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Zaire: A Look at a Post-Mobutu Regime



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An Intelligence Assessment

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September 1983*

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Zaire: A Look at a Post-Mobutu Regime



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An Intelligence Assessment

This paper was prepared in the Office of African
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Comments and queries are welcome and may be
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**Zaire:
A Look at a
Post-Mobutu Regime** [Redacted]

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Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 17 August 1983
was used in this report.*

We believe that potential challengers to Zaire's President Mobutu are too weak and divided to bring down his regime within the next two years. Nonetheless, the risk of major instability in this large, pro-Western, mineral-rich nation if its strongman President were suddenly to be removed has led us to consider the probable features of a post-Mobutu regime. [Redacted]

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An examination of the type of government that is likely to succeed Mobutu necessarily involves considerable speculation. Mobutu has prevented the emergence of institutions or leaders that would facilitate a clear-cut, readily identifiable succession. The actual process may be complex, disorderly, and prolonged. [Redacted]

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If Mobutu's departure from the political scene were to occur within the next two years, we believe it would be the result of his sudden and unexpected death by assassination, accident, or natural causes. We believe that in such circumstances a coalition regime would emerge that would include civilian politicians from inside and outside the present government as well as military officers. Civilians and military men from Mobutu's home region of Equateur would, in our view, hold a disproportionate share of the key positions, just as they do under Mobutu. [Redacted]

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In the light of what we know about the people likely to play central roles in such a government, we would expect the major outlines of Mobutu's pro-Western foreign policy to remain intact. Most educated Zairians are said to distrust Marxist ideology and the Soviet Union. Even more important, they recognize that only the West can provide the aid Zaire needs and absorb the bulk of the country's mineral exports. Nonetheless, a post-Mobutu government might in time seek to distance itself somewhat from the West, primarily because it would be likely to include some people who are now unhappy over the West's close relations with Mobutu. The new regime might also be less willing than Mobutu has been to take bold initiatives supportive of Western interests elsewhere in Africa, such as his recent military intervention in Chad. [Redacted]

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On domestic issues, we would expect an Equateurian-dominated civilian-military regime to continue to govern through a single political party, employing a combination of coercive force and co-optation, as Mobutu has. We would anticipate limited movement on Western-proposed economic reforms, a continued high level of corruption, and tightly controlled elections at some point. [Redacted]

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In our view, there are several other types of regimes that could conceivably follow Mobutu, although we do not believe that factors conducive to their emergence will obtain over the next two years:

- A new strongman, handpicked by Mobutu, might assume power if Mobutu left office under circumstances that gave him enough leadtime to groom a successor. We would expect him to select a pro-Western Equateurian.
- An ethnically broad-based coalition rather than an Equateurian-dominated one could be established if non-Equateurian military personnel managed to seize power in the post-Mobutu period. We believe that such a regime would be pro-Western, and that it would move toward a somewhat more democratic political system than would an Equateurian-controlled government.
- A radically oriented regime might result from a power grab by hitherto unidentified junior military personnel. Although we believe such an outcome is unlikely, there has long been resentment among lower ranking personnel over low pay and inadequate supplies. Moreover, extensive contact by foreigners with junior officers and enlisted men is prohibited, and leftist sentiment could thus exist without our knowledge. [redacted]

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A resurgence of intertribal warfare and regional secession movements—reminiscent of the first few years after Zaire's independence in 1960—is a strong possibility under almost any regime in the post-Mobutu period. Various ethnic-regional groups may well look upon Mobutu's departure as an opportunity to settle old scores. At the same time, we believe most Zairians want to avoid a recurrence of the anarchy and bloodshed of the early 1960s. We also believe there is a greater sense of national identity today than there was then. [redacted]

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In view of these countervailing factors, the ability of a post-Mobutu regime to minimize violence and instability may depend on the extent to which it is seen by the populace as firm and decisive, representative of the main tribal and regional groups and genuinely attempting to address economic problems. Possibly the most important factor in deterring both potential challengers and widespread unrest would be the degree to which Western countries demonstrated their economic, political, and military backing for a successor regime. [redacted]

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**Zaire:
A Look at a
Post-Mobutu Regime**



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Introduction

President Mobutu Sese Seko seems to us firmly in control of Zaire at present. Potential challengers appear too weak and divided to bring down his regime in the near term. The few insurgent groups that exist (see biographic information in the appendix) are fragmented and lack external support. Nevertheless, Zaire's importance as a large, pro-Western, mineral-rich, centrally located African nation—and the potential for major instability if its strongman President were unexpectedly removed—have led us to address the question of what a post-Mobutu regime might look like.



This speculative paper is intended to serve as a resource for US Government policymakers in the event of a sudden change of government in Kinshasa. The paper does not attempt to predict precisely how or when Mobutu's role will end or exactly how the succession will unfold; the actual process may be highly complex, disorderly, and prolonged. Rather, the paper outlines what we believe are likely to be salient characteristics of the regime that ultimately emerges after Mobutu, particularly if he were to leave office within the next couple of years. The paper also discusses, in the biographic appendix, people within and outside the present government who could emerge as important participants in such a regime.



In addition to examining what we see as the most likely outcome of the succession process, the paper sketches out some alternatives. It also addresses the question of how the different scenarios would affect US interests.



The Characteristics of a Likely Successor Regime

The type of regime that follows Mobutu will depend in part on the manner in which he leaves office. If his departure were to occur during the next few years, we believe it would probably be the result of his sudden and unexpected death, by accident, natural causes



Field Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, Zaire's strongman President since 1965. Camera Press ©



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[Redacted] or assassination by one or more individuals. It is far from certain, in our judgment, that Zaire's constitutional provisions for succession would be applied. Even if these procedures were followed, the constitutional successor would probably serve as a figurehead, with others dominating the regime.



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Makeup

We would expect a period of intense backroom bargaining among leading military and civilian figures following Mobutu's unexpected departure. We believe the leadership of the regime that ultimately emerged would include civilian politicians from inside and outside the present government as well as military officers. We also believe that civilians and military

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Mobutu's Legacy**The Years Before Mobutu: A Time of Turmoil**

During the first five years after Zaire became independent from Belgium in 1960, a series of weak central governments was beset by army mutinies, widespread fighting among ethnic groups, secession movements in several regions, and a proliferation of largely ethnic-based political parties. United Nations troops helped suppress the secession attempts by 1963, but new rebellions broke out in much of the country the following year. [redacted]

The new uprisings were put down with the help of white mercenaries brought in by Prime Minister (and former Shaba Region secessionist leader) Moise Tshombe. By late 1965, however, political leaders in Kinshasa had become deadlocked and unable to form an effective government, which led Gen. Joseph Mobutu, the head of the army, to seize power and install himself as President. [redacted]

Mobutu's Early Years: Political Calm, Economic Progress

During Mobutu's first years in office, popular revolution at the anarchy and bloodshed of the early 1960s, combined with a widely shared belief among Zairians that there was at last a firm, decisive hand at the helm in Kinshasa, helped usher in a period of tranquillity. Several years of relative economic prosperity, primarily a result of high international prices for Zaire's copper and cobalt exports, contributed to the more stable political climate. GDP grew by an average of 5.5 percent per year during the period 1966-71. By the early 1970s Zaire had a stable and convertible currency, negligible debt, and ample foreign exchange reserves. [redacted]

