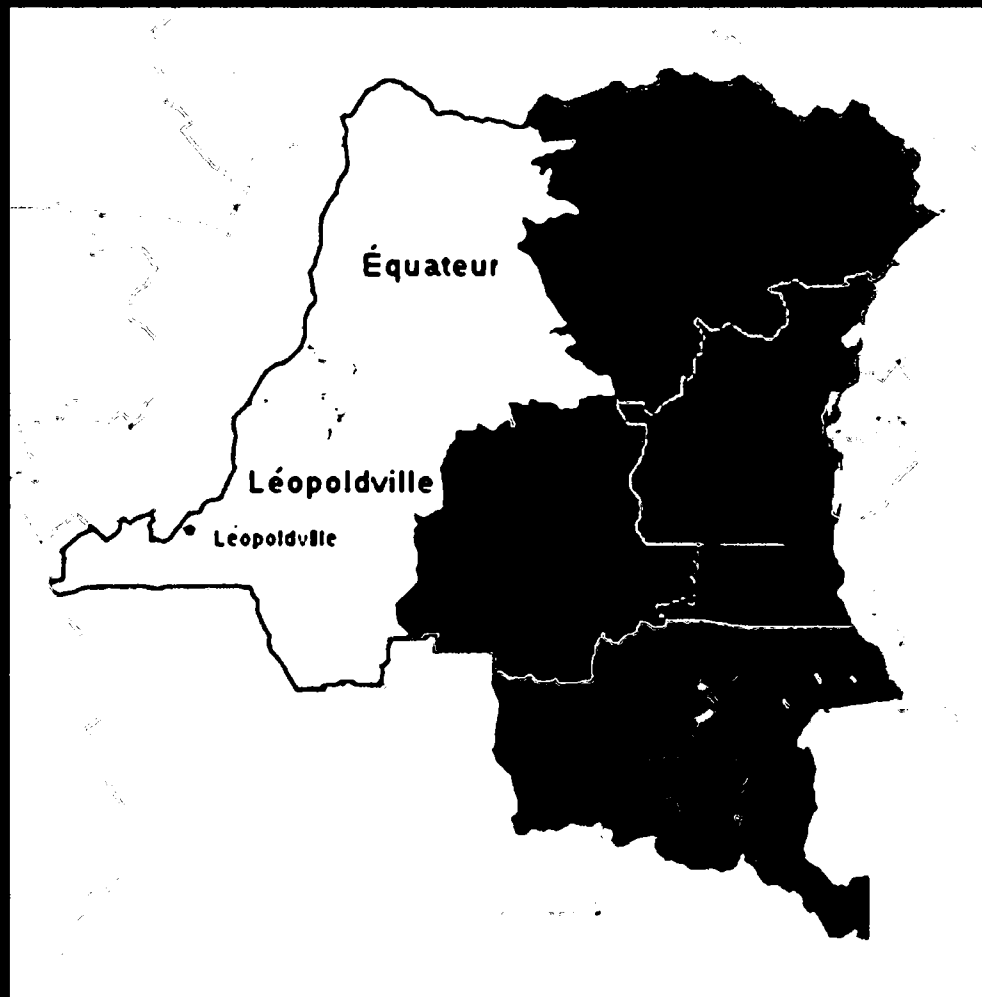
Army poorly trained/equipped/led

Provinces had much de facto autonomy

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Independent but Not a Nation



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The Key Policy Question

“The issue is whether we were right in favoring a unified [Congo]....[W]ere we right in really accepting Lumumba’s vision, or should we have accepted the advice of our Belgian friends and our British friends, [and supported the independence of] the wealthiest province.”

--Frank Carlucci, senior diplomat at US Embassy in Leopoldville


















“Every time I look at this truly discouraging mess, I shudder over the painfully slow, frustrating and costly job ahead for the UN and US if the Congo is to really be helped. On the other hand we can’t let go of this bull’s tail.”

