The Congo Crisis, 1960-1961:
A Critical Oral History Conference

Organized by:
The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars'
Cold War International History Project
and Africa Program

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Opening of Conference – September 23, 2004

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Ladies and gentlemen I think we'll get started even though we're still expecting a few colleagues who haven't arrived yet, but I think we should get started because we have quite an agenda for this meeting.

Welcome all of you to the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; my name is Christian Ostermann. I direct one of the programs here at the Woodrow Wilson Center, the Cold War International History Project. The Center is the United States' official memorial to President Woodrow Wilson and it celebrates, commemorates Woodrow Wilson through a living memorial, that is, we bring scholars from around the world, about 150 each year to the Wilson center to do research and to write.

In addition to hosting fellowship programs, the Center hosts 450 meetings each year on a broad array of topics related to international affairs. One of these meetings is taking place today, and it is a very special meeting, as I will explain in a few moments. This meeting is co-sponsored by the Center's Cold War International History project and

the Center's Africa Program, directed by former Congressman Howard Wolpe. He's in Burundi as we speak here, but some of his staff will be joining us during the course of the day.

The Cold War International History project has, for almost a decade and a half now, tried to internationalize the history of the Cold War, by providing access to sources and perspectives on countries other than the United States. As many of you may know, the history of the Cold War was until about ten years ago written largely on the basis of American documents [and] through the eyes of American officials; written in many ways from one side of an era and a confrontation that involved two sides, or, as we like to think, many sides.

The Cold War International History Project, through publications, through conferences and fellowships, has tried to bring in international perspectives into the debate, into the writing of Cold War history. That's why we're so emphatic about the word 'international' in the title of our project. In many ways, this project is a giant effort at empathy, empathy being the ability that a good statesman and certainly a good historian must have, to put himself or herself in the shoes of the other, or for an historian into the shoes of the players, the actors at the time. We have tried to facilitate the process by collecting, translating and publishing documents from those archives from those countries that were inaccessible for much of the Cold War. Initially that meant mainly the Russian archives and the Eastern European archives. Increasingly we're getting access to other archives, including the Chinese archives, the Vietnamese archives, the Cuban archives. One of the great difficulties in bringing out perspectives, the views of other players in the Cold War, has been the difficulty in accessing archives, be it in South East

Asia, in Africa, Latin America, other parts of the world. This is something we hope very much to focus on in the next few years.

Let me just show everyone our main publication, the Cold War International History Project *Bulletin*, which is a collection of documents from the Russian, Eastern European and other archives on various subjects of the Cold War, from North Korea to Afghanistan. We translate materials from 15 different languages and due to limits of budgets and resources had to focus on one language for publication, so unfortunately I can only present this to you in English. We have amassed a wealth of documentation over the last few years, published in the *Bulletin* and on our website. It has allowed scholars to write, to rewrite and to reassess the history of the Cold War, in a multi-archival multi-perspective international fashion. When you put these documents from the Russian, Eastern European, other archives together with those from the US archives and US documentation that our colleagues at the National Security Archives have brought out over the last few years, you can write Cold War history in a much more interactive fashion.

Documents are clearly important to the Cold War International History Project, but we fully realize that documents can only tell you a fraction of the story of what actually happened. So for the last few years we have created and specialized in a certain type of conference which we call 'critical oral history conferences.' These are not just scholarly conferences with scholars presenting papers on certain subjects. The idea is to bring together veterans of a crisis or an event for discussion of some of the blank spots in history, stimulated by as comprehensive a set of documents as we can put together. What we hope to do in the next day or two here, is to have a conversation, not a structured

meeting with papers, but a conversation in which the veterans of the events that we are talking about at this conference, the 1960-1961 Congo crisis, really are the primary actors, the primary participants. We hope that with questions from the scholars that are present here, stimulated by some of the documentation in front of you, we can fill in some of these blank spots with information that has not made it into the history books. What we are facing as historians of the Cold War, [and] as historians of late 20th Century international history, is a dilemma. We have an increasing amount, an exponentially increasing amount, of sources of documents. We can only publish and translate a tiny fragment of what is available, but we have a slowly dwindling number of eye-witnesses, so that's why we hope this conference will be timely and important as a source for those interested in the history of Cold War and in the history of the Congo.

We have done a number of these critical oral history conferences. This is probably the one that reaches the furthest back in history. More recently, in July 2004, we had a larger conference on the Iran-Iraq war, with veterans of the policy making process, veterans of the intelligence community, and others from the United States, the Soviet Union, Iran, Iraq and other countries in the Middle East. Two years ago, we organized a major conference of this sort on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. A year before that we were in Havana for a conference on the Cuban missile crisis in which Fidel Castro participated for two days. There have also been other conferences, and I will be happy to share the results and findings with you later.

Before I introduce the moderator of the first session, let me just point out that the agenda for this meeting is rather flexible. The questions that are on the program are some of the key questions that scholars are interested in, but we do not necessarily have the

ambition to answer all of them, or to cover all of them. My hope is that the discussion will in many ways be driven by the contributions of those who were present at the events, in exchange of course with the scholars and experts here today.

I especially want to [thank] our Congolese guests for coming this far and for traveling to the United States. It's not as easy as it used to be and I know some of you had to spend several hours at customs. I also thank Larry Devlin for coming all the way from Europe. I'm not an expert on this crisis in the Congo, and have been inspired by and relied on a team of 3 that conspired this conference – Dr. Lise Namikas, who's done extensive research in the Russian archives and is completing a major work on the Congo crisis; Dr. Herbert Weiss, senior fellow and scholar here with the Wilson Center, and one of the foremost experts in this country on the Congo; and Dr. Sergey Mazov from Moscow, who has also helped tremendously with accessing the Russian materials.

I will not end before thanking my staff and the team that has really made this conference happen: Associate Mircea Munteanu, who will be here later today, Bridget Kessler who's been busy helping to get documents and other materials together, but first and foremost Dee Beutel, without whom all of us wouldn't be here today, so thank you very much for all your help with this conference. What I would suggest before we get into the first session is to go once around the table, and to briefly introduce ourselves. Rather than having a participants list with longer biographies here, we thought we should leave it up to you to introduce yourselves, as your biographies relate to the theme of this conference. So, I have said enough about myself and I wanted to just start the round. Welcome again to the Wilson Center.

JEAN MUKE: My name is Jean Muke. I work at the Congolese Senate, I am an assistant, I was asked to accompany Senator Kamitatu on the journey to participate in this conference. Thank you.

GEORGES NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: Professor emeritus of African Studies at Howard University and Director of UNDP Oslo Governor Center in Oslo Norway. I'm a scholar of the Congo as well as a native of the Congo. This conference is of great interest to me and I'd like to thank the Center for inviting me.

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: I am with the UN International History Project at the City University of New York in New York City. I grew up in the Congo in the 60s and 70s and have been a student of the Congo ever since. Much of what I write on the Congo is in collaboration with Professor Herbert Weiss. I'm currently writing a doctoral dissertation on the Congo wars from 1996-2003.

LISE NAMIKAS: My name is Lise Namikas and I wrote my dissertation on the Congo Crisis from 1960 to 1965. As Christian mentioned, I did research in Moscow and in the United States on the crisis, and now I'm working, revising my dissertation into a manuscript.

SERGEY MAZOV: My name is Dr. Sergey Mazov, Doctor from the Institute of World History at the Russian Academy of Science. I have worked extensively in the Russian and American archives on Cold War issues in Africa.

JEAN OMASOMBO: My name is Jean Omasombo, I am a professor at UNIKIN [Kinshasa University], currently residing in Brussels where I am a full time researcher at the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren. I am in a way the inheritor of Dr. Herbert Weiss' research on the Congolese crisis. From the 1950s until today, we have been working together on this. Another reason for my being here is that I am the Congolese expert on the Belgian Parliamentary Commission[1] for the inquiry into Lumumba's assassination.

THOMAS KANZA: My name is Thomas Kanza, I used to be a member of the government of Patrice Lumumba. I was his first ambassador to United Nations and later on I opened the embassy in London. I used to be a professor in Boston, a minister of Kabila's government and now I'm ambassador of the Congo in Sweden.[2]

HERBERT WEISS: My name is Herbert Weiss. I have made of Congo the main topic of my research since 1959 and I lived through the events of both the independence struggle and subsequent months of the Congo Crisis, from 1959 to 1961, while in the Congo. Since that was the high point of my research life, I am particularly delighted that we have been able to come together and review this moment.

[1] The Belgian Commission investigating Lumumba's assassination was formed by the Belgian parliament and operated during 2001. It concluded that (1) Belgium wanted Lumumba arrested, (2) Belgium was not particularly concerned with Lumumba's physical well being, (3) although informed of the danger to Lumumba's life, Belgium did not take any action to avert his death, and (4) the report also specifically denied that Belgium ordered Lumumba's assassination.

[2] During the conference Thomas Kanza spoke in his native French. His remarks were translated for this publication.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: My name is Cléophas Kamitatu, and I would add Massamba, because when it's not on the official documents I get in trouble at the airport, so Cléophas Kamitatu Massamba; I am a senator of the Democratic Republic of Congo at present. I've had a role in the political life of our country since 1959. I am one of the leaders of the Solidarity African Party[3] which participated in the Brussels round table[4] in 1960. I took part in the crisis just like my friend Thomas Kanza, not on an international level, but on a national one. Since then, I continued to be involved in my country's progress. I have also defended a Ph.D. thesis in political science in 1976 in France. I would also like to add that I too, had the opportunity to meet Herbert Weiss, because his research is focused on my party, the Solidarity African Party *(Parti Solitaire Africain)*, so, we have some relations.[5]

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I'm Larry Devlin, aka Lawrence Devlin, I was [CIA] chief of station in Congo, beginning in 1960, arriving, as I recall, on the 10th of July 1960 and staying until 1963. I left never to return, and during the 20 months that followed I was back about four or five times for various, should we say, specific actions. Then I returned again in 1965, remained until 1967. I salute the Wilson Center for what they're doing. I

[3] The Parti Solitaire Africain (PSA) or African Solidarity Party was a nationalist political party that played an important role in the Congolese independence struggle. It was born in 1959 and was based in Kwilu District of then Leopoldville Province, now Bandundu, and although it had national ambitions it was never able to extend its mobilization activities much beyond the Kwilu region. The PSA won 13 out of 137 seats in the first parliament emerging from the May 1960 elections. It was therefore the second most powerful party and it firmly allied itself with Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba's alliance. Soon after independence it split into two main factions led by Antoine Gizenga and Cleophas Kamitatu. Although there are links between the PSA and the Kwilu Rebellion that broke out in 1963, the party was by that time no longer functioning.

[4] The Brussels round table was a meeting held in Brussels with the participation of Congolese political leaders in January 1960. The conference resulted in the Congo's gaining independence on June 30 of that year.

[5] During the conference Cleophas Kamitatu spoke in his native French. His remarks were translated for this publication.

was just beginning to work on my dissertation for my doctorate at Harvard, when McGeorge Bundy[6] came along. While Bill Elliot, also Professor Elliott,[7] invited me in for a brief meeting on Sunday, I was quite impressed, because he was going to be supervising my dissertation and I thought this was a very advantageous arrangement. When I got there, there was a gentleman by the name of McGeorge Bundy, who later, as most of you know, became the advisor on international matters to both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. In essence it reminds me of the old poster, his finger was pointing, "Uncle Sam needs you." I'm not quite sure why he needed me, Uncle Sam needed to fill a lot of slots in CIA. In any case, it seemed very important to me, the Cold War was at one of its highpoints. I believe very strongly at that time I'd been violently anti-Nazi as a young student, I was participating in a group known as the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, the so called William Allen White Committee[8], so when the war came on, I quit college along with many others. We all enlisted to save the world for democracy. We did a great job, didn't we? In any case, Congo became rather special to me. Some of you here, I knew you once upon a time, when you were in your very key positions. Certainly I enjoyed it, I was brand new, I knew absolutely nothing about Africa when I received my assignment. I think the point was no one else wanted the assignment, so therefore I got it. I'm delighted to meet some of you. I hope to get the opportunity to speak with Dr. Mazov. I would have been more than interested in talking to you once upon a time Sir, for a different objective—

[6] McGeorge Bundy was United States National Security Advisor to Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson from 1961 through 1966, and president of the Ford Foundation from 1966 through 1979.
[7] William Elliott was a professor of history at Harvard until 1964. During the Cold War he served on the National Security Council and was a member of Vice-President Nixon's "Kitchen Cabinet."
[8] The CDAAA was a pro-interventionist organization that advocated American involvement in the Second World War. It was formed in May 1940.

SERGEY MAZOV: Thank you, Sir. Unfortunately, your colleague Mr. Kirpichenko had no time, I tried to convince him, but—

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: But anyway, thank you Doctor for permitting me to attend this conference.

M. DEE BEUTEL: My name is Dee Beutel, I'm Christian's assistant and I am an MA student at Norwich University studying Conflict Resolution. I'm just honored to listen to all of you today. It's a wonderful group that we've assembled, thank you all for getting here.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Thanks to you.

STEVEN COLE: My name is Captain Steven Cole. I'm an MA student at the University of Maryland studying US foreign policy in Nigeria during the Biafran war. After this year I'll go on to teach history at the United States Military Academy.

Session One: Background and the Crisis of Independence, 1958-July 1960

HERBERT WEISS: Let the first session begin. As I read these questions which are before you, although I don't want to prejudice your deliberations and contributions, I think we will be able to get through some of the first questions rather rapidly because I

suspect that there isn't all that much that can be contributed until we get to some of the later questions. The first question is "why did the looming independence of the Congo attract so much attention? What made the situation in the Congo particularly explosive?" Those are really two very separate questions. Let's look at the first one first. Did it in fact attract that much attention? And to answer that, especially in the context of a Cold War framework, I'm going to ask Larry Devlin, who says he didn't know anything about it until he got there. Afterwards, to perhaps give us a resume of what he thinks the American perception was of this looming crisis before it sprang upon us. In other words, starting in 1958 and going into 1959-1960. And then I will ask Dr. Mazov to complement that and after that I'll throw it open to any other contributions, but my sense is that we'll be able to move rather rapidly and catch up with the agenda because of that. So Larry, did it in fact loom large, and, if so, why?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: It did not loom large, so far as I know. I was not active in African matters until 1960, but I was based in Brussels and naturally the round table conference attracted our attention as to the riots of 1959, January, I believe.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Larry, if you don't mind, as we are just still at the very beginning, if I could just introduce Thomas Blanton, the director of the National Security Archive, one of our closest partners. We just got through the introductions, Larry was starting.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: In reading this before coming in, I thought that perhaps the fact that Congo produced the materials needed to make the first atomic bombs drew some attention, I would suspect that Dr. Mazov might talk about that, I'm sure that certain Americans thought about it, but generally I had the impression that the American State Department and CIA had little interest in the Congo prior to independence, and prior to the mutiny that occurred in July, the night of the 5-6 of July 1960. I open the floor to comments.

SERGEY MAZOV: Yes, the Soviet authorities were quite ignorant about the Congo before the riots [of 1959]. But the riots stimulated an interest in information from Belgium. Maybe just a few words about the Congolese documents in Russian archives. The Congolese Crisis remains the least explored episode of the Cold War in Africa from the point of view of Soviet intentions and behavior. And the situation in the Russian archives has reinforced this. The documents containing the activity of the Defense Ministry and the KGB are still classified. Many important documents concerning the Lumumba period have been destroyed and burned when diplomatic relations were suspended after the ousting of Lumumba in September 1960. Mr. D'Andro saw smoke coming from the chimney of the Russian Embassy; they were burning documents. The riots that happened in Leopoldville stimulated Soviet interest in the Congo. I'll quote a very interesting document which I believe has never been quoted before. On January 20, [1959] a copy of the letter with ABAKO's[9] seal was delivered to the foreign ministry of

[9] The Alliance des Bakongo (ABAKO) was an initially a cultural organization but developed into one of the most significant nationalist parties participating in the independence struggle. It fully mobilized the Bakongo ethnic group living in the Lower Congo region between Kinshasa (then Leopoldville) and the

the USSR. It contained the added note: “transmit the copy to His Excellency Khrushchev—we hope to receive your military aid before January, 19, 1959,” so it was not Lumumba who was the first to apply for Russian military aid. And this letter was sent to Khrushchev and he ordered [the Foreign Ministry] to find out all about this Congo—what was going on there and who did request military assistance.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Sergey, what's the title of the document? Is it in the briefing book?

SERGEY MAZOV: It was a letter of “Alliance de Bas-Congo” ABAKO, it was a letter to the Belgian minister, demanding immediate independence from Congo, but a copy was sent to Khrushchev, with the addition I just mentioned.

HERBERT WEISS: Before we leave this subject, I might add a few words. From 1958 to the middle of 1959, I had a job with the Intelligence and Research Division [INR] of the State Department. This was my one government job, in the whole of my career. Just to give you a sense of the level of attention that existed in the State Department at that time, I was given as my charge, all of French-speaking Africa. There was only one person doing research on all of Sub-Saharan French-speaking Africa. And one crisis so to speak, that I mainly focused on, because that's what I was ordered to do, was, you will recall, the no vote of Guinea against joining the French Community in 1958. There, there was a real Cold War tension, there was virtually nothing coming out of the US consulate in

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Atlantic Ocean. Its most important leader was Joseph Kasavubu who became the first President of the Congo after independence was achieved.

Leopoldville, and in fact when I left that job to join a research project at MIT and it was suggested to me that I go to the Congo and do research there, I protested that my interest was the independence movements in Africa and that there was no independence movement, from what I had been able to gather, in the Congo, and that was in September 1959. Having had access to State Department documents for about a year, I was totally ignorant about the beginnings of the independence struggle in the Congo. This supports Larry's view that there was very little interest. Does anybody else have any comment on that? Yes, Christian.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Just a follow-up question to Larry Devlin's statement. You must have gotten some instructions, or were briefed before you were sent to the Congo. Did that reflect an increased concern, or were you not briefed?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I was given a number of files to read, which I had very little interest in, and came across a thing I had written as a reserve officer, a paper I had written in 1958, I don't remember exactly, maybe earlier than that, 1956, a report on the outstanding quality of the Force Publique, what a great military unit it was, done by various attachés who had done a two week tour in the Congo and become experts. The briefing was quite frankly: no one knew a damn thing about the Congo. I would say, that essentially, 98% of the information in the files came from the Belgian government in the Congo, officers there, officers in Brussels, but very little from the Congolese that were involved. I was surprised when I got to the Congo. I went there before being assigned

with Ambassador William Burden[10] from Brussels, who was one of the few people who showed any interest in the fact that the Congo was becoming independent. He later provided the economist Rob West[11], he [may have] paid for his efforts for a while, full-time, I'm not sure. Ambassador Burden felt that there was going to be an economic problem there and he was really concerned with the lack of interest in Washington. I happened to go with him for a week down there, where I became an 'expert' on the Congo, and that's in quotes, please believe me, I have no intention of conceiting myself as such, but the briefings were really useless when I got there.

UNKNOWN: I have a question concerning what you just said on the State Department. If the State Department was so badly informed, I assume that the National Security Council was even worse informed than the State Department. I read the Diplomatic Institute [collection] of the US documents published by the Government Printing office in the late '50s. In one meeting of the National Security Council, President Eisenhower made a statement "I see that the natives of the region of Congo want independence. Do they know how to write and read?" That was amazing, because during that time, UNESCO[12] had a vision of Congo, as one of the countries with the highest literacy rate in developing countries, although it was mostly limited to reading and writing in the local vernacular, since the Belgians were not promoting secondary education, but I thought it was amazing that the president of the United States was asking if they knew how to write and read.

[10] William Burden was US Ambassador in Belgium.
[11] Robert West, a professor of economics at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of Tufts University in Massachusetts, studied and worked in the field of African economic development and first came to the Congo as an MIT researcher in 1959.
[12] United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: May I comment on that, actually when I went there, there was a great discussion in the diplomatic community as to how many university graduates there were in the Congo. The main argument was whether there were 14 or 16, which…Ambassador Kanza was number one, Mobutu[13], unfortunately he's not here, was the second. And I don't know the order after all, but it's true that the basic education was much higher than in most African countries, but I went on, after being chief of station to being chief Africa, some years later, '70 to '74.

HERBERT WEISS: Tatiana very quickly and then Thomas, but we've got to move on. Obviously we all have our stories, we could spend the day on the first point, but we've got to move on.

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: I just wanted to make a point that the Africa Bureau in the State Department was established in 1956 and from the moment it was established, the staff of the Africa Bureau, through the early '60s, through the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, struggled with the Bureau for European Affairs over whose purview Africa was going to be. Until then, Africa fell under the Bureau for European Affairs because of has links with the European colonial powers, and [they] tried very hard to prevent any direct contact between new Africa Bureau staff and leaders of African

[13] Joseph Mobutu (1930-1997 aka Mobutu Sese Seko) was in charge of the Mouvement National Congolais/Lumumba (MNC/L) office in Brussels during the round table conference and became Lumumba's first chief of staff of the army in July 1960. In September 1960 he organized a coup against Lumumba with strong CIA backing. For the next five years he headed the army, continued to receive strong US support, but did not formally run the government. In 1965 he seized power formally, was proclaimed president and ruled as a dictator for over thirty years thereafter. He died in 1997.

national independence movements. The great shift in Africa policy under Kennedy was this greater emphasis on building relationships with African independence leaders—an idea pushed especially by Deputy Assistant Secretary for Africa Wayne Fredericks.

THOMAS KANZA: I think it would be a mistake to start talking about the crisis in the Congo, I call it the Cold War, if we start in 1958. Things were happening already, although in America, people were ignorant of what was happening. But we cannot forget that Africa was known not only as empire of silence, but as the reserved zone of Europe. [S]o within America, I think there was this kind of competition going on behind the scenes, but [largely] unknown to Africans, because the setup of NATO and the Warsaw Pact had [already started] the Cold War among the big powers. No one has mentioned [since] we started our discussion, if we like it or not, that what was happening outside [of the Congo], like the Bandung conference in 1955; the visit of the king of the Belgians in 1955; …the publication of the memoirs of Van Bilsen[14] in [19]56, saying that Congo will need 30 years before becoming independent. [Then in 1957,] the independence of Ghana, the first time a Black African [state] became independent; in 1958, the independence of Guinea, the arrival of General de Gaulle, who promised independence to the French-speaking countries; and Congo-Kinshasa being drawn face to face with Congo-Brazzaville. Here we have General de Gaulle [coming to] Brazzaville, asking the Congolese across the river "would you like independence, or not? If you like, you can take [it] straight away," and [then nearby] Guinea became independent. The relation between Ghana and Guinea and the…revenge of General de Gaulle against Sékou

[14] A.A.J. Van Bilsen was a Belgian professor who, in December 1955, proposed a thirty-year plan for Congolese independence, thirty years being the time he felt would be required for a Congolese educated elite to be established.

Touré[15] brought in the Cold War[.] …The Russians stepped into Guinea [and] they were already friends with Ghana, so the relation between Russians and Americans started getting hot because of the [presence] of Russians in Guinea and in Ghana, and then in Kinshasa. Already in 1956, ABAKO[16] was holding secret meetings with the American consulate. I had been attending the meetings because my father was deputy president of ABAKO. So the relations between ABAKO and Americans were very very close. Lumumba, because he went to the Accra conference[17] [...] was tainted as being pro-communist [when he came back] because there he met people like Nyerere,[18] Tom Boya,[19] and especially Sekou Touré. When we start with 1958, I think we have to bear in mind all these facts… and then the arrival of Lumumba from Accra, [and] his statement on December 28, 1958, in Kinshasa. ABAKO wanted to do the first meeting in January [1959]. That month had the first riot in the Congo. The Americans were taken by surprise, because the only information the Americans had was from Brussels. It was Brussels giving the Americans information about every single Congolese, some were tainted pro-West, others pro-communist. So, the files of the American security services were wrong at the start, because you can be pro-Belgium, and then you are pro-West. Or, if you're against Belgians, for internal reasons you're automatically against the West. Now, I'm glad Cléophas Kamitatu is here. Later on, when we start talking about the

[15] Sekou Toure was the President of Guinea from 1958 to his death in 1984. Touré was one of the primary Guinean nationalists involved in the Guinean independence struggle against France.
[16] ABAKO, or Alliance des Bakongo, was a nationalist political party initially formed as a cultural organization of the Bakongo ethnic group. It was formed in 1958 and led by Joseph Kasavubu
[17] The All-African Peoples' Conference (AAPC) was a conference of political parties and other groups that met in December 1958. It was held in Accra, Ghana.
[18] Julius Nyerere was a Tanzanian politician who served as the first president of Tanzania and previously Tanganyika, from the country's founding in 1961 until his retirement in 1985.
[19] Thomas Mboya was a prominent Kenyan politician and labor leader who was active before and during Joma Kenyatta's government.

round table conference, [we will encounter] a man like Gizenga[20], he went to the eastern countries, East Berlin and Czechoslovakia. Kamitatu is here, he can confirm, while he was attending the round table conference in Brussels, it was the PSA that had been sending money to Gizenga, not because Gizenga was communist, but because he was president of the party they had to divide the job; Kamitatu and others discussing in Brussels, Gizenga getting in touch with the Russians, just to get a pressure group against the Belgians. Next Gizenga would go to Guinea, so he would be labeled communist, all the way with Mulele,[21] when he was not communist. We had our strategy, to divide our contact between East and West. It was worthwhile mentioning that, because we will always have opposite views towards what was happening in the Congo, outside powers, it depends if you are European or American. You are called communist, if you have any contact with any communist country. In Kinshasa there were only two consulates, [from] Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. There was no other way to get in touch with the eastern world, unless you became friendly with these two consulates. Kasavubu[22] was in touch with the Americans; Lumumba was very close to the Belgians, but because of his contact with Ghana and Guinea he was called communist. Anyone friendly to Lumumba even if [they had] never been to Russia—I've never been to Russia, I've never been to China—was labeled communist. Cleophas here, who had never been to Russia or China, was

[20] Antoine Gizenga was Lumumba's deputy prime minister and president of the PSA. When Lumumbists were excluded from power after Mobutu's September 1960 coup he fled to Stanleyville (today Kisangani) and formed a rival central government that had strong leftist leanings. Several attempts were made to bring him into the Leopoldville (today Kinshasa) government, but they all failed and he was eventually imprisoned. Later he went into exile and returned to lead his new political party, PALU, during the 2006 election and, in alliance with President Joseph Kabila, he became Prime Minister.

[21] Pierre Mulele was Secretary-General of the Parti Solidaire Africain (PSA), based in the Kwilu region. He became minister of education in Lumumba's short lived cabinet and after Mobutu's September 1960 coup joined Gizenga in Stanleyville (today Kisangani). From there he went to Egypt and China and returned to the Congo in 1963 to start and lead the Kwilu Rebellion.

[22] Joseph Kasavubu was the leader of ABAKO and the first president of what became the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 1960-1965.

labeled communist. When we're talking about the Cold War, there is an outside point of view, [an] American point of view, [a] European point of view, but there is also an African point of view. As far as we are concerned, it's the quarrel between the big powers that brought the Cold War in the Congo. And all of us Africans, we suffer from this outside world, it was brought upon us. Thank you.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Just a couple of words to complete this. I confirm everything that my friend Thomas has said and I would like to add that if the Americans, at the time, had been a little more open in terms of ABAKO and Kasavubu, we may have been able to have different relations. But the Americans chose to systematically support the Belgians. It was our impression, after our first contact, we saw that the Americans couldn't let go of the Belgians. This is confirmed by everything that happened afterwards, in July and August 1960. Maybe it was a false impression, but it was the impression that we had. So when we sent our people to Guinea, it was for pressure. And I confirm what Kanza said. When Gizenga was in Eastern Europe for three weeks, it was me who sent him money from Brussels. This money came from our base in Kinshasa. Herbert verified this during his research. I sent the money to Gizenga and then he used the money to go to Guinea, so that he could ask all the Africans to support our cause. What hadn't been understood at that time, was that Congolese were looking for allies against the Belgian colonial power. If people had understood that, the crisis would have taken another direction.

JEAN OMASOMBO: Very quickly, I was not alive at the time, but, as a researcher, I'm sorry we don't have any [of] the Belgians here, and if I make this intervention it is because I took part in the [Belgian Parliamentary] Commission, and if I'm not mistaken, on page 803 of the Commission's report, it says that the Belgian government was surprised by the Congolese crisis. This is strange, because finally, neither the Russians nor the Americans, and not even the Belgians saw the crisis coming. However, from a Belgian perspective in 1959, Congo was no longer worth too much. The image here was that Congo was a good country till 1960, and on July, 30 everything [had] fallen apart and the Congolese took control of the country. This is totally false. On the Belgian side, the person, or the few people, who were in charge of conveying what happened to the Belgian public, were taken hostage by a group in Congo. We can understand why, for example, Kanza and Kamitatu were accused of being communist sympathizers and why this image was pressed on Belgian public opinion, and we can also understand the sequence of the events that followed… We have to see how, since the end of 1959, beginning of 1960, the colonial power created these images to justify the chaos that already existed in Congo.

SERGEY MAZOV: Guinea differed from the Congo as a Cold War site considerably. Americans let Guinea feel free with the Soviet Union, the USA chose a "wait and see" policy. The Congo, with its vast territory strategically located in the "heart of Africa," richly endowed with mineral resources was roundly considered to be the key to the African continent. Americans were prepared beforehand for the future, to fight for these rich mineral resources at the heart of Africa.

HERBERT WEISS: Let's go on to the next chapter. One of the people at the American consulate in Leopoldville, Owen Roberts, did have contact with Kasavubu and as a result the Belgians declared him persona non-grata. But what is significant is that his career in the State Department was severely damaged, as a result. He was one of the earliest Africa experts. During his last tour of duty, just before his retirement, they finally made him ambassador to Togo, it was a sort of a good-bye gift. He was a friend of mine, I don't know if he's still alive, I haven't had contact with him in many many years. The State Department gave such priority to its relationship with Europe, that the mere fact that [Roberts] had contact with a Congolese leader (this is long before any communist or Cold War labels were attached) was enough to severely compromise the career of an up and coming, bright enterprising foreign service officer.

The next subject is: Did the results of the round table conference in January surprise the United States? Did they surprise the Soviet Union? Let's just have the US and Soviet input here. We understand that lots of things were going on in the Congo, but we will get to that a little later. So, Larry, as the representative of the American power here, do you know of any surprise?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: No.

HERBERT WEISS: We're going to move forward very quickly this way. [laughter]

SERGEY MAZOV: The Soviet Union received this with mixed surprise and tension. The most interesting thing was a report made by the Soviet embassy which identified ABAKO as the most influential and organized Congolese political force. But Lumumba's party was characterized as more moderate.

THOMAS KANZA: We have to make up our minds, when we talk about the US, are we talking about the government, or are we talking about various sources of power in the US. As far as we Congolese are concerned, in 1958, because of what was happening in Africa and the arrival in Brussels of more then the 600 Congolese for the World Fair—this was the first time Congolese visited Belgium. Then the Russians, the Americans, the British and the French had the opportunity to meet the Congolese and to know who is who. In America, I was at Harvard in 1958 and I came here to Washington to visit the United Nations. Congolese leaders were invited [to] America. People like A. Gizak were invited to America by Mr. Harriman.[23] American industries were invited by Congolese to make contacts, especially from Kasai and Katanga. So, mineral industries were very much interested in Africa, especially in the Congo, but the Belgians were discouraging it. The alliance between the Belgians, and the British, South Africans and Rhodesians were preparing already, in case people like Lumumba or Kasavubu wanted power. What to do with Katanga and Kasai? I think it's a mistake to say that it came as a surprise. Maybe for the US government, but for the American industrials (probably preparing the ground) it was not a surprise. And the Belgians were convinced that the USA was preparing to replace them in the Congo, through the United Nations. That's already back in 1958. So

[23] Averell Harriman was a prominent American businessman, politician and diplomat. He owned numerous businesses concerns, held high-level positions within the State Department and Department of Commerce at several points in his career, twice ran for president unsuccessfully, and served as governor of New York.

when 1959 came, I think it's wrong to say it came as a surprise to the Russians. When the Russians, through the Belgian communist party, started getting in touch with the Congolese, the Russians also discovered the Congolese. Some of the Russians were also inviting Congolese, not directly to Moscow, but to Prague.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I would say that I would second Ambassador Kanza's comments, certainly the private industry, also the missionary industry were very active. While [at?] the American consulate, when I visited in 1960, I don't believe the consul general had met any Congolese. The only person who had was a man called Lavalee,[24] whose deputy, called Frank Carlucci[25] had started making contacts. But I think this was not well viewed by the consul general. It was considered not the right thing to do because this would offend the Belgians.

SERGEY MAZOV: Concerning the Belgian communist party... One of its leading members, Albert de Coninck,[26] had extensive contacts with Congolese. He positively characterized Lumumba and Gizenga to Soviet comrades and they were invited to the Soviet Union, but only Gizenga arrived. I have documents, official invitations sent to Lumumba on April 15, 1959 and Gizenga on January 11, 1960. In April 1959, a Soviet charge d' affaires in Guinea, Mr. Ivan Marchuk, met Lumumba and the same person had

[24] Jerry Lavalee later became chief of the political section of the U.S. Embassy in the Congo.
[25] Frank Carlucci served in the US Foreign Service from 1956 through 1969, including in Congo. He went on to serve as Secretary of Defense under Ronald Reagan.
[26] Albert De Coninck was a member of the Belgian Communist Party from 1931 onward and fought in the International Brigades of the Spanish Civil War.

a talk with Pierre Mulele and Raphael Kinkie[27] of the PSA and A. Kingotolo of ABAKO in December 1959. Lumumba turned out to be more moderate, he requested only money, while the PSA and ABAKO representatives applied for arms, money, permission to use radio Moscow for a propaganda campaign. All these requests were denied.