Downturn in the 1970s

Starting in 1973-74, a series of economic setbacks sent Zaire on a downward spin from which it has yet to recover. World prices of copper plummeted, while the cost of key imports—especially oil—rose sharply. Mobutu exacerbated the situation with a series of ill-advised economic decisions. He nationalized many enterprises, placing them under the control of largely inexperienced and corrupt political cronies. He also launched a series of grandiose and costly development projects.^a [redacted]

Zaire's problems were compounded when the Front for the National Liberation of the Congo (FLNC), the group that had led the secession movement in Shaba Region in the early 1960s, invaded the mineral-rich region in 1977 and again in 1978, operating from bases in Angola and Zambia. Mobutu had to turn to foreign military forces—provided primarily by Morocco in 1977 and by France and Belgium in 1978—to turn back the invaders. The two episodes revealed serious weaknesses in the Zairian armed forces and—even more important, in our view—punctured Mobutu's aura of invincibility. [redacted]

The Current Situation

Although Mobutu has recently taken some steps to improve economic management and reduce excessive government spending, the economy has not yet come out of the doldrums. US Embassy officials have noted that, as economic conditions have worsened in recent years, Mobutu has become increasingly preoccupied with ensuring the regime's security and his personal safety. He has turned to Israel—a pariah in the eyes of most African states—to train and equip some key military units. He has increasingly relied—particularly in security matters—on a small circle of key officials, most of whom hail from his home region of Equateur and many of whom are members of his own tribe, the Ngbandi. [redacted]

Working in Mobutu's favor, in our view, are long-standing rivalries among his opponents, their lack of substantial outside support, their inability to organize within Zaire, Mobutu's adroitness at co-optation and repression, and the Zairian public's apparent preoccupation with economic survival rather than political change. Mobutu also has been careful to maintain personal control over the armed forces, [redacted] by putting Equateurians in senior command positions, by encouraging rivalries among military leaders, and by maintaining an extensive network of informers. [redacted]

^a The nationalizations were part of a campaign of "Zairianization" launched by Mobutu. Citizens were required to exchange their Christian given names for indigenous ones, and the country was renamed "Zaire" in place of its Belgian-bequeathed name, Republic of the Congo. Other place names were also "Zairianized." [redacted]

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Constitutional Provisions for Succession^a

Zaire's Constitution does not contain extensive provisions for presidential succession. As amended in 1982, the Constitution states that if the president leaves office his functions are assumed by the Central Committee of the (ruling and only) party, the Popular Movement of the Revolution. The oldest member of the Central Committee serves as head of state.

The 124-member Central Committee, the party's highest organ, is comprised of leading government officials and senior politicians from throughout Zaire. Under Mobutu the Committee has had little decisionmaking power. It often acts as a sounding board for proposals Mobutu is considering on domestic and foreign policy issues.

The oldest Central Committee member at present is Derikoye Tita Avungara, 76. Derikoye, a former legislator and government official, currently heads the Central Committee's Commission on Discipline. He is not a strong personality and is unlikely to be a major power broker in the post-Mobutu period. An Azande tribesman from Haut Zaire Region, Derikoye is friendly toward the West, according to US Embassy officials.

If the constitutional succession process is invoked, the Central Committee, in view of its size and diversity, is likely to be ineffective as a governing body, in our judgment. Nevertheless, Derikoye, functioning as a temporary figurehead, could provide a facade of legitimacy while more powerful figures try to reach agreement on a successor regime.

^a This material is based on reporting from the US Embassy in Kinshasa.

men from Mobutu's home region of Equateur would hold a disproportionate share of the key positions, as they do in the present regime.¹

Civilian-Military Coalition. Neither civilian nor military leaders will be in a position to exclude each other from a post-Mobutu regime, in our judgment.

¹ The people of Equateur comprise about 11 percent of Zaire's population.

Although US Embassy sources describe the Zairian armed forces as riddled with corruption, incompetence, and severe logistic weaknesses,² the military's advantages in weaponry, training, and organization probably assure a major role for its leaders in a post-Mobutu government. At the same time, military men could not run the country on their own, in our judgment. They lack the necessary expertise and would almost certainly have to bring in civilians to run most ministries and other key agencies.

In the biographic appendix, we discuss those military officers, as well as civilian personalities inside and outside the present regime, from among whom we expect the main participants in a post-Mobutu coalition to emerge. We believe civilian figures from this group will control the day-to-day management of the government—as they did after Mobutu assumed power—because of their relative advantages in education and experience.

We do not rule out the possibility that a military "man on horseback" might emerge following Mobutu's departure, but at present we do not see any candidates for such a role.

Major Role for Equateurians. Prominent people from Equateur Region are likely to continue holding most of the key civilian and military posts as long as Mobutu is in power. Thus they are likely to be in a position to exercise strong influence over the transition.

Despite tribal and clan differences and personal rivalries among leading Equateurians, we believe that if Mobutu died suddenly they would work together to protect their interests. They would also be anxious to prevent the retaliation against Equateurians that could occur if another group took control. We doubt that any one Equateurian would rapidly emerge as a strongman if Mobutu departed without having groomed someone for this role.

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Equateurians in Key Positions

Name	Position
Executive branch	
Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga	President; State Commissioner (Minister) for National Defense and Veterans Affairs; President of the Popular Movement of the Revolution (MPR), Zaire's sole political party; Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces
Kengo Wa Dondo	Prime Minister
Seti Yale	Special Presidential Adviser on National Security
Military and security services	
Nkema Liloo	Administrator General, National Intelligence Service (external intelligence service)
Atenda Mongebe Ongwango	Administrator General, National Center for Research and Investigations (domestic intelligence service)
Col. Boloji Gbudu Tanikpma	Chief, Military Intelligence
Vice Adm. Lomponda Wa Botende	Secretary of State for National Defense and Territorial Security
Lt. Gen. Boteti Nkok'ea Nkanga	Deputy Chief of Staff, Armed Forces
Brig. Gen. Bosange Pompese Bakole	Chief, Presidential Military Office
Maj. Gen. Eluki Monga Anunda	Chief of Staff, Army
Col. Nzimbi Ngbale	Commander, Special Presidential Brigade
Gen. Yeka Mangbau	Commander, First Military Region (Shaba Region)
Lt. Gen. Danga Ngbokoli	Commander, Third Military Region
Brig. Gen. Somao Mbele	Commander, 1st Armored Brigade
Col. Mahele Bokungu	Deputy Commander, 31st Brigade (based in Kinshasa)
Other	
Bomboko Lokumba	Ambassador to Belgium
Sambwa Pida	Governor, Bank of Zaire
Nzondomyo A Dokpe Lingo	President, Legislative Council
Bemba Saolona ^a	Chairman, Association of Zairian Companies
Moleka Liboke ^a	Vice President, Zairian Chamber of Commerce

^a Despite their innocuous titles, these men are among the wealthiest and most influential businessmen in Zaire.

We would not expect Equateurians completely to monopolize important posts in a post-Mobutu regime. We believe leading Equateurians recognize that any attempt to exclude other groups entirely from positions of influence would probably lead to major civil unrest. We expect, therefore, that some of the prominent non-Equateurians discussed in the biographic appendix would be placed in sensitive security posts or in most of the other key advisory positions.

Policy Orientation

Domestic Issues. Considering what we know about the people likely to play central roles in a post-Mobutu government, we expect policy continuity in domestic matters. We believe that an Equateurian-dominated regime would govern through a combination of coercive force and co-optation, as Mobutu has.

