

Battleground **AFRICA**

COLD WAR IN THE CONGO
1960-1965



LISE NAMIKAS

Battleground Africa

Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965

Lise Namikas



Woodrow Wilson Center Press
Washington, D.C.

Stanford University Press
Stanford, California

EDITORIAL OFFICES

Woodrow Wilson Center Press
One Woodrow Wilson Plaza
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004-3027
Telephone: 202-691-4029
www.wilsoncenter.org

ORDER FROM

Stanford University Press
Chicago Distribution Center
11030 South Langley Avenue
Chicago, Ill. 60628
Telephone: 1-800-621-2736

© 2013 by Lise Namikas

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper

2 4 6 8 9 7 5 3 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Namikas, Lise A.

Battleground Africa : Cold War in the Congo, 1960–1965 / Lise Namikas.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Congo (Democratic Republic)—History—Civil War, 1960–1965. 2. Cold War—Political aspects—Congo (Democratic Republic) 3. Congo (Democratic Republic)—Foreign relations—United States. 4. United States—Foreign relations—Congo (Democratic Republic) 5. Congo (Democratic Republic)—Foreign relations—Soviet Union. 6. Soviet Union—Foreign relations—Congo (Democratic Republic) I. Title.

DT658.22.N36 2012

967.51031—dc23

2012036962

ISBN 978-0-8047-8486-3

Battleground Africa

James G. Hershberg
Series Editor

The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis

Castro, Mikoyan, Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Missiles of October

By Sergo Mikoyan. Edited by Svetlana Savranskaya

Divided Together

The United States and the Soviet Union in the United Nations, 1945–1965

By Ilya V. Gaiduk

Marigold

The Lost Chance for Peace in Vietnam

By James G. Hershberg

After Leaning to One Side

China and Its Allies in the Cold War

By Zhihua Shen and Danhui Li

The Cold War in East Asia 1945–1991

Edited by Tsuyoshi Hasegawa

Stalin and Togliatti

Italy and the Origins of the Cold War

By Elena Agarossi and Victor Zaslavsky

A Distant Front in the Cold War

The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956–1964

By Sergey Mazov

Connecting Histories

Decolonization and the Cold War in Southeast Asia, 1945–1982

Edited by Christopher E. Goscha and Christian F. Ostermann

Rebellious Satellite: Poland 1956

By Paweł Machcewicz

Two Suns in the Heavens

The Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962–1967

By Sergey Radchenko

The Soviet Union and the June 1967 Six-Day War

Edited by Yaacov Ro'i and Boris Morozov

Local Consequences of the Global Cold War

Edited by Jeffrey A. Engel

Behind the Bamboo Curtain

China, Vietnam, and the World beyond Asia

Edited by Priscilla Roberts

Failed Illusions

Moscow, Washington, Budapest, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt

By Charles Gati

Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era

Soviet-DPRK Relations and the Roots of North Korean Despotism, 1953–1964

By Balázs Szalontai

Confronting Vietnam

Soviet Policy toward the Indochina Conflict, 1954–1963

By Ilya V. Gaiduk

Economic Cold War

America's Embargo against China and the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1949–1963

By Shu Guang Zhang



The Wilson Center, chartered by Congress as the official memorial to President Woodrow Wilson, is the nation's key non-partisan policy forum for tackling global issues through independent research and open dialogue to inform actionable ideas for Congress, the Administration and the broader policy community.

Conclusions or opinions expressed in Center publications and programs are those of the authors and speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Center staff, fellows, trustees, advisory groups, or any individuals or organizations that provide financial support to the Center.

The Center is the publisher of *The Wilson Quarterly* and home of Woodrow Wilson Center Press and *dialogue* television and radio. For more information about the Center's activities and publications, please visit us on the Web at www.wilsoncenter.org.