JEAN OMASOMBO: The decision for Congo's independence was a surprise, probably so for Belgium. Belgium intended to give a certain freedom to Congo, but not go all the way. But even on the Congolese side—Cleophas knows, he took part in the Round Table—even if the Congolese asked for immediate independence, they were not expecting to get it totally. The strategy was to ask for more in order to get something. They obtained everything and I would like Cleophas tell us a bit about this.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Just a few words. When we asked for a meeting with the Belgian government in December 1959, we did not believe that the Belgians would grant us independence in less than 3-4 years. The Belgians did not think we were legitimate representatives, and we refused the dialogue with them as long as Brussels [refused to] make a decision. Then, they invited us, a few of representatives of ABAKO, PSA, MNC of the Popular Party, to Brussels, to meet ministries [ministers?] and members of the Belgian parliament. We went there on the 3rd of December, the ten of us, and we were going to discuss for 15 days to reach an agreement. This was not possible. All we could obtain was to organize a round table in Brussels in January. As soon as he made this decision, the King announced that he would go to Congo to check whether the

[27] Raphael Kinkie was a member of the PSA who, along with a small group of ABAKO and PSA leaders, had left the Congo around December 1959 – January 1960 secretly to seek foreign support in the eventuality that the Belgians refused to grant independence and especially if struggle turned violent.

declarations we had made during the 15 days were reflecting the public opinion. The King started his visit in the East, in Lumumba's area, who hadn't come with us to Brussels because he had already been arrested. He had been set up at the end of October and arrested. The King went there to see if Lumumba was indeed as popular as we said he was, and as other people were saying [he was]. The fact which triggered Belgium's decision at the round table was that all the delegates requested two things. First of all we had an alliance, all the parties were to act in the best interest of this alliance, and the Belgians were surprised to see that the Congolese were capable of unity. They were counting on division and we were all united. First thing we asked was for Lumumba to be released. We said that he had to attend the meetings, as he was so popular in the eastern part of the country and he could call into question all the decisions we would make on the future of the country. If all the Congolese were to be represented, Lumumba had to be there. The second thing, which surprised the Belgians, was that we did not have a date to propose for independence. We had not decided on that, we were still discussing it. Thomas Kanza was behind the scenes, and we were asking ourselves if we could not speed up the independence process and ask for it immediately. And again, all of us reached an agreement. They had no other answer to give us, they had to agree and give up Congo. As I always have written in all my documents, they let go of [Congo] with one hand, hoping they could get hold of it again with the other hand.

[JEAN OMASOMBO?]: I have a question for Cleophas Kamitatu. What was the thinking of you and others regarding the PNP[28] and Katanga at the conference—your relations with them?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: The PNP was a party that the Belgians were supporting, they approved of its creation. It was meant to oppose all the nationalist parties that asked for immediate independence. So, already, in Congo this party was not very well seen by the press, and we didn't have too many relations with them. We used to call them Parti des Nègres Payés (The Party of Paid Negroes), paid by the Belgians. At the round table, since we had decided to create the alliance, the PNP supported it. The main characteristic of this round table was that the nationalist parties, even if they were a minority, fought for their cause. So, the general orientation was that of the nationalist parties, PSA, MNC, ABAKO, the big nationalist parties that were speaking in the name of the people and led the discussion. All that the PNP did was to support us. So we had good relations, because we didn't want the Belgians to see any division among us during the round table.

THOMAS KANZA: Let me just add two small points. Cleophas just mentioned that I was not attending the round table conference; I was behind the scenes, just because I was then an international civil servant at the Common Market. I could not be a Congolese politician, but my father [Daniel Kanza] was deputy chairman of the round table conference and number 2 of the ABAKO. While I was informing my countrymen of the game which was going on behind the scenes, the Americans made a mistake by ignoring the competition between Belgium and France. That's the reason why Kasavubu was

[28] Parti National du Progres or National Progress Party.

invited by the French. He left the round table conference after threatening that we must form the government now, knowing that after the formation of the "Front Commun" (alliance) it was impossible for Kasavubu to make this kind of demand. He did not consult the "Front Commun" and he decided to leave the round table conference. And it happened, he did this the day Lumumba made his entry at the round table conference. This attracted all the media, so Kasavubu had to do something to attract attention. He left the round table conference. He went to France where he met Couve de Murville, who was the French foreign minister. According to the Berlin treaty [of 1885], … in case Belgium failed to control Congo as a united country, the French had the right to take away, if not the entire country, at least a part, which is the Bas Congo area: Congo Brazzaville. That encouraged the Anglo-Saxons. If Bas Congo seceded, then Katanga[29] and South Kasai[30]could also secede with the pressure and the control of Anglo Saxons—Americans, British, South Africans and Rhodesians. These are two important points that we have to mention when talking about the round table conference.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I have a question. I'm not sure that I understood your point, but you say the Americans were involved and wanted to split the Congo. Is that what you were implying?

THOMAS KANZA: No. In case the Belgians could not control the Congo as a united country, the French were prepared to take away part of the Congo.

[29] Katanga is a southern province of the DRC and home to its second largest city.
[30] South Kasai is a central province of the DRC; both Kasai and Katanga attempted to secede from the newly independent Congo in July 1960.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: But, what about the Anglo-Saxons?

THOMAS KANZA: The Americans failed to support Kasavubu. So, Kasavubu went to the French because he had the impression that [the Americans] had let him down.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Well, he was right at the conference, we were under instructions: we were not allowed to meet with Congolese at that time, because we could have offended the Belgians. I think I'm the only person, who accompanied a Belgian journalist who shall remain unnamed, as his secretary. I had requested the right to speak with Kasavubu and your father [Daniel Kanza], but this was denied, very rapidly. And I had dinner that night, with a friend of mine, who was a journalist, and I said "I was turned down," and he said, "well, I see him tomorrow, if you keep your mouth shut, with your accent, you can go as my secretary." So I went, and I carried his briefcase. Later on, when I accompanied Ambassador [Clare] Timberlake[31] to present his letters of credential [July 25th, 1960], Kasavubu thought I was the new ambassador. Unfortunately, I wasn't.

HERBERT WEISS: Any other comments on the round table, as it connects to the two main competitors in the Cold War? Incidentally, wasn't it the Convention of Saint-Germain en Laye, not the Berlin Conference that gave the French the right to take over Congo? It was a special convention signed later, a follow up to Berlin.[32]

SERGEY MAZOV: What was the outcome of Kasavubu's meeting in Paris?

[31] Claire Timberlake served as the US ambassador to the Congo from July 5th 1960 to June 15th 1961.
[32] It was the Berlin Treaty of 1885.

THOMAS KANZA: At the time Americans were inviting [to] America people from Katanga and Kasai to meet mineral groups of [the] USA. The French also, especially one very important French company, I don't want to name them here, was very interested in the Basin Congo area, because, contrary to what the Belgians were telling the Americans, the [French] opinion was that the only [mining] provinces of the Congo were Kasai and Katanga. But the Belgians knew and the Americans knew also, that Bas Congo was as rich as Katanga as far as minerals are concerned, especially [as a result of] their presence in Inga dam. The French invited Kasavubu to sign an agreement. The Couve de Murville meeting was a just cover up. He really signed [an agreement] with one very important French industrial conglomerate.

UNKNOWN: To sell Bas Congo to the French.

KANZA: Exactly, in case Katanga and Bas Congo seceded.

JEAN OMASOMBO: I have another question about the round table. Until the 27th [of January 1960] the Congolese alliance worked, the decision to gain immediate independence was made. But beginning with the 28th the alliance exploded, most of decisions could not be reached—on sharing the resources among the provinces and other issues. So, the success of the round table is partial, because, beginning on the 28th, there were no real decisions made, and Belgium took advantage of this – [division over] unitarianism, federalism, [and whether the King was] still going maintain his position in

Congo.[33] Kamitatu did not agree, Lumumba says "the King is not going to be the head of the state in Congo not even for a minute after the 31st of July." [At the same time] Tshombe[34] and others were saying that finance and foreign affairs should be left to the Belgians until the Congolese would be capable of handling all this—the army, the finance and the foreign affairs.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Your analysis is correct. I think that Kanza said an important thing. The fact that Kasavubu left the conference and [did not observe] the directions of the alliance, that is, not to make any decisions on Congo by himself, had a very negative influence on all the delegates, mostly the nationalist ones. Because Kasavubu was one of ours, he was the president of the nationalist block. But the indecision did not last for long. Contrary to what you say, starting with the 28th [of January] we regained the freedom of discussion. This means that [before January 28th] we were not going to discuss at the round table, we were going to meet beforehand, decide on everything and a representative would announce it at the round table. Starting with the 28th, the system changed. We could discuss, even at the conference, but the decisions were not to be made immediately. We decided to meet afterwards and make the decisions. The two or three issues have been mentioned here—the King as head of the state, for instance. It was not my personal position; I was the spokesman of the alliance

[33] The terms unitarianism and federalism refer to the two basic differences between the Congolese on whether the Congo should be united with a strong central government in Leopoldville, or adopt a constitution that offered the provinces more autonomy, a position favored by Tshombe and the Belgian interests in Katanga. These terms however, were used in a very fluid manner at the time.
[34] Moise Tshombe was a member of the Lunda ethnic group, Katanga independence activist and leader of the Confederation des Associations Tribales du Katanga (CONAKAT). In June 1960 he became the self-declared leader of the secessionist province of Katanga.

during the whole conference. I was put in charge of that. It was Lumumba's personal contribution, when he said "not even for a minute..." But I was the spokesman on this matter. As to the structure of the state, we had all discussed during the conference. But the decision to adopt a regime, which, while not being federalist, would give autonomy to the provinces, we all made it together and a spokesman held it at the conference. But the conference did not go wrong. There was a change in strategy, we could discuss publicly, but decisions were not made individually. This [There?] is not one single decision which had been made individually. If you look at each decision, there wasn't one taken with a majority of votes for and a minority of votes against. All decisions were made by consensus. This means that after discussions, we were meeting and making the decisions which were announced at the conference on the next day. I might be wrong, I don't know, but maybe Thomas who was a part of this could complete what I said.

THOMAS KANZA: I just want to make two points. First, it was difficult for people like us to try and convince the politicians why we were no longer united. For example, the Belgians used these kinds of misunderstandings, divisions, to prevent the Congolese from discussing two very important subjects: the future of the economy and the future of the army of the Congo. Then, the Belgians were already preparing students and some young politicians in the Congo during the second round table conference, knowing very well that the politicians would be back home campaigning for their election, and knowing what would be happening to the army, the "Force Publique." So, in that sense, the Belgians had succeeded, by playing this kind of game, and it became obvious [to] Congolese politicians. They were in a hurry to end the political round table conference

and go back home. Then the young students, and some Congolese, among them, Joseph Mobutu stayed behind for the economic round table conference. And nobody wondered what happened to the Force Publique.

KAMITATU: But Tshombe stayed for the economic conference.

THOMAS KANZA: Tshombe, people like Tshombe stayed, but he knew that the Belgians were taking care of his political campaign in Katanga.

HERBERT WEISS: Alright. I think we covered what was the nature of US and Soviet relations with the Congolese prior to independence. The next question is, how much intelligence did the US have about Congolese politics and leaders, independently of Belgian sources. What did the Belgians tell the US representatives about the Congolese leaders?

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Let me, before we break, introduce my colleague Jim Hershberg, from the George Washington University and former director of the Cold War International History Project who will join the discussions as an expert on the Cold War.

[Gap between tapes. When discussion resumes it has shifted to the presence of the Soviets in the Congo, especially the relationship between the competing central government in Stanleyville led by Gizenga and the USSR.]

SERGEY MAZOV: I have no documents about the Czechoslovakian [involvement] in the Congo; maybe Dr. Namikas can tell us more about this.

HERBERT WEISS: I did hear that Mulele had been in contact with the Czech consulate.[35] When was that?

SERGEY MAZOV: When he was representing Gizenga in Cairo.

HERBERT WEISS: No, no, much [earlier].

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Czechoslovakia had a consul in Kinshasa in 1955. He stayed until 1960. The consul was in charge of selling Skoda cars, a small Fiat-type car, very cheap. In 1956, he started organizing at his place ideological training classes for the Congolese, among them my friend Mulele, who used to go to these classes a couple of times a week. It seemed to go really well. When I went to Kinshasa in 1959 to buy a car for the Party, Mulele took me where they sold the cheapest cars, obviously at the consul's place. So, the first car we bought with PSA Party funds was a Skoda. Of course certain people thought the consul gave the car to PSA, which was not true, we had paid for it, but it was the cheapest on the market. Mulele was friends with the consul, whose name was Virius.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Yes, Joseph Virius.

[35] The Soviet Union frequently used Czech embassies to provide a base of operations for Russian agents and other personnel.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: As you see, he knows him…

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Yes, we were aware at that time... I'm sure that you will not accept this, but Pierre Mulele did become an agent of the Soviets. I have very strong reasons, but I can't go into the details either now.

HERBERT WEISS: But maybe you could define what you consider an agent.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Well, I consider an agent…it depends whether it is as a cooperator or an agent. I consider him an agent, in the sense that he, I think, carried out direct instructions, not everything that he did, certainly. He believed in independence, no question about that. I don't have any details of how it went around with recruitment, etc., but I believe that he was a paid agent.

HERBERT WEISS: Let's follow up a little bit on that, because I think it's of some interest. Later on, he's considered one of the leading Maoists. That of course means, that the deal was broken in some way with the Soviets. Do you have any information on that?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: No, I don't, I'm talking about the beginning of the 1960's, I cannot speak about later on, whether he broke with the Soviets or what his relationship may have been with them. I really can't speak to that, because I don't know.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I don't know if he was really a Soviet agent, but I've just said that he was friends with the consul, who also initiated him into communism, that's for sure, as they were taking the same ideological training classes. We could see that very clearly in the stands he was taking in the party, he was in my party [the PSA]. We were representing two different factions of the party. But as we had been friends since a young age, and as he knew I wasn't supporting his views, obviously, there were things which he didn't tell me. But I don't know if he was an agent paid by the Soviets. What could have been his mission? I can't really say.

THOMAS KANZA: I think there is a misunderstanding here, because a lot of people from outside call Congolese agents, people who, in fact, were just informers, they were passing information. Before independence any friendly relations between the Congolese and Europeans or outsiders who were not favorable to Belgians were just close relations just to pass information. Being recruited is a different story. I think the recruitment started after independence. Then some Congolese started turning to the east, and if we think of Mulele, if he was an agent of the Soviets, how he became an agent of the Chinese, when he became [a] representative of Gizenga in Cairo? Mandungu Bula Nyati[36], my student in Moscow, said that it became difficult for the Russians to keep on helping Gizenga through Mulele. And then Mulele discovered Zhou Enlai, he came to Cairo. Mulele met Zhou Enlai and he convinced him [that] "we are more efficient than

[36] Antoine Mandungu Bula Nyati [aka.Niatti], born in 1935, was an early convert to socialism and a supporter of Lumumba. He is said to have been educated in the Soviet Union and East Germany . He belonged to the Parti du Peuple and after some Lumumbists withdrew to Stanleyville (now Kisangani), in the fall of 1960, he joined them. He was also editor in chief of the MNC/Lumumba paper "Uhuru". Nonetheless, he made his peace with Mobutu and held a number of very high government posts during the thirty plus years of the dictatorship. When Kinshasa was captured by the anti-Mobutu alliance (Angola, Rwanda, Uganda and the AFDL led by Laurent Kabila) he fled to Benin. He died in 2000.

the Soviets." It's a question of money. The Russians were prepared to send arms, [and] ammunition but very little cash. But the Chinese were giving cash. The Congolese fighting against the Kinshasa regime wanted cash to buy things in Africa, and the Russians were prepared to send Russian materials through Cairo, Accra, Guinea or through Tanzania. As far as I'm concerned, if some of our countrymen became agents, it was after independence.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: In this case, with Pierre [Mulele], it was well before independence.

SERGEY MAZOV: I was going to tell it later, but Russians also gave 500,000 dollars to Gizenga through Mulele, in two portions; they also provided financial help; it was much more than the Chinese one.

DEVLIN: But when?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: In 1961, when Gizenga settled in Stanleyville, in October 1960, the Russians helped him financially to form the government. But not before that.

SERGEY MAZOV: I don't know the exact date, but it seems to me it was January 1961.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: After Lumumba's death [in January 1961], the Russians took a stand in favor of Gizenga's government. Just like all the nationalist countries in the

third world, the Russians supported Gizenga's government, even financially. This they cannot contest.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: There was a second payment of $500,000, which I happened to learn about, that it was on its way from Moscow to Stanleyville, and I managed to get word to someone in Sudan. And I knew the person who was carrying it had two suitcases, and I knew the suitcase in which the money was located, and we had him called back to speak with someone and he very carefully put down the one with money behind the chair and walked in to speak with him and someone associated with me walked by, picked it up and went out the door.

KANZA: Where did the money go?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: The money went to…Mr. Dulles [and he] was delighted with this story and it turned out that we had to give it to the general fund of the Treasury; we were not allowed to keep it. [LAUGHTER]

SERGEY MAZOV: The courier's explanation was "I've lost the money while crossing the Nile River." [LAUGHTER]

THOMAS KANZA: When people talk about agents, for example in 1959, Joseph Mobutu was in Brussels, he was not only studying journalism but also representing

Lumumba's party.[37] Mobutu and Victor Nendaka[38] was the channel through which a lot of the eastern bloc [countries] were sending money to Lumumba. And later on, when the campaign started in the Congo, all the money were sent [to] Brussels, coming from the eastern bloc to Lumumba, was known by Mobutu and Nendaka. That was when, after he turned against Lumumba, he had proof that Lumumba did receive money from the eastern bloc, because he and Nendaka were the people receiving it [in] Brussels and poor Lumumba never received the whole lot. Poor Lumumba never received the whole lot, he was given just part of it, but he had proof that this money was coming from Nkrumah, from Czechoslovakia, from Russia, from Yugoslavia. That shows that when people call some Congolese agents, they forget that the best agents were those working for the West, they were double agents, and Lumumba trusted these people thinking they were nationalists, while they were acting on behalf of the western intelligence services.

HERBERT WEISS: Larry, when did you have first contact with Mobutu?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I believe that I met him, this is questionable, but I met him as I met a number of the leaders after the end of the round table conference, Ambassador Burden gave a reception. We each took the names of X number, I don't remember [how many], of Congolese, and tried to get an idea of who they were, if they were intelligent, competent, because what we had up until that time, [were] assessments provided by the Belgians. And Mobutu came out of that—the reaction was that, here is a man who is a

[37] The Mouvement National Congolais, MNC/L, a leading pro-independence, nationalist Congolese political party.

[38] Victor Nendaka served as head of the Sûreté, the Congo's intelligence service after June 1960 and worked closely with Mobutu. He was a member of the MNC/L but broke with Lumumba even before independence and formed his own party.

strong nationalist, intelligent, and who seems to have leadership qualities along with others. For several of the others, the reaction was rather negative. But I next met him on the street near the post office where there was a Belgian being arrested as a Belgian spy, because he was representing a mining company and had a radio.[39] I remember he was brought out and he had been worked over on the way down from his office to the street. I happened to just walk by, I was curious and I stood there to watch and see what was happening, then I saw Mobutu and introduced myself. That was after the independence, but I met him at that reception.

GEORGES NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: I just want to know something from Mr. Devlin. It's known in Congo that Mobutu was used by the US as a spy, to spy on the nationalists during the time of the round table, and after independence, until the time Lumumba was killed. Because you were there, as one of the key players…

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: He was never an agent by my assessment, he was a cooperator, because we both seemed to be going in the same direction and therefore there was a certain collaboration. But before independence, certainly, he was not in contact with any American [before] independence to my knowledge. Only after the independence.

GEORGES NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: But does that collaboration have any influence in Lumumba's death?

THOMAS KANZA: I think the fact is that Mobutu was a Belgian agent. When he started spying on Lumumba, with Victor Nendaka, then the Belgians started introducing him as a friendly contact. But if he was recruited by the Americans, it was after independence.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: He was never recruited, and I certainly would have known.

HERBERT WEISS: But he was given a stipend. I am almost sure of that.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: You don't have to be an agent to receive a stipend. An agent is a person to whom we'd say: 'we expect you to do this and do that.' Mobutu was never a person to whom we could say 'do this and this and this.'

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And he would jump.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: He would never ask how high.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: I just wanted to go back to Senator Kamitatu's initial accounts of the contacts with the Czech consulate and I still would like to pinpoint the initial contacts between Congolese and eastern bloc officials. Is there anything to say? We jumped around a little bit…

JEAN OMASOMBO: Who were the others in the [communist-ideological training] class, for instance?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I don't know the others, I only know Mulele. He told me this because he was in our Party. He told me he was taking this class, but he never told me who the others were. The others were taking the class for their own interest, just like Mulele.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: The Czech service was known to handle spotting, assessing and even recruiting on behalf of the KGB at that time. The KGB was the senior service, while the Czechs, the so called the bloc countries, they were used, if you will. KGB had a very strong influence over them.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Kanza gave a good account of the Mobutu affair. The young Congolese have to find out the truth. Mobutu was indeed a Belgian agent. And many have seen this in my book.[40] During the political round table, before Lumumba joined us, the leaders of the delegations were taking turns in hosting the alliance meetings, and generally it was only the leaders of the delegations who were participating. I was staying at the Plaza, and it was my turn to preside over the meeting and the invited the leaders of the delegation at the lower level of the hotel. Not even the members of our delegations knew in what room we were [meeting]. While we were there, Nendaka was representing the MNC till Lumumba's arrival, Mobutu shows up at the meeting. I asked him if he was the leader of any delegation and he said that was only a member of the

[40] *Zaire: Le Pouvoir a La Portee Du Peuple,*

MNC. I told him that only the leader of the MNC delegation could take part in the meeting and Nendaka said that he was the leader. I asked Nendaka why Mobutu knew that we held the meeting in that room—who, had told him that. Nendaka replied that it was not him who told Mobutu about the location of the meeting. As the hotel's management was Belgian and they knew where we were, someone must have told him about the meeting. I told him he didn't have the right to attend, and he replied that he was representing the MNC. Then I said that he could preside over the meeting instead of me, but that I would leave. Nendaka told him that he didn't want any incidents, and that he would report to him later on all the discussions. When I wrote about this, the Congolese could understand Mobutu's position. Because even at the time, I told them that I did not find it normal that Mobutu followed us everywhere and knew where the meeting was, even if he had not been invited. That's why [I believe] he was an agent of the Belgian secret services.

JEAN OMASOMBO: About the notion of agent, based on archive documents, we can see that 60% of the Congolese political class was collaborating with the Belgian secret services, they were being paid and they were accusing each other. Lumumba was informing the Belgians on what Kasavubu was doing, Kasavubu was also informing the Belgian services and a large part of the Congolese political class was receiving money until 1959. So the notion of agent is not very clear yet. The second thing, as to communism: it is strange that until 1959 the most important person on the Congolese side was a certain Antoine Kimanga.[41] If you see the file prepared by the Belgian secret

[41] Antoine Kimanga (aka Tshimanga), was the president of the National Union of Congolese Workers and leader of various youth movements.

services, it was very voluminous; it seems that he was the most tracked person. The communists did not seem to trust Kanza and Lumumba. But Kimanga and Alphonse Nguvulu[42] were very interesting to the communists.

HERBERT WEISS: What was the role of the Belgian communist party? I should speak a little bit about this. I brought a few documents on these issues. In the late '70s I was invited at to speak at a conference sponsored by the French and the Belgian peace movement, and despite the fact that the communist party controlled the peace movement at that time. You will recall that was an important development in Europe. As a result of that, I came in contact with some of the leaders of the Belgian communist party, who, to my surprise, opened some of their files to me and even allowed me to xerox some documents. As a result, I have a few letters especially from Mulele to the Belgian Communist Party, to leaders of the Belgium Communist Party. These letters strike me, and I'm perfectly willing to include them later on in the dossier, they strike me in the following fashion. First of all, that these are very innocent contact in 1959. The leaders of the Communist party, in response to one of the letters from Mulele, advise him to organize evening courses. Well, even if these are evening course in guerilla warfare—which presumably there were not—in mid 1959, really something more immediate was required. I mean if you were going to get involved, and in fact Mulele is asking for help, he is being given a brush off. On the other hand in these files there were fairly long lists of Congolese students, with their addresses in Belgium. So they did have an interest, they

[42] Alphonse Nguvulu was the president of the leftist Parti du Peuple and maintained contacts with the Belgian Communist Party. Although a member of the Bakongo ethnic group, he did not join ABAKO and—probably for that reason—was not elected in the 1960 elections. He became a junior minister in Lumumba's cabinet and was removed when Lumumba was overthrown in September 1960.

did follow through on that. I think the reason why they showed me the documents is because they wanted to prove to me that the Belgian Communist Party was supportive of the Congolese independence movement. There was obviously absolutely nothing in these files that were shown to me regarding any contacts that they had with the Soviet Union, any people they recruited, if they recruited anybody as an agent or a spy, whatever you want to call it. It was obviously a selective thing. […] And, I would say from what was shown to me, they were morally supportive. Now it's not unimportant to point this out I think, historically, because at the same time, the French Communist Party was not supportive of African independence movements. But it was caught in a sort of Marxist's dilemma of wishing to include the African and other populations in the French empire in a class struggle definition. In other words the issue was [not] the independence, for instance, of Algeria, or West Africa, but rather the unity between the communist party and 'progressive' forces in France and those in Africa. And don't forget that for instance Félix Houphouët-Boigny and the RDA [Rassemblement Démocratique Africain] initially were in a parliamentary alliance in the French Parliament with the French Communist Party. And that the Algerian nationalist movement contacts with international communism was through the Italian Communist Party, not through the French Communist Party, because they were offended by the anti-independence position of the French Communist Party. In that context it is interesting at least from an internal Belgian point of view, […] that they had no problem with Congolese independence and they saw the independence movement as progressive and that they supported it. But from what I was able to gather, that did not involve a great deal of substantive or material support. But I suppose there is a history that I don't know about which is a little more ample.

THOMAS KANZA: I think its a matter of perception, every time you think about that, the Congolese politicians, about the Congolese in general, you remember the Catholic Church was so important, that it was impossible for Congolese to know who is who in the international world, between the communists, the liberals, the socialists. The only thing we knew was the four political parties existing in Belgium. The communist party was the smallest. Even the contact in Kinshasa between the Czech consulate, the Yugoslav consulate, the colonial security was so severe watching those two or three people at the consulate. To enter the consulate, it had to be a secret meeting. To meet regularly with the Czech consulate, you had to go there and attend a few lessons. In the mean time, there was a liberal lawyer, [a] Belgian, who was also organizing courses about liberalism. There were other lawyers, socialists, meeting with Muvunu talking about socialism. Mandungu Bula Nyati[43], he used to work with Muvunu, in his party, the People's party. So, when he came to Belgium, it was as an employee of IBM. It was from Belgium that he was recruited through not only the communist parties but through another Belgian lawyer and leftists.

We the Congolese never knew about the communists or other part[ies]; we knew leftist or reactionary. When you are pro-Belgian you are reactionary, when you are against them, you are leftist. So to get with the communist party, is to get in touch with the leftist; only later, we'd be labeled pro-Russian or pro-Chinese. In 1958, when they

[43] Antoine Mandungu Bula Nyati was an early convert to socialism and a supporter of Lumumba. He is said to have been educated in the Soviet Union and East Germany. He belonged to the Parti du Peuple and after some Lumumbists withdrew to Stanleyville (now Kisangani), in the fall of 1960, he joined them. He was also editor in chief of the MNC/Lumumba paper "Uhuru". Nonetheless, he made his peace with Mobutu and held a number of very high government posts during the thirty plus years of the dictatorship. When Kinshasa was captured by the anti-Mobutu alliance (Angola, Rwanda, Uganda and the AFDL led by Laurent Kabila) he fled to Benin. He died in 2000.

[Congolese] came to the World Fair, they discovered that the communist party had three or four deputies, not many people. So, it was interesting to get in touch with the socialist party, which was then in power. But for the Belgian security, in the Congolese files, everyone in touch with the socialist party, [was a] leftist and later on you develop this label of communist. It's interesting later on how the Belgian communists started building their reputation as having helped Congolese gain independence, while I think the socialists and the liberals did more.

I agree with you that the French communist party had become very important to our eyes, as when the Congolese from Kinshasa discovered that people like Houphouët-Boigny used to be communist, that is no longer seen as associating yourself with the communists. Since that time it was fine to be a communist and then the next day turn against them, just for sake of getting some kind of assistance.

LISE NAMIKAS: I would like to interject some of my research here, because one interesting thing that I found relating to the Belgian communist party, especially the role of someone like Albert De Coninck and his contacts with the Soviet secretary, was the Soviet view of various Congolese leaders. One of documents suggested that Albert De Coninck was questioning Lumumba's role, and gave the impression that he was less central [and more pro-western] then he appeared to be at the conference. So, what impression did this leave with the Soviets? There were some important contacts, and maybe with more Soviet input, we could learn more about them.

SERGEY MAZOV: Not about the Belgian Communist Party, but to remind Mr. Kanza what an interesting document I found in the Russian archive: the transcript of the talk between Mr. Kanza and Mr. Ustinov from the Soviet embassy in Brussels. The conversation was about the difference of approaches, American, Soviet and Congolese approaches.

THOMAS KANZA: What was the date?

SERGEY MAZOV: April 20, 1960. And Mr. Kanza said that the Americans in Leopoldville organized daily for Congolese cocktails, excursions, reviews of films, etc. But radio propaganda from the East is too general, many slogans, few simple facts on ordinary people's life. So that's the essence of approaches.

THOMAS KANZA: We are still talking about before the independence. The only meeting Lumumba had with anyone connected with the Soviet bloc was in Accra, when he attended the conference. But although he met the Soviets, his interpreter was Larry. I don't remember his name, an American living in Paris, do you remember him?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Sorry, I don't.

THOMAS KANZA: Since Ghana is an English speaking country, a friendly introduction was made between Lumumba and these Americans. Even at the meeting between Lumumba and Nkrumah, the American was translating, and also at the meeting with the

Soviets. There he appeared to be French, because they were speaking in French, and for him to be accepted as an interpreter he couldn't say he was an American. The second contact [between Lumumba and a Soviet bloc representative was] in New York, after the independence. We met with Zorin, Kuznetzov, even Gromyko, which turned out to be a very, very sad meeting, but since it was taking place in New York, and Lumumba, when he gave his press conference, he was invited to go to Moscow. Before we came to Washington, we begged the Soviets not to announce the acceptance of going to Moscow. But the Soviets had already announced it, for their own purpose. That's the reason why Lumumba didn't meet President Eisenhower.

SERGEY MAZOV: One of the reasons.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Not the main reason.

THOMAS KANZA: One of reasons was also in his press conference. He was asked the question "what will you do with old agreements signed by the Belgians?" Lumumba mistakenly stated: "all the agreements signed by the Belgians in the name of the Congo will be revised by the Parliament." Next question was "including the uranium?" And he said "yes, including the uranium." Lumumba forgot that there was an agreement between the Belgians and the Americans, the uranium from the Congo will be sold to America until 2006 as Belgian uranium. That evening I got a phone call saying "look Mr. Kanza, I'm sorry, tell your Prime Minister that the President prefers to go and play golf than to

meet Lumumba." So, two things: the announcement from Moscow, and also revising agreement with the Belgians [prevented a meeting with Eisenhower].

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: If I might comment on that, sorry to take so much time, but I happened to be in the embassy when a young Congolese [entered], not very high in the hierarchy, and he required 24 visas. It became clear immediately that he didn't know what a visa was, it had something to do with travel, that's all he knew. I explained to him what a visa was and that it had something to do with travel. And he said "Prime Minister Lumumba and his entourage are going to the US to meet the [UN] secretary general and President Eisenhower." I knew that there was no plan for Eisenhower and Lumumba to meet—this sort of thing is prepared well ahead of time and this was a bit of a surprise—so I called Ambassador Timberlake[44] and asked him what to do, because I was the consul at that time. He said, "stall, don't do anything. I'll have to query the President. Maybe he made some plans that we don't know about." So he [Timberlake] did and came back and said that the President had no intention of meeting with the prime minister, but by all means, we should give him a visa. The President was going on vacation at that time, which had been long planned, and he did go on vacation, and it was left to the secretary of state and the deputy secretary to meet with Mr. Lumumba.

HERBERT WEISS: I'd like to add something too, I'm jumping ahead, it's a little out of the sequence but I think it's fruitful to say it here, I don't know how many of you

[44] Clare H. Timberlake was the first American ambassador appointed to Democratic Republic of Congo. He served there from 1960-1961.

remember the name, [Louis Edgar] Detwiler.[45] When Lumumba answered that question, regarding the Congo's mineral contracts, he thought it was a pro-American answer, because he had signed a contract with an American "entrepreneur," in which he, in effect committed all of the Congo's mineral resource to this Detwiler, for the next 50 years. There was a contract, concluded in 1960. It was one of the only times that I ever did anything that was sort of outside of the strictly academic research, because someone at the American embassy told me that this Detwiler was in very great ill repute.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: That was Rob McIlvaine.[46]

HERBERT WEISS: He knew that?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Yes, he knew him, Detwiler had tried to pull another thing. I don't remember where it was, but when Rob was assigned, Detwiler came in and said "I assume that you heard from Ike that I'm here and that I have the full backing of the US government." And Rob looked at him and said "just as you got at Portugal." "What do you mean?" "Because you are a highway robber."

HERBERT WEISS: I had contact with the entourage of Lumumba and I thought that the signing of this agreement was a disaster. However, be it said that the agreement had to be passed by Parliament. Since Lumumba controlled Parliament, he had an ace of spades, so to speak, in his back pocket. He retained the option of annulling the whole thing. I

[45] Louis Edgar Detwiler was an American businessman who signed a 50-year contract with Premier Patrice Lumumba to develop the new nation's mineral, oil, gas and hydroelectric-power resources.
[46] Rob McIlvaine was the U.S Deputy Chief of Mission in Congo between 1960 and 1967.

thought that Lumumba had very successfully played the Belgians against each other and that he was now trying to apply that method to the Americans and the Soviets. Selling ostensibly all of the mineral resources to this American, who he incidentally took on the plane with him when he went to New York, was his reassurance towards the US. It was very naïve unfortunately, and when I heard that the embassy thought that Detwiler was a crook, I did send a message to a friend in Lumumba's secretariat, but I don't know whether it ever reached Lumumba.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I think Ambassador Timberlake tried to give the same message.