--US Ambassador Clare Timberlake

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Congo Crisis Belligerents

Belligerents		
 Congo (Stanleyville)	 Katanga	 Congo (Léopoldville)
 Simba Maoists	 South Kasai	Supported by:
Supported by:^[1]	 Belgium	
 Soviet Union	 South Africa (Mercenaries)	
 Cuba	 Rhodesia (Mercenaries)	
 United Arab Republic		
 FLN/Algeria		
 Congo-Brazzaville		
 Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika)		
 Burundi		
 People's Republic of China		
 ONUC		

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Congo Crisis Leaders

Commanders and leaders

 Patrice Lumumba †

 Antoine Gizenga

 Pierre Mulele

 Gaston Soumialot

 Che Guevara

 Dag Hammarskjöld †

 King Baudouin I


 Moïse Tshombe

 Albert Kalonji

 Mike Hoare

 Jean Schramme

 Joseph Kasavubu

 Joseph-Désiré Mobutu

 Cyrille Adoula

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Major Players in the Congo



Clockwise:

Patrice Lumumba

Antoine Gizenga

Pierre Mulele

Joseph Kasavubu

Joseph Mobutu

Moise Tshombe

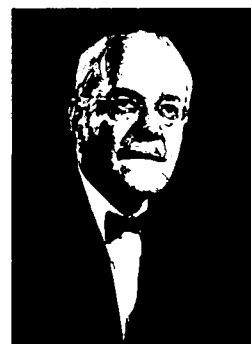
Cyrille Adoula



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Major Players in the US



Top: Eisenhower, Kennedy, Harriman, Dulles, McCone
Bottom: Bissell, Tweedy, Fields, Devlin

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Milestone Events, Pre-Independence

1958: Adoula, Ileo, & Lumumba found
Mouvement National Congolais; later splits
into two groups

1959: Large riots in Leopoldville (Jan.) and
Stanleyville (Oct.)

18-27 January 1960: Brussels Roundtable
Conference on independence process

22 May 1960: General election; Lumumba's
group wins largest number of seats

23-24 June 1960: Lumumba becomes prime
minister, Kasavubu elected president

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Milestone Events, 1960

30 June: Congo becomes independent; dueling speeches at ceremony highlight divisions

5 July: Army mutinies after Lumumba declines to raise its pay; Mobutu soon appointed Chief of Staff

10 July: Belgium sends troops to Katanga

11 July: Katanga secedes

14 July: UN agrees to send peacekeeping force, calls for Belgium to withdraw troops

27 July: Lumumba meets with US officials in DC

8 August: Kasai Province breaks away

14 August: White House approves regime change operation; Station starts it on 27th

17 August: Lumumba asks for Soviet military aid; starts arriving within days

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Milestone Events, 1960 (cont.)

5 September: Kasavubu dismisses Lumumba, who later declares action unconstitutional & announces Kasavubu's removal from office

14 September: Mobutu takes over government, appoints College of Commissioners; Lumumba placed under UN protection

13 November: Gizenga declares establishment of rebel regime in Stanleyville

27 November: Lumumba flees for Stanleyville; Army captures him on 1 December

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Milestone Events, 1961

17 January: Lumumba transferred to Katangan custody and executed with two associates

8 February: Kasavubu returns to power

21 February: UN authorizes use of force to end civil war

28 May: Provincial leaders agree to federal system

2 August: Kasavubu names Adoula PM, Gizenga DPM, Gbenye IM, Bomboko FM; 1st UN-recognized government since Lumumba's ouster

August-September: Large UN operations in Katanga; Tshombe flees to Zambia

30 December: Kasai Province secession ends after government military campaign

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Milestone Events, 1962-64

January 1962: Adoula removes Gizenga from office

15 January 1963: Tshombe announces end of Katangan secession

September 1963: Kasavubu dissolves Parliament, declares martial law

Late 1963-early 1964: Eastern rebellions develop, receive Soviet and Chinese support

1 July 1964: UN troops withdraw from Congo

9 July 1964: Kasavubu replaces Adoula with Tshombe as PM

August-November 1964: Stanleyville takeover and hostage crisis

5 September 1964: "People's Republic of the Congo" declared in Stanleyville

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Milestone Events, 1965-67

24 April 1965: Che Guevara and Cuban expeditionaries arrive to support eastern rebellion; leave in November disillusioned

14 October 1965: Kasavubu dismisses Tshombe as PM

25 November 1965: Mobutu takes over government

July 1966 and November 1967: Two mutinies in Kisangani are crushed

30 June 1967: Phase-out of CIA PM programs begins; personnel withdrawn from fronts; assistance continues under DoD MAP

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CIA's Presence in Africa in 1960

Africa Division only one year old

Few stations in Sub-Saharan countries

Most opened in previous five years

Very small staffs at most of them

Leopoldville Station opened in 1951

- Very small staff
- Covered most of equatorial Africa
- Grew rapidly in 3 months after independence

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State's View of Lumumba

“Despite charges by the Belgians and his Congolese opponents that Lumumba is a Communist or Communist sympathizer, we have nothing to substantiate this allegation.”