Board of Trustees

Jane Harman, Director, President, and CEO

Joseph B. Gildenhorn, Chairman of the Board

Sander R. Gerber, Vice Chairman

Private Members:

Timothy Broas, John T. Casteen III, Charles E. Cobb Jr., Thelma Duggin, Carlos M. Gutierrez, Susan Hutchison, Barry S. Jackson

Public Members:

James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress; Hillary R. Clinton, Secretary of State; G. Wayne Clough, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education; David Ferriero, Archivist of the United States; James Leach, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities; Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services; Designated Appointee of the President from within the federal government: Fred P. Hochberg, Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank

Wilson National Cabinet:

Eddie and Sylvia Brown, Melva Bucksbaum and Raymond Learsy, Ambassadors Sue and Chuck Cobb, Lester Crown, Thelma Duggin, Judi Flom, Sander R. Gerber, Ambassador Joseph B. Gildenhorn and Alma Gildenhorn, Harman Family Foundation, Susan Hutchison, Frank F. Islam, Willem Kooyker, Linda B. and Tobia G. Mercuro, Dr. Alexander V. Mirtchev, Wayne Rogers, Leo Zickler

The Cold War International History Project

The Cold War International History Project was established by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in 1991. The project supports the full and prompt release of historical materials by governments on all sides of the Cold War and seeks to disseminate new information and perspectives on Cold War history emerging from previously inaccessible sources on the “the other side”—the former Communist world—through publications, fellowships, and scholarly meetings and conferences. The project publishes the *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* and a working paper series and maintains a Web site at www.cwihp.org.

At the Woodrow Wilson Center, the project is part of the History and Public Policy Program, directed by Christian F. Ostermann. Previous directors include David Wolff (1997–98) and James G. Hershberg (1991–97). The project is overseen by an advisory committee chaired by William Taubman, Amherst College, and includes Michael Beschloss; James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress; Warren I. Cohen, University of Maryland Baltimore County; John Lewis Gaddis, Yale University; James G. Hershberg, George Washington University; Samuel F. Wells Jr., Woodrow Wilson Center; and Sharon Wolchik, George Washington University.

The Cold War International History Project has been supported by the Korea Foundation, Seoul; the Leon Levy Foundation, New York; the Henry Luce Foundation, New York; the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Chicago; and the Smith Richardson Foundation, Westport, Conn.

Acknowledgments

Where there is no justice, there is no peace. A deep and growing respect for the people of the Congo kept this topic immediate and important over the years. At the University of Southern California, Roger Dingman, Michael Graham Fry, and Azade-Ayse Rorlich guided me as I formulated my first thoughts on the crisis and were always encouraging even across the miles. A number of reviewers, known and unknown, have helped me clarify and strengthen this work. A special thanks goes to James Hershberg, a reviewer and the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) series editor. Additional special thanks to David Gibbs, Thomas Borstelmann, Andrew DeRoche, Stephen Weissman, Crawford Young, and the others who read all or part of the many versions of this manuscript over the years. The CWIHP Oral History Conference on the Congo Crisis renewed the meaningfulness of this project, and it was an honor to work with CWIHP director Christian Ostermann, the Russian historian Sergey Mazov, Herbert Weiss, and all the others involved. Thanks, too, to Joe Brinley, the director of the Woodrow Wilson Center Press, for seeing this project through its final stages, and to Alfred Imhoff, the project editor, for improving its clarity and readability. The team effort was truly professional.

Financial support made research a possibility. The David L. Boren National Security Education Fellowship program enabled travel to Russia, and the John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Baines Johnson presidential libraries funded trips to Boston and Austin. I would like to thank the many librarians and audiovisual specialists, especially at the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson presidential libraries; U.S. National Archives and Records Administration; the Library of Congress; and the Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii and the Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossiskoi Federatsii. Special thanks to N. I. Gorlova, Mary Kennefick, M. Kirilov, N. I. Mozhukhina, S. V. Pavlov, Mikahil Iurevich

Prozrymenshchikov, L. I. Semichastano, Galina Shulgina, Natal'ia Georgievna Tomilina, and John Wilson. Their knowledge of the archives was truly invaluable. Ruth Wallach at the University of Southern California also shared her time and expertise. A warm thanks to Luc Viaene for help from abroad. Thanks also to Nina Nikolaevna Belaeva and the entire Vizgini family for their support in Moscow and patience in teaching me the Russian language. My learning about the Congo was also made much easier with the friendship of Litofe Sloj Silika. Thank you.

This book is dedicated to Olivier B. Muloin (d. 1999). His passion for history inspired my own, while a mother's encouragement kept it going. My husband, Steven, offered support one day at a time. Though the book was begun long before they were born, my three children—Kalina, Benjamin, and Timothy—can now share in seeing this project in print.