HERBERT WEISS: Probably. Clearly he didn't take those messages seriously, because he took Detwiler on the plane. And you must add to this that it was my impression, without any direct confirmation, that this was in his mind, the reassurance that he gives America, thereby giving him freedom to meet Zorin and so on an so forth. It was read exactly the opposite way: "this guy is a total nut, he sells his country's resources to a crook, it's meaningless, and he is beginning to fall into the trap of the Soviets." That was the beginning of the disaster.

THOMAS KANZA: I think that explains what we were saying earlier. The Congolese politicians had no idea what was going on outside the Congo. They only knew, if you want to be popular, let the supporters of the West deal with the Americans. Now, Detwiler was brought to Lumumba by Ganshof van der Meersch, the son of the last

minister of African affairs in the Congo, a Belgian-American. Van der Meersch tried to prevent Lumumba from becoming a minister, and his son, coming to him as an American, bringing someone who was going to invest, because the contract was $2 billion dollars. As for Lumumba, he didn't care who was coming there, as long as an American presented this contract. People like us tried to tell him not to sign. He signed and in his mind it was something very good for the Congo. He couldn't understand how… I'm sorry Larry, but if you or Mr. Timberlake had asked to see Lumumba before he signed, maybe he would have listened. But people like me, coming from Brussels, a civil servant in the Common Market, if we had tried to prevent him from signing this, he would have turned against us. He would have said that we had a first opportunity to sign with Americans and I was against it. I was at the airport, Lumumba first went to Accra, from Accra he went to London, and from London he came with a lady, I don't remember her name but she turned out to be a double agent for the Czechs, Russians, Americans, we don't know. [47]

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Not for the Americans, I can tell you that, I'd have been interested.

THOMAS KANZA: I'm sitting at the airport waiting for my Prime Minister to arrive and I get a phone call from London, telling me that Mrs. so and so, she's also traveling with Lumumba. That lady had no visa, but she was still admitted to the US, so she must have been very well related to some high politician.

[47] Possibly Andrée Blouin, Chief of Protocol in the Congo government.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I don't have information about this, but I imagine that they didn't want to create a problem in the meeting with Lumumba to begin with. Actually you know that the meetings with the State Department did not go well at all.

THOMAS KANZA: That's why I wanted to come to the US with Lumumba. People in the Congo before and after independence were so ill-informed, that just meeting an American, some chief executive of a bogus company, they would have trusted him. When Lumumba landed, Diallo Telli, Quaison-Sackey and the Ghanan, Guinean, and Malian ambassadors asked "why on Earth did you sign this contract?" He was surprised, because for him, he signed a contract beneficial to the Congo. And later on, at the press conference, this man was there, Detwiler. And that's where it became difficult to defend Lumumba—the Congolese had signed a contract in good faith. The Americans knew it was a trap [and] the Congolese didn't know. And instead they used that contract against Lumumba. I begged some people to prevent it from happening, but it was used against Lumumba.

HERBERT WEISS: They did know about Detwiler. I decided this is so important that I sent a message to Lumumba's secretariat, but my effort came to nothing. But would you agree that Lumumba's success in Belgium was incredible in playing the capitalists against the communists, the socialists against the liberals, etc.? There was a story, where he came to someone high up in the Société Générale**.** This is before independence. And he said that he needed a newspaper, and the guy sits back in his armchair, and says that a newspaper costs a lot of money, and Lumumba raises his finger and says "no conditions."

And the guy writes the check—this might not be the truth but it reflects the story of successful manipulation. And it is a legitimate one, because the Congolese at the round table conference had very little to play with and yet they managed to wipe the floor with the Belgian delegation.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: But also the Belgians did not want to resist; the only thing you could hear from the Belgians was "we do not want another Algeria."

HERBERT WEISS: Their hands were tied, because they thought they could not send the metropolitan army. But the plans were to divide the Congolese delegation, to maintain finance [and] foreign policy in their own hands, and to give them a French Community kind of independence. Recently, there was a conference that was going to take place in Brussels, at Louvain la Neuve,[48] on the 10th of October of this year, organized by Professor Pilipili. Its aim is to resuscitate the Commonwealth between Belgium, Burundi, Rwanda and Congo, as it is outlined in the Loi Fondamentale. Nothing came of this plan in 1960 and nothing will come as a result of this conference, but it signals what Belgium was hoping to settle for.

Let's move forward. How did Lumumba view the Cold War? Did he overestimate his ability to play one superpower against the other? For myself, I think I've answered the second question. Let's ask the Congolese here to answer the first question.

[48] Louvain le Neuve is the name of the French section of Louvain University whose original location—Louvain—is now the Flemish section.

THOMAS KANZA: Let us not overestimate the ability of Congolese politicians at that time to understand the Cold War. Nobody knew about it. In Congo you were pro-Belgium or nationalist. If you were to be a nationalist, you had to use outsiders. Only the outside world brought to us the idea of being pro-communist or pro-capitalist. It's really very sad, when they came in contact at the round table conference. The Belgians discovered that if they granted temporary autonomy instead of granting independence in June, some Congolese had the idea that the independence was going to be granted in 1961. But the public opinion, back in the Congo, if you dared to postpone the game, you were called a reactionary. So we had to go for the 1st of June. But the reality is that elections mean preparation, political campaign means money. Congolese politicians had no money, so people like Leon Minier, like F. Minier started financing everybody. Congolese politicians were in need of cash to organize their campaigns, and they had to get money from the Belgians. Those who didn't ask for money, like Kamitatu's party—PSA—people started assuming that they had money from the Soviets. Gizenga was with the East and Mulele had good contact with Ghana, Guinea, they were the only ones to refuse money from the Belgians. The rest of the political parties in the Congo got money from Belgium. And people like Isaac Kalonji in Katanga, because he came to America, he was accused of getting money from America. Isaac Kalonji, being a reverend pastor, a protestant, [and?] the protestant missionaries helped a bit.

This was before independence, the first part of 1960. It was impossible for Lumumba to know anything about the Cold War, until he became prime minister. Don't forget he was made prime minister on the 23rd of June, seven days before the independence he got the confidence of the parliament, next day the confidence of the

Senate. Kasavubu was elected on the 26th. I'll never forget, as ministers we didn't know the responsibilities of being ministers. We didn't have offices, everything was run by the Belgians; the preparations for Independence Day were made by the Belgians. On the 29th June, as a minister I went to the airport to welcome the King. I saw a Belgian behind me. I asked him what he was doing there and he said that he was my bodyguard. In those days we didn't know about the Cold War; some of us who used to live in Europe did know. The rest didn't know until after independence.

The day before independence the Russian delegation came. We expected a delegation to come in one plane, but they had a huge delegation. And Mr. [Robert] Murphy[49] led the American delegation. When he arrived he told me that he must meet Kasavubu, we must arrange for him to be accredited the first ambassador in the Congo. The Congolese were surprised to see the Russians arriving in big numbers. Bomboko and myself had arranged to [inaudible] with the French delegation who had arrived for Independence day. The American delegation left quietly, but as soon as the Russian delegation wanted to leave, there was a big riot at the airport. They wanted to carry the souvenirs. They were forced to let Congolese soldiers to enter the plane and inspect their souvenirs. We had to negotiate with the Congolese because the rumors were that the Russians had come with paratroopers to protect Lumumba. So, we had a mutiny of the army. At the airport, we negotiated. The Congolese soldiers were convinced that the Russian diplomats were soldiers. They had to enter the plane, and we were received by the Russians with vodka and they let the Congolese inspect a couple of cases, inspect the art objects, the souvenirs they were taking away and the Congolese left the plane. But, It

[49] Robert Murphy was Ambassador to Belgium and Under-Secretary of State, retired in 1959, but remained an influential advisor on Congo affairs.

was difficult to crush the rumors, which were that Lumumba brought in Soviet soldiers and only that started teaching the Congolese that the conflict between the Americans and the Russians. And poor Lumumba, poor Congolese ministers and politicians, started discovering that when you deal with the Russians you do not deal with the Americans and when you deal with the Americans, you do not deal with the Russians. That's the only thing we learned about the Cold War just after independence.

So, Lumumba, as Herbert [Weiss] said, by signing the agreement with an American, not with Mr. Detwiler, he signed with an American van der Meersch son of the minister of African affairs, he laid a trap for Lumumba. So Lumumba signed in good faith but when he knew it was a mistake, it was too late. So my answer to the second question is that he had no ability to play East against the West. He was just a good politician, nationalist, willing to help his country, but was deep in the trap [of the Cold War].

SERGEY MAZOV: Just one point, the Soviet delegation was beaten previously by Congolese soldiers, and I appreciate your efforts to save its members.

JEAN OMASOMBO: As to Lumumba's knowledge of the Cold War, the French-Algerian press attaché, Michel Serge says that at the end of July, Lumumba was upset and invited the two ambassadors, the American and the Russian, at the same time. The moment they got in, Lumumba started shouting at both of them, "what did your country do for mine?" and other such things. I guess this is pretty telling as to his knowledge of

the Cold War. It's strange that a prime minister comes to doing that. It was in August I think.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I'd like to confirm and complete what Thomas said. Before forming the government in June 1960, Congolese politicians knew nothing about the Cold War. We hadn't had any contact with the exterior [world] before the round table. The Congolese came to the World Fair, but did not establish any relationships with the outside world. There was some correspondence with foreign countries, but they were innocent, friendly letters, not political letters because we didn't have any external political relations and had no idea of the Cold War. How could Lumumba, who had lived in the Congo like us, take any positions in the sense of making any distinctions of the different sides? He, as all of us, was totally ignorant of that. We only found out that there was a Cold War when Americans and Russians started to have disagreements over the Congo. At that moment, we saw that there was a problem.

GEORGES NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: I'd like to ask the Congolese a question. It's true what we've heard, but isn't it also true that the general atmosphere was anti-communist? In the churches and in the schools run by the Catholic and Protestant missionaries, there was always an anti-communist discourse. I went to a Presbyterian protestant school in Kasai, and in April 1960, the missionaries were saying that those in favor of the independence were influenced by the communists. Did this attitude have a role?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Towards the end of the round table conference we met in Brussels, a group of Americans and Belgians, called "Rearmament Morale," led by Dr. Cloze. This group was against communism in Congo. Congolese had never heard of communism officially, because there wasn't anything about it in the Belgian press. But this group introduced communism to us and from that moment, the Catholic Church began a strong campaign against communism. Before the forming of Lumumba's government, Cardinal Malula [Head of the Catholic Church in the Congo during the 1960's] invited me to lunch. I was the delegate of the PSA. He asked me whom we were going to support, and I answered that we were nationalists, we were in the nationalist alliance since the round table conference. He also asked me if we could accept Lumumba as prime minister. I said we'd certainly do so, as he had won the elections. He told me that I was a Catholic and had not the right to support that communist [Lumumba]. I replied that I didn't know he was a communist. I told him he was wrong, that neither Lumumba nor his party was communist and that we were going to work with them. He was really unhappy with this. When we met again in Rennes, he was exiled in Rome and I was exiled in France [1967-1977], and I asked him again "between Lumumba's position in the 60s and that of Lumumba that you have so much supported [i.e. the opinion that Lumumba was a communist], which one would have helped the Catholic Church more?" And he admitted that he had been wrong.

HERBERT WEISS: With this, we will stop for now.

Session Two: The Beginning of the Crisis

LISE NAMIKAS: I hope you all feel a little refreshed and ready for another discussion. Our morning session was excellent and I look forward to hearing more. I think at this point it would be a good idea to start talking about the crisis in Congo at independence. Most of the scholars who wrote about the Congo have started here; many books begin here. Of course we know, from our discussion that the crisis had roots much, much deeper, before the Americans and Russians had any awareness of the Congo. The crisis [formally] began with independence in June and the mutiny of soldiers four days later. It would be interesting to hear the perspective of the Congolese and Larry Devlin, of the chaos which occurred with the mutiny and the strikes of the workers and how the United Nations responded to this crisis? Were they caught off guard, or were they braced for some kind of trouble? Particularly with the army, nothing was done about the army in the pre-independence days, was there any acknowledgement of the need to reorganize? Maybe we can start with Larry Devlin, since he was arriving in the Congo in the midst of this.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I was on vacation in the Loire Valley when I first heard on the radio, we were having lunch in a bistro and in the back room we heard something about the army having mutinied, and my wife asked me what army was that. I said it was probably in Latin America. Next thing we heard about was something about officers and families having been arrested. I asked the owner where that was happening, he said somewhere in Africa, Congo and I asked which Congo was that. He said he didn't know. I thought this is probably the Belgian Congo, so I put my wife and child in a car and

drove like hell to Arcachon, where my wife's family had a summer place and then I went back to Brussels, used my Sabina ticket and found out all Sabina planes have been commandeered, and I complained and they said I could ride with an army group going to Elizabethville. I said that it was not where I wanted to go, I finally got a flight to Brazzaville on Air France, and they told me that if I'd cross the river I would be immediately raped or killed. I arrived the next day. The United States certainly hadn't expected anything like that. I had written a paper, as a reserve officer, on the Force Publique some years before, saying what an outstanding group it was. When one accepts that, General Jansens [The Belgian Commander of the Congolese National Army, the post-independence Force Publique] may not have used words, but they gave the impression that for the army, independence equals zero, words to that effect, it is not surprising that the army reacted the way that did. Anyway, to my surprise, I found that the army officers that were elected were not necessarily the most competent, [but] they were popular. It was difficult for someone like me, I didn't speak any Lingala on arrival [making it hard] to get around. For example, on the second day, I was picked up by a roving group of mutineers and taken out to camp, and I was told that I would get on my knees and kiss the feet of this sergeant, and I had seen this happen in town, someone would bend down to kiss and they would stamp him on the head. I said no, I tried to explain that I was a diplomat, it didn't work. Later, the sergeant had an idea, he asked me if I ever played Russian roulette. I said no, and that I didn't want to play and he said that then I had to kiss his feet. He took his pistol out and turned his back, seemed to be taking out some bullets and put it against my head and said – now will you do it, and I said no, terrified, and he went 'click,' and he went on for sometime. Now, when I think about it, I

know that he did not intend to shoot me but to frighten me, and they surely succeeded. It was a totally chaotic situation for those of us who did not know our way around. I did not speak Lingala and it was the language of the army. If they spoke French, it was very limited French. Certainly the US was not prepared, I was not personally prepared.

LISE NAMIKAS: Did you report to Washington?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I don't think I did. There were so many things happening that... When we got to the sixth round and it went click I thought that was it and everybody in the room laughed, because I was the only one in the room who didn't know that there weren't any bullets. Then, afterwards I was friendly, and they offered me a drink, which I took and we all drank out of the same wine bottle and we were friends. It was still just a common occurrence, because that happened more then once, because my job was to be out on the streets, and meet people. When I look back, it was not an enviable period, but it was a great period because I survived.

SERGEY MAZOV: How do you think the Belgians were prepared for this event, especially General Jansens?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I have no idea, but I think that he was probably as surprised as everyone else, because the Belgians were convinced that they were loved. I was in Brussels for three and a half years and certainly their idea was that the Congo was not ready for independence, perhaps in a hundred years. I remember pointing out what was

happening in the rest of Africa, "you don't have a hundred years," and they assured me they did.

GEORGES NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: Based on what we know from 1959 and 1960, General Janssens was not very much loved by the Force Publique troops. Janssens was like a machine, and only good at giving commands. It seems that for him the crisis was unavoidable. Based on different reports, we can say that he is not the only one responsible for the crisis, but he does have a role.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: He left immediately, on the 11th [of July]. He was really escaping.

HERBERT WEISS: I think it's worth pointing out, that during the months before the independence, there were letters written by groups of anonymous soldiers in the Force Publique, and they were explaining that they would insist on Africanization, for the army and would refuse Africanization limited to the civilian elite. In other words, independently of the Jansens affair, there was going to be trouble if the Belgian-Congolese relationship or ratio in the army—Belgian officers to Congolese enlisted men—was maintained after independence. These letters were ignored not only by the Belgians but also by the Congolese leaders with few exceptions, notably Lumumba.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I was not aware of these letters at all.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I could add to that. Kanza said this morning that the Belgians managed at the round table not to discuss economic problems and the army. Lumumba was the only one to request that we discuss military problems during the political round-table. But, the Belgians and the Ministry of Colonies insisted that we didn't discuss this matter. They said that Belgians would keep their positions of officers and advisors under the authority of the Ministry of National Defense, who would be Congolese, and that he would be in charge of the army. But, when we came back, in April-May, during the electoral campaign, Congolese soldiers were publishing these documents and broadcasting their messages on the radio, in the part of the program reserved for Force Publique, addressed to Lumumba. He was the member of the General Executive Council in charge of the army and defense. They were drawing his attention to the fact that when independence was gained, civilians would have important positions, and the soldiers would also be Africanized. It was a normal request. It's also present in van der Meersch's book, which I brought with me. So, soldiers had asked this and Lumumba asked the question to the entire council. The Belgians answered this just like at the round table saying that the matter would be looked into after the independence. Civilians were going to have access to military positions and [would] then promote the military.

When we gained independence, the military felt somehow frustrated on June 30. This date meant nothing for the population, there was no change. They [the soldiers] were expecting two or three changes, which did not occur. Lumumba intervened with the Belgians for radical measures which were refused. Among these measures, there was some regarding the promotion of the soldiers. So, on June 30th: big disappointment [for]

the military. On July 2nd, Jansens writes on the blackboard in the Kinshasa military camp, that for the soldiers of the Force Publique (now the ANC), after the independence equals before the independence; he had been placed at the head of the army. There were protests in the army, but no action. The military in the Teysville camp, close to Bas-Congo decided to take action and require their promotion; they organized the mutiny. They arrested their chiefs, they sent a delegation to Kinshasa and they communicated by phone to other units, beginning with the one in Kinshasa, that they had taken action against their chiefs. The others followed their example and the whole chaos started.

On the 11th of July, it was already too late, the harm had already been done by General Jansens on the 2nd of July. The military had a violent reaction and came to Kinshasa on the 4th. It is only on the 6th of July that Lumumba, already overwhelmed by the events, takes the decision to examine the problem and announces that the all the soldiers were going to be promoted up a grade. This was no longer enough, it was too late, they [the soldiers] had already arrested all their Belgian chiefs. The army needed a chief, and elections were organized. We asked them to elect the chiefs they wanted. With a few exceptions, they had chosen the ones with the highest grades. This was the climate during the days when we gained independence. We often forget that political independence did not even have a week to express itself. After four days, the military took action and prevented the political power from functioning normally and everything started.

HERBERT WEISS: I'd like to ask a question. Did Lumumba's government give a pay increase to the civilians but not to the military?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I do have some information on this. A few days before independence, Lumumba had some talks with the Belgian ministers in Kinshasa, the Minister of Colonies and the Minister of African affairs, Van der Meersch. He suggested three measures: give a pay increase to everyone, so that the population could have a positive reaction. The answer was that the budget could not support this increase and that it was necessary to wait for the formation of the Congolese government. This was not to be done under the Belgian authority. We could take the decision ourselves later. There was no pay increase at all. His second request was to free a great number of prisoners, which would give the people an image of liberation. This was also denied, because it was for the new government to follow the whole judiciary procedure needed for taking such a measure. If the prisoners were freed and this affected public order, the Belgian[s] would have been accused. The third request was to do the same we thing did at the local level. I was the president of the regional government in Leopoldville. I had met Lumumba 28 hours before the independence. I told him that in my province, Leopoldville, people would not accept that the Congolese flag be hoisted by Belgian officials. It was necessary that we assign new district administrators the day before independence to preside over the celebrations on the 30th. He agreed and asked that the same measure be taken for the military. Belgians did not agree with the measure for the military. So, these three requests that were not accepted obviously annoyed Lumumba. When we're talking about his famous improvised speech, we forget that he had been assigned the position of prime minister but who, on the 30th of June, could offer nothing to his people and could not even address a message to his people, because he was not supposed to talk during the

official ceremony—only the head of the state did. All that frustrated him, [and] this explains his intervention. The army responded by mutiny. So, no pay increase. But when the Belgians left, we decided together, that the people who took over the positions of the Belgians would be paid the same as them. First pay was at the end of July, for all the people in new positions.

HERBERT WEISS: Is this true of the military, too?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Yes, starting with the 8th [of July] they had new positions and new pay.

THOMAS KANZA: I'd just like to add a few things. The biggest surprise in the Congo was the fact that Lumumba became prime minister. The Belgians would have never expected it. After the elections, although Lumumba had a lot of victor[ies] around the country, the Belgians manipulated [things] in such way, as to prevent him from being a prime minister. First they tried with the constitutional procedures—appointing Kasavubu, the head of the state to form the government. It didn't work. They called on Lumumba, not [as] former [formateur] but as informer [informateur] of the government.[50] They failed. But Lumumba organized the elections for the speaker of the house. It was when [Joseph] Kasongo, Lumumba's nationalist candidate was elected president of the Parliament, that the Belgians realized they had no choice. Lumumba finally controlled the

[50] According to the agreement drafted at the round table, the king was to select a "formateur" who would then form a cabinet to be approved by the legislature. The formateur would become the prime minister. It was widely assumed that only Lumumba could get a cabinet approved. The Belgians tried to deny him this by using the word "informateur" and seeking to assemble a parliamentary majority ready to support another leader.

Parliament. It was a secret negotiation between the Belgians, Kasavubu and Lumumba. The deal was that, if Lumumba accepted Kasavubu as president then he [would] be nominated "government formateur." Lumumba was prepared to support Bolikango[51] as president. He had promised him his support for the presidency. But after this secret agreement, Lumumba had no choice. It went further, with the Ministry of National Defense. Lumumba had these candidates, among them, my father because he used to be a soldier. Between Kasavubu and my father things went wrong, they were no longer comrades and he [Kasavubu] could not propose him as a minister. That's why he became the first mayor of Kinshasa after independence. I joined the government, although I had to resign from Brussels. Here is the frustration of Lumumba. Whoever is talking about what was happening in the Congo, this had nothing to do with the Cold War. It was just the big surprise from the part of the Belgians, and their relations with Lumumba had never been made up. We go further. Lumumba is prime minister, how can he accept Kasavubu as president? On the 29th [of June] the King of the Belgians arrives and his speech was definitely written by the Belgian government. The people preparing the program for the 30th of June announced two parts—the speech of the king and the speech of the head of state. We members of the government never saw the speech which was going to be pronounced by our head of state. Lumumba insisted on the fact that the "Loi Fondamentale" was exactly like the Belgian constitution. The King of Belgium could not make a public statement unless approved by the Belgian government. How could

[51] Jean Bolikango was the most senior Congolese public servant before independence, serving as deputy to the information section of the Central Government in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa). He came from Equateur Province and led the Bangala ethnic federation and later a regional political party - PUNA. During the political negotiations leading to the first Congolese government (June 1960) he was a presidential candidate but lost to Kasavubu. He then sought the position of President of the National Assembly, but lost again. He continued to be politically active in the post-Lumumba governments.

Kasavubu then make a statement without the [Congolese] government having seen it? Lumumba decided to speak, unless the Belgians changed their view. And here, I'll add one small note: some of us intervened for the postponement of the declaration of independence. Instead of 11:00 to make it 12:00. [This would] allow Kasavubu and Lumumba to [come to] agree[ment]. The Belgians were reluctant to [make] any postponement. Some of us had to help the correction of his speech, as although we told the Belgian prime minister that Lumumba will speak. They did not believe that Lumumba would have the courage to stand up and speak in front of the King. Who would have prevented Lumumba from speaking, as long as Kasongo would be presiding at the ceremony? We were sitting there after Kasavubu spoke and Kasongo said, "now I give the floor to Prime Minister Lumumba." After that the King wanted to leave and we had to run some sort of backstage negotiations. We had to write a short new speech for Lumumba to make. I think the frustration of Lumumba before independence and on the day of independence, accumulated with the hatred the Belgians had for Lumumba. The soldiers [were?] not being paid, although they had been very busy since the elections until independence, controlling the stability of the country and protecting the ministers. They could not accept seeing the civilians the day before driving small cars and next day driving big American cars and some of us with European bodyguards, when we [and] they had just [had] the same salary and the same rank and Lumumba was prime minister and minister of defense. The first reaction was [to] target Lumumba, but there is nothing he could have done. Cleophas mentioned the elections—again another Belgian trap. Kasavubu was presiding [over] the extraordinary council of ministers and sitting there, the door opened and we saw Belgian officers bare footed, forced by the Congolese

soldiers to kneel down with arms up. This was under pressure, we had to decide that day on the Africanization of the army. And Lumumba had the courage to ask the soldiers for the name of one high ranking soldier to become the commandant of the camp. But when the name of [J.] Kokolo came out, he was one of the high ranking soldiers [or, acting commander of camp Leopold, July 8, 1960 and an ally of Kasavubu] adjutant. Kokolo was promoted commandant and then they had to elect the chief of staff. [This was a trap because] the night before someone mentioned [Colonel] Henniquian. He used to know Lumumba very well, back in Stanleyville and he talked to Lumumba about Mobutu. Mobutu was then secretary of state at the prime minister's office, so the best collaborator of Lumumba. Henniquian has told Lumumba that the best man to become chief of staff was Mobutu. We didn't know that. Many names were mentioned, among them Maurice Mpolo and other soldiers. To our surprise, Lumumba, looking at Mobutu, said "it seems that you are also a soldier, you are going to be chief of staff, your rank will be colonel. Why don't you go outside and try to find a uniform of a colonel, we're going to introduce you to the soldiers." This was prepared by the Belgians and Henniquian. And then, [when] Lumumba wanted to appoint a general, it wasn't enough that Mobutu was colonel and was chief of staff. He had in mind [Victor] Lundula, who was in Katanga, arrested by Tshombe. Lundula was from Lumumba's tribe so Lumumba thought that, Kokolo [being] from a Bas Congo tribe, he needs some one, a high ranking officer, to be the general. That day we kept the post vacant. […] We had to keep General Jansens commander in chief of the army because Lumumba was reluctant to appoint a general that day. Many things have been written about Lumumba, but here is a man under pressure since the round table conference. He was elected, then prevented from being prime minister, then

prevented [from making] the best speech of his life on independence day, and then, a few days later he has the soldiers mutinying against him. My last point is that the secession of Katanga was already planned, Larry remembers, two days before independence. They arrested the Belgians coming from Katanga, because from the Belgian's point of view, secession was to be announced before the 30th of June. But with pressure from the USA and other powers, they postponed it. But the plan was there as long as Lumumba was prime minister, in the hope that the Bas Congo will also secede if Kasavubu was not elected president. Belgians would then have Katanga, South Kasai and Bas Congo being pro Belgian, against Lumumba.

UNKNOWN: I have a question, but first to add to the description of the rivalry between Kanza and Kasavubu, Tshombe reports that in 1964, Kasavubu repeatedly opposed [his] nomination of Thomas Kanza as a foreign minister, as he had opposed the nomination in 1960 as minister of defense.

JEAN OMASOMBO: My question for Cleophas: all you say about Lumumba's frustration is correct, but is this all the Belgians' fault? The three measures he asked of the Belgians before the independence, why wouldn't he have taken the same measures, as prime minister of a sovereign country?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: After 44 years, discussing this in a quiet, secure atmosphere, my answer is that, yes, we could have done this. But we can't write the history now. In the climate of the electoral victory, it was impossible that someone takes

over power without announcing any measure to his people. This was something imposed on Lumumba, a single measure would have been enough on the day of independence in order to have a quiet climate. I was the president of the regional government. I was invited to celebrate independence this at the Palais de la Nation, but what happened to the population of my city, Kinshasa? For the people, nothing changed. We went to the office on the next day, everyone was already thinking “is this all there is to independence?” But at least Lumumba has spoken and he said that we would build a new Congo. Today we can’t say that Lumumba could have waited to organize everything quietly. But even if he waited, four days after the independence, he was prevented from carrying out his program. We can’t blame everything on the Belgians, we have to take our part of the responsibility, but we have to admit that when we’re doing politics for the people, we can’t obtain anything if at some point we don’t take certain popular measures. Unfortunately, we haven’t taken any measure in favor of the people.

THOMAS KANZA: To answer your question, it was impossible, we will keep on blaming the Belgians because they made the budget for 1960. Since they didn't want independence, their money was prepared for the secession of Katanga and Kasai. If they had given it to the Congolese government, it would have been possible for us to do something. Another point, Larry, I may be wrong, but two days before independence, there was a meeting between Lumumba and the American ambassador. Since we had agreed with [head of the US delegation at the Independence Day ceremonies] Mr. [Robert] Murphy that the new American ambassador, [Clare] Timberlake, would be given some kind of precedence among diplomats. Lumumba had asked some of us to ask

if the Americans could help us financially because he knew that the Belgians would not help us. If we had received any help from the Americans, those measures suggested by Lumumba could have been done to the surprise of Belgians.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I'm not surprised that you were not offered anything. I suppose it's not proper to speak ill of the dead, but the officers who headed the African bureau at that time had almost no imagination and very little interest and understanding of what was happening. For example, as late as the 26th of July, Ambassador Timberlake and I, having become 'experts,' returned to Washington on orders of our superiors to report on what was happening. The assistant secretary for Africa chose that time to go on vacation. He was in his home in Washington, he did not bother to speak to Ambassador Timberlake. So Timberlake went to his home to brief him and try to get him interested, but his interest was limited, as were I think, his abilities and intelligence.

SERGEY MAZOV: Is it true that Serge Michel was the real author of the speech that Lumumba delivered on June 30, 1969?

HERBERT WEISS: No, that's not true.

SERGEY MAZOV: Before the Katanga secession, Tshombe arrived in Leopoldville to meet Lumumba, but was refused. Were there any chances to make an agreement between Tshombe and Lumumba? A little comment for Mr. Devlin, you always repeated: the African bureau was very ignorant of what was happening in Africa. I can't say about the

Congo, but I've read a lot of documents about West Africa and the whole of Africa and my impression is that their authors were quite aware of what was happening in Africa and their estimates and prognoses were superior to the Soviet ones.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I am basing my comments on the reactions. After independence, when I first met the gentleman concerned, to say that I was not impressed, would be an understatement, I was…disgusted. This is a key point, a key time, I was looking at it from a Cold War angle and also, this is a country [the Congo] which deserves a chance. I don't think anyone was prepared for what was happening, I'm not just criticizing them, I criticize myself. But I learnt as I went along, a number of Congolese, including the governor of Leopoldville province [Kamitatu], seated here with us, explained certain facts of life to me, which I had not somehow thought of by myself.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: From your vantage point, how, in those weeks or months, did the Cold War affect internal development? You mentioned at some point, the election of the prime minister, and others were making similar plans. Were these parallel developments when these things have happened, in any case, or did the Cold War play into these domestic developments more significantly? I would like both of your points of view.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I have to make a general remark first. Thomas Kanza and I insisted on the fact that Cold War was not a basic element for the Congolese leading the country in 1960. The Cold War, the relationship between the US and the Soviet Union,

was not an important criterion for us. These were the concerns of people like Larry, not ours. In analyzing the Cold War, young people do not take into account the internal dimension of Congolese politics. And this was sometimes completely different from the image the great powers had of us. Sometimes, our attitudes have taken into account the Cold War (and Thomas Kanza said this yesterday) and this was only because we thought that maybe at some point, we could play the two great powers one against the other. This was what Lumumba had in mind at some point—they would have to deal with each other and leave us alone, and this way we could progress. But most of our political decisions had nothing to do with the Cold War, they only had to do with the Belgians. For us, the only enemies of our political and economic development were the Belgians. The Americans and Russians were not our enemies; we wanted their support against the Belgian invasion. The Belgians attacked us on the 10th of July, and if we asked for the help of Russians, it was not for them to replace the Belgians. In case the Americans don't support [us] we will look elsewhere, [that] elsewhere was to the Soviets. In many countries, there are problems with elections, with electoral campaigns. We surely had ours, and they had nothing to do with the East-West opposition. Lumumba had enemies and [Albert] Kalonji[52] was one of them. He was one of the people who formed the Binza group that asked for help from the CIA. At the beginning they were Lumumba's opponents for internal reasons; they did not turn to the CIA to serve the cause of the Americans, but to serve their own cause. Kalonji was wondering how Lumumba could form a government in which he was not taking part. He was offered the ministry of agriculture but he refused. Ileo couldn't understand how Lumumba could be considered

[52] In 1958-9 Albert Kalonji led a break away faction of the MNC known as the MNC-K and he and Lumumba were clearly rivals from this point forward

one of the great leaders of Congo, while he, the one who had taken initiative in 1956 as the leader of the Manifesto for African Conscience[53] was only the head of the senate, and only as compensation, he wasn't supposed to have any position at all. Everyone said, let's give him something, he's the author of the manifesto, but he didn't deserve it, I can say this today. He didn't meet any of the requirements to be head of the senate—he had neither the majority nor the special conditions. But we said that we'd give him this position as compensation—so all these were internal matters.

THOMAS KANZA: I'd like to confirm what Cleophas said. Starting from Lumumba's death and the formation of [Cyrille] Adoula's government [from January 1961 onward], our aim was how to save the nationalist movement, because we knew that no aid would come from the Soviet Union or from the communist bloc, and now the nationalist African government will be working within a new context, meaning Adoula's government.[54] All of us regretted the behavior of Gizenga [his refusal to leave Stanleyville], because after succeeding in creating a nationalist government, we could have received any assistance from our friends outside. Those who were representing officially countries in Stanleyville left because Gizenga joined Adoula's government [formally in August 1961] and the Soviet bloc was fighting to come back, to be accepted in Kinshasa. We were not prepared to create any new scandal by backing Gizenga without the approval of Adoula. The Cold War has nothing to do with it, just internal struggle. Some of us made mistakes because we didn't understand what was happening.