--INR, 25 July 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.”

--Embassy Leopoldville, 26 July 1960

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“When [Lumumba] was in the State Department meeting...he would never look you in the eye. He looked up at the sky. And a tremendous flow of words came out...his words didn't ever have any relation to the particular things we wanted to discuss....You had a feeling that he was a person that was gripped by the fervor that I can only characterize as messianic...he was just not a rational being...the impression that was left was...very bad, that this was an individual whom it was impossible to deal with. And the feelings of the government as a result of this sharpened very considerably at that time....”

--Undersecretary of State C. Douglas Dillon,
congressional testimony, September 1975

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“[UN Secretary General Dag] Hammarskjold considers Lumumba an impossible person and has suggested that an explanation for his up and down behavior may be that he takes dope.”

--Undersecretary of State C. Douglas Dillon,
recounting recent talk with UN Sec. Gen.
Dag Hammarskjold, August 1960

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The Field's Perspective

“...Congo experiencing classic communist effort [to] take over government. Many forces at work here: Soviets...Communist Party, etc. Although difficult [to] determine major influencing factors to predict outcome [of] struggle for power, decisive period [is] not far off. Whether or not Lumumba [is] actually Commie or just playing Commie game to assist his solidifying power, anti-West forces [are] rapidly increasing power [in] Congo and there may be little time left in which [to] take action to avoid another Cuba.”

--Leopoldville Station to Headquarters,
18 August 1960

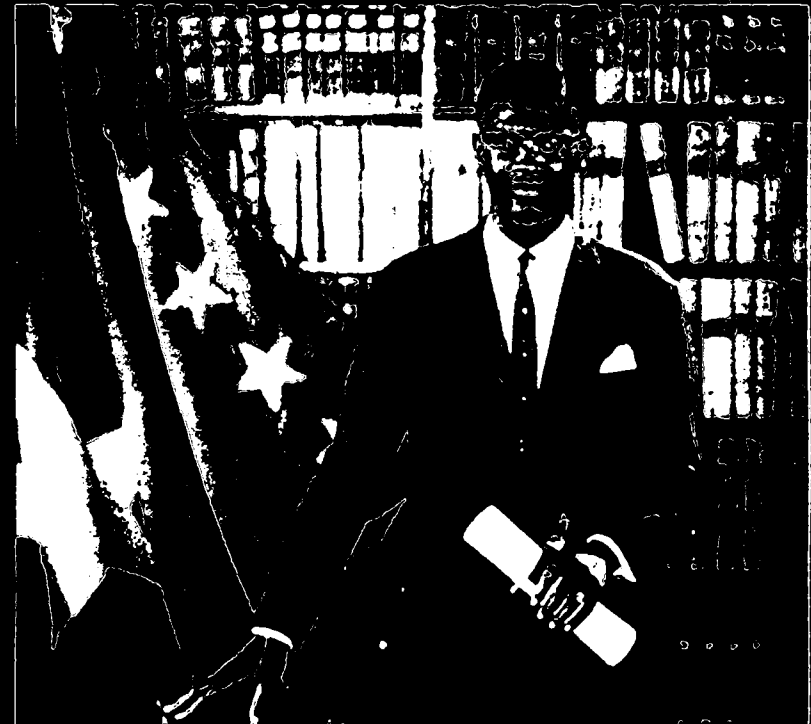
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“A Castro or Worse”

“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...His removal must be an urgent and prime objective...”