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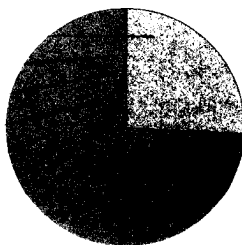
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Figure 2
Regional Affiliations of Zaire's Ruling Elite

Percent

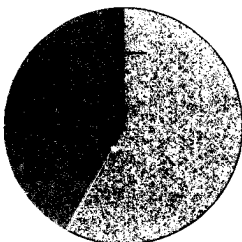
Executive Branch

- Equateur (7) - 25.9
- Kivu (1) - 3.7
- Haut-Zaïre (1) - 3.7
- Kasaï (2) - 7.4
- Bas-Zaïre (4) - 14.8
- Shaba (6) - 22.2
- Bandundu (6) - 22.2



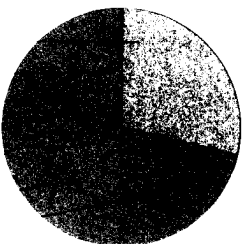
Military and Security Services

- Equateur (11) - 57.9
- Kivu (1) - 5.3
- Kasaï (1) - 5.3
- Haut-Zaïre (3) - 15.8
- Bas-Zaïre (3) - 15.8



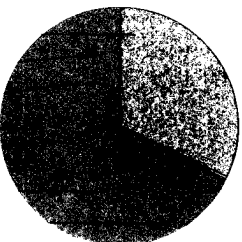
Other Key Governmental Positions

- Equateur (4) - 28.6
- Shaba (1) - 7.1
- Kivu (1) - 7.1
- Bandundu (1) - 7.1
- Bas-Zaïre (1) - 7.1
- Kasaï (3) - 21.4
- Haut-Zaïre (3) - 21.4



Total

- Equateur (22) - 31.9
- Kivu (4) - 5.8
- Shaba (8) - 11.6
- Bandundu (8) - 11.6
- Kasaï (9) - 13.0
- Haut-Zaïre (9) - 13.0
- Bas-Zaïre (9) - 13.0



Moreover, we would expect the new regime to continue Mobutu's practice of ensuring that opportunities for financial enrichment remain available to a broad segment of the educated urban elite. Thus, we would expect the government to sanction a high degree of corruption, just as Mobutu has done. [redacted]

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We believe it unlikely that a regime in which Equateurians played a central role would move toward participatory democracy and hold genuine elections because of their general unpopularity. Some sort of tightly controlled single-party elections would probably be held at some point in an effort to strengthen the regime's credentials in the West. [redacted]

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On economic questions, we would expect such a regime to continue Mobutu's general practice of undertaking just enough of the reform actions demanded by Western and multilateral aid donors to ensure continued foreign support. We do not believe such a regime would be willing to attempt the kinds of large-scale austerity actions and overhaul of economic management practices that would facilitate economic recovery but would be likely to alienate many members of the elite.³ [redacted]

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Foreign Policy. We believe the regime most likely to follow Mobutu will retain his pro-Western orientation. According to US Embassy reporting, the vast majority of educated Zairians are favorably disposed toward the West and particularly toward the United States, in part because they recognize that only the West can provide the aid Zaire needs and absorb the bulk of Zairian mineral exports. [redacted]

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Moreover, according to US officials in Kinshasa, educated Zairians have had relatively little exposure to Communist ideology, are generally distrustful of the Soviet Union, and view the activities of the Soviets and their allies in neighboring African countries as a threat to Zaire. Even anti-Mobutu Zairian academics for the most part reject Marxism, according to Embassy reports. [redacted]

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Contributing to these attitudes, according to Embassy officers, are a predilection for free enterprise among Zairians and the pervasive influence of the Catholic Church. About 60 percent of Zaire's population is Christian, predominantly Catholic. [redacted]

Nonetheless, we believe a post-Mobutu regime may in time seek to distance itself somewhat from the West. The regime may include some Equateurians and others who resent either past Western pressures for economic reform or the West's staunch support for Mobutu over the years. Moreover, a new regime, in our judgment, may well be less willing than Mobutu to be viewed by Zaire's African neighbors as one of the continent's most pro-Western governments. [redacted]

Such a limited loosening of ties with the West could take several forms. The Mobutu regime has usually supported US positions in international forums; a successor government might vote somewhat more frequently in support of nonaligned positions. A new regime may become more active in support of the Frontline States⁴ on southern African issues such as Namibia, and somewhat less willing than Mobutu has been to support US initiatives on these questions. It might be less inclined to take bold initiatives supportive of Western interests elsewhere in Africa, such as Mobutu's recent military intervention in Chad. It may also try harder than Mobutu has to improve Zaire's often uneasy bilateral relations with neighboring countries, some of which are Marxist-oriented. [redacted]

Alternative Possibilities

Another Strongman

It is possible, in our view, that Mobutu, rather than departing the scene suddenly as the result of assassination, accident, or natural causes, could leave office in a manner that gave him some leadtime, which he could use to help shape the succession before stepping down. We see little indication that he will depart in this way within the next couple of years, although in the longer run we find such a set of circumstances to be highly plausible. [redacted]

⁴ The Frontline States group is informally chaired by Tanzania and includes most of the countries of southern Africa: Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. [redacted]

For example, if economic conditions were to worsen sharply, with no sign of effective remedial measures by the government or efforts by Western countries to bail Zaire out, Mobutu might simply lose his zest for ruling and decide to quit. He might retire to Western Europe, where he has accumulated considerable wealth. [redacted]

We believe that in such circumstances Mobutu would groom a politician from Equateur Region to succeed him as Zaire's leader, who would be capable of sustaining the system of one-man rule that Mobutu probably views as the most effective way to govern Zaire. In our judgment, he would not trust a non-Equateurian to refrain from condemning the Mobutu regime and from taking reprisals of some kind against the Equateurians who now dominate the government. [redacted]

Among the Equateurian candidates that we believe Mobutu might consider in selecting a new strongman are a pro-Western former foreign minister, Bomboko Lokumba, and Mobutu's strong-willed Prime Minister, Kengo Wa Dondo. Because Kengo is a mulatto, he would probably have to play the role of strongman from behind the scenes, or from the position of prime minister, with a black Zairian acting as a figurehead president. [redacted]

A Broad-Based Government

It is also possible, though still not likely in our view, that a more broadly based regime rather than an Equateurian-dominated one will emerge after Mobutu. For this to occur, we believe non-Equateurian military officers would have to seize power and remove most of the leading Equateurians from positions of power. We do not see any non-Equateurians as being in a position to do this within the next two years. [redacted]

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Bomboko Lokumba, Ambassador to Belgium, potential successor to Mobutu Knack ©

If a regime not dominated by Equateurians nonetheless did come to power, we believe it would have several features of importance to US interests:

- We would expect such a regime to be pro-Western because most of the civilian and military figures likely to be included are known to be friendly to the West. Nonetheless, we would not be surprised to see some limited distancing of Kinshasa's policies from Washington's, for the same reasons—as stated earlier—an Equateurian-dominated regime might follow such a course.
- We believe such a regime would be characterized by a substantial degree of balance among various ethnic-regional groups; we see no one non-Equateurian group as being able totally to dominate the others. We also believe that such a regime would go further than an Equateurian-dominated one in inviting some of the country's political dissidents to join the government.
- We would not expect multiparty democracy to emerge under such a regime because we believe most educated Zairians would fear a resurgence of the political infighting, violence, and governmental paralysis that prevailed during the multiparty era in

the early 1960s. In view of what we know about potential participants in a broad-based regime, we believe it might opt for a more limited form of democracy. It might, for example, allow genuinely competitive legislative elections, in which rival contestants would run under the banner of a single official party without the careful screening and frequent purging of candidates by the party leadership that has taken place under Mobutu.