[53] The manifesto was a bold statement by Ileo, Lumumba and others demanding "total emancipation for the Congo. The signatories went on to form the MNC.
[54] Cyrille Adoula was an MNC leader and premier of the Republic of the Congo from 2 August 1961 through 30 June 1964.

JEAN OMASOMBO[?]: There were, however, external influences, as in Adoula's case, that maybe you didn't control. These influences were going in the same sense as the orientation of the Congolese. The great powers were interested in the natural resources, the uranium in Congo. Neither the East nor the West wanted to give up the Congo. The Americans were counting on this influence, so that they wouldn't lose the Congo and the Russians wanted to gain their influence back. Maybe you did not control the external influences, but the outside world was looking at you, and had an influence.

THOMAS KANZA: Don't forget the secession of Katanga was still going on then. The aim was how to end the secession of Katanga. We knew that with the elections here in America, Kennedy in power, we stood some chance of having some backing from the US, through the United Nations, to end the secession of Katanga. And many Congolese politicians didn't know how the game was played, we could not crush, literally, Tshombe's government. We had to go to the United Nations. Regardless of the criticism, it was important for some people, some individuals, who knew the game, at least temporarily, to play the game so that Adoula's government would succeed, for the nationalists to crush Tshombe's government.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: I know that it's too late to bring up the subsequent developments. But it just strikes me, that the detention of Gizenga becomes the first step toward repression of the Lumumbists that would lead to the rebellion. Since it was very clear that in the early period the US, Belgium and other countries were so powerful as to

determine the leader of a country, even if Gizenga was wrong and made a bad judgment that shouldn't have been accepted by the other nationalists, without changing the mindset or without any changes in the external powers, you get a situation where aid is being given to Adoula's government, the government becomes more unbalanced perhaps and in the end, most of the country is taken over by rebellion coming out of the nationalist areas. It seems to be that while the actors are having their own strategies, at the same time, other strategies are influencing the result to a certain extent. I know this is a good question to bring up at three o'clock.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I think that you are right, and Jean is right, too. As I said earlier, even Adoula was being influenced by other factors too, not only by our actions. We were aware of the fact that Adoula was not working only for us, but also on the orders of others, because he was a member of the Binza group. Since 1960, I was the first to denounce this group in the Congolese press, the Congolese didn't know about it. We surely knew that Adoula was serving other interests. But we accepted the reconciliation in July [1961, at the Lovanium parliament] because our objective was to reunite the Congo. We were looking for partners in our struggle to end the secession of Katanga. Since 1961, our objective was no longer ideological: it was defending the unity of the Congo. Adoula became prime minister, he joins forces with us in reuniting the country and crushes Katanga, Katanga doesn't accept all our requests. I become a member of the government in February 1962, when Gizenga came to Bulabemba [was put under house arrest, -ed.], I replaced the minister of home affairs and I said that I won't stay unless the unity of the country is guaranteed. And they answered that we were going to fight for the

unity of the country. We tried to negotiate with Tshombe, we invited him to Kinshasa, and every time, under the Belgian influence, he refused. Then, we said there is nothing else to do. Adoula went to Washington and New York, met with the Secretary General [of the United Nations, U Thant] and raised the issue of the unity. They said, let's give Tshombe another chance. We negotiated again, and it didn't work. In June 1962, during the reception organized for the 2nd anniversary of the independence, Adoula looks for me and [Justin] Bomboko.[55] He tells us that the next day, on the 1st of July, there is a plane going to New York. You're going to New York to negotiate with the Secretary General who was very open to matters of nationalism. You are going to negotiate for a change in the UN mandate, so that the UN could use the armed forces to intervene in the secession.

The next evening, on the 1st of July, Bomboko and I took the plane, we were going to stop in Belgium and meet the new Belgian minister of foreign affairs [Paul-Henri Spaak]. He was a socialist, very favorable to the reunification of the Congo. He told us he was going to join us in New York for the negotiations with the American secretary of state. We met the Secretary General [U Thant] on the 3rd of July in Washington. He told us, "I prepared the resolution, but we needed the approval of the US and Belgium. If you get these two approvals, the resolution is going to be passed." We met the [US] Secretary of State [Dean Rusk] who told us that the US was positive that the Katanga secession had to be ended, but that force could not be used. We were going to wait for six more months and negotiate. If on the 31st of December Tshombe doesn't accept the negotiation, if the matter was not settled, starting with January 1st [1963] the

[55] Justin Marie Bomboko was one of the first Congolese university graduates and was also the first Foreign Minister of the Congo in Lumumba's cabinet. Thereafter he served in the same position on several occasions. He broke with Lumumba in August 1960 and supported President Kasavubu's dismissal of the Prime Minister.

United Nations would settle the matter by driving out the mercenaries, because they were the main problem. Bomboko, minister of foreign affairs, and I, minister of home affairs, stayed in New York till the resolution was passed and went back to Congo with the resolution. When we came back, we took all the measures needed for Tshombe to understand that we were going to go further. This didn't work. We invited him to come, we went to Katanga, we assigned Ileo as representative of the central government in Elizabethville, for negotiations, and this didn't work either. In December, we had a meeting and decided to ask the UN to enforce the resolution, based on chapter VII of the charter and the UN accepted. In December, Adoula and Bomboko went to Katanga to see what things were like, they came back and Adoula asked the UN to intervene. At that time, they were using the famous Gurkhas [soldiers from India] at the UN, and in mid December the war against mercenaries started. The moment the mercenaries fell, independent Katanga no longer existed. At the beginning of January [1963], thanks to the resolution passed in July, the Congo became united again. Our mission at that time was to reunite the Congo, and that's why we neglected some other things. The fact that we were so focused on this, made us ignore the social and political revolt of the population. Herbert came to do some research in 1966 and he handed me a list and asked whom I knew on that list. I didn't know anyone. He said that we needed to change the political class, because my people no longer had influence, because they had only been concerned with the reunification. At that point, we decided that our mission was completed.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: I'm sure we could talk for days, maybe after this tour de force, we might break. Unless there is consensus here to continue for some time.

THOMAS KANZA: Before you break up, I'd like to say a few words about the secession of Katanga. I think it's important for the record to know the role played by Britain. It just happened that from April 1962, I was the Congolese ambassador in London and I met the Foreign Secretary, Lord Hume. We discussed Katanga and to my surprise, Lord Hume tells me "I'm going to give you a list of eleven people and instead of accusing the British government of supporting Tshombe, your role is to convince these people. If you manage to convince them, then the secession of Katanga will be over." Among these names, there was Sir Hugh Alexander, the advisor of the Queen and Captain Waterhouse, chairman of the Tanganyika concessions. I spent from April until September, dining with all these people separately. Mr. Waterhouse told me that I had convinced him and that he would like to meet my prime minister. I went back to see Lord Hume and he had received a report from Captain Waterhouse saying that now the British, meaning the South Africans and the Rhodesians, were convinced that they could do good business with the central government, instead of doing business with Tshombe. Lord Hume said that the situation had improved because I managed to convince those eleven. I went back to Kinshasa and I convinced Adoula to meet Captain Waterhouse in Brussels. We had a midnight meeting, Adoula, Waterhouse and myself. I was translating because Adoula didn't speak English and Captain Waterhouse didn't speak French. After discussing, Captain Waterhouse stood up saying "Mr. Prime Minister, after shaking your hand, when we leave this room, consider the Katanga secession over." It was in October 1962. Adoula looked at me and he couldn't believe it. So, they shook hands—Captain Waterhouse was a 75 year old man—and we left.

When I came back to London, Lord Hume asked me if Adoula's government could plan any kind of meeting at the African level in Kinshasa at the end of the year. We had a summit in Kinshasa in December, Tshombe Mobutu, Tom Mboya [a young Kenijan nationalist]—everyone came there. While we were dancing there, Robert Gardiner [officer-in-charge of ONUC] announced that the UN troops were going to attack the Katanga mercenaries. I thought it was very important to add this. The British were very involved in this.

HERBERT WEISS: To give a little bit of final thought. First of all, one can summarize by saying that the Congolese who participated in these very complicated games were attempting to do something that more or less in this time frame the Indian government was failing at—and that is not to be either partisan or an agent of one or the other of the major power blocks. And if the Indians couldn't do it, it's no surprise that the Congolese leaders didn't do it either. Of course, they had leaders who made mistakes which have been described very frankly and I think very openly to our great benefit by people who can still clearly identify with this position, but in the interest of history, given a very detailed and I think a very frank analysis and testimony. On the issue that has just been raised, which is on the next chapter, the end of the Katanga secession, is really the one chapter in which I, as an American, am at last in some agreement with the actions of my government. Because I thought—having been there, having studied the whole independence struggle, having had some acquaintance with Lumumba and many of the other leaders, that it was a profound tragedy. The tragedy was that we so quickly, at the behest of the Belgians and using profoundly biased Belgian information, that we so

quickly rejected all possibility of supporting and helping Lumumba rather than spending all our time dismissing him and finding ways of getting rid of him. But when the Katanga issue came up under the Kennedy administration, I think it is fair to say, that it is Kennedy who recreated the unity of the Congo, more than any other force. Gardiner was sent over with a beefed-up mandate. I remember talking to Gardiner, and he told me, “the first thing I did was I bought land for a cemetery” and I told Tshombe in Ghana, “a general who fails, never returns from the battle.” Indeed, as I had predicted much earlier, reducing Katanga's armed forces was just a matter of will. They collapsed almost at the very beginning of a serious attempt by a military force to bring them down. But of course, given the visions of the time, unifying the Congo, which was the goal of Lumumba, was the goal of Hammarskjöld and of Kennedy, in the sequence of events that occurred, could only happen after a totally pro-western and pro-American government sat in Kinshasa. Later on, our man Mobutu, did things that were ten times more offensive than what Lumumba ever did to the US position. For instance, he had an entire brigade trained by the North Koreans. Imagine if Lumumba had done that he wouldn’t have lasted at all, but this guy was ours, that guy was theirs, and with this simplification, we did a lot to destroy that country and its future for decades. The reaction, which was the rebellion, cost the lives of hundreds of thousands. I do hope we can find the funds, perhaps in collaboration with some Belgian research centers, Soviet research centers to pursue this. My contribution to this is that the Congolese voice, which has turned out to be so valuable, was substantially present.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: May I make a foot note on that? I was not particularly lenient towards the Eisenhower administration personally, but I would say that the Eisenhower administration also wanted the unity of the Congo. None of the American governments accepted the idea of a separate Katanga, so far as I was involved. The difference was that [the] Secretary of State for Kennedy and one of his assistants, Dean Rusk and George McGee, while openly supporting action, by the backdoor suggest[ed] "let's try and settle this by negotiation, do not do it by fighting, do not destroy Union Miniere" which provided more than 50% of the country's external earnings. They were not after Union Miniere or anything like that, but it was my impression that they really believed that this [unification?] was important.

HERBERT WEISS: The mistake in my opinion was in thinking that you have to destroy Union Miniere in order to end the Katanga secession. First of all, militarily, all you had to do was to destroy the railheads and they couldn't export the copper. How long would Katanga have survived that way?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: It was difficult in getting that across, that didn't escape my mind, nor the ambassador's.

HERBERT WEISS: I'm outside the government, if we had dumb leaders, that's not just my problem.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Maybe we can come to an end on these very fine concluding remarks by Dr. Weiss and Mr. Devlin. Let me in conclusion, say that I [have] participated and organized a number of these critical oral history conferences and this is one of the very best. It's always a little bit of a stroke of luck, even with the expertise and help of Dr. Weiss here, you can never plan how the conversation works out and how the veterans complement each other in their perspectives. I think this has worked exceptionally well and I'm profoundly grateful to the veterans here that shared their recollections. Let me thank all of you, especially those of you who have come from afar, I know that this has not been easy for many of you. Let me say a heartfelt thanks to my collaborators Dr. Weiss, Dr. Namikas, and Dr. Mazov who really were the brain trust behind this meeting. Let me also thank two other teams without which we could not have worked here today. First, our wonderful translators, thank you so much for excellent translation, and my own team, Mircea [Munteanu], and especially in this case, Dee and her assistants for putting this event together. [We'll be in touch after the conference as we'll work] through the transcript of this meeting, if you have questions, further ideas, documents to share, we will publish them and the transcripts for this conference. And hopefully we'll see all of you either here, or in Brussels, or in the Congo.

Session Three: The Ousting and Assassination of Lumumba: Breakdown

HERBERT WEISS: I gather I am again the moderator, and as moderator I will give Lise a chance to ask a question, and Sergey Mazov also has a question directly related to Larry's interesting last explanation.

LISE NAMIKAS: My question is going to relate to Mobutu. I am wondering here, at this time, by mid September [1960], by the time Joe from Paris comes to Congo, Mobutu has neutralized Lumumba and Kasavubu, and I am wondering then, how your relationship changed with Mobutu and for how long was this relationship stable, or going in a positive direction, and was there a sense that maybe after Eisenhower was leaving the presidency, and Kennedy won, that things would be different, or did that factor in at all?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: It was indeed a factor. Whatever was done that was not appreciated by the Congolese government, the authorities with whom I was in contact, I was always blamed; it was my fault that the United States government had taken such and such a position. I made it a rule never to attack my own government in a sharp way, but I used to point out that sometimes the US had interests beyond the Congo and other countries and that they sometimes had to take steps that perhaps were not favorable to the Congo in order to meet other commitments. But this came up regularly, believe me. Mobutu, Bomboko, Nendaka, all the members of the Binza group so to speak, and other ministers who were not members of the group would often times hit me hard with some of these things. I can't remember the number of the resolution [Resolution 161][56], I think was the 21st of February, a resolution of the UN, when Stevenson went along, he tried to put through one resolution but he was blocked and he went along with the Afro-Asian

[56] UN Security Council Resolution 161 called for, among other things, member states to act to prevent civil war in the Congo, and use military force if required, all Belgian and other foreign military personnel, paramilitary forces and mercenaries to be evacuated from the Congo, all member states to prevent militants from traveling from their countries to the Congo, the organization of an impartial investigation into Lumumba's death, that the parliament of the Congo be reformed, and the reorganization of the Army of the Congo and its removal from Congolese political life.

resolution, which [said that] the UN should be prepared if necessary […] to take action such as disarming the Congolese army. For some reason, Mobutu did not approve of that, which I think won't surprise anyone. It [the resolution] also said that they [the UN] should prevent fighting within the Congo, and Mobutu's argument was that we are a sovereign nation, and if somebody is trying to revolt, it would be perfectly normal that every country would try and prevent such action. This went on constantly, so I was under pressure—critical pressure—a great deal of the time. Other times, I was trying to, if you will, sell the American position, explain it constantly, because this came up constantly as related to the UN, actions being taken there, actions being taken [in the] Congo, by UN personnel, particularly [Rajeshwar] Dayal [UN representative in the Congo], I think he was hated by every Congolese with whom I spoke; certainly I disliked him personally, he had a neat little way of…One day he said "Mr. Devlin, you have such a great country" and he went on and on about what a wonderful country the US was, and he finished by saying, "you make the best refrigerators and the best air conditioning machines, so many good things, if only you would concentrate on making these things, and let us, the Indians and Africans ponder for you," in other words, think for you. I never really liked the man after that. He was [like that] from the day he arrived. We found that he was very slanted in his policies, whatever the US was for, he was against, to put it very briefly. It became clear, there was a shift in the Secretary General's position, at least in our view, ours being the embassy's view, of the few of us there who followed this sort of thing, that with the Soviet effort to bring about a troika, which in our opinion, for what it's worth, would have meant the destruction of the UN as a useful unit of international society. And I think, we estimated that, the Secretary General [Dag Hammarskjöld] suddenly realized

that he had to find a broader backing and that he should not be seen as being too close to the Americans. Where else were we going now? You asked, you had some other points.

LISE NAMIKAS: About Mobutu and your relations with him, and I'd like to maybe take a step back and think about September, October, November.

HERBERT WEISS: It's fine, but in terms of the chronology, there is a very important event, and it's unfortunate that nobody is here from the UN, that is the closing of the airport and the closing of the radio, without which the dismissal of Lumumba would have had a very different end. […] The key person there is Andrew Cordier,[57] and there are a couple of questions that I think one should answer about him. One of which is that he's the representative of the Secretary General, but he's also an American citizen; how much coordination was there in Kinshasa between the embassy, the CIA [and] Cordier?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Absolutely none, from my point of view. […] I realized very early on that there was one thing I should not do, and that was to try and recruit or work on UN people. Because when one recruits or tries to recruit, it's not always sure that it can be done, and if you make the wrong approach and someone objects and then he goes to the press, this was absolutely a no-no. I followed up on that, always very carefully, and my home office agreed fully [on] that. The ambassador certainly saw Cordier, as all of the ambassadors did, whether Cordier acted as an American as opposed to a UN official. At that time, I thought that he was acting legitimately. As you remember, the 5th of

[57] Dag Hammarskjöld's temporary representative in the Congo. He was there for 10 days to replace Ralph Bunche before the arrival of Rajeshwar Dayal

September the President [Kasavubu] made his announcement, and then went home and went to bed. Within no time, Lumumba was in there, and he made three speeches, as I remember, each time he was more and more angry. Then, the President had not made any effort to protect the radio station from just these actions nor did Lumumba for that matter. My impression was that the radio station, that he [Cordier] was just taking this action to prevent conflict there, because there was always conflict at [for example] one time with the ABAKO youth group going in to smash up the place. As far as the airport was concerned, as you remember there was that incident with the Canadians, I think it was 11 or 13 Canadians, were horribly beaten, some almost to death, I don't think that any of them actually did die, but they had their faces smashed in with gun butts, and [broken] ribs and all that sort of thing. I assume, put it that way, I don't know if I thought that this was the factor which caused Cordier to act that way, he did continue, he did later, Dayal later changed it and pulled troops out. I thought it was so that we could continue using it, the airport; it was the only means of ingress or egress available to most of us.

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: Paul Berthou, a Swiss lawyer, was legal advisor at that time, and we interviewed him. I'll read a short excerpt [which] I interpret as him saying that they interpreted it in a legal sense not to violate article 27 of the Charter [of the United Nations], which is the non-intervention clause in the Charter. Let me read the paragraph: "beyond that, of course, the big problem was a reconciliation of our attempt at doing what we were doing with the constraint of the charter which is the famous article 27… At that time, we were really very much constrained. There was the famous closure of the airport and of the radio station. This was at the fringe of this problem of the

interpretation of article 27. But we also were very conscious of the fact that we had the mandate, to assist in the maintenance of law and order. Reconciling those two dimensions of the mandate and the constraint is, I would say, the second major souvenir which I have of my experience in the Congo."[58] So I think that what he's saying is that in fact, they stretched the mandate to maintain law and order so as not to violate the non-intervention clause of the mandate, but that at the same time he justified that stretch by saying they weren't in fact violating the article 27. Clearly they made a legalistic argument made for the closure of the airport, that's how I read this.

HERBERT WEISS: That may be so, but the question is not what is the alibi for doing it, but what was the motivation for doing it.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: As far as I'm concerned, it was that 11 or 13 Canadians. I know I had someone leaving the day that occurred. I had sent a young woman, a secretary was going back to the [United] States, and I sent someone from the embassy along with her, male, because […] it was 4 or 5 road blocks in going to the airport. They left and after 15 or 20 minutes, someone came in and asked me if I heard what happened. They'd either smashed up or killed 11 or 13 Canadians, and it sounded pretty bad. And I thought, my God, I've just [sent] these two people out to the airport, and I rushed down the steps, and as I hit the front door, Carlucci was trying to come in, and I knocked him backward, not intentionally, and he popped up […] not very happy with me. When I told him what

[58] See Thomas G. Weiss, Tatiana Carayannis, Louis Emmerij, and Richard Jolly, *UN Voices: The Struggle for Development and Social Justice* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005) and its accompanying Oral History CD ROM of searchable interview transcripts (www.unhistory.org)..

happened he said “I am going with you, you may need some help.” We got there and we couldn’t find anybody in the airport. Finally, we found our 2 people, they were wandering around, they said “there’s nobody here.” The soldiers that had caused the big problem had left. Finally people, some beat up, started coming out of back offices, then we found out that she [our secretary] could leave on a plane that day. It was really bad; I think the situation was bad. But the airport was really the only way of getting in and out of Kinshasa and getting large amounts of supplies that were urgent, as opposed to coming in by sea.

HERBERT WEISS: These are not mutually exclusive explanations, so I’m not in anyway de-legitimizing anything you said. But the impression that I had was that, one, the closing of the airport had the political purpose of preventing Lumumba from bringing in his allies, two, that the closing of the radio was inconsistent with the notion of neutralization, because Kasavubu had access to the Brazzaville radio and third, (there are two documents that are going to be distributed to you and I’ll leave it to you all to make your own judgments on this) that Cordier was, at the very minimum, a profoundly non-neutral person whose writings suggest that he was a racist. I brought and I think that's been distributed, the thing from Columbia University, an article by Carol Collins published in the *Journal of International Affairs* [vol 47, summer 1993], which has a delicious irony added to it, which is based upon Cordier’s personal papers, which were opened up after he died and which have been deposited at Columbia University. She cites things that he wrote to a friend of his while he was in the Congo which are quite shocking, and the irony is that she got the Cordier prize. I think that this is again such a

moment of enormous importance, because it's Cordier's actions that cut the feet from under Lumumba. And presumably, is also, to get to your story about waiting in Kinshasa, the fact that he [Lumumba] loses so many of his political tools, is presumably the motive for the mistake he makes. I agree his escaping from Leopoldville was a mistake, and even if leaving was not, because of the deal in the making, the biggest mistake was the way he comported himself on the road to Stanleyville. If you are escaping from an army that is substantial and out to get you, then you don't stop and make speeches along the way, and he did.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: I wonder if Ambassador Kanza, and Senator Kamitatu, would have a reaction to, how did you perceive the actions by Cordier?

THOMAS KANZA: If I may, I would like to support what Herbert said. Cordier attended the meetings in New York, between Lumumba and Dag Hammarskjöld. The first meeting went all right. I did prepare the ground; there was no ill feeling or wrong impression about Lumumba until after the first meeting. Lumumba didn't know anything about the UN. Lumumba thought that anything you ask for from the Secretary General, you get it, especially after the resolution accepting to give to the Congo general assistance in all fields. So, Lumumba thought that as prime minister, he has come to tell the Secretary General "Okay, these are the needs of my government." For example, "I don't want only Europeans and Americans in the Congo from the UN, I want some Africans, some black people, in Congo." We got Jean David, he was Haitian, but living in New York. He was appointed no. 2 of the United Nations operations in the Congo. But

again, Lumumba misjudged. After the 1st meeting, we were supposed to have a second meeting in the afternoon. Coming down from the 38th floor, Lumumba asked me to arrange for a press conference. I insisted and told the prime minister that it's not time for a press conference, we had a second meeting and he said "no, no, I must speak to the press." [I told him] that he should speak to the press afterwards, but he insisted. Dag Hammarskjöld was following the press conference on TV. Lumumba [had] been asked the question—"Mr. Prime Minister, what is [your] feeling after the 1st meeting with Dag Hammarskjöld?" His answer, again, without any kind of knowledge of international diplomacy, he said "no, I don't talk with the Secretary General, he's an international civil servant. He's going to discuss with my ambassador. I, as head of the government, don't discuss with international civil servants." When we came back in the afternoon, it was a very very cold meeting. Then Hammarskjöld said, "as an international civil servant I am going to listen to you, what instructions do you have for me." Lumumba realized the mistake he made by calling him an international civil servant. Cordier was there, and since then, the friendly relations between Dag Hammarskjöld and Lumumba got cold. Your three points are really correct. When Cordier came to Kinshasa, it was before Dayal came, and Cordier stepped in, as special representative of the Secretary General. Number one, the dismissal of Lumumba, one may mention Jansens, one may mention Van Bilsen or other people. But Cordier stepped in and said that he must be dismissed. Kasavubu, when he [Lumumba] made his speech, according to our constitution, any statement by the President or any decision must be countersigned by two ministers. That night, it was not signed by the ministers. In fact, we had a cabinet meeting that night, all of us had to sign the allegiance to the Prime Minister. Bomboko, [Albert] Delvaux [the Congolese

ambassador to Belgium] and others were there, all of us, we signed. Next morning, when Lumumba made these three speeches dismissing the president, next morning in the cabinet meeting, and Bomboko and Delvaux started arguing, not about the dismissal but about the speeches by Lumumba. Nobody blamed Kasavubu. The two ministers who were about to countersign the president attacked Lumumba for his speeches at the radio [station]. When we had a coffee break Lumumba he asked me to go outside, and he told me "Thomas, I will call you tonight, I'm going to countersign the dismissal and from now on I will be living in the presidential compound. I will phone you, don't phone me." That evening, Bomboko signed but Delvaux was arrested. He was released under pressure I believe from Cordier or somebody else. Delvaux went to sign because of this arrest. So, on the 6th or the 7th [of September], we had the dismissal of Lumumba officially countersigned by two ministers. Cordier decided by himself, and I think Larry's right, Cordier was really acting as the number one UN [man] in the Congo. He didn't care about what the Americans may think. His boss was Dag Hammarskjöld, he consulted him, and said "look if we leave things…" and he said that the situation may get out of hand and that they had to act. But he knew, that once you closed the radio in Kinshasa, Kasavubu had access to Brazzaville radio, because Abbie Fulbert Youlou was his friend so he stopped the radio in Kinshasa, and also knowing that the Soviets were about to send assistance to Lumumba, he closed the airport. Cordier, as far as I'm concerned, was responsible for many things, including what would happen later. The parliament was reconvened and dismissed both the speech of the president and the speech of the prime minister. The Parliament set up a reconciliation committee saying that "we are going to send people to reconcile the president and the prime minister." That did not please

Cordier, and this committee never sat. After that, Cordier left when Dayal came. Dayal was powerless, because Dayal has to follow the instructions from New York and Cordier was back to New York, he was still very powerful in New York. This was my assessment of the situation.

UNKNOWN: This is basically what I wrote in my book.

THOMAS KANZA: Oh really? I haven't read the book.

UNKNOWN: I actually referred to the 5th September as "the Cordier coup," because he was responsible for the situation. My conclusion came from reading documents in the UN archives, Cordier's actions were very clear.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I have a question for Larry Devlin. Why didn't Jean David succeed in reconciling Kasavubu and Lumumba? We know that Jean David had prepared a document for the reconciliation, on behalf of the UN and that Kasavubu had signed the document, Lumumba had signed and when he presented it to the UN, it seems that Timberlake asked that it be burnt. Is this true?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Not to my knowledge, No, I don't think so. I'm really not playing political games here, I'm not aware of that story. Which document were we burning?

THOMAS KANZA: The reconciliation agreement.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I never saw such a thing, I really did not.

THOMAS KANZA: Cleophas, let me bail out Larry on that. Lumumba didn't know the background of Jean David. Jean David was a former senator from Haiti, living in exile in New York. He was a good friend of François Duvalier [President of Haiti from 1957-1971]. In New York, he was an agent, I don't know [if I should] call him an agent of the CIA, but he was an American agent. So, by asking him to come to Kinshasa, Lumumba thought he was dealing with a nationalist from Haiti, not an American agent. Larry was not close to Jean David, but Timberlake was very close to Jean David.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Not really.

THOMAS KANZA: No no, because, what happened, this reconciliation, if it took place, was going to damage the whole plan of getting rid of Lumumba. On the 9th of September, it was when the Parliament decided that the two must reconcile. Kasavubu had signed, but before Jean David takes the document to Lumumba, he went to check with Timberlake. Timberlake was against it and the best way to get rid of it, was to burn it.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: It's interesting, because I had never heard of Jean David bringing this to Timberlake. How do you know this? Are you sure?

THOMAS KANZA: Jean David was very [good] friends with me, because I'm the one who knew him before Lumumba met him.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: There are two points that I would make. Number one, Jean David had the tendency sometimes to, shall we say, expand on his positions in discussing things. I knew him, I met him, but I did not know him well. Secondly a point I want to make, he was not an agent of CIA.

THOMAS KANZA: No not CIA, an agent of some sort…

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: No, I'm sorry, that's not correct.

THOMAS KANZA: Jean David's wife is from Algeria—someone mentioned Serge Michel—when his wife came to Kinshasa, she became very friendly with Serge Michel. It could have been that Jean David was acting on behalf of the French, because he was very friendly with Serge Michel and Serge Michel was not really a nationalist Algerian.

HERBERT WEISS: He was a Russian, surely.

THOMAS KANZA: Serge Michel, Andre Blouin, all these people, agents around Lumumba. Lumumba wanted to discuss with Africans, Madame Blouin was from Bangui, Serge Michel was from Algeria, but all of them were agents of France, French agents.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: It's possible that Serge was a French agent, but on the other hand he was condemned to death in absentia by the French. I sort of doubt that he was an agent, I'm not saying that they hadn't tried to use him. I know the French services well enough to know how they work sometimes. What I can affirm here for what it's worth—[and] maybe I shouldn't because you might ask me what an agent is, and I'll have a difficult time, but this one time, I will speak to it—[is that] Jean David was not working for the US government. He may have had contacts at some level, unofficial contacts, but he was not working for the US government.

THOMAS KANZA: Larry, what surprised all of us was that he backed this reconciliation. When Kasavubu signed, he was very happy that Lumumba also wanted to sign. He never reached the step of meeting Lumumba for him to sign. Something happened in between, and what he told me, he had meeting with some friends, among them Timberlake.

HERBERT WEISS: I think there is something which doesn't work. Okay, he has a statement and Kasavubu is in favor. The physical statement is not crucial; you can go back and get another copy. If Jean David was sincerely reconciling, how come he never got to Lumumba. Now then maybe he was prevented from getting to Lumumba, physically prevented, but not because the document was burned, by Timberlake in his office. If that is the case you go back and make another document.

THOMAS KANZA: He received an order from somewhere not to get it signed.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Obviously, I can't say this with 100% certainty, but I was very very close to Timberlake. We met several times, each day, my office was next to his, he would pop into my office and say "oh, so and so just told me…" At the end of the day, we would review what had happened and our assessment and interpretation of what was happening. I think I would have heard that he instructed…

THOMAS KANZA: Did you know about this reconciliation statement?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: No, the document itself no.

THOMAS KANZA: But you knew that someone was going around to get the document signed?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: No I knew that they were trying to get them together, but I didn't know that there was going to be a signed document.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: But in addition to Jean David, the African ambassadors in Kinshasa also tried, and the ambassador of Togo, to reconcile the two, and that also failed. There were other interests opposed to reconciliation—France and Belgium among others.

HERBERT WEISS: What was the role of the Tunisians? They were very active. Were they also on the side of the anti-reconciliation?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: [The Tunisians were] Anti[-reconciliation].

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Anti-Lumumba. I'd like to bring our discussion back to the following point. I think that regardless of Jean David's or other people's efforts, Lumumba's dismissal was organized by outside forces, Larry explained the process to us. An internal party organized by the Binza group, and, we always forget to mention, Ileo and Kalonji who settled in Kasavubu's presidential residence to prevent all reconciliation. Kalonji came from south Kasai to wait for Lumumba's dismissal and he stayed [at] Kasavubu's place during all that time. They didn't go out, because they were threatened by Jeunesses Nationalistes, who wanted to keep them from acting. So, I think that the reconciliation was prevented by all these adversaries. This was carried out in two stages. The first one—Lumumba had to be dismissed, and this was done. Second stage: his physical elimination. It seemed difficult to imagine that American friends could accept the reconciliation. They knew that Lumumba was to be replaced, and his dismissal was wanted at a very high level in Washington. No reconciliation was possible. During this time, the Belgians had their own action. The Belgian king didn't want Lumumba any longer. Three combined actions: the internal one carried one by the Binza group, to which we should add Ileo and Kalonji, the actions of US and that of Belgium. The result couldn't have been different. To confirm this, I'd like to make a statement. When Lumumba was arrested and taken to Thysville on the 13th of January, there was a mutiny

of the soldiers in Thysville. They asked for Lumumba's release. They took him out of his cell, asked him to go back to Kinshasa and put the tanks at his disposal. Lumumba says no, he requests that Kasavubu come to explain why he arrested him. The soldiers sent a delegation that reaches Kinshasa on the 14th of January, the same day as Dag Hammarskjöld. I was his neighbor. My official residence was near Dayal's. On the 13th, Lumumba sends me a letter addressed to the Secretary General, he asks me to give the letter to him. The envelope was open, so I read the letter. He was simply asking the Secretary General to intervene in favor of his release. I take the letter to Dayal's, and I meet the Secretary General and present him with the letter. When he found out that it was from Lumumba, he said that he couldn't read the letter from the person who asked for his dismissal in August in New York. Dayal took the letter and I wrote to Lumumba that the Secretary General didn't want to read his letter. The soldiers left, and on the next day, the 15th, the transfer operation was initiated. Kasavubu, Bomboko, Nendaka and Mobutu left for Thysville to organize the transfer operation. Everything was carefully planned. From the 15th till the 17th everything went exactly as planned.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I would say I remember very well that period, particularly the 13th, because I went and I talked with Mobutu, Nendaka, Bomboko and others at that time concerning their plan to go to Thysville, and I said I think that at that time Lumumba was out of jail, out of prison, was free to get around the military camp. The troops seemed very unhappy. It looked as though they were starting over, the night of the 5th of July, [started] all over again. I said "this is ridiculous for all of you to go, because, if you fail in your mission and the troops arrest you, who is going to be leading the government,

who is going to be leading the army, it would be chaos again." I don't remember who it was, whether it was Nendaka or Bomboko or perhaps someone else, I don't remember—they told me "Larry, this is much more serious than you realize, now we have to bet everything on succeeding in this mission." Also, Damien Kandolo said "remember we represent many tribes, and there are many tribes represented in the army." It's very important that we go as a group and that we try [so that] each one of us speaks to the people of our tribes to convince them to stop this mutiny and put Lumumba back in jail while we try and arrange some sort of a peaceful arrangement for this. There was no comment at least at that time, to my knowledge, about sending him elsewhere. It may have well been, I don't say it was not, I just don't know.