--Dulles to Devlin,
26 August 1960



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CA Programs in the Congo

Remove Lumumba from power

Stabilize and support pro-Western
government

Support to Congolese Air Force

Support for tribal leaders and
mercenaries fighting eastern rebellion

Maritime arms interdiction on Lake
Tanganyika

Stanleyville hostage rescue operation

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**“The Agency had put a top priority...
on a range of different methods
of getting rid of Lumumba...of either
destroying him physically, incapacitating
him, or eliminating his political influence.”**

**--Richard Bissell, congressional testimony,
September 1975**

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Covert Action's Non-Lethal Side

“Lumumba moving left, communist influence increasing...Lumumba faced by mounting but disorganized opposition. Recommend program include using Senate as balancing wheel, launch intensive propaganda campaign, expand political action operations and recruit political leaders, further infiltrate Congo government with assets....All Station efforts concentrated this campaign on crash basis.”

--Leopoldville to Headquarters, 11 August 1960

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Regime Change in Operation

Closely coordinated with Embassy, State, NSC
Contacts with oppositionists in Senate who were
developing plot to oust Lumumba through parliamentary
action

Support for Kasavubu's dismissal of Lumumba
Funds to Mobutu to ensure loyalty of key army officers
and support from parliamentary leaders

Street demonstration organized to wreck government
radio station

CIA-financed black radio in Brazzaville calls for revolt
against Lumumba

Station backs unexpected intervention by Mobutu, who
detains Lumumba and recognizes Kasavubu as president
Lumumba's newspaper closed, Bloc communists PNGed
Lumumba ousted in less than a month

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“We wish [to] give every possible support in eliminating Lumumba from any possibility [of] resuming governmental position or if he fails in Leopoldville, setting himself in Stanleyville or elsewhere.”

--Dulles to Leopoldville, 24 September 1960

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“What Mr. Bissell was saying to me was that there was agreement, policy agreement, in Washington that Lumumba must be removed from the position of control and influence in the Congo...and that among the possibilities of that elimination was indeed assassination.”

**--Bronson Tweedy, congressional testimony,
9 October 1975**

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“Joe from Paris”

“[‘Joe’] should arrive approx 27 Sept...will announce himself as ‘Joe from Paris’...It is urgent you should see [‘Joe’] soonest possible after he phones. He will fully identify himself and explain his assignment to you.”

--Headquarters to Devlin,
19 September 1960

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**“No really airtight op possible with assets now available.
Must choose between cancelling op or accepting
calculated risks of varying degrees.”**

--Devlin to Tweedy, 30 September 1960

**“Be assured did not expect objectives be reached in
short period...considering dispatching third country
national operative...if you conclude he suitable
and bearing in mind heavy extra load this places
on you, would expect dispatch [TDY] senior case officer
[to] run this op...under your direction**

--Tweedy to Devlin, 7 October 1960

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“Only direct action we can now stand behind is to support immobilizing or arresting [Lumumba], desirable as more definitive action might be. Any action taken would have to be entirely Congolese.”

--Headquarters to Leopoldville,
15 October 1960

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“[Agent] has not been able [to] penetrate entourage...Although maintaining priority interest [in] this op, able [to] devote only limited amount [of] time, [in] view [of] multiple ops commitments....If case officer sent, recommend HQs pouch soonest high powered foreign-make rifle with telescopic sight and silencer...as hunting rifles [are] now forbidden, would keep rifle in office pending opening of hunting season.”

--Devlin to Tweedy, 17 October 1960

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Lumumba's Fate



Flees UN protection
for Stanleyville
Tribal rivals capture
him with tacit
approval of Belgian
officials on the scene
US was aware of
threat but did not
intervene
Executed, remains
destroyed

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Political Action in Operation

Advice and subsidies to key pro-Western leaders
Funds to Mobutu to ensure loyalty of key army officers and support from parliamentary leaders
Funds to military for arms stockpiles, communications equipment, transport, salary subsidies
Parliamentary maneuvering aided by covert money
Payments to agents of influence in Adoula government
Public relations bureau
Contacts with labor unions and student associations
Newspaper subsidies
Street demonstrations
Radio broadcasts
Influence of UN delegations
Leaflet distribution
Subsidies to tribal leaders
Advice to security service
Penetration of leftist opposition

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Political Action as of Mid-1964

