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INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS
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Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WNS
Date: SEP 14 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Zaire - Uncertain Future -- INFORMATION MEMORANDUM (U)

(S) The month-long invasion of the Shaba Region has cast into doubt Zaire's future unity and stability by eroding the prestige and authority of Mobutu and his government, upsetting Zaire's economic stabilization program, and increasing Zaire's already excessive foreign debts. Nigeria's diplomatic initiative and OAU action appear to hold little promise for immediate resolution of the situation. France's influence in Zaire, and possibly other African states, is at a new high as the result of its response to Mobutu's requests for military assistance. On the other hand US (and to a lesser degree Belgian) influence in Zaire and among African moderates has suffered somewhat, at least in Zairian eyes from the limits we have placed on our aid. Introduction of Moroccan military forces last week added a new dimension to the conflict. The outlook is uncertain. Hard policy decisions for the USG may be in the offing.

(S) General US objectives are:

- Prevent, preferably by diplomatic means, the partition of Zaire.
 - Avoid making Zaire appear as a test of American will or a major East-West confrontation.
 - Prevent, if possible, a situation which would be perceived as another victory for USSR/Cuba and further destabilize the tense southern Africa situation just as we start our new initiatives on Rhodesia and Namibia.
 - Encourage improvement in Zaire's relations with neighboring states, including Angola.
 - Avoid the emergence of a hostile regime if Mobutu falls.
- (March 1977 CIA assessment of the effects of a "radical" successor is attached.)

CIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR RELEASE OF THIS DOCUMENT. DATE:

Classified by Director, Africa Region, OASD
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652, AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS. DECLASSIFIED ON 12-31-85

15-Jan-2015



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- Favor, in the "post-invasion" era, a more broadly-based and effective government for Zaire.

(S) Current US policy is to provide qualified support to Zaire's central government. The President has approved State's consultations with Congress on a program that would extend further tangible support, but in a precisely limited manner. It would:

- Provide Zaire additional military support only in the amount already approved by Congress, i.e., the approximately \$30 million remaining in FY 76 and FY 77 FMS credit plus the residue of earlier fiscal year credits.

-- Restrict equipment deliveries to non-lethal items.

-- Approve \$13 million in requests now pending, including approximately \$9 million in FY 76 credit for a C-130 aircraft to be delivered in May.

- Accelerate implementation of approved economic assistance (\$14.9 million for PL-480 food and \$16.6 million in security supporting assistance for commodity imports).

(S) The degree of US influence over events in Zaire is very limited. Events which could necessitate a US reaction include:

- Seizure of Kolwezi by the invaders (would dramatically alter the military and psychological situation in Zaire).

- Confirmed use in Zaire by third country (e.g., Morocco) forces of US equipment.

- Abortion of Nigerian and allied diplomatic initiatives designed to ameliorate the situation within Zaire.

- Zaire's exhaustion of all remaining FMS credits with concomitant pleas for more.

- Request by Zaire for lethal equipment readily available only from US sources, e.g., M60 tanks.

- Strong signals that Mobutu is likely to be ousted by a coup, voluntary departure, etc.

- Pressures by Belgium, France, or others for the USG to do more.

- Serious escalation of the fighting with resultant requests for US aid to help beleaguered Moroccan or other friendly troops.

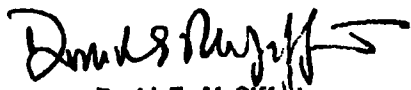
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(S) If events in the fluid situation warrant, the most likely types of US reaction options to review would include:

- Maintaining our present posture.
- Extending additional political support for third country, OAU, or UN mediations (or even interventions).
- Providing lethal items to Zaire or to third countries involved in Zaire.
- Increasing US FMS. This would involve reallocating FMS credit from other country programs or requesting a supplemental security assistance appropriation.



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Assistant Secretary of Defense
International Security Affairs

Enclosure - 1
CIA assessment

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