- The displacement of the notoriously corrupt Equateurian elite would, in our view, result in some reduction of high-level graft. In view of Zaire's long tradition of and broad opportunities for such activity, we have no illusions that anything approaching a corruption-free regime would emerge. The mere promise of reform on the part of a new regime, however, might result in additional financial help from the country's Western creditors, who have grown cynical about Mobutu's willingness to clean up his government.

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A Leftist Regime

Also unlikely, but conceivable in our view, is a power grab by junior military officers or enlisted men—a possibility obtaining in almost any country in Africa. there has long been considerable resentment among lower ranking personnel over low pay, chronic shortages of food and other supplies, Mobutu's tribal-regional favoritism, and the corruption that has enriched many senior officers.

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Although junior officers or enlisted men involved in such a move might be radically oriented, it is also possible that they would be nonideological. Zairian military personnel have had very little exposure to Communist or other radical influences, and we are not aware of any leftwing sentiment within the armed forces. Nonetheless, US Embassy officials and other US personnel have only limited access to junior military people, and leftist sentiment could exist without our knowledge.

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A radically leftist regime in Zaire probably would be inherently unstable. We believe it would face challenges from other elements in the military and would lack broad support among the general populace or, more important, among the educated civilian elite.

[redacted]

Even if a leftist regime did succeed in consolidating its authority and establishing close ties with Communist countries, we believe Zaire would not totally sever its links with Western countries. Zaire has no realistic alternative to the West as the market for most of its mineral exports. Nor do we believe the regime would repudiate Zaire's foreign debt, since doing so would presumably close off any hope of further Western aid and investment.

[redacted]

Prospects for Stability

Centrifugal Forces

A resurgence of intertribal warfare and regional secession movements will be a real possibility under almost any regime in the post-Mobutu period, in our judgment. Strong ethnic and social tensions exist beneath the surface calm that prevails today in Zaire, according to US Embassy officers. Indeed, Mobutu is said to encourage such tensions as a way of preventing groups from forming alliances and becoming strong enough to challenge him:

- In urban areas, the increasing enrichment of the Equateurian elite and its dominant position within the government have created strong resentment among other groups, [redacted]

[redacted]

- In rural areas as well, tribal loyalties seem strong throughout the country and there appears to be considerable latent enmity among the various ethnic groups. [redacted]

In our judgment, various ethnic-regional groups may well look upon Mobutu's departure as an opportunity to settle old scores. Perhaps the most formidable challenge would come in Shaba Region, where the Angola- and Zambia-based insurgents who invaded Shaba in the late 1970s might well be emboldened to try again.

[redacted]

Mobutu for years has emphasized the notion that he alone deserves credit for the peace that has generally prevailed in Zaire since the mid-1960s, and that when he departs the old animosities will flare anew. We believe that this view is widely accepted among Zairians. [redacted]

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Adding to the threat to stability and national unity after Mobutu's departure will be the near-total lack of institutions that could help ensure a smooth succession. US Embassy officers note that instead of fostering the building of institutions, Mobutu has created a cult of personality whereby the state is closely identified with his person. His frequent restructuring of key party and government organs also has worked against the development of institutions with enough power and authority to assure a smooth transition.

[redacted]

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Despite these threats to stability, we cannot be certain that Zaire will slip into chaos after Mobutu departs.

[redacted] we believe most Zairians wish to avoid a recurrence of the country-wide anarchy that prevailed in the early 1960s. We also believe there is a greater sense of national identity among Zairians today than existed in the pre-Mobutu period. In addition, under Mobutu the Zairian military and security services have gained a reputation for dealing ruthlessly with internal dissidence, and this would help deter any challenges to a successor regime that retained the loyalty of the armed forces, police, and intelligence services. On balance, we believe that an Equateurian-led successor regime would be able to avoid a widespread breakdown of order, but we are less certain that a non-Equateurian government could do so.

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Signposts

Any successor regime's ability to minimize violence and instability may depend to a great extent on the following factors:

- *The extent to which the new regime gives the impression of strength and authority.* At present, we do not see any other individual figure who could match Mobutu in this regard. We do not rule out

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the possibility that a resolute leader might emerge from obscurity, or that some hitherto uninspiring figure might prove to have hidden reserves of tenacity and decisiveness.

- *The extent to which the country's main ethnic and regional interests are represented in the regime.* Inclusion of leaders of various groups would not only help pacify these groups, in our judgment, but also would make it easier for the regime to control their members. For these reasons we believe representatives of the Shaban rebels and/or of smaller dissident groups might well be among those invited to join a post-Mobutu regime. (Paradoxically, the more broadly based the regime, the more difficulty it will have in projecting an image of decisiveness and strength, in our judgment.)
- *The extent to which the regime gives the appearance of coming to grips with economic problems.* We believe any successor regime that seemed to be making a serious effort to combat mismanagement, corruption, endemic shortages, and inflation would win a significant degree of public support, at least initially. A new government's ability to bring about any sustained economic progress will depend in large measure, however, on international prices for Zaire's mineral exports, as well as on the regime's ability to convince international donors that it deserves generous economic aid.
- *Attitudes of foreign powers toward the regime.* According to the US Embassy, a widely held view among Zairians that the United States, Belgium, and even the Socialist government in France strongly support Mobutu—and a widespread belief that one or more of these countries would intervene militarily in his behalf if necessary—have helped to discourage moves against the regime by discontented groups. If Western countries move to demonstrate strong economic, political, and military backing for the regime that succeeds Mobutu, we believe that would-be challengers among disgruntled elements of the society might well be deterred from mounting an armed bid for power. [redacted]

Implications for the United States

Thus the odds are good, in our view, that the regime that emerges after Mobutu—regardless of how he departs and how the succession process unfolds—will be friendly to the West and anxious for Western aid and investment. During the crucial early phases, we believe a post-Mobutu government will seek strong support from the United States in particular. As it becomes more secure, however, it may seek to distance itself somewhat from the West, perhaps toward a more nonaligned position. [redacted]

A successor regime might attempt to reduce corruption and mismanagement in government if only in the hope of winning the approval of Western creditors. At the same time, however, a successor regime may lack Mobutu's ability to keep the lid on ethnic and regional unrest. Major turmoil in Zaire could paralyze the country's mineral industries at least temporarily, thereby driving up international cobalt and copper prices. [redacted]

Prolonged unrest would probably break down along ethnic and regional lines and would increase the possibility for secession attempts or outside meddling. An armed challenge from Shaban dissidents based in Marxist-ruled Angola, for example, could lead to a confrontation between the Soviet- and Cuban-supported regime in Luanda and a new Zairian government which would probably request US or French military assistance. [redacted]

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Appendix

**Prospective Participants in a
Successor Regime⁵**

It is difficult to predict precisely which civilian and military leaders will be included in the regime that follows Mobutu; this will depend partly on whether Mobutu helps shape the succession. Below we examine a number of key individuals who, we believe, may play important roles after his departure. [redacted]

Civilians Within the Mobutu Regime

Civilian politicians within the present government could figure importantly in a post-Mobutu regime. Some of these people have periodically been moved in and out of the regime by Mobutu, who maintains the support of members of the Zairian elite by allowing them to hold office long enough to enrich themselves but not long enough to amass sufficient independent power to pose a threat to the President. The politicians we discuss below are by and large competent and experienced men, and some of them are adroit politicians with significant followings in their home regions. Most of them appear to be pro-Western in outlook. [redacted]