Political support for Leopoldville
government growing

Government weathered Katanga crisis

Broad-based political party still not
organized

NSC allocates more money for party
building and military subsidy

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Political Action in 1965

Money to support Tshombe's successful campaign for unified central government during general elections in March-April
Money to encourage Kasavubu, Binza Group, & others to work with Tshombe
Money to ensure military officers' loyalty
Mobutu's coup on 25 November ended this aspect of the CA program
Emphasis shifts to PM ops to suppress eastern rebellions

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Aviation Operations Timeline

7 November 1962: First foreign pilots and US maintenance officer arrive

14 November 1962: Mobutu and Adoula want planes used in combat operations in Katanga

18 April 1963: DCI approves paramilitary air program

13 February 1964: First air operations, against rebels in Kwilu

May 1964: First air ops against eastern rebels

September 1964: Aviation maintenance company organized

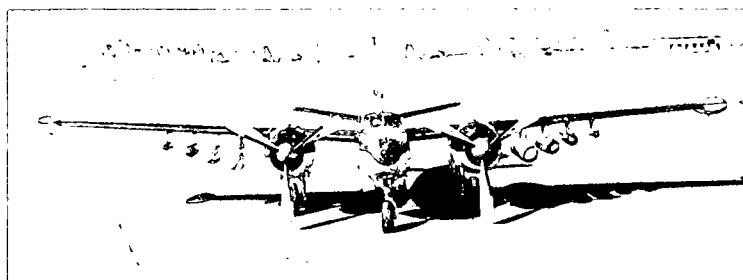
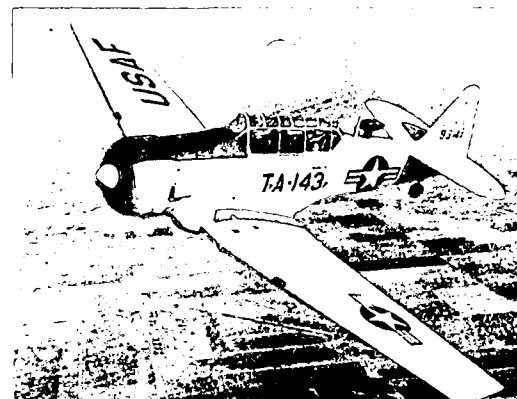
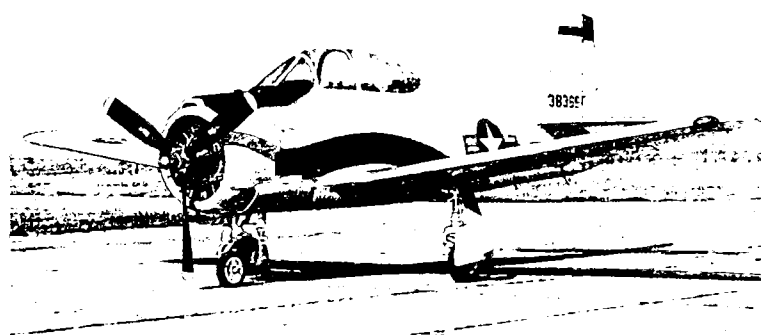
28 March 1966: NSC decides Congo government should pay for air fleet

March-August 1967: Paramilitary air program phase-out implemented, aircraft and aviation maintenance contract turned over to Congolese government

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Aviation Assets



Clockwise :
T-28, T-6, C-46, B-26

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Aviation Inventory

11 T-6s (Belgian & US)	6 CIA officers
13 T-28s	79 foreign pilots
7 B-26s	125 aviation maintenance workers in country (all European except for 3 US managers)
2 C-45s	
3 C-46s	
3 Bell helicopters	
1 Beech twin-engine	