JEAN OMASOMBO: On January 13th, the possibility of sending Lumumba some place else existed. The 2nd day meeting of the General College of Commissioners was taking place and two ministers from Brazzaville took part in this meeting in Leopoldville. But at same time, on the 13-14th, Mobutu and Nendaka went to Thysville. They paid off at least a couple of soldiers, they dismissed some others who were against them. Brazzaville refused to allow Lumumba to transit in Brazzaville. There is a letter from Kasavubu to Youlou asking that he accept Lumumba's transfer in Brazzaville, but Youlou refused. I would also like to go back to Lumumba's death. It would be interesting to analyze a bit Lumumba's behavior. Since December 1959, Lumumba started to talk a lot about death. Although it doesn't seem very important, there is an attitude of Lumumba towards death that needs to be explained. He says "I'm going to be killed, but it's not the most

important thing." As Cleophas, one of the people who organized his escape, is here, it would be interesting that he tells us more about this.

HERBERT WEISS: But not now, tomorrow.

Session Four: The Ousting and Assassination of Lumumba: The Assassination

[The session begins with reference to Lumumba's unplanned speech at the Independence Day ceremonies.]

THOMAS KANZA: My first reaction was that it was an excellent speech, but not to be pronounced in the Parliament. In the afternoon, we had a meeting on the stadium. He could speak in Lingala, in French, in Chiluba, and Swahili, but not there, because kings, heads of state would be there. Those two Belgians, I noticed something, they knew who wrote the speech. Talking about Tshombe, in fact he came to Kinshasa, it's true. Before he went back, he announced the secession. Part of the trap, some people (Cleophas may have names) prevented Tshombe from meeting with Lumumba. I remember Tshombe telling me "Thomas, do [not] come to Katanga because it will become independent." I said "do not dare to make secession, no country will recognize yours." His reply was "I came here to meet Lumumba, but he refused to meet me." Later, I will check, Lumumba was never told that Tshombe wanted to meet him. Tshombe left with the impression that Lumumba refused to see him and he was going to have revenge. Now, the last question, about Henniquian. Lumumba knew him in Stanleyville. One thing I liked about

Lumumba, he remained loyal to all the Europeans he knew. He trusted him Henniquian. Every time there was progress, he would go and meet his 'former friends' who defended his case when he was attacked by the Belgians. Henniquian was one of these people, he knew him and he trusted him.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: We have to stop for a moment, a question on Tshombe has been asked. In fact, Tshombe got to Kinshasa because after the soldier mutiny, Lumumba summoned all the six provincial governors. I was one of them. All the governors except [inaudible] met with the Prime Minister on the 6th [of July], The next day we had a general conference with his [Lumumba's] cabinet and discussed security and order in the provinces after this mutiny. We discussed the political problems related to the appointment of Congolese administrative staff and we talked about [the] budget. Tshombe asked if Katanga had a special budget. He said "we have several problems. We produce two thirds of the country's resources; we can't be given the same budget. I propose that we discuss allocating a special budget to Katanga." Lumumba answered that he was going to ask his advisors to examine the question and he was going to answer later, but that for the moment the issue was maintaining order in the provinces. Tshombe insisted on seeing him alone, on the 8th of July. That day, Lumumba was discussing with the military and assigning functions, and he asked me to receive my fellow governors. We had lunch at my house on the 9th. During lunch, Tshombe received a phone call from Lubumbashi. He was staying at the Memling, the call was transferred to my house. He was told to come back as soon as possible because the Belgians had decided to declare independence the next day, on Sunday. Tshombe said that he was trying to get on a plane.

I asked for a special plane for him and advised him to leave on the same day. I took him to the airport, the plane was at 5:00 p.m. He didn't ask to see the prime minister again, because the prime minister said that he would decide later on the matters [of the budget]. But as the situation in Katanga was urgent, he told us "I'm going back to stop this secession. I'm going to do everything I can, but if I don't get there in time I will be faced with the fact. At any rate, they won't do this today." He left on Saturday at 5 p.m. He got home and delayed the declaration of independence until Monday. The Belgians had everything planned, [and] he was faced with the fact. It's not because Lumumba refused to see him; it's true that he complained about it. I know exactly how this happened, day by day, hour by hour. I witnessed this with the other governors.

JEAN OMASOMBO: To complete what Kamitatu said, in an original document of Colonel Bebe, he says "the Belgian government asks me to authorize Moise Tshombe to proclaim the independence of Katanga." It's a document dated July 10th, and on the 11th, they proclaimed the independence. My question for Thomas Kanza, as to Lumumba's famous speech of June 30, at the Belgian inquiry commission, we didn't succeed to identify the author of the speech. This speech shouldn't have been a surprise, Lumumba had not received officially either a copy of the King's speech nor of Kasavubu's, but we think that Lumumba was aware of their content, thanks to the secret services or other sources. But my question is, according to different sources and Jean-Claude Willame says this in his book; the Belgian officials already had a copy of Lumumba's speech on the [night of the] 29th.[59] But everyone was drunk, celebrating it was the end of the regime and

[59] Jean Claude Willame is currently a professor at Louvain la Neuve University. He has been an expert on Congo politics since 1960 and has published numerous books and articles on the subject.

they didn't read and analyze it. And there are Belgian officials who stated the same thing. All the Belgians say they didn't write the speech. If we think of the style, we can say that it's not different from his previous speeches. When Lumumba was arrested in Stanleyville, his speech on October, 28, 1959, everything he says in that speech is similar. But for this one, the style is more elaborate, one couldn't have written it in 15 minutes. It was really written by someone with a very good knowledge of the French style. It's true that Lumumba was writing well in French, but it was more elaborate than that. Then, Thomas Kanza, who wrote this speech?

THOMAS KANZA: The question had already some ideas about the answer. It's true that a man like Lumumba, after winning the elections had not waited till the last minute to write this speech. He had been writing this speech for a long time, but in the presence of his lawyer, a very close friend. And maybe [Jean] van Lierde[60] refined the style. Definitely, it was not me. It was not my style. The ideas were Lumumba's, the first draft was his. There must have been one or two European friends who refined the style. I must admit that on the 30th of June [from] 8:30 until 9:30, Ambassador Mandi and I sat together and tried to correct, meaning tried to suppress certain expressions which may have seen as insulting not only to the Belgians, but to some of the people who were friendly to our independence. But we failed to complete the corrections. When we were just about to finish, Colonel Massi, a Belgian officer came to inform us that the government must be in the parliament before the arrival of the heads of state. Lumumba asked Mandi and me to accompany him, we were following Lumumba in the second car, while we were kept on correcting the speech. When we handed the speech to Lumumba,

[60] Jean Van Lierde was a close friend of Lumumba's who edited his speeches.

telling him what we had suppressed and added, and if you see the film from the Independence Day, in the parliament, Lumumba sitting next to the Prime Minister of Belgium, was still busy correcting the speech. And at the end, to answer your question, let us give credit to Lumumba. He wrote the speech and asked friends, maybe Europeans to correct it, Mandi and myself suppressed and added a few things. The Belgians did pass the speech to officials, because all the Belgians around Lumumba were double agents. They were friends with Lumumba but they were still Belgians, they could not keep any information. Those who betrayed Lumumba are the Congolese who knowingly did not exert pressure on Kasavubu to send his speech to Lumumba officially. Lumumba got it through Van Lierde and Van Bilsen. Van Bilsen was the personal advisor of Kasavubu, and he, out of honesty gave the speech to Van Lierde who passed it to Lumumba. So, Lumumba had read, Kasavubu's speech the day before.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: We maybe forget that Lumumba had a lot to suffer from the Belgians. This discourse expressed his revolt. He was arrested twice in dramatic conditions by the Belgians, they handcuffed him. We often forget that on the day when he was making his speech he had a few tough words for the people who made him suffer; this shouldn't surprise anyone.

LISE NAMIKAS: Perhaps we should talk about our next point, it would fit in nicely here, perhaps starting with Larry Devlin and then moving on to the Congolese. Do you think that the US or maybe the combined efforts of the US and Belgium could have done

anything to help settle what happened a few days after the independence. Do you remember anything about the Congolese approach to the Americans for aid?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Could the US and Belgians [inaudible] possibly, I just don't know. I wasn't there at the time, I certainly was not as close as Cleophas and Thomas and a couple of other Congolese that I know. As to the reason for refusing aid after independence…When Gizenga came to the American embassy to say that the government has voted to request that the US provide military help to the Congo, the response was almost immediate by Ambassador Timberlake. That would be a great mistake, because through the US, there will be other countries seeking to put troops in and endanger your independence. Whether he was afraid that the Soviets would come in, I don't know.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Were you there at the meeting?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I was there briefly and then I went out of the room, I don't know why, I was not told to go. But we discussed it that night. I know Timberlake believed that this was a very bad idea, and without consulting the Department of State, he said "you should bring in the UN and no members of the Security Council who have the veto should participate in the UN directly by sending troops, funds were more than acceptable."

THOMAS KANZA: I can confirm that, after Gizenga came to your embassy, the government invited Ambassador Timberlake to attend the council of ministers. Some of us said that we were setting up a very bad precedent, to invite a foreign ambassador to a cabinet meeting. But we had no choice, because in the mind of Lumumba, [we were] ignorant of the international situation. He thought that, if the Belgians aggress [sic] us, the best response would be to bring in Americans because the Belgians would never fight against Americans. Ambassador Timberlake said "don't commit this mistake, if you invite the Americans, the reaction will be by the other powers, the Soviet Union. The solution would be the United Nations." So next, we invited Ralph Bunche, and through him Lumumba sent an invitation to the Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld requesting military and financial assistance.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Were you there at the cabinet meeting? Did Timberlake specifically use the Soviet Union?

THOMAS KANZA: I think the way he put it, was "don't get involved with one of the five permanent members of the Security Council," but knowing very well, that besides the Soviet Union, the other 4 members were allies of US.

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: This is a good moment to read from Brian Urquhart's transcript; Christian had asked me to do that. This is an interview that we at the United Nations International History Project did with Brian Urquhart. I understand that we tried to get him to come, but there was a conflict in timing, so this is the first and last time that

I will ever attempt to impersonate Sir Brian Urquhart. This is just a portion of his transcript in which he talks about how Hammarskjöld perceived the issue initially: "I think that the Congo was a terrible shock to Hammarskjöld. He had been on this amazing tour in 1960, in January and February he visited about 24 countries and several territories of one grade or another. He spent about 6 weeks doing it and had been enormously impressed. This was the honeymoon year after independence. First by the wonders of Africa and secondly by the brilliant young people who were appearing to be coming up, like Sekou Touré.[61] And he thought rather naively that the UN, having been the bridge over which the colonial powers crossed, in order to achieve decolonization, will also be the bridge in the opposite direction, in which the world would help the new independent countries to get into the game. Hammarskjöld believed that the UN would be the bridge over which the former colonial power and the US will be able, in a completely un-colonial way, to help in the development in independent African countries… Then suddenly, in the July of that year, Congo became independent and instantly blew up literally almost at the moment of independence. We were confronted with the grim reality of an African country, totally unprepared for independence. In Congo, the UN was suddenly confronted with a first class international crisis… It was the second largest and clearly the richest country in Africa, it was the most complicated country to run, with a very complex infrastructure. Hammarskjöld believed originally and quite wrongly that this was a problem of management and training. The idea was that the UN would go in with a peace-keeping force to get the mutiny and everything quieted down, to get the Belgian troops out, [and] to get the place pacified. Then, they would put in a whole civilian operation, which would run the banks, the post office, the communications, the

[61] Ahmed Sekou Toure was president of Guinea from 1958 until his death in 1984.

hospitals, the airfields, with UN people from the specialized agency, and beside them, they would have their Congolese counterparts by their side who would eventually take over. The guy who was running the Central Bank for example would have a Congolese deputy who is going to become the head of the Congolese Central Bank. Hammarskjöld didn't understand the depths of complication in the Congo. The Congo was in the first place, a Belgian territory. It also had a very complex infrastructure, it was extremely rich, the Congolese had no training, there was nothing above a sergeant in the army, and there were only 17 Congolese with university degrees. Mobutu was a sergeant until the day of independence when he became a major. Hammarskjöld had not realized that Patrice Lumumba, the prime minister, was crazy, but he soon found out, or that President Kasavubu was a very sleepy, passive fellow. Nor did he realize the tribal complications of the Congo—200 tribal groups. The final thing he hadn't realized was that this great mission, the biggest UN operation ever, is going to get crucified on the Cold War, because very early both the Americans and the Russians were in the Congo. They both had enormous embassies and very soon it was going to be the Russians backing Lumumba and the Americans backing President Kasavubu and later on Mobutu. So, we had the Cold War in the worst possible form in a country where we were doing an enormous development exercise. None of us, I think, understood any of this until we actually got there. I got to the Congo the first day, and I didn't even know what side of the Africa it was on. For some unknown reason I thought it was on the Indian Ocean, and I was much surprised to discover it was on the Atlantic." And Urquhart continues and I'll close with this last paragraph "in spite of getting it wrong at the beginning, the Congo operation was the only UN operation that I can think of, which did every single thing the

Security Council had asked them to do. It got foreign forces out of the country, it maintained the country within its borders of independence, despite the three major secessionist movements, it trained a completely untrained Congolese team to run the country and it really got the country going again. And then we left. Unfortunately, the CIA had the brilliant idea of putting in General Mobutu, which incidentally, we strongly advised against. We all knew Mobutu, because we dealt with him as Lumumba's chief of staff. If ever there was a guy with his eye on the big chance, it was Mobutu. He really was, even in those days, outstanding in this respect. But when one told that to people like Mr. Devlin, the head of the CIA in Leopoldville, they just shook their heads as if we were boy scouts."[62]

SERGEY MAZOV: To the previous subject, about this cabinet meeting. It was Bomboko who asked for American aid?

THOMAS KANZA: He was minister of foreign affairs in the government. It was a cabinet meeting. The prime minister was there, Gizenga [the] deputy prime minister, Bomboko and myself, [the] minister in charge of the UN. All members of the cabinet were there. The American ambassador was there and we discussed. That was after Gizenga went to the American embassy. He was sent there by Lumumba to go and try to see if the Americans were prepared to help. But Lumumba didn't believe this. He said "let us invite the ambassador, maybe all of us can convince him." But the ambassador

[62] For this and the preceding quote on the Congo's location, see Thomas G. Weiss, Tatiana Carayannis, Louis Emmerij, and Richard Jolly, *UN Voices: The Struggle for Development and Social Justice* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005) and its accompanying Oral History CD ROM of searchable interview transcripts (www.unhistory.org).

repeated exactly the answer he gave to Gizenga at the embassy. Bomboko, as minister of foreign affairs of course, in the discussions, he agreed with us, "let's not involve the Americans, let's go for the UN." None of us was prepared to see American troops landing in the Congo, first because of the language barrier and all the implications [of that].

JEAN OMASOMBO: I could talk about the Belgian effort to resolve the Congo crisis. Lumumba was in power and Belgium was not supporting him. His elimination was not decided after independence, but right after the political Round Table [of] January-February 1960. On the 1st of March 1960, in the office Prime Minister Eyskens, the deputy chief of cabinet who was going to become minister of African affairs [Harold D'Aspremont Lynden], had a conversation with the commissioner Doussy and came up with a plan; the person to be eliminated, Patrice Lumumba, the necessary budget was 50 million Belgian francs. The ethnic groups and parties which were going to be involved were decided. There was a list, already on the 1st [of July]. What happened on the 30th of June and other events did nothing but aggravate the situation. But at the same time, I would like to make a different point and say that Lumumba was the link between opposing Belgian forces: the administration in Congo, the Catholic Church, [were] unfavorable to Lumumba since 1957-1958 [and] the Belgian government did not understand much of what was happening in Congo till 1958-1959. So really Lumumba helped harmonize these opposing forces in Belgium, because the Belgian administration of Congo was in political and economic chaos. There were too many misconceptions. Belgium did not understand much of what was happening and there were only a couple of

people who manipulated the others. It's true that Congo was a complex, ethnically diverse country, [and prior to the mid 1950s] there were no universities. Thomas Kanza here is the first Congolese college graduate. The Congolese were not paid as much as the Belgians, because they didn't have any diplomas. But Thomas, he was a college graduate, and when he came back to Congo, his case was often mentioned as related to salaries.

The second issue revolves around Mobutu. Mobutu was a coward. He was man who educated himself gradually. He was not stupid, he was very alert and cunning. If we follow his evolution in 1960, from July to October, he was a man who was learning a lot, but he was too afraid. Mobutu knew how to play, but he was never the one to decide. For instance, the first coup d'etat on the 14th of September is attributed to him, but he was just the representative, the spokesman of a group. But who made the decision? If you look at his text, it says "we decided." Who was the person who decided with Mobutu? And moreover, the Belgians who were there at the time said that he was not the one to form the College of Commissioners, he announced it, but so far we have no answer as to who actually formed it. Apparently, it wasn't him. Mobutu was involved in a network. Marlier [a Belgian] and Kettani [Moroccan] were his two officers and his entire guard was made up of Moroccans and his house was inside the soldiers' camp. We see that he wanted to be protected. He was learning very fast, he was intelligent and he knew how to manipulate people, and that helped him a lot, but he was not the all powerful character that we saw afterwards, not from the beginning, anyway.

LISE NAMIKAS: A comment here, and maybe we can have Larry Devlin's recollections about his relationship in general with Mobutu, addressing some of what Jean said.

GEORGES NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: I'd just like to lay to rest the myth that the Congolese were not ready for independence because they didn't have enough university graduates. Because when you look south, in Zambia, how many university graduates did they have in 1964 when they became independent? And they didn't go through the crisis we went through.

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: Exactly. It's inaccurate to say that there weren't enough university graduates in the Congo at independence to run the country. As Herbert has frequently pointed out, there was an equivalent level of education in the Catholic seminaries and churches—in some cases the equivalent of graduate education—and this fact has tended to be completely ignored.

HERBERT WEISS: Yes, I wrote an article about this. There were what one could call university level graduates from the seminaries or even MA level graduates if one compares them to Americans with secular educations. There were certainly over 500 Congolese clergy of this level existing at the time of independence. And that was, in proportion to population and in absolute figures, way above anything you would have seen in most West African countries, with the exception of course of places like Senegal.

This story of only 16 university graduates was just a piece of sheer nonsense that was swallowed by everybody.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I don't think we knew at the time. I didn't certainly.

HERBERT WEISS: You were being informed mainly by people linked to the Catholic Church, politically or directly, and it's in a sense surprising that they didn't point out to you, that there were 3,000 Congolese alive at that time, who had reached the level of the "Grande Seminaire" which, in our terms, can be compared to our MA level. Of these 3,000 about 500 were abbeys and priests. All of these seminarians would have been taught Greek and Latin. When I had to admit to some of the ABAKO leaders who took me around, that I knew no Latin and no Greek, it was considered a lack of education. So I feebly said "yes, but I know a little Arabic."

There is a second thing regarding Urquhart and the Hammarskjöld thing, which I think is very important. At one point, the one man in the world who could have saved Lumumba was Hammarskjöld. The fact that their relationship became so acrimonious and collapsed is a very great tragedy.[63] And it collapsed over one great issue—whether force would be used to reintegrate Katanga into the Congo. Lumumba, in terms of the resolutions of the Security Council, had at least one good argument. Because the Security Council passed the resolution saying that it was the UN's task to maintain the unity and the sovereignty of the Congo. And since the sovereignty had been broken by force, and since they had a mandate to use force, it was not far fetched for the Congolese prime

[63] Hammarskjöld denied Lumumba's request to help force the Katanga Province to rejoin the Congo, causing Lumumba to turn to the Soviets for help.

minister to say “go do it.” But of course, Hammarskjöld said “I’m not using UN troops to make you the dictator of the Congo,” [or] something to that effect. And then, when Lumumba launched the mutinous troops that were semi-loyal to him against Kasai and Katanga and a massacre resulted in Bakwanga, Hammarskjöld spoke of genocide. That was sort of the end of the relationship.

Analytically speaking, let us add another sin to Hammarskjöld. He was certainly a very good man, but regarding the Congo crisis, certainly a very misguided one, and a very poor analyst. In the end, it was Lumumba’s analysis which was correct. Katanga could not be reintegrated without the use of force. Hammarskjöld repeatedly tried to achieve Katanga’s reintegration through negotiations and he was proven wrong. He kept trying and paid for it with his life, because he was on his way to yet another negotiation with Tshombe when he was killed or died. This poor young man of 30 [Lumumba] understood the power game which was going on in his country, and this sophisticated Swede with all his knowledge of international affairs was dead wrong. And his organization in the end repaired the error, with the Kennedy administration’s support, by launching military action by ONUC against secessionist Katanga. Of course in the meantime the basis was set for the Congo rebellions and the million people who died as a result of that conflict.

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: Just to follow on Herbert, yes, Hammarskjöld is responsible for the decision not to use force to end the Katanga Secession. But the intellectual architect of UN peace keeping was Ralph Bunche. He was the one who insisted on the principle of not using force. And he came to that from his earlier

experience setting up the UN observer mission in Palestine, where the absence of the use force was critical in maintaining international neutrality. And so, he applied that same principle the first real multi-dimensional UN peace-keeping operation, which itself became the blueprint for subsequent operations. I recently wrote a paper on this for an International Studies Association panel marking Bunche's centenary.

LISE NAMIKAS: What I would like to talk about, is Mobutu's role in all of this, so perhaps we could back to Lumumba and Mobutu's relationship, particularly in July, August and…

THOMAS KANZA: I' m sorry, but I wanted to do one intervention after Herbert spoke. For the sake of history, I'd like to say two things 1. Herbert said that the only one who could have saved Lumumba was Dag Hammarskjöld…

HERBERT WEISS: At a certain point…

THOMAS KANZA: Ok**,** Let us also be just and fair. Lumumba was killed by his own fault and mistake. Because the deal was, after the election of Kennedy, we (the Moroccans, the Guineans, all these Casablanca countries which were favorable to Lumumba) decided to keep Lumumba alive until at least the 25th of January 1961, because Mr. Kennedy was prepared to make a deal with Lumumba. So it has been agreed that Dag Hammarskjöld would allow Lumumba to be under house arrest against his will, protected by Moroccans, Ghanaians and Congolese. So, one had to go through the

Moroccans and Ghanaians to reach Lumumba. We begged Lumumba, Cleophas was there too, to stay in his house until the 25th of January, because if he was still alive at that date, after Kennedy takes over the White House, a Security Council meeting will take place and the Parliament will be reconvened. Lumumba will walk from his house to the Parliament, which was less than 100 meters from his house, and if the Parliament renews its confidence in Lumumba's government, he comes back as prime minister. If the Parliament refuses confidence, he becomes the leader of the opposition. But Lumumba, God knows why, decided to leave the residence, to travel all the way from Kinshasa to Stanleyville. And when he was arrested, I personally intervened, General [Indar Jit] Rikhye, was the officer in charge. I spoke to Dag Hammarskjöld in New York. His reaction was "Thomas, the deal was he has to remain in his residence. Now the situation is out of the hands of the UN." Now, to be fair, we must admit that if Lumumba had remained in his residence… [Interruption] Now the second thing. Lumumba made a mistake and Dag Hammarskjöld made the same mistake in New York. We had agreed that the meeting with Tshombe would take place within the Congo territory, not outside. I was supposed to be there as ambassador at the UN. I left, I went to Cairo with Pierre Mulele. Adoula, the prime minister came to Kinshasa, Dag Hammarskjöld came to Kinshasa. God knows why, Lord Lansdowne, the British minister of foreign affairs, came there to convince Dag Hammarskjöld to come all the way to Ndola to meet Tshombe. When I got a telephone call from Adoula, he said "your man has changed his mind, he is now going to Ndola." Now, Zambia was not even independent, it was still Northern Rhodesia, so I told Dag that he or the government could organize a meeting in Kinshasa or in Moanda and that I would be there. He said that he would go any place to meet

Tshombe. I said that I would wait. He never came back. They both made the same mistake.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: May I comment on Thomas's statement? I don't know who the deal was made with, but not with Kennedy.

THOMAS KANZA: Larry, I can confirm to you, I have known Mrs. Roosevelt back in 1955, so in November 1960, I contacted Mrs. Roosevelt in New York. In 1958 it was Mrs. Roosevelt who introduced us to Kennedy saying "I'm introducing you to the next President of the US." So I contacted Mrs. Roosevelt who contacted Kennedy, and she was the one who told me that he had agreed.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: My impression, put it this way, by talking to President Kennedy at that time, was that he felt that Eisenhower's Congo policy had lacked imagination, and he thought that he could come up with a better Congo policy, but he didn't really know what this new policy would be. He appointed Harland Cleveland and several others to work out the policy. Actually the policy was drafted by Joe Sisco in the State Department and I certainly don't think that the president… he may have said a new policy, and certainly did not want to say no to Mrs. Roosevelt or to anyone about Lumumba because he hadn't made up his mind about him at that time.

THOMAS KANZA: Larry, may I say this—the memorandum we submitted to J.F. Kennedy through Mrs. Roosevelt, spoke about the prime minister who was properly

elected and dismissed wrongly. So Kennedy knew that the question of the Congo was a question of putting into force the Constitution. It was not a question of being friendly to Lumumba, but just a question of respecting the Constitution. That was what we talked about in the parliament after 20th of January.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Could we stop? I think we sort of jumped way ahead of the schedule. The discussion is far ahead, so to make it usable and valuable for historians, we have to try and work ourselves a little bit more gradually through the chronology. I'm thrilled to listen to this and I hope we can come back to this, but I think there are some key episodes in between.

LISE NAMIKAS: As moderator I got carried away with listening and not doing my job, I guess. But I think that at this point it might be a good idea to go back to the events of August 1960 and bring in again the US and the Soviet Union, and go back to Lumumba's relationship with the United States, but also Belgium. In late July, early August Lumumba and Hammarskjöld had a falling out and at this time, Lumumba's relations with the US are deteriorating and he turned to the Soviets. He meets [Vasili Vasilyevich] Kuznetsov in New York and asks for help, and at this time the Soviets… In one of the memoirs written by Oleg Grinevsky,[64] he says that "Khrushchev was absolutely astounded that the Americans didn't give Lumumba more aid." Lumumba really falls in the lap of the Soviet Union for accepting Soviet aid. It seems at least, with this marginal aid, that he is able to launch his attack on Katanga. At this point his relationship with

[64] Oleg Grinevsky is a Russian diplomat who served in the Soviet and later Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the 1961 Cuban Missile Crisis he worked in the Ministry's Special Group. He was a political adviser to Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, and Gorbachev.

Mobutu seems to break down. Let's go back to that event and see if there are any recollections about the August events, about Lumumba's turning to the Soviet Union and about his break in relations with Mobutu which will become very important later on. Larry Devlin, do you have any recollections about the Lumumba-Mobutu relations before the break?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I'm not aware of any break between Lumumba and Mobutu in August. Thomas, you might know more about this. I was not in touch with Mobutu, I had met him on two occasions. He was certainly not telling me anything. We had met once in Brussels and once on the street, when he was arranging a little trouble which had developed, trying to calm down the mutinous troops. I can't comment on what his relationship was at that time with Lumumba.

THOMAS KANZA: After Lumumba failed to receive aid from the United Nations, to crush the secession of South Kasai and Katanga, he started asking aid for from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union sent planes and trucks, and Lumumba used that to crush the South Kasai secession. Now, do remember, Joseph Mobutu is the chief of staff, General Lundula is the commanding officer. Mobutu has no choice other than to obey orders to allow, against his will, soldiers to fight against South Kasai. This did not please the UN and Dag Hammarskjöld made the genocide accusation about South Kasai.[65] If you talk about quarrelling between Lumumba and Mobutu it's because Mobutu was half-heartedly obeying orders without really supporting the crushing of the South Kasai rebellion. But

[65] Hammarskjöld made the charge of genocide several times, including in his Report to the Security Council on September 7, 1960 and in a statement to the Security Council on September 9, 1960.

Lumumba made a mistake by thinking that after South Kasai, he could also crush the secession of Katanga. I'm sure that the Americans used that opportunity to force Kasavubu to dismiss Lumumba. All this was happening at the end of August. On the 5th of September, Kasavubu took the initiative of dismissing Lumumba and 5 other ministers. But prior to that, I think it's obvious from the statement in many publications that at the end of August, in the White House, I think it was the president who said "get rid of this Lumumba. Then, the order was given, Get rid of this Lumumba by all means."[66] The means was to dismiss him politically, to close the parliament and to neutralize the head of state, the prime minister, by Mobutu. They started by also dismissing his General Lundula, and then the crushing of the Katanga secession could not happen.

SERGEY MAZOV: [Picks up immediately on the question of Soviet aid to the Congo] On August 10, 1960 the Soviet merchant ship *Leninogorsk* called at the Congolese port Matadi, carrying 9,000 tons of wheat, 1,000 tons of sugar, and 300,000 tons of milk. The sugar and milk came in handy, for the Congo had been suffering an acute shortage of foodstuffs, but the wheat was not unloaded due to the unavailability of milling facilities. It took two weeks to negotiate its grinding in Morocco. On August 22, another Soviet merchant ship *Arkhangel'sk* delivered to Matadi 100 trucks, spare parts and a repair shop. The trucks were diverted by barge up the Kasai River to Port Franqui, and overland to Luluaburg, the point of departure for Lumumba's offensive in South Kasai. Soviet transport planes previously provided by the Soviet Union to Lumumba were also ferrying

[66] Here Kanza is referring to the results of the National Security Council meetings of August 18 as described to the Church Committee by NSC secretary Robert Johnson.

his troops. After Lumumba's ousting, on September 20, Soviet planes, delivered to the Lumumba government, landed in Cairo on their way back to Moscow. The Soviet trucks were left in the Congo and fell in the hands of Mobutu army and police. They were used sometimes in a way that Soviet officials couldn't imagine even in their nightmares, for repressions against Lumumba's supporters. When in Moscow, participating in World Trade Unions Congress held in January 1962, Edward Mutombo, General Secretary of Congolese Working People's Union, told his Russian interlocutor that "Congolese revolutionaries were being driven away to be shot" in Soviet trucks. Mutombo himself was arrested and carried to a police station in a Soviet truck.

JEAN OMASOMBO: On the role of Mobutu, since the beginning of July we see Mobutu transmitting a lot of information to Lumumba, information coming from Belgium. But, starting with July, they started forming what we call the Binza group. It had six members: Damien Kandolo, Lumumba's chief of cabinet, Cyrile Adoula, Justin Bomboko, Victor Nendaka, Mobutu and Albert Ndele. At the beginning, Kandolo was the coordinator of the group. The meetings were taking place at the Belgian embassy. Kandolo's office was across from Lumumba's residence, and he was the one to receive the reports of the ministers and present them to the Prime Minister. Kandolo was coming in at 7.30a.m -8.00 a.m and he was leaving at 6.00 p.m, not returning home, but rather going to the meetings at the Belgian Embassy. When the Belgian Embassy was closed, the meetings were held at the Tunisian Embassy. All the ministers' reports were sent to the prime ministers, and were discussed at night by the Binza group, so Lumumba was carefully watched. After the arrest [of Lumumba] on the 5th, Kandolo loses his role of

coordinator, because Mobutu replaces Kandolo, because the members of the group were starting to be afraid. All the meetings were now taking place at Mobutu's residence, inside the military camp and Mobutu starts being very important because he was in charge of the protection of the other members of the group. When the College of Commissioners was formed, the post of president was reserved for Bomboko even if he was not there. Ndele was there and he was the one assigning functions, there were five or six available positions. But Thomas Kanza was not wanted, and two positions were left vacant. The position of transportation commissioner was vacant for five or six days. The role of Mobutu became more and more important, and at the same time undergoes military training until the 15th October. When he gets the check for 1 million francs, he is in Katanga. At the beginning, he didn't want to abandon Lumumba. He was afraid [of] Lumumba, and he hesitates to kill him all through September, but all the generals, commissioners wanted the death of Lumumba as soon as possible. Mobutu avoided doing this and his relations with the commissioners became awkward, at the end of September, beginning of October. Mobutu was more lucid, while he was having contacts with the Belgians, with the Americans, with the UN, he needed to be sure. But in mid October, he gets his check and he goes to Katanga and accepts to finally let go of the government.

HERBERT WEISS: What check?

JEAN OMASOMBO: Belgian money, 1 million francs.

LISE NAMIKAS: To Cleophas and then we're going to ask Larry Devlin what he knew about Soviet aid.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: We jumped over important events. At the end of August, serious things happened. Who decided on Lumumba's death? [...] It would be important to know who pressured him [Kasavubu] to do the dismissal. On the 28th, in the morning, a friend of mine, Guillaumet Gaston, came to see me. He told me "go and see Prime Minister Lumumba and tell him that he is going to be dismissed. I support his policy but I'm from ABAKO, he's going to be dismissed in the following 24 hours, so […] he should see the president and settle the issue right away." I went to see Lumumba on the 29th, I told him there is a threat of dismissal from the president; go see him. He replies, "it's impossible, we're working together everyday, he never said anything. How could he do this?" I said "go see him, the decision has been made." Lumumba asks to see the president but he [Kasavubu] refuses on the 30th [of August]. The president received him the next day, which probably gave him the time to make other contacts. After their meeting on the 31st, the prime minister makes a public statement to say that there is no conflict between him and the president, nothing was out of order. On the 31st I heard his statement on the radio and I thought that the matter was settled. And on the 5th, the Prime Minister is dismissed by the same president who was saying a few days earlier that everything was fine. So, who made the decision of Lumumba's dismissal at the end of August, beginning of September? Should we support the theory according to which it was President Eyskens who made the decision, or does our friend Larry have other

information to give us? Before we discuss Mobutu or anything else, we have to know who made the decision of dismissing Lumumba.