Kengo Wa Dondo, First State Commissioner (Prime Minister). We believe the qualities of shrewdness and toughness that Prime Minister Kengo has exhibited throughout his career make him a candidate for a major role in a post-Mobutu regime. [redacted]

After Mobutu appointed him in late 1982, Kengo, now 48, moved rapidly to strengthen the cabinet and cement alliances with other influential politicians in the regime. With Mobutu's approval, he launched a dramatic anticorruption campaign in December. Some 150 civil servants were investigated, and many were arrested or fled the country before the campaign began to taper off in mid-1983. Kengo deftly exploited the corruption issue to remove old political rivals such as Vunduawe te Pemako, an Equateurian who had served as Deputy Prime Minister. [redacted]

⁵ Except where otherwise indicated, the information in this appendix is based on reporting from US Embassy officials in Kinshasa. [redacted]

As Zaire's Attorney General and President of the Judicial Council from 1978 to 1980, Kengo came under criticism both at home and abroad for trying to put Zaire's judicial and legal systems completely under the control of the executive branch and for transferring, demoting, or retiring many judges and magistrates. The adverse publicity apparently moved Mobutu to send Kengo to Belgium as Ambassador. [redacted]

Although Kengo, a mulatto (his mother was an Ngbandi tribeswoman, his father Polish) from Equateur Region, has made many enemies over the years, he has retained links with powerful figures, particularly presidential security adviser Seti Yale. Such men might well support Kengo as a major figure in a successor regime. Kengo's repressive style, however, would probably alienate many ethnic groups and politicians if he were installed as president. Kengo seems generally sympathetic to the West and has commented a number of times to US officials on the importance of close US-Zaire relations. [redacted]

Seti Yale, Special Presidential Adviser on National Security. Seti, 40, is one of the two men closest to Mobutu. (The other is Nimy Mayidika, director of the President's office.) A mulatto (Ngbandi mother, Portuguese father) from Equateur, Seti has risen rapidly as a career security official. Prior to his appointment as Special Presidential Adviser in 1979, he served as head of the civilian security agency. Unlike some other senior officials, Seti has shown no desire to succeed Mobutu. Seti has no following of his own and seems to prefer playing a powerful role behind the scenes. [redacted]

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Seti has been a trusted adviser to the President on a wide range of political and security matters as well as foreign affairs. The leader of a "hardline" faction of presidential advisers, he has counseled Mobutu to deal harshly with dissidents and to remove a number of officials who advocate political and economic reform measures sought by Zaire's Western backers.

[Redacted]

Seti seems to resent what he regards as interference by the United States and other Western countries in Zairian internal affairs. He has often been uncooperative toward US diplomats

[Redacted]

Because he is entrenched so close to the presidency, Seti may be in position to play a highly influential role in a post-Mobutu government. We believe he might prefer to remain an *eminence grise* rather than hold a top cabinet post in such a regime. In any case, Seti would probably try to influence such a government toward authoritarian domestic policies and greater independence in relations with the West.

Bomboko Lokumba, Ambassador to Belgium. Bomboko, 55, has demonstrated an array of skills that mark him as a probable leading player in a post-Mobutu government. A three-time Foreign Minister (1960-63, 1965-69, and 1981) and Ambassador to the United States in 1969-70, Bomboko has been one of Zaire's most able diplomats. His affable and sophisticated negotiating style and grasp of international affairs have won him high marks from Western officials. US Embassy officials in Kinshasa characterize Bomboko as a friend of the West who has generally tried to influence events and policies in Zaire in a direction favorable to US interests.

Bomboko served as both Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister from February to October 1981. He put together a group of competent cabinet officials who sought to challenge the influence of some of Mobutu's cronies and to improve economic policies

and management practices. As he had done in the past with Bomboko, Mobutu removed him from his position because he was exercising too much responsibility and strength.

Bomboko is a native of Equateur. He has profited financially under Mobutu's tenure, both while serving in the government and as a businessman during the periods he was out of office.

Nendaka Bika, First Vice President of the Central Committee, Popular Movement of the Revolution.

Nendaka has long been one of the most influential men in Zaire. He has a sizable following in eastern Zaire, particularly in his home region of Haut-Zaire.

During the early 1960s, Nendaka served as Chief of National Security and then as Minister of Interior. He was a key supporter of Mobutu's rise to power in 1965. Subsequently, however, Mobutu moved to weaken him through a series of demotions, culminating in his brief imprisonment on treason charges in 1971.

Mobutu subsequently rusticated Nendaka to Haut-Zaire Region, where Nendaka worked to expand his network of business interests and regional supporters. He was elected from Haut-Zaire to the Political Bureau of Zaire's official political party in 1977.

Nendaka is reputed to be an ally of Zaire's top Army officer, Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Singa, a fellow Haut-Zairian.

We believe Nendaka will seek to play a strong role in a post-Mobutu era. His close association with Haut-Zairian interests, however, will probably be viewed as a threat by other regional groups—particularly the Equateurians, traditional rivals of the Haut-Zairians.

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Nendaka, an energetic entrepreneur and admirer of free enterprise, has expressed considerable respect for the US economic system and seems to be friendly to the West. [redacted]

Kamitatu Massamba, State Commissioner (Minister) for Agriculture/Rural Development and Conservation/Tourism. A colorful and influential figure in Zairian politics since independence in 1960, Kamitatu, 52, was for many years an opponent of the Mobutu regime. After serving in several senior positions in postindependence governments, he fell from favor when Mobutu came to power in 1965. The following year he was sentenced to a five-year prison term for alleged involvement in an abortive coup, but he was pardoned and released by the President in 1968. [redacted]

Subsequently, Kamitatu antagonized the regime again by attempting to marshal a political following in his native region of Bandundu. He fled to Paris in 1970. During seven years in exile there, he organized a Zairian dissident group with ties to the French socialists and wrote a book harshly critical of Mobutu. [redacted]

In 1977, however, Kamitatu reconciled with Mobutu, returned to Zaire, and was named to the cabinet as Minister of Conservation, Nature, and Tourism. He obtained the more important Agriculture portfolio the following year. Since then he has managed to survive several sweeping cabinet changes as a result of his political shrewdness and professional competence. A forceful personality, he has been one of the government's more outspoken advocates for economic reform. Although he professes a socialist orientation, he seems more inclined toward pragmatism than ideology and has encouraged much-needed private investment in the agricultural sector. [redacted]

As recently as 1981, Kamitatu intimated to US officials that he would like to take Mobutu's place. Despite his strengths, we do not think he would be accepted by the many Equateurians who are in a position to influence the succession. [redacted]

Should he hold a major position in a post-Mobutu regime, Kamitatu would probably operate through the existing, well-established system of patronage and

ethnic favoritism while also attempting to introduce a few reforms. Kamitatu has stated that he views the United States with mixed feelings, and we believe he would probably urge greater independence from the West. [redacted]

Mandungu Bula, Regional Commissioner (Governor), Shaba Region. Bula's political adroitness and professional talents could propel him to prominence in almost any type of regime that follows Mobutu. He was a Marxist revolutionary in exile—mostly in the USSR and East Germany—for the first decade of Zaire's independence. He attended the Institute for International Relations in Moscow, became involved in a number of international leftist causes, and served as Moscow representative for a Zairian Communist movement led by Antoine Gizenga. He returned to Zaire in 1971 and less than three years later was appointed personal adviser to the President. [redacted]