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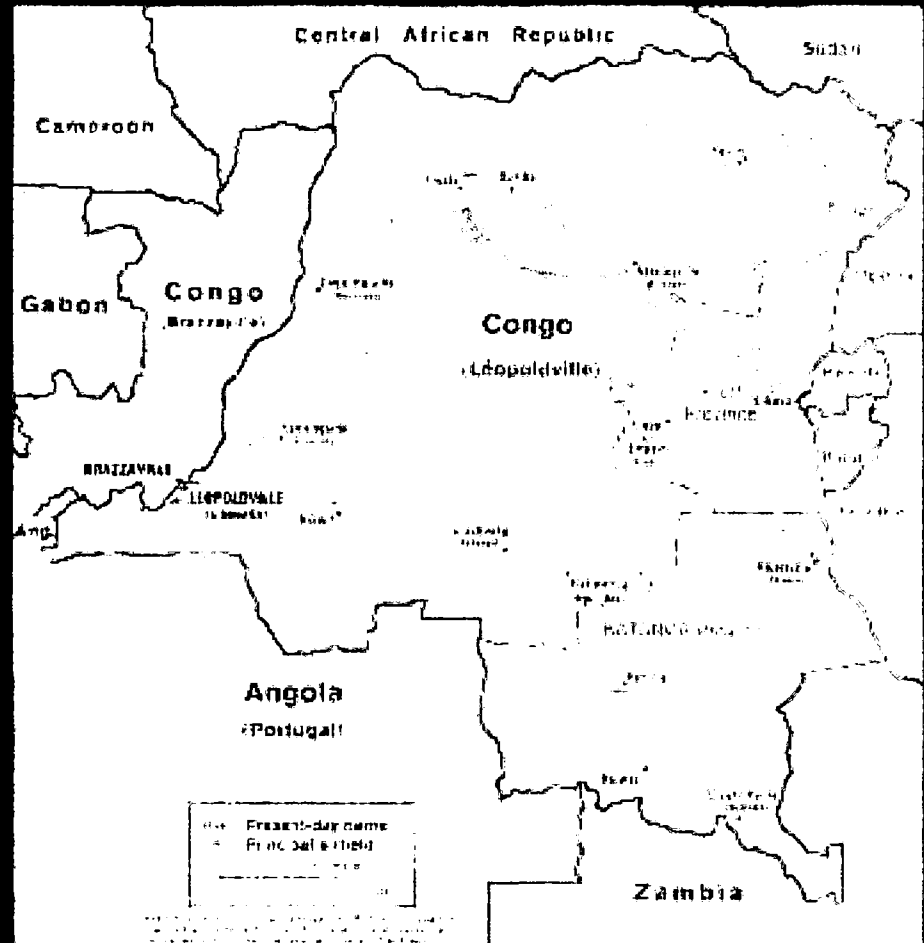
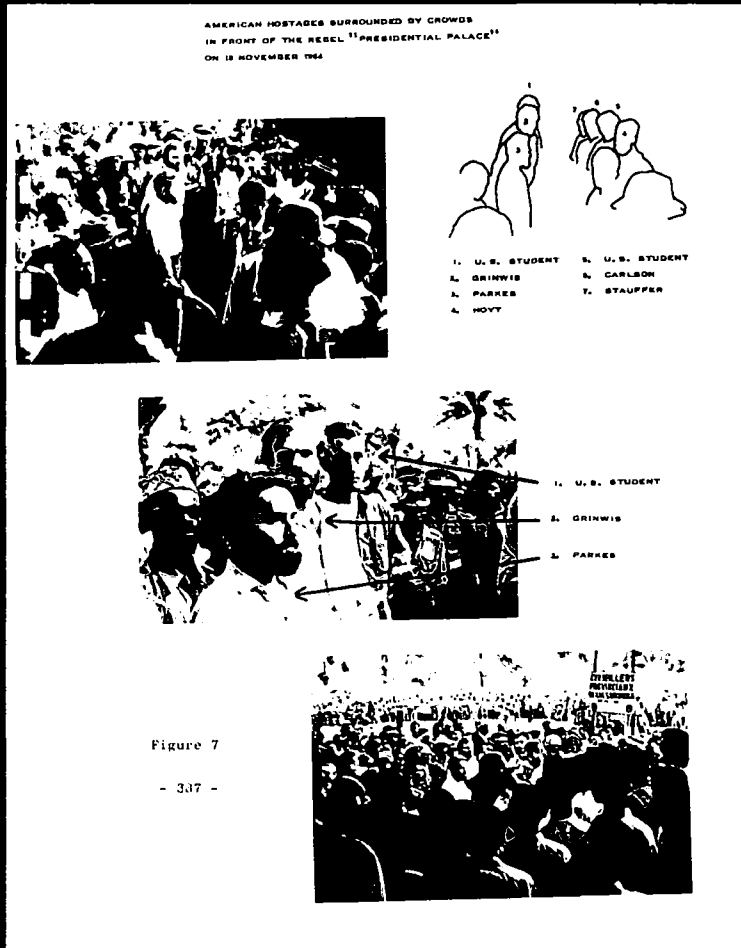
Paramilitary Air Program: Key Points