JEAN OMASOMBO: I just wanted to say that I agree with Kamitatu. At the Belgian Parliamentary Commission we asked this question. It seems that the US ambassador [Timberlake] who pressured Kasavubu to make this decision, and the advisor Dennis who gave orders to Van Bilsen, and Van Bilsen who wrote the dismissal notice, are the three people who…[inaudible] Moreover, after Lumumba's dismissal, Van Bilsen took the dismissal notice to the US embassy. Kasavubu later got rid of Van Bilsen who wrote him a "letter of excuses" because Kasavubu no longer wanted to see him. So the people accused in the report of the Parliamentary Commission are Van Bilsen, Dennis and the US ambassador

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I haven't read the report of the Belgian commission. I wish I had before this meeting. I can comment partially on this. Certainly the ambassador, Timberlake and I and other members of the embassy were of the opinion that we did not believe that he [Lumumba] was a communist or an agent of the KGB or anything like that. But he was a man who did not fully understand the dangers of trying to play one side against the other. The impression was with Serge Michel and a number of other people like [him] who were speaking as though they had just had their statements prepared by the KGB or some other group in Moscow, that he was fully under the influence of the Soviet Union. [They did not realize that Lumumba] was not planning to have the Soviet Union [in] control, but he thought he could use Khrushchev and various

other levels of the government in the Soviet Union, up to a certain point, and then he could say "no, that's as far as I'm going." I think that historically this was not really possible. Once you got too far down that path it was very difficult to come back. The impression which Lumumba had made during his visit to Washington was disastrous. Part of it was Lumumba's fault and part of it was [our] lack of understanding Lumumba. Secretary of State Dillon's comment was that he would never answer a question directly and that he would never look you in the eye when he was talking.[67] In any case, he asked for a private airplane for himself, he asked for funds from the [U.S.] government and a number of other things. He was told "no, if you want those things you have to go through the United Nations. The US will only provide aid through the UN and not directly." As I said, the feeling was, the wrong man, at the wrong place, at the wrong time. I'm afraid that I may have contributed to that feeling with some of my reports, I'm sure that some of Ambassador Timberlake's reports may have contributed to that. In any case Timberlake, in a meeting with Kasavubu, said once that he was concerned with Lumumba not being up to his job. He did not say "we want him revoked," he merely implied that. In reality he said "we think he's not the right man." Coming from the ambassador, that might have been felt as great pressure, but I don't think that the U.S. government felt that it was pressure. Certainly, I know Timberlake felt that he had been ignored, because Kasavubu just skipped over that part. I picked up through various sources I had at the time, that there were a number of Congolese politicians who were urging president Kasavubu to get rid of Lumumba. At that time, I had a report saying that a group of Congolese leaders whose names I do not know, who went to him and said that the only solution is to assassinate Lumumba. Kasavubu said "no, I do not favor that type of action." This is

[67] This body language could also be interpreted as a sign of respect or deference.

what I received in my report, how exact the information was is open to question. I was certainly not thinking at that time that Lumumba should be assassinated. I remember that I was studying the Congolese Constitution to see how the prime minister could be dismissed. A vote of either chamber of the parliament would put him out temporarily. The next problem would be to name a successor who would have sufficient support in the Parliament. As you remember, there was a question of the Senate; a vote of no-confidence was taken. I counted votes as best I could, the day before, the night before, along with Carlucci who was covering Parliament for the embassy, and I concluded that the vote would be very strongly against him. Lumumba spoke for several hours and the vote was 47 for Lumumba, 2 against and 7 abstentions, to include both Ileo and Adoula who prior to that time had seemed very favorable to his dismissal. I'm giving you just impressions of what was going on in my mind at that time. I had information sent to me by the director of CIA saying that effort should be made to remove Lumumba.

SERGEY MAZOV: This is published in the Foreign Relations of the US.[68]

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Yes. At the time, I was not close to what the President was thinking. I had not realized how strong the thinking got in Washington. I went there at the end of July and stayed till the end of August. At the time I left Washington, they seemed dissatisfied with Lumumba, there was a great misunderstanding of Lumumba as a man or as a leader. But I certainly didn't have the impression that they expected me to act like that. That came later.

[68] *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960,* vol. XIV, Africa, p. 443.

LISE NAMIKAS: Do you remember how much later that came?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I think that was somewhere around 15-18th of August, that I received a cable from the director of CIA, Mr. Dulles, I don't remember which euphemism he used, but the idea was that, it was felt at higher level that Lumumba should be removed from office, words to that effect. I didn't read into that any thought of assassination.

LISE NAMIKAS: What action did you take on that?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: As I said, I studied the Constitution, to see how he might be removed legally. There was an effort to remove him that way, which I encouraged, but that failed completely.

LISE NAMIKAS: And then more serious action was taken later?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Yes, but that didn't come until... that must have been at the end of September.

HERBERT WEISS: [At] that time he [Lumumba] was in house arrest. How were you going to get that stuff into his tooth paste?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: That was one of my problems, you know, how do you get the tooth paste back in the tube? I remember very specifically, if you want to jump ahead to that, when Joe arrived, I received a cable totally unlike any I have ever received. Normally instructions were sent by cable or by letter to a chief of station, with specific instructions, so that he knows the parameters of his position. I received a message saying that a senior officer that I would recognize would arrive shortly within approximately a week, and that I was to follow the verbal instructions that he would give. I didn't like the sound of this. When I walked out of the embassy one day I saw seated outside at Cafe de la Presse by the embassy, the man whom I recognized. As I walked to my car, he walked to it as well, he apparently knew the license plate, and when we got to the car, he said "I am Joe from Paris." I said "let's talk." I took him to a safe house. I asked for the instructions. And he said "they want you to assassinate Lumumba, and I have some things which will help you accomplish your effort." And my response was "Jesus Christ isn't this unusual? Whose instructions are these?" He said "the president." I asked "President Eisenhower?" And he said "yes. President Eisenhower has requested." I asked "did he tell you that?" And he said "no, [Richard] Bissell told me that." Bissell was chief of operations for the Operations Directorate of the CIA. I did some quick thinking 'how do I respond to this?' I objected to the idea of assassination personally. I knew that if I said no, I would be removed immediately and another officer who was much more pliant and agreeable would go take my place. I had a number of important operations developing, which I thought were important to the Congo and to America's relations with the Congo. The officer who would replace me would not be interested in those at all. He would have one thought in mind: carry out this operation, which was known as PROP,

the code name. I did not refuse, I said I would look into it and see what could be done. I submitted a number of cables with comments on the possibilities, none of which were really applicable. After these, I received a cable, very friendly saying that they realized how much work I had and how many things were being piled on my shoulders, but would I agree to the assignment of a senior officer to work under my control to carry out the objectives of PROP? There I had two decisions to make. If I said no, then I would be relieved. It was quite clear that they were not happy with the way I was getting rid of the guy. They expected me to accept, so I did. When the officer came, it was an officer two or three grades senior to me, whom I'd known for some time and he immediately said "I know I'm senior, but I will follow your instructions other than I'll handle this a bit. "I asked "do you favor this?" He said "no, not at all, I don't intend to carry out an assassination" and that drifted on for some time. He said "if I come up with a plan whereby the government can arrest Lumumba, that way I'm not going to have anything to do with the assassination."

HERBERT WEISS: No discipline in the US government.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I have been accused of course in many books and articles of having murdered Lumumba, I did not, but…

HERBERT WEISS: Did you check that up, that the instruction came from the US president?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I did endeavor to do that, and it appeared to me in the end that he said “who will rid me of this guy?” [or] words to that effect. But he didn’t say why and how or where. People interpreted what he said. The impression I have is that he probably meant just that, assassinate, but he did not use the word, he was very careful not to say that. But I was nowhere close to Eisenhower and I really don’t know.

HERBERT WEISS: And then, the assassination of Lumumba happened?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Yes. I think that there were other countries interested in having Lumumba killed. I heard later that one other country was considering a similar operation.

LISE NAMIKAS: Did you have any contact with the Belgians who were there working towards the same end?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I had no contact with the Belgians on that matter.

LISE NAMIKAS: So, there wasn't any real cooperation between the US and the Belgians on that matter?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I’m sure there was cooperation, but at another level in Brussels. At my level down there, I’d been in Brussels for two or three years before going down there, I did meet some officers of the Belgian Congo Securité whom I had met in Brussels. I had met Colonel [Frederic] Vandewalle, when I visited the Congo with

Ambassador Burden, and we attended a dinner given by the governor general, and by chance I happened to see Vandewalle.

SERGEY MAZOV: There was a common opinion in the Soviet works on the subject, that a CIA agent was sent to Stanleyville with poison, but that the operation was delayed and that the poison was thrown in the Congo River. Is it true?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I threw it in the Congo River but in Kinshasa.

THOMAS KANZA: After that two crocodiles died.

Session Five: From Lumumba to Mobutu, January 1961-1965

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: This morning I hope, since this discussion is taking place at the Cold War International History project, we could at least in part focus again on the Cold War context and how the Cold War affected, and was brought into, the events in the Congo. Mr. Devlin yesterday mentioned how the Eisenhower administration was increasingly wary of Lumumba and his ability to play the Soviet card vs. the American and other cards. It would be useful and important to probe and further elaborate on this aspect. With that said, let me turn it over to our chairman Dr. Weiss for the next couple of hours.

HERBERT WEISS: We'll start by focusing on the Soviet part of this conflict. I'll ask Lise and Sergey to give us an overview of the period from September 1960 onward or anything prior to that as well, of course.

LISE NAMIKAS: In September Khrushchev decided to make a trip to New York, and often times it's been suggested that he was, on the one hand criticizing the UN operations, and on the other hand, getting further entangled into the Congo crisis. After the Soviet embassy was closed, the Soviet aid to the Congo was stymied in a lot of ways and yet, Eisenhower still believed that there was very much of an interest in getting rid of Lumumba, he was a "communist" in their views. In October, while there is some indication that perhaps assassination plans were withdrawn, if you will, the CIA was also still involved very much in funding potential leaders of the Congo. There is some indication, and I'm reading from a piece that Dr. Weissman wrote, and he can perhaps jump in on this. In October, the NSC approved a quarter of a million dollars for the CIA to win support for Mobutu and then again, in November, the CIA was again authorized to provide arms and materials for Mobutu and his military. I'm wondering if we could go back to the US effort to elevate Mobutu. Perhaps the Congolese remember and Devlin might remember about these efforts.

SERGEY MAZOV: I have nothing to add to what Lise said and I would like to listen to what the Congolese have to say. I have one question also: there were rumors that Soviets made plans to save Lumumba from his prison and a military operation was about to be launched. Mr. Devlin, do you have any information on this?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I had nothing but rumors as well. I was really watching to see if that was happening, but I didn't think it would get off the ground. I did not know the source of this, I assume that it came from Moscow, but I don't know.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: How about Dr. Namikas' question about CIA operations in support of Mobutu?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I was more in support of a pro-Western group, as opposed to one individual. Another point I'd like to mention: you said $250,000 dollars was approved, and I think later $500,000 was approved. When money is approved, it doesn't necessarily mean that it was ever spent. I was really upset when I went home, because I couldn't have spent more then $50 dollars without permission from Washington, and then I had to play games. What I would do was spend the money and send a cable at the same time, and knowing that the cable would get there a little later, I would assume I had authority to take the following actions. It worked for quite a while, and then I got a reply advising me the contrary. I don't think we ever spent the kind of money that we talked about, nowhere near that, period. But I did get authority to spend considerable amounts, but never did.

LISE NAMIKAS: But wouldn't maintaining Mobutu's army have taken sums like that?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I never took care of the army.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: I could jump in. Some US government documents were shown to me when I didn't have any governmental responsibilities, the ones that I talked about in an article in the *Washington Post* in July 2002. They stated that on October 27 the NSC approved the $250,000 for the CIA [to] provide parliamentary support for Mobutu's government, but the legislators didn't want to do that, they wanted Lumumba back, and so it's specifically stated in this document that the money, instead $250,000 went to Mobutu personally.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: What kind of documents were these?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: May I ask? […] I just cannot believe that happened.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: I can't personally verify, I was not on the scene as you were. All I can say is that official documents indicated that was the ultimate use of the $250,000 I'm sure that if Devlin is saying this, that the full $250,000 wasn't spent—but it does come, according to these documents, as part of a combination of payments, that probably today would be seen as very small, but in 1960 were very large to people who did not customarily receive such payments. The [CIA's] payments really begin with the organization of the anti-Lumumba effort in parliament to get ministers to resign. Then there is a payment authorized on September 1st to President Kasavubu, whether it was really made or not, I don't know, but it appears in the documents.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: I think it is important to characterize these documents, because Mr. Devlin raises a good point, there is a difference between a Washington policy document, national security or other document saying 'this payment is authorized' and actually being operationalized.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: I had the impression for each of these at least some money was spent if it was authorized. This is not a fictional world in which money is authorized and never spent. These documents are not at variance with declassified papers, such as those dealt with by the Church committee in 1975 or those found in the analytical chronology of the Congo crisis done at the beginning of the Kennedy administration, cited in other people's work. It's very [from the documents] clear that the US authorized money being given, under [CIA] Project Wizard, to at least eight leading Congolese politicians, including Ndele, Bomoko and others and that funds were received; that the US subsequently approved the authorization of trying to overthrow Lumumba, approved the authorization of a payment to Mr. Kasavubu on September 1st and Mr. Kasavubu is part of the action of overthrowing Lumumba. After Mobutu took over [on September 14th], it would be interesting to see Larry Devlin's views—since Mobutu was one of those being funded—were there any conversations on this takeover? After his takeover, there was the appointment of the College of Commissioners. It's very clear from the documents I saw that the US not only financed, but helped select commissioners. Many of them would be members of Project Wizard. During the subsequent periods, there was [authorization of funds for] parliamentary support for Mobutu's government, and there was on November 20th, I don't know whether that was carried out or not, to provide arms,

ammunition, and training for Mobutu's military in the event that they'd have to resist pro-Lumumba forces. I just think that what is also very clear during this period is also what the Church committee talked about, that the CIA in the Congo were advising prominent Congolese to eliminate Lumumba, and urging the arrest or permanent disposal of Lumumba, Gizenga, and Mulele in September. This was covered by the Church committee. So there was a series of operations, even before the assassination which were mentioned in the documents I saw. They indicated the US felt that this was a classic, both the embassy and CIA wrote that this was; "a classic communist takeover." It was necessary to do things, so I think that is clear from both the declassified documents and our other documents.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I'd like to add something on the financial assistance for Mobutu's army [for the first] coup on the 14th of September. Ambassador Mandi and I, he was not ambassador at the time, he was in the government, had a meeting with Mobutu, and asked him to take part in our attempt to reconcile Kasavubu and Lumumba and not be against it. While we were there, he told us the following: "yesterday, I met several ambassadors, among which the ambassador of the US, they came to tell me that we had [to] put Lumumba back in his position. I [Motubu] answered that Lumumba was my political leader and that I acted because I was asked to, but that I'd do anything to reconcile Kasavubu and Lumumba. The ambassadors told me, that if I do[n't] at the end of this month, you won't be able to pay your soldiers, you won't have enough money and your army is going to rebel against you. So think about it." The next day, the General Kettani, the Moroccan, went to see Mobutu in his camp and told Mobutu "there are only

two days left to pay the soldiers. Do you have the funds to do it?" Mobutu said no. The general then said that Mobutu had to carry out the plan that he was asked to carry out, and that he was going to provide the funds. Mobutu told us that he said no to General Kettani. Two days later, Mobutu paid the soldiers with Kettani's money. I think that, if we want to add up all this, it's obvious that the money came from somewhere. And it was not from the Central Bank, it was not Mobutu's money, not from Morocco, although Kettani brought it. I have the impression that the authorization of funds to support the anti-Lumumba movement had to be the source of this money.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: Mr. Devlin says that he wasn't spending all that money. Do you have an impression that there was a second force operating in the Congo or without your knowledge? Did you ever get the impression that it might have been someone else from the CIA, even without you knowing, operating in the Congo?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Certainly, I would have known. As chief of station, 99.9% of the times I'd be advised. I can't accept the possibility that they came in by some back door and provided this money. I did suspect two things. One, was Moroccan money, and the other was Belgian money. Was this in the interest of Belgians? Maybe not, but Kettani might have received it from elsewhere. I was never in direct contact with Kettani but I had the impression from everything I picked up and people in our embassy picked up, some of them were in contact with him, that he was anti-Lumumba and favored a change in the government. This is not based on hard intelligence; it's just things that we

heard. I do not have any records, everything I say is based on my memory and I'm an old man, my memory is fallible, quite clearly. I do not recall paying the army at all.

THOMAS KANZA: We are forgetting one more element. By the end of September, Tshombe, in Katanga, had issued a lot of currency. He had a lot of Congolese currency available and Mobutu was in close relation in Tshombe.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: That is entirely possible, I had just forgotten about it.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: In fact, Tshombe gave the money to Mobutu in October, the 15th.

THOMAS KANZA: I was told that Mobutu did receive some money from Tshombe, Congolese currency which was no longer in use in Katanga.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: I think it's established that the UN was paying Mobutu's troops. Catherine Hoskyns has talked about that in her book, [69] de-classified documents talked about that too. I think that the issue Mr. Kamitatu has raised that the US was in touch with Mobutu [regarding reconciliation efforts], maybe Mr. Devlin was not aware of this, but [there were] others like Ambassador Timberlake or Cordier. Clearly, everyone was aware of the Belgian and American operations. The US was clearly influencing the UN [inaudible].

[69] Weissman is referring to Hoskyns' book *The Congo Since Independence: January 1960-December 1961*.

JEAN OMASOMBO: As to the matter of money, I have two sources: Victor Nendaka, I interviewed him several times, and the Commission. There was a 50 million franc secret fund voted by Belgium, for which there has been no bookkeeping and which arrived in the Congo at the beginning of September. I'd like to make the distinction between the government of Mobutu, the College of Commissioners and the individual Mobutu. As a person, Mobutu was still hesitant till the beginning of October. The General Commissioners were saying that he was afraid to arrest people. Beginning with September 24, 25, the General Commissioners, especially the Defense Commissioner, had asked several times to see Mobutu, who was hesitating. He was dealing with the Americans, Belgians, the UN; he was analyzing everyone. Since they had been assigned, the Commissioners were looking for funds, they were trying everything. Bomboko was an important witness, but unfortunately he didn't speak. Bomboko had a role in the entourage of Mobutu, and he was also a member of the Binza group, although he was not as important, but all of them had important contacts.

To conclude, I'd like to say that we have to also make the distinction between the College of Commissioners and the Binza group, the Commissioners seemed to me like a group of activists, a couple of "errand boys," except for Ndele and Bomboko who were also members of the Binza group. They also played the role of mediators; it was the six members of the Binza group who had contacts with other countries who decided on matters of money. So, most of the time, the members of the college were seeing money come in, but they had no idea where it came from. The money from Belgium didn't come in through the Moroccan general. Marlier and Andre Lahaye were the ones in charge, but even at their level, there were misappropriations. Yesterday, we said that on January 13th

there was a threat of mutiny in Thysville. Mobutu and Nendaka went there but Mobutu was booed and left. Nendaka stayed, he paid off two soldiers probably with Belgian money. Later on, Nendaka told me that the money was coming from several sources. It wasn't just the Belgian money. He was clear about that, but didn't want to say anymore. I will stop here.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I'd like to add something about General Kettani. Morocco at that time was in favor of Lumumba. The country, the government and the king supported Lumumba and our cause. But General Kettani was acting on behalf of the UN and had his own policy. So we can't, in any case, say that he was representing the Moroccan government at the time, with which we had excellent relations.

JEAN OMASOMBO: And he was not considered Moroccan, he was French-Moroccan.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I would second what the senator here just said, that Kettani did not follow the politics of his government. He was against Lumumba while the Moroccan government was favorable. I think he may have passed some money at the time, it could have come from France, it could have come from private interest, because there were very large Belgian private interests, which were on the periphery of various events and had contact with various people such as Bomboko and Mobutu.

HERBERT WEISS: Is there any input to all of this from the Soviet side?

SERGEY MAZOV: As I said already, all the documents on the Congolese crisis produced by the KGB, Minister of Defense, they remain classified, and it's impossible to say anything about the financing. I have only documents from the Foreign Ministry related to funding Gizenga through Mulele.

HERBERT WEISS: Can you identify when that began, the payments to Gizenga?

SERGEY MAZOV: I don't have the exact date. I have the record of the talk between Mulele and Deputy Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs Kuznetzov in Moscow, March 8, 1961. They mentioned December 1960 – January 1961, as the time when the first tranche was made. Beginning in November, Gizenga kept sending desperate telegrams to Moscow, requesting weapons, ammunition and even calling for direct Soviet military intervention.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: There is a reference in one of the German documents from the East German Communist Party, that Lise Namikas obtained from the German archives in Berlin. It's dated in mid-February 1961, but it references a conversation on January 9th, 1961 between the German consul and the head of the second Africa division within the Soviet Foreign Ministry, comrade Brykin, in which the Soviet side emphasized the necessity of aid for the Gizenga government. It also mentioned the difficulties in direct aid, for international reasons, resulting from the problems with transportation. This reference is rather cautionary in terms of the direct Soviet aid for Gizenga. That's from the beginning of 1961.

SERGEY MAZOV: Russian diplomats had begun contacting allies since December 1960 trying to stimulate them to run the blockade of the Orientale Province, the Gizenga's stronghold.On December 13, 1960 Egyptian Ambassador to the USSR Mukhammed el-Kuni told the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Semenov that his country could do nothing in the Congo alone without the support of the USSR and other "friendly countries". On January 31, 1961 Semenov in his talk with President Nasser tried to find out whether Egypt was ready to send military advisers to help Gizenga. "We've made up our minds," he informed Nasser, "to send to Stanleyville an experienced person and we are going to send a group of diplomats there, including the military, but we haven't had an opportunity to transfer them yet." He suggested sending Gizenga some Egyptians having combat experience in Algeria. Nasser dismissed the matter with a joke, saying that the parachuting of Soviet diplomats seems to be the only way to guarantee that they reached Stanleyville. Transcripts of talks between Czechoslovakian Ambassador in Moscow Richard Dvorzack and Deputies of Foreign Minister of the USSR Yakov Malik and Arkadey Sobolev, in December 1960 – March 1961 reveal that Czechoslovakia unsuccessfully tried to establish an airline route from Prague to Stanleyville via Cairo and Khartoum. Czechoslovakia gave 25,000 sterling pounds to its embassy in Cairo for the Gizenga Government, but it is doubtful whether the money ever reached Stanlleyville. On March 9, 1961 Dvorzak told the Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikolai Firubin that money allocated for Gizenga hadn't been handed to his representative in Cairo Pierre Mulele. The Ambassador hinted that the latter was a corrupt and unreliable: "It is known that Mulele lives in Cairo in luxury and is

surrounded by the company of very dubious people. Agents of intelligence services of imperialist states might be among them."The USSR failed to establish an international coalition to counteract the UN troops that supported pro-Western Congolese forces. Khrushchev used blustery rhetoric on the Congo, but avoided steps that could have strained relations with Western powers.

HERBERT WEISS: In Cairo, Larry are you aware of any…

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Not by Americans, not the CIA.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Actually, this works very nicely with the [East] German document.

SERGEY MAZOV: Yes. And there was a problem with direct involvement of the Soviet Union, and the problem was Sudan. The Soviets needed to receive the passage rights from the Sudanese government. But the Sudanese government was under strong pressure from American diplomats, and not only diplomats. So Mulele was told by the minister of defense [Rodion] Malinovsky "we can send the planes for Gizenga's help, but we know the position of the UN, they will shoot down our planes." That's why the Soviets' option was to grant financial aid and to try to convince the allies to support the Gizenga regime. But there were problems with the allies.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I'm not aware of the details, but certainly the embassy in Khartoum was doing everything to prevent the Soviets from having overflight. Our great worry was that Sudan would permit overflight and then the Soviets could fly to Cairo, from Cairo over Sudan and then land either near the frontier or go all the way to Stanleyville.

SERGEY MAZOV: Even consignments prepared by the Red Cross were prohibited to land by the Sudan government.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Speaking of the Red Cross, I do remember a large aircraft would take off, without filing a flight plan. They were carrying boxes with red crosses on them, but the boxes looked a lot like rifle boxes. The smaller ones looked like ammunition [boxes.] We found some of them later in 1964; they had never been opened, but they did have arms in them.

SERGEY MAZOV: Nasser had told Semenov that the Egyptian contingent acting in Congo left armaments including mortars and guns to Gizenga.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Much of the Soviet documentation on the subject is still not declassified, but which a colleague of mine saw briefly when he was in Moscow in 1996, and there is a large file. Much of the Soviet aid and diplomatic activity was channeled through Cairo, and the Cairo files are numerous and awaiting declassification.

SERGEY MAZOV: These materials are not available, I tried to get them.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Thank you so much for all this information. I think that we need to put all these actions in their chronological order. All the actions of Mulele and Gizenga that we're talking about happened after October. Gizenga formed his government in mid October. But Lumumba was dismissed on the 5th of September and on the 14th he is neutralized, at the end of the month Kasavubu recognizes the College of Commissioners as the provisionary government of the republic. In response to this, Gizenga and the others settled in Stanleyville, because they realized that the Binza group and the college had all the support of US, Belgium, France, the UN, everyone. At that moment the opponents, known by Gizenga, start looking for alliances beginning with the African countries, Egypt, Guinea, Ghana, and then the Soviet Union. I think that we have to make these things clear for the sake of history. These things did not all happen at the same time, there was a succession, some of them triggered the others. The political decision to eliminate Lumumba was taken in mid-August, and then came all the efforts for his physical elimination. Then, the efforts of the western group against Lumumba's rehabilitation triggered a reaction of the nationalist group expressed by Gizenga by forming a government in Stanleyville.

THOMAS KANZA: I just want to clarify one point. I agree with Cleophas, but we were not opponents. What Gizenga did, we were fighting against his decision to dismiss [a] constitutional government. Gizenga—instead of establishing a rebel government—established Lumumba's government in Stanleyville. Those ministers who succeeded to

escape joined him and Mulele moved to Cairo, I escaped from Kinshasa, I went to Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and it was from there that I attended the Casablanca conference in 1961. After that, I came to New York. So we had established the functioning of Lumumba's government, with ministers, with Gizenga acting as prime minister in Stanleyville, Mulele as ambassador in Cairo, and I joined my function as ambassador to UN.

GEORGES NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: I just want to add to the point that Thomas has made. Yesterday, some document was read referring to three secessions. And by the 3rd secession they mean Stanleyville, and that is totally an erroneous reading of history, because Stanleyville was the legal government, not a secession.

SERGEY MAZOV: Speaking of the African side of the Soviet aid, mentioned here. A secret agreement between Khrushchev and the Ghanaian president was concluded providing military supplies to Ghana for supporting the national forces in the Congo. At the end of 1960 Soviet arms and ammunition were delivered to Ghana, but they had never been sent to the Congo. Nkrumah used this in getting substantial benefits from the USA. In March 1961, he visited Washington and President Kennedy stated that the US government would fulfill its commitment in financing the [Volta River] hydroelectric scheme. They allocated a $30 million loan that the Eisenhower Administration had frozen in the light of Nkrumah's policy in the Congo. Nkrumah's speech at the UN on March 7th evidences that his position in the Congo crisis had changed totally in favor of the Americans. He did not mention that the Gizenga government was the only legitimate government in the Congo and supported their deal of conducting general elections under

American supervision. And the Ghanaian minister of foreign affairs was charged by the Casablanca conference to negotiate with the government of Sudan, trying to receive transit rights for Moscow-Cairo-Stanleyville, but he failed.

JEAN OMASOMBO: To continue what Cleophas and Thomas said, we have the College of Commissioners, the Ileo government that Kasavubu appointed and wasn't capable of carrying out its functions. Even if Ileo accepted the recognition of the College, he remained active. Delvaux, Mafuta Kizola, and Ileo had contacts and in October, November, and December he [Ileo] went to Belgium. Mafuta Kizola also remained very active. On the 16th of January, he comes back from Elizabethville in the evening, and it's probably he who is one of the people who decided the change in Lumumba's destination. On the 16th at noon it was decided that the Commissioners would go on a first plane to Bas Congo, and the second one, with Lumumba would arrive 30 minutes later. But on that day, Mafuta Kizola, who was in Elizabethville, received a few telegrams from Brussels and probably decided on changing Lumumba's destination. But we don't know. Guy Duprès, a Belgian, wanted to prove that Nendaka was the one to have changed the decision, but Nendaka accused Mafuta Kizola. Probably the external forces had their influence in bringing Lumumba to Elizabethville and probably Belgium played this role, because Belgium was in favor of a united Congo, but without Lumumba. Bomboko didn't like Elizabethville and neither did others. They [outside forces?] insisted on bringing Lumumba to Elizabethville, this was a way of suppressing Elizabethville. Tshombe understood this and resisted.

It's not by chance that [Jonas] Mukamba accompanied Lumumba [on the plane]—he was a former classmate of Munongo. In case Tshombe resisted, Mukamba wouldn't have been in a good position. [He anticipated] support from his friend so that Lumumba could be accepted. We had to question Mukamba and Nendaka at the Belgian Parliamentary Commisstion; we put them face to face. The first question we asked Nendaka, was "who presided at the meeting on the 16th, that was meant to decide the changing of the destination." Although many sources say so, it was not him who presided at the meeting. It was Kandolo Damien and Andre Lahaye [Belgian advisor to Victor Nendaka, Chief of Security for Motubu] who presided at the meeting. Nendaka who was in his office in Leopoldville when Kandolo came in with a note showing him the flight plan. Andre Lahaye came a couple of minutes later. So we found out that it was Lahaye who presided at the meeting. Kasavubu signed a letter asking Nendaka to go bring Lumumba from Thysville. Nendaka went there in the evening, spent the night, and then he took Lumumba to Muanda in to Bas Congo and then Elizabethville.

We don't know why he only chose three prisoners to take with him. Nendaka says that the plane was small. And as the plane was small, they told him to go to Moanda, and as the soldiers were afraid of him and he didn't want to stay in Thysville. But then again, everyone had their own enemy; Lumumba was everyone's enemy. Mobutu didn't like Mpolo, because he wanted his position. According to Nendaka, in Moanda, he understood when he saw Jonas and the soldiers, that it was the end. Mumbaka says that Nendaka ordered [him] to go to Elizabethville, Nendaka says that Mumbaka was his boss, so we didn't know who was whose boss. The pilot was Belgian. According to Belgium, the pilot didn't know anything, but maybe they were just trying to blame this on

the Congolese. In this story, there have been so many collaborations and so many unclear points that…

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I was very interested, needless to say, after the 13th of January mutiny in Thysville, and I tried to discourage the key people from all going at once, because I was afraid they would be arrested. When they came back I received three telephone calls from different persons in that group, saying that the mutiny is contained, all is well. After that, I normally was able to see those gentlemen almost anytime, if I called, but somehow then, they were never available for several days. I was in fact very worried that suddenly I did not have access, not even by phone. I don't remember what day it was, but it was after Nendaka returned [and] a day or two after Lumumba was sent to Elizabethville. My first inquiry that he had been moved, was a cable from my men in Elizabethvile. Some Swedish UN people plus some other unidentified people, had seen a man they were almost sure was Lumumba, kicked down the movable steps from the plane. Then he was taken away quickly by [what were] presumably Katangan forces. So, something was cooking, and then a day or two later I got a call from Nendaka inviting me to dinner which was most unusual. I accepted, needless to say, and I thought at the time that he was probably an emissary of the Binza group. I was told that Kazadi and Jonas Mukamba had gone down with Nendaka to the camp. I assumed that the leaders of the opposition would resolve this in their own way and I saw it very likely that it would result in Lumumba's death. I never talked to the Binza group about what they were going to do, because that was their business and I was not there to decide anything. I knew what

US policy was and I knew that I was not going to implement it, but I would not have tried to block it.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: I guess the other question coming out of the Belgian report to me was what was the relationship between the Belgians and the Americans? Clearly, on some things, for example Lumumba's dismissal in August, there was collaboration. The question is, in what would look like a small town, by American standards, of Europeans and others working together in Leopoldville, was the US not knowledgeable about all of the advice that was going from Belgian advisors to Bomboko and other leaders of Project Wizard, [the] leaders of the [CIA funded] College of Commissioners, Kasavubu who was financed to do the coup, [and] Mobutu who was financed? It becomes difficult from the outside to see how the Belgians were paying these people [and] and having advisors there, [while] the Americans are paying these people as you said [and] talking to them all the time—and the Americans have no idea of what [the] Belgians were doing at the moment when Lumumba was killed.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: That's quite right, I didn't. I certainly knew very well that there were Belgians meeting with Bomboko, with Mobutu with various members of that group and the College of Commissioners. There was absolutely no effort of coordination. I was aware from various conversations, from various reports coming from Belgium, of what the objective was. For example, André Lahaye and I had never met until I went to the Congo, and while I was waiting for the plane to go to Brazzaville to take up my post, I sat next to a Belgian. He introduced himself, it was Lahaye and he explained that he

was a representative of the ministry of education and he was going to the Congo to help evacuate teachers who had been cut off by the mutiny and I explained that I was the new American consul going to take up my post. Later we met when I went in to see Nendaka when he took up his position of chief of security, and it was Andre who said to me "you have so many things to do, don't worry about what's happening here, I'll keep you advised. You don't need to establish direct contact with Nendaka, I'll keep you advised." I thanked him, but I didn't put myself in the position of having a filter.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: The question of January 13th is critical, as on that day, the Congolese and the external forces refused to assume responsibility. Why did they do this? Because they were afraid and because everyone had their own contact. Kasavubu, originally from Bas Congo was counting on their support. Nendaka was an intriguing character, he had so many contacts and he was in charge of the funds. Mobutu, when he addressed the military in Thysville, was booed.