In 1975 Bula was named Foreign Minister as part of an effort to improve Mobutu's nonaligned credentials. He subsequently served in several cabinet positions and as Mayor of Kinshasa. In the latter post, he proved to be an industrious, competent manager, particularly in intelligence and security matters. As Governor of the economically vital and politically sensitive Shaba Region since 1980, Bula, a native of Bandundu Region, has generally been regarded as a skillful performer in the government's most important post outside Kinshasa. [redacted]

After entering the government in the mid-1970s, Bula was instrumental in persuading Mobutu to establish relations with China and North Korea. During his tenure as Foreign Minister, he presided over—and was partly responsible for—a sharp decline in US-Zairian relations, which included the expulsion of the US Ambassador in 1975. At that time, the US Embassy in Kinshasa reported that he was suspicious of the United States and that he had warned Mobutu that Washington would ultimately abandon him. In recent years, Bula, now 48, has been more cooperative with US officials, but we do not believe he has wholly abandoned his Marxist views. [redacted]

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Bula no doubt is sensitive to the Western orientation of most educated Zairians, and we believe he would attempt to succeed Mobutu as president only if he had the support of an outside power such as the Soviet Union or Cuba. Bula is more likely, in our view, to seek an influential advisory role in a post-Mobutu government in the hope of steering Zaire away from its traditional Western friends [redacted]

Moderates Within Zaire Who Have Become Estranged From the Regime

As part of his method of governing, Mobutu frequently rotates in and out of government figures who gain too much prominence or who prove too critical of the President's policies. While some of these politicians react to being banished to the political sidelines by joining the dissident ranks, most are content to quietly pursue private business interests until they are politically rehabilitated by Mobutu. Below we discuss two such personalities, currently out of office, who could eventually play prominent roles in a post-Mobutu government [redacted]

Ileo Songa, former President of the Socio-Cultural Commission, Central Committee, Popular Movement of the Revolution. Ileo is a rare political figure in Zaire because he is an influential Equateurian who is highly respected among other regional groups. Popularly referred to as "Papa," the 62-year-old Ileo is one of the country's surviving founding fathers. He was removed from the Central Committee in 1981 for openly criticizing the President. In our view, his popularity, experience, and political stature make him a potential candidate for inclusion in almost any type of government that succeeds Mobutu [redacted]

A journalist in the preindependence period, Ileo helped found the National Congolese Movement, a party that attempted to unite the country's various ethnic, regional, and political groups. During the early 1960s, he served twice as Prime Minister and later headed the commission that drafted the country's first constitution. He was elected to the legislature in the mid-1970s. As that body's President in 1980, he presided over sensitive legislative hearings that sought to expose high-level corruption in government. Embassy reporting has consistently portrayed Ileo as solidly pro-West. [redacted]

Bo-Boliko Lokonga, former Executive Secretary, Popular Movement of the Revolution. A veteran labor and political leader, Bo-Boliko is respected by virtually all elements of society, including the military, politicians, and intellectuals. A native of Bandundu, he appears to have avoided intense ethnic and regional competition and enjoys a reputation as a fairminded, competent, and industrious technocrat. As Prime Minister during 1979-80, he tried to control public-sector finances and was eventually removed for acting too independently, according to US Embassy officials. He was subsequently given the figurehead job as head of the sole political party and was finally purged from government in 1981. In view of his popularity and experience, Bo-Boliko could be invited to play an important role in a post-Mobutu government. [redacted]

From 1961 to 1967 Bo-Boliko was president of Zaire's largest labor union. He later served as secretary general of the National Union of Workers of the Congo, an umbrella group created to unify the labor movement. In 1970 he was elected president of the Legislative Council where he gained widespread popularity among its members for allowing them to vent grievances against other government institutions, including the presidency. Bo-Boliko is pro-West but has generally been cautious about appearing to be overly friendly with US Embassy officials. In 1963 he visited the United States under the US-Government-sponsored International Visitors Program. [redacted]

Opposition Group Within Zaire

The Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) has been the only significant opposition group operating inside the country in recent years. It was formed in 1981 by 13 former members of the Zairian parliament who hoped to press Mobutu into allowing an officially sanctioned opposition party. Although the 13 were sentenced in 1982 to long prison terms for their activities, Mobutu released them in June 1983 as part of a general amnesty for political prisoners and exiled dissidents. Since then they have rejected Mobutu's offers of government posts and have continued to advocate formation of an opposition party. [redacted]

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While many of the 13 are members of one tribe—the Baluba, based largely in southern Zaire—they appear to enjoy considerable popular sympathy because they are the only group in recent years that has worked openly within the country to try to build a broadly based opposition party. Given the group's apparent popular appeal, we believe that some of its leaders could well be invited to participate in a post-Mobutu government. [redacted]

Below we discuss the three top leaders of the UDPS—all potential candidates for inclusion in such a government. The three are Balubas who began working closely together in the 1970s when, as members of parliament, they were leading advocates of democratic reform. We believe that all three would prefer a multiparty system for Zaire and the retention of close ties to the West. [redacted]

Tshisekedi Wa Mulumba. The most outspoken critic of Mobutu in Zaire, Tshisekedi is the de facto leader of the UDPS and would probably be the group's principal representative if it were included in a future government. His willingness to remain in Zaire to work toward reform, along with his vociferous criticism of the regime, seem to have won him considerable popular sympathy. [redacted]

During the 1960s, Tshisekedi was one of Mobutu's closest advisers. He served as Minister of Interior in Mobutu's first cabinet, as a member of the Political Bureau of Zaire's sole political party, as the party's first national secretary, and finally as Minister of Planning. In 1969 he was sent to Morocco as Ambassador after the Balubas fell out with Mobutu. [redacted]

Tshisekedi has long been an advocate of democratic reform and a critic of ethnicity and corruption in the government. The first Zairian to earn a doctorate in law from its national university (1961), he also helped draft the country's constitution. [redacted]

The 50-year-old Tshisekedi, in our view, would probably be an aggressive, competent figure in a post-Mobutu regime. We believe he is generally well-disposed toward the West, particularly the United States. He has argued strongly, however, that the United States should help foster democracy in Zaire, and he has often complained to US officials that

Washington is impeding Zaire's political and economic development through its support for Mobutu. As a result, he might advocate a cautious approach toward relations with the US in a post-Mobutu era. [redacted] 25X1

Ngalula Mpandanjila. Ngalula has been the main political strategist of the UDPS. He conceived of and wrote the group's principal political document, a 51-page open letter sent to Mobutu in 1981. Ngalula, 55, appears less aggressive than Tshisekedi, but he nonetheless has been a prime mover in the UDPS and might well press from behind the scenes for political and economic reforms if the group were to be included in a future government. [redacted] 25X1

Ngalula has been an active politician since the late 1950s when, as a journalist, he cofounded the National Congolese Movement, an organization that worked for independence and later became a political party. He served as Governor of South Kasai Region in the mid-1960s. At that time the US Embassy described Ngalula as one of the country's most impressive politicians—an intelligent man with leadership and oratorical skills. Ngalula was a prominent member of the Zairian parliament from 1965 to 1980, but he has never served in a top post in the central government. He has advocated strong ties with the West and especially with the United States. [redacted] 25X1

Makanda Mpinga. Although he has been a leading activist in the UDPS movement, Makanda seems to lack the political stature and breadth of experience that Tshisekedi and Ngalula possess, and we believe he would probably be given a lesser cabinet post if the UDPS were included in a future government. [redacted] 25X1