Original propaganda purpose turns into tactical support to UN,
Congoleses, mercenary ground operations
Reliance on foreign pilots; Congoleses not reliably trained;
Belgians assist with support flights
Difficulties with supplies, field & living conditions,
communications, maintenance,
Staffing issues: getting State to approve PCS slots, competition for
PCS personnel with Southeast Asia requirements
Ambassador Godley is de facto program manager
Press disclosures about pilots raise issue of US involvement
Toughest operations in late 1965-early 1966 because of
Communist training and weapons for rebels
Collaboration with State and Air Force on supply airlifts
Air support to crackdown on mutiny in Katanga in August 1966

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Stanleyville Hostage Rescue



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Operation DRAGON ROUGE



Clockwise: Belgian commandos, C-130 at Stanleyville airport,
Belgian soldier & dead hostages, Belgian evacuees

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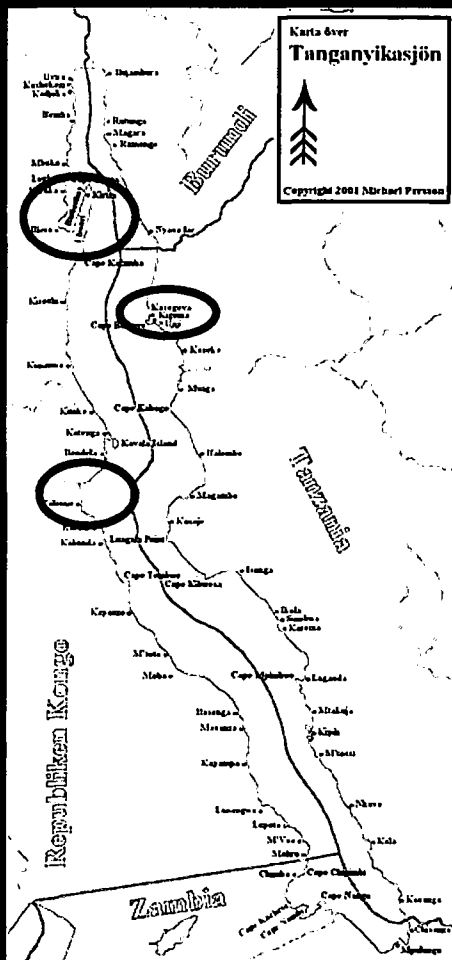
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Eastern War Zone: Lake Tanganyika

Fizi-
Baraka

Kigoma

Albert-
ville



- Longest, 2nd largest, 2nd deepest fresh water lake in the world
- >400 miles long, avg. 30 miles wide
- Heavy fighting in Fizi-Baraka area
- Main MAROPS there and at Albertville and Kigoma

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Arms Interdiction on Lake Tanganyika

December 1964: AF suggests use of boats to interdict arms traffic on lake

February 1965: HQ officers go to Kinshasa to discuss operation

31 March 1965: CIA team deployed

10-16 May 1965: Boats conduct 1st patrol

27 September 1965: Successful amphibious landing at Baraka

7 October 1965: Swift boats flown to Albertville; 1st patrols on 2-3 November

2 January 1967: CIA turns "pocket navy" over to Congolese army

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Maritime Personnel and Inventory

Seven CIA officers and one
communicator

Six 21-foot Seacrafts

One 75-foot trawler

Various small boats

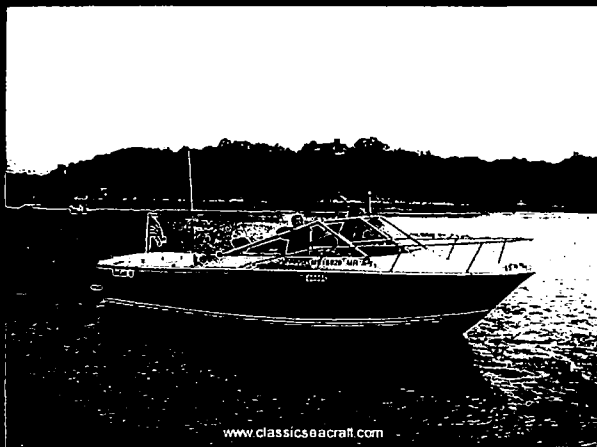
Belgian, French, Rhodesian, South African
crewmembers