It's curious that Lumumba should be killed on the 17th, The Belgians said that they were not informed, the Americans said pretty much the same, while, if the theory saying that Lumumba was shot at night, around 10 to 11, there were both Congolese and Belgians, there were foreigners, who were working for their own country. But surprisingly, they said that it was the Congolese who shot him.

This brings us to Lumumba's words, "I will be killed by a black hand, but that hand will be held by a white man." This is what he said five or six months before his assassination. I would insist on the following aspects. In Lumumba's entourage there were too many policemen. Serge Michel mentions the case of Franz Fanon who tells him

in September to abandon Lumumba as he is a dead man. Probably in December, the UN was almost certain that Lumumba was going to be killed. According to the members of the Binza group, the UN already knew in December that he was going to be killed, but when, where, was yet to be settled.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I would doubt that's a fact. It would have been Dayal[70] at that time, and I don't think that he knew and kept it quiet. This would have sounded off, gone off on the radio waves to New York and other areas for that matter. [Interruption]

SERGEY MAZOV: I would like to tell some interesting details of Mulele's visit to Moscow. On March 7th 1961, he arrived in Moscow on a secret visit, spent a week and conducted negotiations with Deputy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Kuznetzov and other Soviet politicians. Mulele lamented that the Soviet aid was insufficient and pushed for it to increase and to become more comprehensive. He tried to convince Soviet interlocutors that Gizenga troops were suffering from a shortage of vehicles, fuel and arms: "Of coarse material difficulties badly affect the morale of our soldiers, especially when they meet face to face with Mobutu's troops and find out that the latter have everything, including modern arms".

Mulele didn't dramatize the situation. According to Polish and Czechoslovakian newsmen in Stanleyville, it was even worse than the picture he presented. The Gizenga government had no finances whatsoever. The economy was about to collapse, since stocks of goods and foodstuffs had been exhausted. The army suffered from an acute shortage of ammunition, and each Gizenga soldier had only ten cartridges to combat the

[70] Representing the United Nations in the Congo.

enemy. The units were not mobile due to the shortage of gas. Mulele called for urgent aid, especially military supplies. He proposed the establishment of a Congolese airline made up of Soviet civil planes with Congolese wing markings. Two possible air routes have been discussed: Cairo-Stanleyville and Accra—the mouth of the Congo River. Only long range planes could cover the second route and Mulele raised the issue "of buying in the Soviet Union 2-3 IL-18 planes." The Soviet reaction shattered Gizenga's hope for increased aid.

Vladimir Brykhin, the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' African Department II, said, "the problem of using our planes especially IL-18 is very complicated. It is necessary to also take into account political dimensions. We think it is better to negotiate this with African countries as the UN would not grant Soviet planes the right to fly to the Republic of Congo". Soviet Defense Minister R.Y. Malinovskyi put it strait: "The UN position is quite clear for us, it will shoot down these planes." Mulele was told that "flying of Soviet planes with Congolese wing markings over African countries, and especially Sudan, without their permission is fraught with international conflict which might develop into world war and this cannot be allowed." The Soviet side made it clear that it would refrain from handling supplying problems. "The UN, Brykhin noted, is not able to fight against all African states. If the heads of independent African states wish, they will clinch the matter. The main thing is to reach an agreement with them. We are giving you all possible material and diplomatic support. We are doing everything that depends on us. However, the problem of communications should be solved by African countries." It sounded like an excuse for a rebuff, as it was clear to

both sides that the African countries would never manage this problem. Mulele had every reason to inform Gizenga that salutary Soviet aid would not come.

Stung with the absence of aid from the USSR and its allies Gizenga began to search for other sources of support. On March 10, 1961 Frank Carlucci, then an officer of the US Embassy in Leopoldville, visited Stanleyville on the invitation of Gizenga. Carlucci enjoyed an unexpectedly warm reception. A telegram sent to the Department of State by the US Ambassador to the Congo Clare Timberlake on March 12 partly read: "Most amazing change is attitude toward US. Carlucci who three weeks ago was labeled a spy was given red carpet treatment […] Gizenga saw him privately for over hour and organized reception in his house attended by General Lundula, six key members Gizenga Government and two members of provincial Government." The Congolese appealed for US "understanding and aid" emphasizing that they were "not communists" but neutrals trying to restore order and would accept aid from anyone. The Ambassador concluded that the "entire group has become disillusioned with Russian promises which never materialized." I have the impression that comparison of Russian and American archival documents is very useful to make us understand the story.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Very interesting. That was at the time, when Frank [Carlucci] was put under arrest in his hotel room, was it not? But he actually left his room, because the guard went to get some coffee or something, and went to see various people and then he returned. The foreign minister Mandi came to his room and said "we really want to deal with you, is everything alright here for you?" And Frank said "no, it's not alright, I don't enjoy being a prisoner." Mandi said "you're not a prisoner." "Then what are those

two men with rifles outside the door doing?" "They are here to protect you." "But when I try to go out they put me back." "Well," he said, "that's part of the protection." Then, suddenly the guards came in and told Mandi he was under arrest for speaking to a prisoner. They took Mandi away, and he was saying, "Mr. Carlucci please do something, help me." This is a story I heard from Frank [Carlucci].

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Carlucci came in April, and that's when me and Cyrille Adoula were trying to reestablish contact between Leopoldville and Stanleyville. Carlucci, who was at the embassy, came to see me to ask whether he could go to Stanleyville. I told him that it was dangerous for him to go by himself by but that I could ask Gizenga to see us. He accepted and we asked for a UN plane. Carlucci and I flew together to Stanleyville. Carlucci was put in detention. I went to see Gizenga and we talked all night long, with other African ambassadors and with members of my party. We tried to find a solution of reestablishing relations between Stanleyville and Leopoldville.

Mandi, after the incident, was worried. I negotiated with Gizenga and I told him that I didn't think it was right. [Anicet] Kashamura was in prison, [Laurent] Kabila too, and I asked for them to be released. Gizenga agreed and released them. Mandi decided not to stay and fly back with me and Carlucci to Kinshasa. I was doing certain things just for the sake of reconciliation. We came back with Mandi. We had gone there to see how the US and the UN could help us reunite the Congo, because that was our main concern. That's how Mr. Carlucci and I got to go to Stanleyville together.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Let me just take a moment to interrupt and recognize the deputy director of the Wilson Center, Michael Van Dusen.

MICHAEL VAN DUSEN: I just want to welcome all of you, we are glad to have you here. We consider the work you do extraordinarily important and I regret that the head of our Africa program, Howard Wolpe is in Burundi. We really appreciate what you're doing. It's going to help us a great deal in putting together very useful material and I hope this leads to other meetings on Africa. We are at the Center are very proud of Christian's leadership, and I hope that you all agree that this document reader that you have is an extraordinary compilation. Welcome to the Center, and we really appreciate the work you're doing.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: The Congo is like my second country and I've been participating in the last ten years in a number of meetings and conferences. This I find certainly the best prepared I have ever seen. The way the conference was put together—I was a pain, but Ms. Beutel handled this so well.

MICHAEL VAN DUSEN: This is very important for the Center, thank you for saying that.

HERBERT WEISS: Let me just ask: of course we can have a whole conference just on October-September. Can we move forward chronologically, or is there some urgent comment on the Stanleyville regime and on the dismissal of Lumumba?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I think there is an open space that hasn't been filled, let me just cover this very briefly. I think that it has been assumed from conversation that I worked closely with Mobutu considerably before the 14th of September. I met Mobutu only twice, once in Brussels, once on the streets of Kinshasa, prior to his takeover. I think I mentioned to someone here yesterday through one of my sources I picked up that Lumumba intended to have Bomboko assassinated, for having signed Kasavubu's dismissal. I took it very seriously, and at the time Bomboko was regarded by the embassy as being a competent person, and also pro-western, which I think is proper. It was indelicate for me, or for the ambassador to go over and knock on his door "by the way, we have a report that Lumumba intends to have you assassinated." It could have caused the whole embassy to be closed. So, I arranged it with an American businessman, who spoke very little French but was living in the same hotel as Bomboko, the Regina, and saw him in the bar at night quite often. I had him practice his French and to tell him "I have something very important to tell you which touches on your life, but I don't speak French well enough. Would you receive me if I can bring a member at an American consulate to come along as an interpreter?" This was after the 5th of September. Bomboko started laughing "this is ridiculous. Nobody's going to arrest me, I'm a senior Mongo, they can't do this to me." I was able to give this warning to Bomboko. As I was leaving, Bomboko asked me "assuming that this is really true, what would you recommend?" I said that I suggest that he surrounds himself with really large Mongos at all times, and don't sleep twice in the same bed, meaning, don't stay here in the hotel.

HERBERT WEISS: Now we know he was just following American advice, all the way. He has over thirty children. [laughter]

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: The next morning, I was walking from the embassy past the Regina and there were troops in the lobby and you could see through the windows people running around in rooms, all troops. My report was correct, and I ran back to the embassy, and Bomboko was sitting in my office. He said “I took your advice and did not stay in the hotel last night, and when I came back it was a little late for the office and I walked into the lobby and there was Mobutu who said “my troops have orders to kill you. What should I do?” “Run over to the American embassy and ask to see Larry Devlin, he will protect you.” I didn't even know that Mobutu knew my name at the time. We kept him there for a while. The ambassador, Timberlake, said that we couldn't keep him there, because there were a number of Americans staying in the embassy till they could go back to their businesses or missionary activities. Timberlake asked me “can you guarantee me that Mobutu has not set this up?” After all he was appointed by Lumumba, he’s been Lumumba's man [all] along. Maybe he set this up so that the ANC [could] march into the embassy to take him out and also take some Americans with him. I called the UN and asked them to provide protection for Bomboko. And they had refused, they said that they would protect only Lumumba and Kasavubu and said that we should deliver him either to Lumumba's residence or to Kasavubu’s residence, they would protect him there. Timberlake said, “get one of your boys or you drive him up to the president's palace.” So I went out and saw that there were more road blocks than usual, it seemed that they were still looking for Bomboko. So I went back to the embassy. We had a young officer who

had just arrived and didn't even have his diplomatic passport yet and we arranged to take him out through the back steps. I said that I would drive him, but since I had a diplomatic passport and if I got caught, I would have tied the US embassy to his escape. I asked this young officer to drive him, but he didn't know where the presidential palace was. So I led the way, and we found our way around. We got to the president's palace and the ANC was on the outside and the Tunisian troops were on the inside. I pulled up to the guards and handed out a few packs of cigarettes. He welcomed me and I said I had to run in, I had a message for the president, and he opened the gates. And we went through the gates together and we delivered Bomboko and went out the back gate. That night we had a meeting with Carlucci: Rob McIlvain, Jerry Levalle and myself. We discussed and to see if there was any way things could work out between Kasavubu and Lumumba. [We] couldn't really decide we didn't know what was really happening. Timberlake asked me for my opinion at the end and I suggested that I go back and speak with Kasavubu and Bomboko and that he goes and speaks with Lumumba, because he had better access. I did go out that night, I got in and I said that I wanted to see president Ksavubu and I sat in a small windowless waiting room. Suddenly Mobutu came in with two guards with machine guns and I thought "my God, they've occupied the palace and now I'm a prisoner." I felt rather nervous. Mobutu dismissed the guards, walked over and said he was happy to see me. We talked and he went on at great length about the very serious situation between Lumumba and Kasavubu, and then things began building towards how many difficulties he had with Lumumba who had authorized the Soviets to come in and lecture the troops at Camp Kokolo. And he showed some of the books that they were giving to the soldiers. They were typical propaganda, very simple communist

propaganda, and they were written in American English. We talked for over an hour and it was building towards something that I didn't quite have the authority to do. It became clear to me that there was likely to be a coup d'état and I did not have the authority to get involved in such a thing. He would ask me 'Would American policy back this, etc.?' and I tried to avoid a direct comment. Bomboko entered the room and he had a piece of paper in his hand, and all it said was "help him!" The leadership of the army from various regions had been called in, and they discussed what should be done. If the US would guarantee to recognize the government resulting from the coup, they would go, they would mount the coup, if not they would not do it. I kept avoiding an answer, I knew that if I gave an answer and then the coup failed, the embassy would be closed, [and] we'd be out of jobs. And then Mobutu said "you represent the American embassy? Will you guarantee American recognition or support of the replacement government? If you do not, I will send my leaders back to the post, and if you do, we'll have a coup within a week." I stood up and shook hands and said "I guarantee you American support," which I did not have authority to do. I went to the embassy and tried to send a cable to Washington but we couldn't for hours. So I got in the car and went to the embassy and went up to Timberlake's room and woke him up and I told me what I have done. He asked me "do you have sufficient time in for retirement?" I said "no, sir." "Do you have a private income?" I said no. He said "I have both. If this fails you and I will be out of a job, I don't know what will happen. I do approve of this and you made the right decision, but [you've] got to know the risk you're running and that I already considered all the possibilities." I was able to send out a cable finally, [but] not before I went over to the military headquarters and talked with Mobutu the next morning. I went in with an

unofficial cover officer, who was extremely confident; I specifically asked that he'd be sent out and he was to be my regular contact with Mobutu during this period. We no sooner got in there—we had a briefcase with $5,000—then a squad of eight to ten ANC soldiers came into the hall. Mobutu's secretary told us that he was busy and that he'd see us in a few minutes. We were leaning against the wall and the soldiers with machine guns were standing right in front of us. The guy who was with me said "we've been had," but the colonel's secretary came out and said that he would see us now. I don't know whether they were guarding Mobutu's office, but it was no problem for us.

HERBERT WEISS: It's a consistent thing which goes on to the present.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Well I don't know about the present but at that time there did not seem to be much coming out of Washington. This whole business about... that I should arrange an assassination; we were not qualified to do it.

HERBERT WEISS: Since there was a week before the decision was to be executed—he in effect predicted that they would do it in a week, yes? Couldn't you have gotten clearance from Washington? Why couldn't you have said "I will give you the American answer tomorrow"?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Because he said the people were all leaving that next morning.

HERBERT WEISS: I see. It was one or the other.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: It was pressure put on me and I recognize that, but I was not prepared to put pressure on him by saying "hold your people here for 24 hours." I don't really know what went through my mind now.

THOMAS KANZA: What was the conversation with Mobutu once he received you?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I introduced him to my men and, we discussed again was he going to do this and went through a little bit more of the detail; and then he did it.

THOMAS KANZA: Have we got the exact date of those two names, the evening, do you remember the exact date of the evening and the subsequent meeting?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Certainly, it was, let's see… Kasavubu made his radio address the 5th of September. Correct?

THOMAS KANZA: I think that's correct yes.

HERBERT WEISS: Yes.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: And then it must have been about the 7th or the 8th of September. That's approximate. That may be off by 24 hours.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: If I could ask just two quick questions. There were lots of reports and books that have been written about this, that you had established a relationship with Mobutu when he was in Belgium; when he was a journalist, that you knew Mobutu.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: That's not correct. I've read those and that's nonsense.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: Okay, and then the other question is, as you were making this difficult decision, how to reply to him, something must have been in the back of your mind, something, even though it was risky, about what is US policy, the US policy objective, since you were a US official. It would be interesting to see that point of how your decision factored into what the US was trying to accomplish.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Well I knew that I'd had instructions from Allen Dulles that you know, at higher levels, was sort of put in general terms. They did not say the highest authority but it is believed that Lumumba should be removed, etc. It was something along those lines; those are not the exact words. But that was the thrust of it. And so I knew that this was desired. This came before the "Joe from Paris" cable so I did not think it was that. But it was very clear that Washington wanted a change and that I was expected to provide that change. And so yes, all those were factored into my thinking as I was stalling and …

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: Was there a judgment there that the Kasavubu move, which according to these documents I referred to earlier had been supported by the United States, on September 5th that was failing and that therefore it was necessary to not just stay with Kasavubu or was there a feeling that when Bomboko came and approached you that Bomboko was in some sense representing Kasavubu?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I was not, I don't think at the beginning I was aware of the idea to quote "neutralize" Kasavubu. I thought he was going to create a government but a government which would work under President Kasavubu. When it became clear; do you remember when it first was called "commissaries" not "commissioners?" That upset Washington terribly because it sounded too Russian. What the hell does it matter the exact title! If they're happy, we should be happy! I must have gotten 40 cables [with] instructions to do something about this! This was of course after the coup. And this can't be…And then of course, Kasavubu was quote "neutralized." Well this sent Washington, they were spiraling, and I kept thinking we can get this straightened out just, let's don't get excited, you know? And I probably had to spend, if you count it in hours, maybe a hundred hours, resolving these two problems. A hundred is a round figure. I have no idea really how much time but I had many, many meetings. And the first reaction was I will not change the titles, "… de commisaire", that's what it is and if they don't, if some bureaucrat in Washington doesn't like it, to hell with them! And anyway I would listen for a long time each time to these things and then as far as Kasavubu, I can't de-neutralize him now! This has just happened! For God's sake, relax, you know?! I would go back and write this up and I'd get an immediate [response] (bang fist on table) saying

"do it, get it done!" Well I think Washington thought in terms of that Mobutu was a control agent; he was no more control agent than Mr. Weiss here who was also in Kinshasa. Dr. Weiss.

HERBERT WEISS: Glad to have you confirm that.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: In fact he was. Anyways, it was a hell of a time for days there, trying to get things straightened out, well; we had to make the illegal appear legal.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: So the question though that I was trying to figure out was what was our attitude to consulting or not consulting President Kasavubu about Mobutu's planned coup?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I did not have direct contact; I occasionally saw the President when I first, when I went with Timberlake when he presented letters of credence. Kasavubu thought I was the new ambassador first and greeted me, and I had to say no, no, he's the ambassador. A few times—essentially I did not see—I knew people who saw Kasavubu regularly and I occasionally asked them to suggest various steps but it was not a control where I was meeting with him. I did not have that regular—

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Okay.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I have a question [and a comment]. First the question: what obliged Mobutu to neutralize also President Kasavubu, because such as the plan was prepared, he was to have done a normal coup d'etat? He was to have formed a government under the authority of President Kasavubu and neutralize only Lumumba. What happened such that he made a decision declaring that he neutralized both of them? Between your meeting and the eight days in which he promised all would happen, what happened to make him change his decision? I have a personal comment but first I'd like to have—

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Honestly I can't answer that because I don't really have the facts from which to base an answer. It was clear, I guess it was clear, that in our conversations of the night when he made this suggestion of his plan, it was very clear that he was going to neutralize Lumumba. It seemed possible that he might be considering neutralizing Kasavubu but I can't be sure completely on that point. And it was only later that this became very clear to me and certainly Washington said this won't work. The only chief of state we recognize, Washington believed that it was legal, I mean the Department of State when I say Washington, and indirectly the agency then, believed that the President had the right to remove the Prime Minister. The problem was to find another Prime Minister who could then get a vote of confidence. And then of course with the coup, that became moot. Would you like to make your remarks?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: Yes, my comment is the following; I was absent from Kinshasa the 5th [of September] as I already commented because I was out on a tour. I

returned because I was called by Lumumba via a special telegram on the 8th of September. In the afternoon, I was at a meeting in his office with a group of his ministers, and he brought me up to date on the situation. I asked him the following question: I see that [inaudible] are there but where is Mobutu? He was named by you to be main chief of state. He is from your party, but where is he now? A decision was made against you; Lumumba was neutralized but Mobutu is not responding. Where is he? Lumumba responded "indeed, I don't understand, since I've been neutralized, he's showing no signs of life; I'm going to call him." He took his telephone and called him; we were all there. He said "Joseph, we're all assembled here to see what we're going to do about the crisis, and why aren't you with us?" He responded "I am military and I have to remain neutral." Lumumba responded "no, you can't be neutral! You're military but I am the one that put you there, as a member of the MNC! You're not going to tell me that you're neutral!" Mobutu responded that no in fact, he is neutral and doesn't get involved in political problems. That was on the 8th of September. And that corresponds practically to the version provided by our friend Larry [Devlin]. Lumumba threatened him [Mobutu] by saying if you don't support us, I will take my responsibilities in hand as well. And that is how the next day Lumumba said that we were all told openly that Mpolo would be Defense Minister, Chief of State and head of the Army but you didn't want that. Now you must designate Mpolo as General, so that he can run the Army. You must depose Mobutu. Lumumba made the decision; we called Mpolo who rejoined us. Lumumba said to him "starting tomorrow, you take command of the troops." Mpolo the next day had assassins in Camp Leopold (Leopoldville) but as always there were information leaks, Mobutu took steps so that Mpolo and Gizenga were arrested at the entrance of the Army

camp. They were transferred to Luzumu and at that point all was spoiled. Mobutu clearly announced he was against Lumumba after this operation saying that "Lumumba wants my hide; I want his!" So, there are the elements that I wanted to bring to these discussions about the 8th and 9th of September. So, we were able to recover Gizenga thanks to the provincial police (Gizenga and Mpolo). I had the provincial police go to the province of Luzuma. We got them out of prison in the evening and brought them back to Kinshasa. But things were broken between Mobutu and Lumumba. We didn't think at that point that Mobutu would go to such a violent and brutal definitive action. But curiously Lumumba wasn't—but Kasavubu was—neutralized. If it wasn't for the American pressure saying that the chief of state can't be neutralized, Mobutu would have neutralized them both definitively.

HERBERT WEISS: A couple of very quick comments. First of all, it seems to me when a military person makes a coup, it is usually not one that preserves a president. So [if] the question is why did he decide to neutralize Kasavubu; it really should be reversed. If he hadn't neutralized Kasavubu it would have been curious. Typically a military coup gets rid of everybody who is above that general or whatever. The second thing is that we, I think, should concentrate on a very important element in the fall of 1960 which is—Thomas can give us a lot of information on that—which is the competition at the General Assembly as to which delegation is going to be recognized. And the importance to the United States of the legal fiction that Kasavubu is still president has a great deal to do with which delegation is going to be seated. And is the delegation sent by the Prime Minister [i.e. Lumumba] going to continue to represent the Congo at the United Nations.

The decision was made all the more important because the UN operation, ONUC, had to preserve the fiction that they're there at the invitation of a legal government and that they were not breaking [Article] 27, in other words transgressing article 27, and imposing their will and interfering in the internal affairs of a country through the presence of 30,000 troops which are about to descend. So I don't know whether you'd agree that we should move into the direction of New York, the New York chapter, as the next one. But you were going to, independently of my request, say something so why don't you say that first and then possibly lead into that second part.

THOMAS KANZA: I was just going to talk about that particular subject.

HERBERT WEISS: We're on the same wavelength.

THOMAS KANZA: Yes, confirming what Cleophas just said, on the 9th of September the parliament meeting dismissed the decisions made by Kasavubu and Lumumba and then they set up the reconciliation committee. Then Bomboko traveled to New York because we had this admission of the Congo to the United Nations coming as one of the subjects of the UN. And I also intended to come to New York. I was prevented from travel to New York as Lumumba had arranged. I had to fly to Accra and with the help [of] the Soviet Union. Nkrumah gave us a plane and I also landed in New York. So here we are, Bomboko [as] Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thomas Kanza [as] Minister in charge of the United Nations but also permanent representative of the Congo to the UN. And back home Kasavubu has dismissed the Prime Minister [and] not all the government, but

only 5 ministers. So the main question—was Thomas Kanza still minister and ambassador or not? But I was not dismissed as minister. Then, both of us, we met separately Dag Hammarskjöld and we had become friendly with Dag Hammarskjöld, Bomboko and myself. In a discussion, Dag Hammarskjöld advised us not to bring to New York the quarrel going on in the Congo. Then he as Secretary General was going to suggest that the General Assembly will admit the country, the Republic of Congo—Leopoldville, and the seat will remain vacant until the head of state is admitted. So the position of the United Nations was maybe troubled with Lumbala. Lumbala used to be with Mobutu, private secretary of Lumumba at the Prime Minister's office, and he was very close to Mobutu. And it was from New York that I was following what was happening in Kinshasa. And Lumbala every day was talking to Mobutu. There was no question of [a] coup, Mobutu was advised, he was not yet 40 years old. Mobutu was born in 1930, so in 1960 was just 30 years [old]. And people were advising him to be very careful.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: He was 29.

THOMAS KANZA: 29 going on 30. So among them Van Bilsen, also traveling with Bomboko, were in New York, two delegations, and Belgians [were] advising Mobutu to be very careful, not to stage a coup taking over from Kasavubu as president because that will damage the whole plan. But he has, in theory, to neutralize both; to sound neutral. But [he] was keeping in touch with Kasavubu while working to meet with Lumumba. We discussed in New York with Bomboko and Van Bilsen the formation of College de

Commissaires Generaux. It was then that I knew from Bomboko that there was this new kind of provisional government to be set up since Ileo [if] appointed Prime Minister could not receive the confidence of the parliament.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: But Ileo was neutralized also.

THOMAS KANZA: He was staying with Kasavubu so he couldn't get the confidence of the Parliament.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: But he was officially neutralized by Mobutu.

THOMAS KANZA: So now Bomboko told me that he was going to lead the College de Commissaires Generaux. He asked if I could join him. My view was "Justin, you and I are ministers, we're not dismissed. So it's going to be improper, and especially you as minister as foreign affairs, to lead this College de Commissaires Generaux. A kind of government officially opposed to the prime minister. So personally, I will refuse and be careful Justin." Van Bilsen insisted and said the only way Van Bilsen is a Belgian is as advisor to Kasavubu. And before independence he used to be advisor to ABAKO. He is the man who issued the plan of 30 years before Congo became independent. So Van Bilsen insisted, said to me "we must save the Congo from the communists and you and Bomboko will be a good team, so please join." I said no. So we sat in New York while Mobuto staged his so-called coup. But on the telephone he told Lumbala, and I also had the chance of talking to Mobutu. I said "could you tell me, is it a coup? Are you now

going to be head of state or what?" Mobutu told me personally on the telephone: "Thomas, it is not a coup. I'm not going to be head of state. I'm just paving the way to allow some kind of reconciliation still between Lumumba and Kasavubu because you heard about the decision made by the parliament. So whatever you have heard, I'm not staging a proper coup. I'm just doing certain things to show that the army remains neutral so go ahead talking on behalf of the government but be careful." Now when Bomboko first tried to arrange a meeting between us, the two delegations, the Belgians opposed. Now the United Nations General Assembly was divided; the pro-Lumumba's and the pro-Kasavubu's. The Africans, those who were supposed to be non-aligned, the Latin Americans, the Asians, most of them were pro-Lumumba, and those who were favorable to the socialist or communist countries. The pro-western were against Lumumba. So Dag Hammarskjöld tried to evolve the decisions being made by the General Assembly to voting because we didn't know who was going to win. And the chairman of the General Assembly was Mongi Slim, the ambassador of Tunisia. And he was also a very close friend of Dag Hammarskjöld, and was neutral. Then finally when the discussion took place, the decision came out: Congo as a state will be admitted as a member of the United Nations but none of these two delegations will take the seat. Bomboko and myself were sitting there just watching our seats remaining vacant but all these heads of state were in New York including Castro, Khrushchev, Nkrumah, Nehru, all these people. And Bomboko spent his time meeting the western leaders; I spent my time meeting the Soviets and all the communists and the non-aligned countries' leaders.

SERGEY MAZOV: Did you meet Khrushchev?

THOMAS KANZA: Yes, and Gromyko. So the advice was how we can use the United Nations to reconcile both Kasavubu and Lumumba? It was then I personally learned that the American position and the Belgian position, at least the western position, was that this reconciliation would never take place. But if we can come back to what I said yesterday where now, end of September, an election campaign was going on, a [US] presidential election campaign. So, we knew that if things go well, maybe Democrats will win. With the failure of the visit of Lumumba in Washington, we knew that the Republicans will not be in favor of Lumumba. So my delegation starts becoming closer with the Democrats. As I said yesterday with my relations with Mrs. Roosevelt, and also two [other] Roosevelts, [and] John F. Kennedy, I started trying to become closer with the Democrats. And I stayed in New York until the election. And once Kennedy was elected, I managed to go back to the Congo with advice from various heads of states who were favorable to Lumumba. It was then we decided to keep Lumumba alive since the decision was made that at one point he has to be removed from power—meaning not only politically but physically. Then our decision and our suggestion from various heads of state was to keep Lumumba alive until the 21st of January. And we have been discussing before when we were talking about the meeting the 13th of January, I think the key question was how to get Lumumba out [of jail] for him to be killed before the 21st of January. I think very few people talked about it. I think that Cleophas knows that in Kinshasa, the quarrel was friendly to Lumumba's people in saying okay, let us save Lumumba, although he was in jail. But still, instructions were received in New York were to use the UN if possible to send troops. There were already troops in Desree but if the UN troops could start

protecting the prisoners, political prisoners, instead of keeping them out of the guard of [committee] soldiers, Dag Hammarskjöld was reluctant to see UN troops protecting Lumumba. For him, as long as Lumumba did not remain in his residence, the UN had no longer a right to interfere in the Congolese internal affairs. And we knew then that Lumumba would be killed before the 21st of January. And I was in New York when news came that Lumumba was killed. And I think later on we're going to talk about after the death of Lumumba, what's happened.

SERGEY MAZOV: Can you explain the details of your talk with Khrushchev and Gromyko?

THOMAS KANZA: The details? [Laughter] Alright. Discussions with Khrushchev and Gromyko [were] really part of the discussions I had with all heads of state. In fact in the 1960s if you remember, practically all the world heads of state were in New York so the discussions with Khrushchev took place at the Russian embassy [sic. Probably consulate] and I was there with my colleague Lumbala. We discussed various topics, mainly how to save Lumumba. And we knew that the Soviet Union would not do anything except in true African countries and non-aligned countries. So we asked Khrushchev if he could at least talk to some African countries like the king of Morocco—he didn't come to New York but his prime minister came to New York—because we told Khrushchev that people like Kettani although Moroccan, was playing a game that was against Lumumba. So [we asked] if Khrushchev can use his relations with Moroccans for the King to talk to Kettani. And also we confirmed the request made by Gizenga about assisting the Sudanese

government. We knew it was difficult, impossible, for Soviet aid to cross the Sudan, but there were other venues. But Tanzania was not yet independent but was favorable to Lumumba so there was one way of getting some assistance, through Tanzania. And then we also asked diplomatic support of Khrushchev. But Khrushchev was a showman. The discussion was more serious with Gromyko because what Khrushchev wanted to show in 1960 [was] the presence of Khrushchev and Castro in New York, it was an attraction. So Khrushchev wanted to meet us, Lumumba's delegation. I think that some of you remember that Castro was removed from Manhattan to go and live in Harlem. So Khrushchev suggested if he could see us twice, once at his embassy, and secondly in Harlem [laughter] because when Lumumba came, he became very popular in Harlem. We drove to Harlem and when the black Americans discovered that Lumumba was in the car, they got him out of the car. At the corner of 125th street and 7th avenue Lumumba started making speeches, so he was very popular in Harlem.[71] So Khrushchev showed that he thought that to make public relations, if Khrushchev and Castro and the head of Lumumba's delegation could show [themselves] in Harlem that could be a good show.

SERGEY MAZOV: Thank you, this information was very interesting.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Well, since you spent such a considerable amount of time in New York during this period, did you have any interaction with Dag Hammarskjöld's so-called Congo Club—all his close advisors—all of whom were Americans?

[71] Lumumba and Khrushchev were not in New York at the same time. Most likely this incident took place during Lumumba's visit to the US in late July 1960.

THOMAS KANZA: After the dismissal of Lumumba, with this presence of two delegations in New York, my relations with Dag Hammarskjöld became more private than officious. So before he had his meeting with the Congo Club, I had a personal meeting with Dag. Dag was a bachelor then. I was also a bachelor. So we had some kind of arrangement to meet somewhere sometime at late hours but officially he was dealing with Bomboko's delegation because he also wanted to keep the relations saying that he recognized Kasavubu; he did not recognize Lumumba.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: May I just come in here with one thing. I omitted something earlier in my talks with Mobutu that night at the camp. It was understood that this College of Commissaries—whatever it was going to be—would last until the 31st of December. I omitted that and that was understood and that's one of the things I reported to Washington.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: One quick follow up. I know I missed yesterday's discussion but the Belgian report does not talk at all about the American election as a reason for the transfer of Lumumba even though most of the plans began after the American elections concluded. When the Kennedy administration came into power before it knew that Lumumba was dead it was developing various plans about what to do in the Congo and I think the final plan that was adopted did not envision Lumumba ever coming back as a prime minister but perhaps as a leader—people would be kept in prison until everything was stabilized and then Lumumba could be let out—maybe [he would

have been] not very powerful. Who did you speak with? Any one, who might have been—I don't know if you spoke directly with Kennedy, or people like Cleveland or Williams or others who would eventually be in the Kennedy administration—that […] felt that Lumumba would be safer, at least afterwards? Since most of what I've seen in the declassified papers indicates most of the planning occurred in January pretty much until close to January 20th so that it would be interesting if they were discussing this earlier.

THOMAS KANZA: I said it yesterday; you were not there, but after the election of JFK, I knew back in '55 Mrs. Roosevelt in Geneva; so I got in touch with Mrs. Roosevelt in New York privately and Mrs. Roosevelt when I came to Harvard in '58, she's the one who introduced us, JFK [and I], saying that "I'm introducing to you this young senator who is going to be the next president of the US." So I reminded Mrs. Roosevelt about this meeting in Boston and I wrote a memo, submitted to Mrs. Roosevelt for her to show it to JFK. But the question was "we know that Lumumba is arrested. We're asking two things. One, could Kennedy now that he's elected, when he takes over the White House, if he could arrange for the establishment, re-establishment of the legal government in the Congo to the parliament? We're asking for the re-convening of the Parliament. And later when this parliament decides, if the parliament renews the vote of confidence in Lumumba, then he's back as prime minister. If not, he will remain a member of the parliament and he may organize himself. And two, we're asking if, when Kennedy takes over, if he could arrange even before he takes over, the 21st of January, if he could arrange in such a way that the UN can start protecting political prisoners. Because we're

sure that as long as Lumumba and others are under Congolese army control, the danger was that they'd be killed before Kennedy takes over." Those were the two requests. And the answer from Mrs. Roosevelt, coming assumed from JFK, was that as far as convening the parliament [he] is for it. He would not object; to the contrary; for him Congo democracy must be organized and there was no question of taking over power by coup or otherwise. But protecting the prisoners, that has to be decided by the UN.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: So your interlocutor was Eleanor Roosevelt.