Makanda, now 53, was an advocate of democratic reforms as a member of parliament during the late 1970s and would almost certainly press for such changes as a member of a new future regime. In a letter to the US Embassy in Kinshasa in 1982, Makanda—who had visited the United States in 1980 under the International Visitors Program—asked for US support for the UDPS and cited the United States as “the model and political and economic ideal which inspires us.” [redacted] 25X1

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Brussels-Based Dissidents

Brussels has long been a haven for exiled Zairian dissidents because of the historical ties between the two countries, Belgium's liberal political asylum laws, and the sympathetic attitude of one of the Belgian political parties—the Flemish Socialist (SP)—toward anti-Mobutu dissidents. [redacted]

The US Embassy in Brussels estimated last year that there were over 50 Zairian opposition groups in Belgium, but most were small, poorly organized, and apparently lacking in any popular following in Zaire. Even the few groups that are relatively organized and active tend to be less respected by the Zairian public than are dissidents who have remained within the country. Moreover, although the Brussels-based dissident groups have occasionally formed loose alliances with one another, they generally seem to compete among themselves for public attention. Finally, these dissidents were further weakened when several of the more prominent members of the exile community returned to Zaire in June 1983 under Mobutu's political amnesty. [redacted]

Nonetheless, a very few of the leading dissidents in Brussels appear to have reputations abroad or ties within Zaire that could result in their inclusion in a post-Mobutu government. Two such leaders are discussed below. [redacted]

Nguza Karl-i-Bond—Leader, Congolese Front for the Restoration of Democracy (FCD). A former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister under Mobutu, Nguza Karl-i-Bond is the most prominent of the Brussels-based dissidents. During his years in the government he was highly regarded by Zaire's Western and multilateral benefactors as well as its African neighbors. Largely because of his favorable international reputation, he was chosen to serve as the titular head and spokesman of the FCD, a loose coalition of Brussels-based dissidents formed in October 1982. A post-Mobutu government wishing to obtain international and regional credibility might well invite Nguza to assume an important post. [redacted]

Between 1972 and 1981, Nguza served as Foreign Minister on three occasions and finally as Prime Minister. In August 1977 Mobutu, claiming Nguza

had suppressed intelligence concerning the rebel invasion of Shaba Region in March of that year, had the Foreign Minister jailed on charges of treason. Nguza reportedly was mistreated in prison and was under a death sentence for a time, but was pardoned by Mobutu in July 1978 and reappointed Foreign Minister the following year. He served as Prime Minister from August 1980 until 1981, when he fled to Brussels and obtained political asylum. [redacted]

As Foreign Minister, Nguza was the architect of a "good neighbor" policy that eased strained relations with Zaire's neighbors and won Nguza the admiration of a number of African leaders. As Prime Minister he earned the respect of Western governments for his cooperative attitude toward them, his advocacy of sound fiscal policies, and his skills as an international negotiator. [redacted]

Nguza, 44, is a native of Shaba Region and a member of the Lunda tribe, the predominant ethnic group in Shaba. Partly because of his long affiliation with the Mobutu regime, he lacks a strong political base of his own within Zaire. Moreover, as Prime Minister he was not a forceful cabinet leader, and in our judgment he probably would not be a strong figure in a post-Mobutu government. [redacted]

Nguza appears to have remained favorably disposed toward the West. In 1981 he publicly described the United States as "that admirable democracy which we would like to use as a model." He speaks fluent English and has visited the United States on several occasions—most recently in September 1981 when he criticized the Mobutu regime in testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. [redacted]

Dikonda Wa Lumanyisha—Foreign Representative, Union for Democracy and Social Progress. As a leading intellectual and outspoken critic of the Mobutu regime, Dikonda seems to be respected by dissidents both within and outside Zaire. A former professor of sociology at Zaire's National University, Dikonda was imprisoned and tortured in 1981 after

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criticizing Mobutu on Belgian television. Released from prison in January 1982, he became a leading supporter of the movement for a second political party. He fled to Brussels in mid-1982 and now acts as the main spokesman there for the UDPS. [redacted]

Dikonda, like many of the other activists of the UDPS, is a member of the Baluba tribe. In view of his good reputation among Zairian dissidents and his active role in the movement to establish a second party, we believe he could be included in a post-Mobutu government, particularly if the UDPS plays a prominent part in such a regime. [redacted]

In Brussels, Dikonda, who is about 50, has tried to bridge differences among anti-Mobutu dissidents of divergent ideological and political orientations, and he might try to play a similar role in a future government. He has affirmed, however, that his first loyalty lies with the UDPS. He is currently working to build international support for the group, particularly among West German and French socialists. [redacted]

Representatives of Insurgent Groups

Three insurgent groups have been active in recent years. The Front for the National Liberation of the Congo (FLNC), comprised of dissidents from mineral-rich Shaba Region, operates from bases in neighboring Angola and Zambia. The FLNC, which was unsuccessful in two attempts in the late 1970s to seize control of Shaba, suffers from factional divisions, severe material and financial shortages, and morale problems. [redacted]

[redacted] the group—which has several thousand members—has continued to infiltrate men into Shaba to seek new recruits and to cache weapons and supplies there in the hope of eventually launching military or guerrilla operations against the regime. [redacted]

The second most important group, the Popular Revolutionary Party (PRP), is the only insurgent organization that has operated more or less continuously inside Zaire in recent years. The PRP, comprised of 200 to 300 men, has been based along Lake Tanganyika in eastern Zaire since 1967, according to reports from

Embassy [redacted] Like the FLNC, it lacks material and financial resources. The PRP has tried on several occasions to develop links with the FLNC, [redacted]

[redacted] The group tried to gain international attention in 1975 by kidnapping several American students on the Tanzanian side of Lake Tanganyika and holding them for two months. [redacted]

A third insurgent group, the National Congolese Movement/Lumumba (MNC/L), traces its roots to the late 1950s when it functioned as an independence movement. It operated as a political party in the early 1960s. After years of obscurity the MNC/L resurfaced in the late 1970s as a rebel group. The group enjoys some support in Zaire's eastern regions but has remained too small, loosely organized, and poorly funded to mount guerrilla operations. [redacted]

Monga Numbi—Commander in Chief, Front for the National Liberation of the Congo (FLNC). In our judgment, the FLNC's most likely representative in a post-Mobutu government, should the group be included in such a regime, is Gen. Monga Numbi, its principal leader. [redacted]

Monga, formerly an obscure FLNC colonel, was elected by Front leaders as Commander in Chief and Minister of Defense in March 1981. The 42-year-old Monga oversees all aspects of FLNC activity, including recruitment, training, infiltration, and efforts to obtain Soviet assistance. Although the FLNC suffers from factional differences—mainly between those who want to launch military or guerrilla operations soon and those who advocate a delay until the FLNC is better prepared—Monga appears to command the allegiance of most members. [redacted]

Laurent Kabila—Founder and President, Popular Revolutionary Party (PRP). Kabila has been a dedicated guerrilla leader since 1963. He was active in several revolutionary movements in eastern Zaire before forming his own group in 1967. Under Kabila's leadership the PRP grew into a well-organized and

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disciplined rebel movement. In the past few years, however, the group has become inactive because of Kabila's inability to obtain significant outside assistance. Kabila, 44, travels periodically to Belgium from Tanzania and Burundi in search of aid. [redacted]

[redacted]

Kabila received material assistance from China during the 1960s, but Beijing terminated its aid in the early 1970s and was denounced by the PRP leader. Kabila subsequently obtained modest amounts of aid from Tanzania and Burundi, and he still seems to enjoy freedom of movement in those countries. [redacted]

[redacted]