Two 50-foot Swifts (radar-equipped for
night operations)

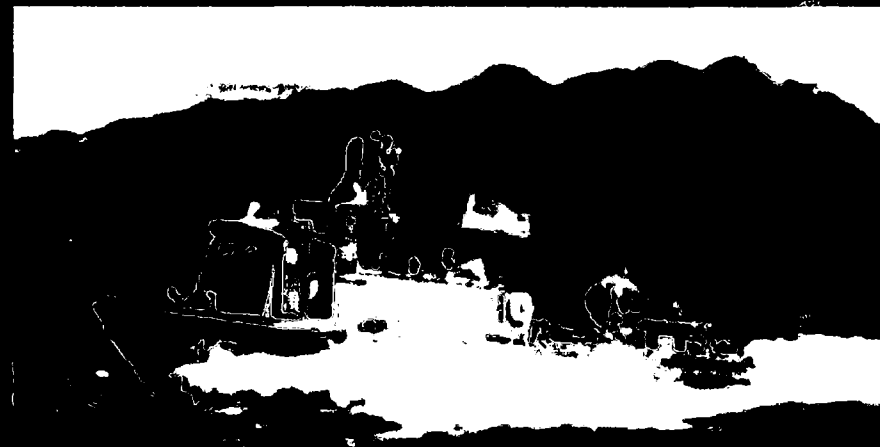
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MAROPS Assets



Seacraft



Swift

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Key Points about MAROPS

Problems finding reliable crews

Policy restrictions on CIA in command

Unpredictable weather required larger, faster vessels

Patrols had psychological effect at first

Interdiction difficult because of long coast to patrol (175 mi.) compared to short distance across (20-30 mi.)

Operational capability at night needed

Swifts with trained crews made significant difference

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Other PM Operations

Secure allegiance of tribal chiefs with
covert payments

Interdict arms flow from Sudan and
Uganda by sealing borders with help
from tribal chiefs, who got aid of various
sorts

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Operational Costs, 1960-67

Political Action	\$5,842,000
Air Operations	\$3,285,000
Maritime Operations	\$2,575,000
Total	\$11,702,000
(1967 to 2014 dollars	\$81,955,000)

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Measuring Effectiveness

“If it hadn’t been for the CIA operation, the Congo would have been splintered and it would have been a tragic continuation of some sort of civil war.”

--Ambassador W. Averill Harriman

“It was only in Langley that the White House, the State Department, and the Pentagon found the peculiar combination of talents necessary to block the creation of a pro-communist regime, recruit the leaders for a pro-American government, and supply the advice and support to enable that government to survive.”

--*New York Times*, 29 April 1966

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Short- and Long-Term Impact

Lumumba becomes a revolutionary martyr

Mobutu is a reliable Cold War ally but also a corrupt autocrat

Congo is temporarily more unified but economically decrepit

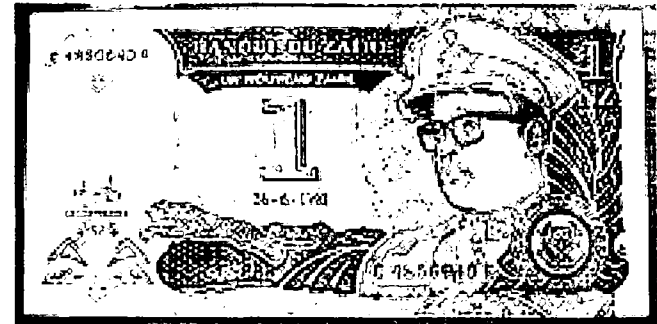
Soviets keep trying to destabilize Africa

CA programs were successes but not always consistent with democratic values

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Our Friend in the Congo... Until the Cold War Ended



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