THOMAS KANZA: Yes.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Not Soapy [G. Mennen Williams, assistant secretary of state for African Affairs] or Adlai Steveson [U.S. representative at the UN]?

THOMAS KANZA: No, as soon as the Kennedy administration was formed, I met just once [with] Adlai Stevenson. But until then I had to keep in touch with people through [Henry] Cabot Lodge because he was still ambassador in New York.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: This was in November? December?

THOMAS KANZA: November, December, because I remained in New York until about early December [1960].

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: Before we break, one final comment. In this morning's session, Steve [Weissman], you mentioned a few documents both that the Church commission refers to and some documents that you referred to in your [*Washington Post*] article. I think it would be helpful if, when the organizers put the final documentation together, if they could have those specific documents for inclusion in the report.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: Unfortunately I can't share the documentation I saw because it was not declassified. But the Church Committee has an entire report that is declassified that is publicly available and all I can say about the documentation I saw, [that] I was shown because I had been a scholar at this time, is that I personally verified that it was authentic and I discussed it at length when I wrote my article for the *Washington Post* with the deputy editor of the Outlook section who knows something about Africa, Steve Mufson, and it was very carefully done so that what I have in that article I would stake my entire reputation or whatever on, but the problem is I can't really declassify it [or] make it an available document; that's not something …

HERBERT WEISS: Do you have copies of the document?

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: I have had in my possession copies of these documents and so what I'm saying is, I very carefully went over this material and again Larry may be correct in that if something is authorized, it doesn't mean everything is spent and we certainly did not have the detail that he put in on what happened before the September 14th coup, but it does talk about, it includes chronological material on authorizations by

the secret special group that approved covert operations. And this material that reveals payment to Kasavubu authorized September 1st, the paramilitary authorization in November, in October the financing being given to Mobutu to create a moderate base in the parliament and the fact that it wasn't successful so Mobutu used it personally, and the fact that we were financing and selecting the members of the College of Commissioners. So all of this is firm but I can't give you more than my reputation on it and the fact that it was carefully vetted by *The Washington Post* editor.

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: Can we not declassify them under FOIA? It's been over 30 years?

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: These are materials that are not customarily…

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: 40 years (laughter).

HERBERT WEISS: Okay, let's end on that note…

Session Six: From Lumumba to Mobutu, January 1961-1965--Continued

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Ladies and Gentleman…

GEORGE NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: I've been asked to moderate this session, from Lumumba to Mobutu, January 1961 to November 1965, a very, very long period. I hope

that we can address some of the major issues, the consolidation on the part of the moderates after Lumumba's demise under the leadership of the Binza group. Was Louvanium an attempt at national reconciliation or was it simply a cooptation of the radical nationalists?[72] I think that Stephen Weissmann has written, quoting an American diplomat in Kinshasa that this was a US operation under the UN umbrella. So the UN provided a cover for US actions in the forming of the Adoula government.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: That's nonsense.

GEORGE NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: The third question, the whole question of the re-establishment of national unity after the demise of the Katanga secession, why was this possible at that particular time and not before? And what was the role of the Cold War in making it possible for Tshombe to be pushed out and for the UN to take action? The 4th question I think is the whole question of the failure of both the moderates and radicals to deliver on the promise of independence, the first leading to the Congo rebellions, and the second to the failure of the rebellions to make a difference and the disintegration of the whole movement. And I think that we have Thomas Kanza here who was minister of foreign affairs for the people's republic of Congo, established in Kisangani (Stanleyville) in August of 1964 and he could be a good witness as to what really happened. The Tshombe government, which was another attempt to restart the process of getting the country together, and why it failed; what was the African factor? What was the Cold War factor? And the demise of the Tshombe regime, and the coming to power of Mobutu. So

[72] Kamitatu is referencing the September 1961 Louvanium conference, a gathering of Congolese parliamentarians to form a new government for the Congo.

these are some of the issues which I think are quite important to address within this time period so I'd like to know who would like to start this, would Thomas want to start?

THOMAS KANZA: Should we go back to 1961? [laughter] Now starting 3rd of January 1961, Lumumba and other political prisoners are in jail. The Casablanca countries met in Morocco. Those countries were supporting Lumumba. Egypt-Nasser was there, the king of Morocco was there, Nkrumah-Ghana was there, Sekou Touré-Guinea was there, Ben Khedda [aka Bella], who used to be the leader of the Algerian provisional government was there. Those were the countries forming the Casablanca group. I was there representing Lumumba's government. Then the game starts; the whole international world was divided into pro-Lumumba, meaning communist or non-aligned countries, and against Lumumba, pro-western countries. We're talking about the whole world, Latin American countries, Asian countries, African countries, even European countries. Some countries like Sweden were not against or in favor of Lumumba; they tried to be neutral protecting the interests of Dag Hammarskjöld who was secretary general. And we lived in 1961, started peacefully with these crises going on until the killing of Lumumba. As far as we are concerned—Congolese nationalists—we thought that the death of Lumumba opened a way for some kind of reconciliation which failed between Kasavubu and Lumumba, which could be starting now since Lumumba was gone. And in New York, there was this Congo Club advising Dag Hammarskjöld. In Kinshasa, people like Cleophas Kamitatu who are at this point still very close to Gizenga in the party, and other moderates, so-called moderates, living in Kinshasa, who were arrested, were trying to build a bridge between Kinshasa and Kisangani. The question was to set up a new legal

government. Kasavubu was accepted by the UN as being the only legal power in the Congo. The rest, the college etc. were not considered as being the government of the Congo. So we had Kasavubu as legal head of state of the Congo, Gizenga in Stanleyville representing Lumumba's government, because we had ambassadors accredited to Stanleyville. Those ambassadors were from Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Yugoslavia; I think the Czechs also had one there, Morocco and Egypt had chargés d'affaires. For the first time China, Red China, opened up an embassy in Stanleyville.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: And the Soviet Union came there.

THOMAS KANZA: The Soviet Union didn't have an embassy; only delegates through the Czech embassy. The talks started in New York about the setting up of a new government. As I said earlier, the Congo Club was meeting, and the ambassador representing Kinshasa did not attend the meeting. And I also did not attend the meeting. But Dag Hammarskjöld was meeting us each separately. If I could not meet Dag, I did not meet with Cordier,[73] but Bunche.[74] So we used to meet and he'd report. It was then two names came out; who will be the next prime minister? Who will be accepted by the Stanleyville government? Cleophas was the number one; he belonged to the party of Gizenga, and he had to make the trip to Stanleyville, and he went with Frank Carlucci as his head. But I knew although they belonged to the same party, that Gizenga and Kamitatu couldn't work because Gizenga could not be vice prime minister if Kamitatu

[73] Andrew Cordier was undersecretary in charge of the UN General Assembly from 1945-1961. He went on to become president of Columbia University.
[74] Ralph J. Bunche was undersecretary for special political affairs under Dag Hammarskjöld. In 1950 he received the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in mediating the Arab-Israeli conflict.

becomes prime minister. Because our idea was to have a new government; all the ministers of Lumumba who were still alive and loyal to Lumumba must be given the same portfolio they held during Lumumba's government. So it was a key question that Gizenga must be kept vice prime minister. And he could not work with Kamitatu as prime minister. They belong to same party so I personally pushed the idea of Adoula, Cyrille Adoula. I knew Adoula is from Kinshasa and he was for independent socialist trade unions and in the senate he was a vocal defender of democracy and unity in the Congo. And he could be accepted easily by the Stanleyville government. Adoula was approached in Kinshasa, I informed Mulele because we had a triangle. Gizenga in Stanleyville, Mulele in Cairo, and I was in New York so the communication was via Cairo. And Gizenga replied to me that he doesn't mind about Adoula becoming prime minister as long as he'd accept two things, one, the parliament, once reconvened, must pass a resolution that the government that will be accepted by the parliament has to be recognized as the constitutional successor of Lumumba's government. So whatever happened between the 5th of September 1960 and the 2nd of August 1961 when Adoula's government will be formed is considered as being non-valid as far as the constitution of Congo is concerned. It was a power vacuum, so we had only Kasavubu [as] president and [a] prime minister elected by the parliament to be recognized. And this idea was accepted by Adoula, and Gizenga made one mistake by not traveling to come to the parliament in Kinshasa. Why? I don't know. He promised that he would be leading the delegation. Instead, I think he suspected that security was not guaranteed in the university and he preferred to stay behind in Stanleyville with General Lundula, head of the army, hoping that the government would allow also Lundula to come back as general of the Army and

Mobutu would keep his job as only chief of staff. But that was just wishful thinking so Gbenya, minister of interior in Lumumba's government, led the delegation going from Stanleyville, Christophe Gbenye, and as we suspected, the parliament gave vote of confidence to Cyrille Adoula who became prime minister. He kept Gizenga vice prime minister, Bomboko minister of foreign affairs, and the rest, Gbenye minister of interior, the rest of the former ministers of Lumumba were kept in their posts. Mulele in Cairo did not accept to be minister of education because under Lumumba he was minister of education. He refused. I was not kept at my job as minister because I was not member of the parliament. So Cyrille Adoula asked me to join the delegation because as soon as the government was formed, Gizenga flew to Kinshasa because Congo was invited to attend the non-aligned conference in Belgrade [September 1961]. So I flew from New York to Cairo, I picked up Mulele, and Gizenga flew from Kisangani to Kinshasa; he traveled with Adoula to Rome. So Mulele and I met Adoula, Gizenga, Bomboko, the minister of foreign affairs, and […] minister of information in Gizenga's government in Rome. So that was the delegation which represented the Congo at the non-aligned conference. Also in Belgrade, the non-aligned countries insisted that Congo make two speeches, one by Adoula and the other by Gizenga because as far as the non-aligned countries were concerned they did not want Gizenga to just sit there as deputy prime minister. They wanted him also to express Lumumba's views. After that, I was asked to return to Cairo to wait, because before I left New York, I met Dag Hammarskjöld. The idea of Dag Hammarskjöld going to meet Tshombe before the General Assembly was discussed. And it was agreed if the meeting took place, it has to be in the Congo, not outside the Congo. I was supposed to be part of the Congolese team. So Adoula asked me not to return to

Kinshasa with him but to wait in Cairo with Mulele. So Dag came to Kinshasa, he met Gizenga, Adoula, Bomboko, all the cabinet ministers and I think I said it yesterday Lord Lansdowne, the British [Foreign] Minister came, convinced him [Hammarskjöld] that he had to go and meet Tshombe outside the Congo in Ndola. I had a telephone call from Adoula [saying] "your friend has changed his mind. He wanted to give this publicity to Tshombe so he's flying all the way to Ndola to meet him. We asked him, since the UN can't assure security to Tshombe, to come to Mwanda or to Kinshasa. But he said he'd go anywhere in the world to meet Tshombe for the General Assembly." So I spoke to Dag Hammarskjöld for the last time. I told him it was a mistake, I can't join his team because northern Rhodesia was not independent and with the speeches I'd be making at the United Nations against the white mercenaries, Rhodesians [and] South Africans, I cannot be there. So we promised each other to meet once he comes back to Kinshasa. So we're sitting in Cairo and we heard the news that Dag Hammarskjöld was killed. And then I came back to Kinshasa. Mulele refused to come back. And Gizenga still didn't trust Adoula, because he had the feeling that Adoula [was part of the Binza group.] […] As far as I'm concerned, I never thought that Adoula was part of the Binza group, but our friend Jean told us the other day that Cyrille Adoula was also one of the founding members of the Binza group. Gizenga knew that, I didn't; he didn't trust Adoula. So he gave the excuse of going back to pack his bags; he never came back. Then when I was in Kinshasa, Lundula came to Kinshasa, to be allegious [sic] to Mobutu and [I] met Lundula. Bernier and Mobutu [and] Lundula asked me to try to convince Gizenga to come back to Kinshasa. If not, when Lundula goes back, he's going to arrest him. Now

you must bear in mind, Gizenga is from the Bandundu tribe. He was in a foreign area in Stanleyville.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: That part I don't recall and so I can't… but the part that they had this arrangement.[75] Certainly from my talks with Adoula, I had no… he gave the impression that the one thing he feared was Gizenga would gain the votes rather than him, rather than Adoula. He seemed to have no belief, this is my opinion; what was actually going on, I don't know—my understanding at that time was that if Gizenga came to parliament that he might tip the scale for his election. Certainly every effort had been made to get Gizenga to come and he was as you say quite fearful that if he came, he would be eliminated. But I certainly had no impression that there was any of these understandings that you describe.

THOMAS KANZA: If I may just add one point; you say if Gizenga came, if he stood against Adoula, the Nationalists group, the Stanleyville group, would vote against Gizenga. Because you say the understanding was not personal—was the Stanleyville group agreeing with Adoula "we are going to vote for you on the condition you keep all Lumumba's ministers in power." And for the Stanleyville group, Gizenga was vice prime minister, he has to be vice prime minister. This was my understanding.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I see. I misunderstood that.

[75] There appears to be a break in the discussion, but given the rest of the exchange, he is almost certainly referring to the 1962 agreement whereby Gizenga kept his post as vice prime minister.

THOMAS KANZA: What was meant is that sign of national reconciliation.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: But you see, that was—none of us on the other side so to speak had that understanding. We were not aware of it put it that way.

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: I'd like to open a parenthesis and ask Larry and Sergey if you could comment on what was known in Washington and Moscow about the circumstances surrounding Dag Hammarskjöld's death at the time.

SERGEY MAZOV: I have only official information, but as far as I know, Connor O'Brien[76] made his own investigation, and the conclusion was that it was not an accident but was done by Katanga mercenaries. The Soviet press supported this version.

TATIANA CARAYANNIS: So there was nothing in the documents you've come across about any …

SERGEY MAZOV: No.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Well, my information would be quite different than Sergey's. I was not there—I was at a reception before the night they flew. It was a rather large reception. I had an opportunity to speak briefly with Dag Hammarskjöld but it was just a "how do you do" and a very superficial type meeting. But when we got word in Kinshasa,

[76] Connor Cruise O'Brien is the author of the book *To Katanga and Back.* He was special representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations in Katanga (1961-1962).

we received a cable. Source, I don't remember now. And all but one person had been killed instantly and one man survived briefly. Our air attaché was over in that area at the time and he went to the crash site and made a preliminary investigation. Later I believe there were other Americans who specialize in recovering crash sites and interpreting what happened. The air attaché in talking with me said that, one, he was convinced it was either pilot error or malfunction of the plane, that one of the things that concerned him he found in the cockpit area, what was left of it, a chart showing the landing plans for landing at Ndolo. I don't know which is which. Which is the airport?

THOMAS KANZA: Ndolo.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: …showing the landing plans for Ndolo airport and he was trying to land it in Ndolo.

THOMAS KANZA: Ndolo is Kinshasa.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: This was lying there, and so they had been using it. There was no, there is no guarantee, maybe it fell somewhere, but if they did, that would be obviously very bad because the altitude differences were rather considerable between the two devices. Also the air attaché had been in touch with the pilot since ahead of time. They had changed one motor on—that explained [why they were] there in Kinshasa. It was not ready, it had just been completed when Dag wanted to take off. He refused to have the pilots do a flight check and take it up to see if it was alright. And they left so

there's a possibility of malfunction but—if so they got halfway across Africa. And thirdly that the pilot had almost no sleep for somewhere over thirty-six hours and that was of course not a good thing for a pilot. That could mean a failure to act rapidly or to see where they were going or something like that—whatever is involved in that.

GEORGES NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: And the rest of the hypotheses of the mystery of the Katanga air force having been involved. Jean you have information on that?

JEAN OMASOMBO: Not about that.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: The United States government did obtain with the review of a matter or two they came [to the] conclusion that was just nonsense, that was—people say it was Katanga—who set up to get him. No one and certainly [not] in the US government believes that story about the plane. Again, I was never involved in the check-up. I'm just saying information which I received.

HERBERT WEISS: I heard another version but I mean...

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Another with a bomb put on the plane.

HERBERT WEISS: No. The version I heard was that they turned off the lights at the last minute in a conscious attempt to misguide the plane or blind it so to speak in its

approach. And that [it] was a white North Rhodesian [who conducted] this operation for a satchel of diamonds in exchange.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: What's this based on, on what sources?

HERBERT WEISS: Some Rhodesian I met who was totally unreliable.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: We've all heard about the diamonds.

JEAN OMASOMBO: For me, it was surely the government of Cyrille Adoula. But it's true that Gizenga doesn't want to speak about that. We tried to make him speak to get an explanation, but he never talks. Why didn't he trust us, Adoula? Our hypothesis is that what is obvious is that Adoula was not only a member of the Binza group but he is also known as an indecisive man, intelligent but he never decided directly. He always listened to other opinions and he made the sum of the opinions. One of the most important advisors of Adoula was Andre Lahai, [sp?] the chief of Belgian security. Also I'd like to mention that Adoula was the former vice president of MNC, Lumumba's first party. The group breaks up at the end of October, beginning of November [19]59. When the group breaks up, Adoula is in the opposition. In the MNC, we have to see that after Lumumba's death, there was no leader. There were several important figures, but no leader who could reunite everyone. He was not easy to replace. I should also say that Gizenga didn't trust Lovanium and a question should be raised on that too. Let us not forget that Lovanium had a very important role in Lumumba's dismissal. Most of the tracts and the press

releases were written at Lovanium. With Albert Ndele's collaboration, the newspapers and other documents were also written at Lovanium.

HERBERT WEISS: Excuse me I couldn't understand it, what happened in Lovanium?

JEAN OMASOMBO: The tracts, most of them have been written in Lovanium. These are three false letters, presumably written by Lumumba which were asking the governor to arrest and kill such and such people. It's a hypothesis for which we had a lot of proof. So, Lovanium was a place where a lot of the anti-Lumumba conspiracy took place, and also a meeting place. I would like to ask a question at this moment: in the imagination of the people, Adoula has always been the man of Americans. They think that Adoula's government was formed by the Americans. I'd like to ask Thomas and Larry if this is true. Mulele and Gizenga confirmed this, but the two of you were there.

STEPHEN WEISSMAN: This is a very interesting discussion because everybody seems to be right. And it really gets to the mystery. A few things I just want to add to this or wonder about this. First from the Belgium report, Ileo and Adoula are active in the effort to overthrow Lumumba. And it's very clear that they are organized in the effort to get rid of Lumumba so that Gizenga would have confidence in them. When I wrote my book on interviewing American officials, and later when I wrote an article looking at CIA declassified files and this CIA memorandum in President Kennedy's files, these are files from the Kennedy's library: "about Lovanium, the UN and the United-States" in closely coordinated activities played essential roles in this significant success over Gizenga. So I

think the perception Devlin had that Gizenga was possibly threatened in Lovanium was possible. I think there were some preliminary votes. My vague recollection is that there were votes of people from Lovanium before the election of Prime Minister Gizenga seems to be better off than people had thought they would be. So this suggests at least that from the American point of view even though maybe Gizenga was communicating that he wasn't a threat, they thought that he was a threat and they were supporting the person who presumably they've worked with in the earlier period along with the Belgians in overthrowing Lumumba—Adoula—even though Adoula didn't have nationalist credentials, labor credentials and so forth. When I asked American officials what they recalled about this, some people have suggested that Adoula came to the attention of Americans by a Soapy Williams of the labor. But the officials deny that, they say no, we knew about him at the embassy early on. He was certainly seen as a friendly person. So it does seem…it seems to me very interesting that there [is] a conflict of the perception here but other people who I've spoken to, and I think Dick Mahoney's book[77] indicates that quite a bit of bribery was used. There was a Tunisian who is involved with the Tunisian operation in Lovanium, there was some bribery used on certain legislators. So, maybe all of these factors, maybe the Stanleyville group would have voted for Adoula, and Gizenga didn't have the final support in the last vote, but I also feel that Gizenga must have been skeptical at least about Adoula, and I think that there is a lot of evidence, whether or not he was the Americans' man, that the Americans were active along with the UN and trying to support [him].

[77] Richard D. Mahoney is author of *JFK: Ordeal in Africa*.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: He was not the American's man in the sense of being told what to do, but there was a considerable discussion prior to Lovanium, who would be able to defeat Gizenga. And suddenly the US embassy came up with the name Adoula and I certainly supported that position. I was a part of the embassy, I knew about Adoula a lot, he was a trade unionist but he was neither to the right nor to the left, he was not an extreme of anything. And the fact that he listened to all and then made his decision was quite right, it was his normal way of operating. Certainly, the US supported his candidacy.

GEORGES NZONGOLA-NTALAJA: Could I ask Thomas, you didn't know that he was a member of the Binza group, but you knew that he was a member of the MNC Kalonji and he was against Lumumba. So why did the nationalist camp support him?

THOMAS KANZA: We must look at the situation after the assassination of Lumumba. We knew that Gizenga could not lead the nationalist movement. People forget that MNC, Lumumba, won the elections. The number two party was PSA. For Lumumba to found the government he needed the help of PSA and I'm very sorry that Cleophas is not here. PSA and MNC were not partners before independence; it was just one of those opportunities to become partners. When ABAKO [and] MNC-Kalonji wanted to meet, PSA joined them. For Lumumba, PSA was more federalist then unitarist. Because of that, after the assassination of Lumumba, people like [Felix Houphouet] Boigny[78] did not [want] Gizenga to lead Lumumba's movement and we, some of us, who didn't belong to any party at all, thought of saving Gizenga. By remaining in Stanleyville, we knew it was

[78] Felix Houphouet-Boigny was the first president of Cote d'Ivoire. He came to power in 1960.

going to start again—[that is] Ganshof's idea of crushing the secession of Katanga. Lumumba was removed because of the success in attacking the secession of South Kasai. Until the situation became clear that Gizenga couldn't receive ammunition, arms from outside, which was impossible as long as Sudan was opposed, the question was, should we give Gizenga the chance to come to Kinshasa as vice prime minister, at least to start operating within the parliament to build up some kind of basis. That was the idea, I didn't know that in Kinshasa the name of Adoula was suggested, but I knew Adoula very well, he was a socialist, he also opposed Lumumba. But he was the only one, being a Kin, as I said a man from Kinshasa, the only one who could be accepted at that moment. I insisted at the UN "let us give Adoula a chance, as long as he will allow Gizenga [and] Stanleyville members of the government to join as ministers." The trouble with Gizenga, is that he's so secretive, he believes that he can lead a movement on the national level. Gizenga before independence led PSA, which was more of a regional party. Gizenga came with the Congo delegation at the UN twice. The first time we had an incident. We had a big incident at the Berkeley Hotel. We had dinner, a very good dinner but didn't know that those people serving us were agents of some sort. Next morning, in the newspaper, picture of all of us at dinner: 'Congolese communists, look how they're spending money they receive from the Russians.' So the presence of Gizenga in the delegation—the second time, Gizenga was there, but the man who made the speech at the Security Council was Bomboko, the minister of foreign affairs. According to our information, the Americans believed that if there were any communists in Lumumba's government, it was Gizenga. Gizenga was the communist behind Lumumba. I don't

know what gave the Americans the possibility to attack this government. I personally told Gizenga “Antoine, please accept to be vice prime minister.”

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Maybe Larry has further information on the [US] perception of Gizenga.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: The perception of Gizenga was not that he was a communist agent or even a convinced communist. The perception was the same as it was for Lumumba; that he wanted to use the Soviets for obtaining assistance and aid and that he would continue becoming more and more controlled by them by use of their help. That was [our] perception.

HERBERT WEISS: It boils down to the same thing, which is, if their perception was that if they put Gizenga forward, it would profoundly offend the US and would be interpreted by the US—that someone tied to the Soviets was now speaking for their government. That was their point of view, and since they had already experienced the negative effects of those perceptions of the US in other situations.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I don’t think we’re far apart on this. Another perception was that when he came back he [Gizenga] would work from inside the government to eventually take over the government from Adoula. And certainly I think that Adoula had that perception. That's one of the reasons he [Gizenga] was arrested.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN: Could you try to put yourself back into your mind set and your thoughts then? What were some of the assumptions based on?

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: Statements made by Lumumba or Gizenga directly to members of the embassy or to others which were reported to us, or that appeared in the press, various statements. I can't put a finger on any one of them. But there was this general belief, which I must admit I was part of. Starting with Lumumba, he was the competent one of the two. He was regarded as much more competent then Gizenga. But with Lumumba gone, there was no understanding on our part that he [Gizenga] was not acceptable to the Stanleyville [government].

THOMAS KANZA: Let me ask Cleophas two questions. Before the convening of the government in Lovanium in July, you traveled to Stanleyville. But I think Adoula also made a trip there.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: No.

THOMAS KANZA: I believe there were two candidates for prime minister—you and Adoula. When I was asked in New York about my view, I said that it was difficult, since the agreement between Stanleyville and the Belgians in Kinshasa there were two points of agreement for the formation of the government. First, the next government which will receive the vote of confidence from the Parliament will be the successor of Lumumba's government. It means that all ministers, members of the Parliament, must be kept in their

portfolios as ministers. The second one was that Lundula had to join the army and accept to be general of the army. The third point, we were very sorry that Gizenga did not come to Lovanium. Because he thought that if he comes to the parliament he may be challenging Adoula. We told Gizenga that he was wrong, [that] he stood no chance of becoming prime minister. The people in Stanleyville were against him, because he was very unpopular in Stanleyville. These are the points I was trying to make, if you can comment on them.

JEAN OMASOMBO: I would like to add a question about Gizenga. He was the vice prime minister, but he had no portfolio. This was a compensation post, and the circumstances were the ones [by which] he becomes the successor of Lumumba after his assassination.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I'd like to start by the third point. Gizenga, the Vice Prime Minister, was not just a compensation, but a compromise. It was a necessity for Lumumba to have the majority in 1960. The PSA was the second party, and no majority could be obtained without Gizenga by Lumumba's side. We considered that he had to assist the prime minister and replace him when he was away. It was a convention between us. Now as to Kanza's questions. Adoula never came to Stanleyville to see Gizenga, I did go two times. I went in June and in July 1961. In April, I just went to make an attempt at reconciliation, but in June and July it was to bring the nationalist deputies and senators to Lovanium. The first time I had to negotiate to convince them to come. They accepted and I took them to Kinshasa in the UN plane in June. They went back to

Lovanium. Thus they showed that they still had the majority, as during the first meeting they elected the same Kasongo with the same majority as president of the chamber of deputies.[79] We had the proof that nationalists still had the majority. The president understood that he had to negotiate. Kasavubu stayed at the head of the state, Kasongo: chairman of the Chamber of Deputies, Kalonji: president of the Senate, he was more or less neutral. As Kasavubu kept his position, the prime minister was going to be nationalist. The nationalists met in Lovanium, I wasn't there because I was a provincial governor. I had given up my position in the party in favor of Mulele. In the nationalist camp, Gizenga was the leader. But President Kasavubu told me that we could choose any prime minister we wanted, but the government had to be split in half. I was talking to Kasavubu very often since I had come back from Stanleyville. Because our people were in Lovanium and couldn't communicate with the exterior, the whole communication was through me. Robert Gardiner, the Ghanaian, on behalf on the UN was in charge of the mediation; he would go to Lovanium, he'd go to see Kaavubu and came back to my place every evening. The nationalist deputies and senators elected Gizenga prime minister. My last trip was to transmit the message to Gizenga. I told him he was expected as prime minister in Lovanium, where he would be appointed and then had to form the government. We spent a sleepless night discussing this. He was telling me that there was no security, he was afraid he was going to be killed, just like Lumumba was. I told him that the security was increased, that we were going by a UN plane, he was going directly from the airport to Lovanium in a helicopter. I also told him that he had to appear before the two chambers in order to obtain their trust. He didn't accept it. In the morning I asked him to call all the African ambassadors, because I needed witnesses. At 7 o'clock in the

[79] Kasongo was one of the leaders of the Stanleyville government

morning all the ambassadors were in his living room. I told them that I came with a mission, to announce him [Gizenga] the position of prime minister. We discussed this during 3 hours. The opinions were not unanimous. He took advantage of this and told me that not even they would agree. I asked “when I'm going to tell the parliament, what should I tell them?” They said “go back and tell them just what happened.” I went back and told Kasavubu and he replied that I should take the position. I refused. I am a provincial governor and Gizenga is going to think I’m against him. I was asked to propose three names as candidates. I suggested Christophe Gbenye, Alexandre Mamba and Remy Muakmba. All three refused the position because they are afraid of Gizenga. The situation was difficult. I told Kasavubu that in our camp nobody wanted the position. Kasavubu said “the members of the parliament are tired, they want to seat the government. The post is yours, why do you refuse?” He proposed the position to me again and I refused. Then Robert [Gardiner] suggested Adoula, who was already preparing to take the function and was prepared by others. As Adoula and I had been good friends for a long time and that politically, in the MNC-Kalonji he was the one closest to us, closest to Lumumba, he had never betrayed Lumumba, I thought he could be the solution. That night, I wrote a letter to President [of the Chamber of Deputies] Kasongo telling him that, in the situation given the least harmful solution for us would be Adoula. He accepted Adoula but he sent Lemoine to help form the government. The first government was formed in my residence. Adoula left Lovanium with Gardiner, in his car and came to my place where we discussed the forming of the government. Kasavubu was on the phone with us all the time. We split the portfolios between the two sides. We first made the repartition of the functions. After that, we needed the names for the functions.

Kasongo said that our former ministers should keep their positions and I agreed, all our people from the former government joined the new one. We decided on the list and we signed it. We gave the list and a letter to Robert Gardiner for him to take them to President Kasongo. In the morning, Kasongo received the letter and presented it to the nationalists. They agreed with the list and everyone got to keep his function. This government, to which the others added their side—Bomboko was in charge of this for them. On the 2nd of August the government was presented to the parliament and accepted. There was only one abstention. I think that I had done my job. When the government was accepted by the two chambers, Gizenga accepted the post of vice prime minister. This shocked us all. He had refused to be prime minister, but he accepted to be vice prime minister. We talked on the phone and he accepted the job three days later. Adoula went to Stanleyville to take him, because he wouldn't have come by himself. They went to a conference in Belgrade together and when they came back we had a reception at my place and everything went well. But one week later, General Lundula came to Kinshasa, and I welcomed him at my place. Gizenga wanted to go back to Stanleyville. I asked him if he was going back to say goodbye and come back or to stay. He told me he didn't know. I told him not to do that, as we had engaged in an official position. He replied that he'd say, depending on the situation. When Lundula came, I asked him "what is going to happen if Gizenga wants to stay in Stanleyville?" He replied "I have just taken oath as general of the army, Mobutu is my only chief. If the government tells me to do something, I'll do it." I said "even if the government wants you to arrest your chief Gizenga?" He replied "My chiefs now are Kasavubu, Adoula and Mobutu." I called

Gizenga and told him about my conversation with Lundula. He said he understood, but he never came back. Six months later, Lundula arrested him.

JEAN OMASOMBO: But you became part of this government later?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: I kept my position of provincial governor and became part of that government in February, the following year [1962].

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: If I understand well, Thomas and you said that Gizenga finally left Stanleyville as a prisoner?

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: The second time—the first time Adoula went to take him.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: At the UN, the impression was that when he came to Kinshasa, he stayed the first night at the Royal and then he called the chief at that time to tell him that he was going to go stay at his place. The UN and the US had the impression that he was not a prisoner at all.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: So the Adoula government formed on the 2nd of August, the Belgrade conference was in September. At the beginning of September Adoula left for Stanleyville to bring back Gizenga. They came back together. It is possible that on that night Gizenga was lodged by the UN, they spent a few days in Kinshasa and they left for Belgrade. When he came back from Belgrade, Gizenga stayed at his own place. For 15

days he talked to everyone, but he did not take over his office. He told Adoula that he had to go back to Stanleyville to pack up and say goodbye. He left at the beginning of October for Stanleyville and he stayed until February.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: I have the impression, I don't know for sure, that while he was there, he tried to arrest General Lundula and that several soldiers were killed at Stanleyville. And that the government condemned him and he received a vote of distrust.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: What happened is that Gizenga went to Stanleyville in October and he was not supposed to come back till the end of the month. But he took office in Stanleyville as vice prime minister of Adoula's government and he started to act as an autonomous government. He took initiative, he was responsible for the killing in Kindu. Lundula did not obey his orders and Gizenga tried to arrest him. At that time, there was a crisis. The vice prime minister tried to arrest the General Lundula. The central government passed the matter to the parliament, in January 1962. Adoula asked the parliament what should be done about this vice prime minister who refuses to come to Kinshasa and acts as a local government and the parliament gave him a "vote of distrust." He was dismissed and later on arrested at the beginning of February.

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: On this, we have different versions, because Linner, the UN representative, told someone from the embassy that Gizenga came by himself, stayed at the Royal and then went back to his place.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: This is the first time when he came.[80]

LAWRENCE DEVLIN: In Washington, I was told that they shouldn't kill Gizenga as they killed Lumumba and I called everyone I knew in Congo to tell them that.

CLEOPHAS KAMITATU: He profited from Lumumba's death.

[80] As Madeleine Kalb points out in *The Congo Cables: The Cold War in Africa—From Eisenhower to Kennedy* there was "considerable confusion" when he arrived in Leopoldville in January 1962. On January 16th parliament censured Gizenga 64:1 with 4 abstentions. On January 19th Adoula told US Ambassador Gullion that Gizenga would be brought to Leopoldville as a prisoner. Gizenga arrived to a warm welcome, spent his first night at UN headquarters and Sture Linner Chief of ONUC, received a promise from Adoula that the central government would offer protection to Gizenga. All agreed that he could not suffer the same fate as Lumumba. The question of the Congo Crisis was still very much of Lumumba.