In late 1982 Kabila joined a loose coalition of pro-Western dissidents based in Brussels—a further sign that he may have moderated his stance. Kabila's ties with Brussels-based dissidents and his experience as an insurgent leader lead us to believe that he could be included in a post-Mobutu regime, although we doubt he would be given a major role. [redacted]

Francois Lumumba—Secretary General, National Congolese Movement/Lumumba. The MNC/L chose Francois Lumumba as its leader in 1981 largely because he is the eldest son of the late Patrice Lumumba, the organization's first president and the country's first Prime Minister after independence. After his father was assassinated in 1961, Francois, then 10 years old, lived for a number of years in the palace of Egypt's then President Nasser. He speaks excellent Arabic, holds a Ph.D. in economics from Cairo University, and has extensive contacts in the Arab world, particularly among leading figures in Algeria, Syria, and the PLO. He visited Libya in 1981, according to [redacted] US Embassy reporting. We have seen no evidence, however, that he receives significant Arab assistance. [redacted]

Lumumba lacks political experience and seems to have no clearly formulated ideological position; he has voiced both democratic and Marxist views on different occasions. Lumumba could be chosen to represent the party in a future government, but we believe he would not be a strong figure. [redacted]

Military Men

In our judgment, there are a number of military officers who—by virtue of their ability and the support they enjoy in the armed forces, and in some cases because of their ethnic, family, or political connections—could forge major roles for themselves in a successor regime. [redacted]

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Vice Adm. Lomponda wa Botende, State Secretary for National Defense. The second-ranking military official after the President (Mobutu himself holds the post of Defense Minister), Vice Admiral Lomponda directs the day-to-day operation of Zaire's defense establishment. Mobutu has also relied increasingly on Lomponda to carry out sensitive assignments abroad. During the first half of 1982, Lomponda supervised Zairian operations in Chad as part of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) peacekeeping force in that nation. In February 1983 Mobutu sent Lomponda to Israel to discuss proposals for expanding the Israeli military aid program in Zaire. [redacted]

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Lomponda is a capable administrator. The Navy became the best organized and equipped branch of the Zairian military when he was Navy Chief of Staff from 1976 to 1980. [redacted]

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Lomponda is known as a skilled political infighter who enjoys Mobutu's confidence. [redacted] he is widely disliked in the military, however—particularly among junior officers—because of his reputation for ethnic favoritism and corruption. Lomponda, a member of Mobutu's Ngbandi ethnic group from Equateur Region, appointed a disproportionate number of Equateurians to key positions when he headed the Navy. [redacted]

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We think the 47-year-old Lomponda might well control the armed forces in a post-Mobutu regime, particularly if Mobutu influences the succession process. Lomponda would be likely to run the military as

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he and Mobutu do now—in a highly ethnic-oriented, autocratic manner, tolerating corruption among senior officials in return for their loyalty. He could probably count on the support of the Equateurians who occupy most of the senior positions in the military [redacted]

Lomponda is friendly toward the West and has cooperated with US military and Embassy officials in Kinshasa. As head of the airlift to Chad in 1982, he sought to ensure that Zairian troops guarded the US Embassy compound in Ndjamena when rebel forces occupied the city [redacted]

Gen. Singa Boyenge Mosambay, Chief of Staff, Zairian Armed Forces. Perhaps the military's most professional and competent senior officer, General Singa has directed the armed forces since 1980. He has long been one of the few non-Equateurians among senior officers—a reflection of his good military record, his reputation for being relatively honest, and especially his loyalty to Mobutu. As commander of field operations in Shaba Region in 1977 and as military governor there in 1978, Singa proved to be one of the few competent commanders during the invasions in those years by the FLNC. He reportedly is popular among military officers. [redacted]

DIA

During the past two years, [redacted] Singa appears to have become increasingly frustrated over the military's weaknesses. [redacted]

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[redacted] Mobutu may elevate Singa, possibly to the position of State Secretary for National Defense, the number-two spot in the military hierarchy. Because of his position and his good reputation, Singa could well become an important figure in a future government. We believe, based on Embassy reporting, that Singa would favor establishing a more broadly based government. [redacted]

[redacted]

Singa, 51, has served as Governor of Shaba Region (1979), Commander of the National Gendarmerie (1972-77), Ambassador to Uganda (1970-72), and Chief of the National Security Service (1965-69). A visitor to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in 1973, he is reputed to be friendly toward the United States. [redacted]

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Lt. Gen. Boteti Nkok'ea Nkanga, Deputy Chief of Staff, Zairian Armed Forces. General Boteti appears to be a protege of Mobutu and is reportedly being groomed by the President for eventual leadership of the armed forces. He is a member of the Mongo tribe from Equateur Region. [redacted]

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Although he lacks formal military training, Boteti has a reputation among Western military missions in Kinshasa as an intelligent and fairly capable officer. He is said to be honest by Zairian standards and has appointed competent subordinates. Although he reportedly has extensive ties with influential Equateurian officials, he has remained largely uninvolved in ethnic infighting within the government. Indeed, he seems to lack forcefulness and may not be a major figure in a post-Mobutu government unless Mobutu himself is able to influence the succession process and the composition of a new regime. [redacted]

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Boteti, 46, was Army Chief of Staff from 1978 to 1981, Air Force Chief of Staff from 1972 to 1974, military attache and later Ambassador in Tel Aviv (1968-72), and military attache to Paris (1967-69). He appears to be well disposed toward the West. [redacted]

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Lt. Col. Mahele Bokungu, Deputy Commander, 31st Brigade. Since 1981, Lt. Col. Mahele has been the deputy commander of the French-commanded brigade that is one of the Zairian Army's best combat units. This brigade, located in Kinshasa, is a key prop of the regime—as well as a possible threat. [redacted]

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French and other Western military advisers who have worked closely with Mahele concur that he is one of the most capable officers in the Zairian armed forces. [redacted]

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He is also one of the few officers in key positions who has had combat experience; he led the recapture of the Kolwezi airport from the rebels who invaded Shaba Region in 1978. Mobutu subsequently became apprehensive over Mahele's growing popularity in the military and sentenced him to 10 years in prison on trumped-up charges of misconduct. Mahele was soon released, however, and appointed as a battalion commander. [redacted]

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Earlier in the 1970s, Mahele had served as chief of Mobutu's presidential security guard. Mobutu now seems to trust Mahele, an Equateurian, and reportedly may name him as commander of the 31st Brigade some time next year when he returns from a training program in France. The actual leadership of the unit, however, will probably be kept in French hands. Mahele is respected within the Zairian military. He seems to be favorably disposed toward the West. [redacted]

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Col. Nzimbi Ngbale, Commander, Special Presidential Brigade (BSP). Nzimbi heads one of the Army's best units, the 2,000- to 2,500-man BSP. Since last year the Brigade has been undergoing retraining by Israeli military advisers. Based in Kinshasa, the BSP is charged primarily with protection of the President and other senior officials, but it is also prepared to deploy against civil disturbances in the capital. In view of the Brigade's strategic location and competence, Nzimbi could play an important role in the period following the sudden death of the President.

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An Equateurian and relative of Mobutu, Nzimbi works directly under Mobutu. According to the US defense attache, he is intelligent, competent, and might be slated for a more senior military post at some point. [redacted]

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Nzimbi accompanied Mobutu on an official visit to the United States in 1979. Although we lack specific information on his political orientation, we do not believe Mobutu would have named him to the sensitive post of BSP commander unless he were highly loyal to the President and shared his pro-Western views [redacted]

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