Place Name Changes

<i>Former name</i>	<i>Changed to</i>
Albertville	Kalemie
Bakwanga	Mbuji-Mayi
Baudouinville	Moba
Coguilhatville	Mbandaka
Elizabethville	Lubumbashi
Jadotville	Lukasi
Katanga Province	Shaba
Leopoldville	Kinshasa
Luluabourg	Kananga
Paulis	Isiro
Port Francqui	Ilebo
Stanleyville	Kisangani
Thysville	Mbanza-Ngungu

Frequently Used Abbreviations

Abako	Alliance des Bakongo
ANC	Armée Nationale Congolaise (formerly Force Publique)
CC CPSU	Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Cerea	Centre de Regroupment Africain
CIA	U.S. Central Intelligence Agency
CNL	Conseil National de Libération
Conakat	Confédération d'Associations Tribales du Katanga
CRISP	Centre de Recherche et d'Information Socio-Politiques, Brussels
<i>FRUS</i>	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i> (U.S. State Department publications)
KGB	Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopastnosti (Committee for State Security), Soviet Union
MNC	Mouvement National Congolaise
NSC	National Security Council
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ONUC	Opération des Nations Unies au Congo (United Nations Operation in the Congo)
PSA	Parti Solidaire Africain
TASS	Telegrafnoye Agentstvo Sovetskogo Soyuza (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union)
UAR	United Arab Republic
UMHK	Union Minière du Haut Katanga
USUN	U.S. Mission to the United Nations

Battleground Africa

Contents

<i>Figures</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>Place Name Changes</i>	xiii
<i>Frequently Used Abbreviations</i>	xiv
Introduction	1
1 Which Way Africa?	21
2 A Cold War Nationalism	33
3 Collision Course: The Superpowers in the Congo	47
4 A “Stopgap Arrangement”: ONUC	62
5 A “Castro or Worse”: Lumumba in Charge	78
6 Coups d’État and Troikas	97
7 Murder and Malice	112
8 A “Cold War” Civil War	127
9 No Silver Bullets	142
10 Force and Reconciliation	160
11 Johnson’s Distraction	181

12	“Carrying the Burden” in the Congo	194
13	Reaction and Mop-Up	210
	Conclusion: The Congo in Global Perspective	223
	<i>Appendix: Persons in the Book</i>	233
	<i>Notes</i>	239
	<i>Selected Bibliography</i>	317
	<i>Index</i>	339

Figures

I.1	Lumumba Faces Mobutu, December 1960	2
I.2	Map of the Congo, 1960	4
2.1	Ethnographic Map of the Congo	37
4.1	Dag Saves the World (Cartoon), July 1960	71
4.2	United Nations Forces in the Congo, July 1960	75
5.1	Lumumba and Cordier, July 1960	80
5.2	Lumumba and Bomboko, July 1960	81
5.3	Hammar skjöld in Elizabethville, August 1960	88
6.1	Khrushchev at the United Nations, October 1960	110
8.1	Eisenhower and Kennedy, January 1961	129
9.1	Refugees Flee from Tshombe, September 1961	150
9.2	Kennedy and Gullion, August 1961	152
10.1	Adoula and Kennedy, February 1962	161
10.2	Kennedy, U Thant, and Stevenson, January 1962	163
10.3	Kennedy and Spaak, November 1962	170
10.4	Kennedy and Mobutu, May 1963	176
12.1	Map of the 1964 Rebellions	197
12.2	U.S. Air Crews at Kamina, November 1964	207
12.3	Belgian Paratroopers Escorting Simba at Stanleyville Airport, November 1964	207
13.1	Soviet Weapons Stash Found in the Eastern Congo, February 1965	211
13.2	Johnson and Goldberg, July 1965	215

Introduction

On February 13, 1961, Godefroid Munongo—the interior minister for Katanga, the Congo’s secessionist province, and a loyal supporter of its leader, Moïse Tshombe—made an announcement that had been expected. Munongo had a reputation for being cold and calculating, and his words equaled it. With reporters listening around the world, he told how the former Congolese prime minister, Patrice Lumumba—now an accused communist sympathizer—had escaped from prison and been killed by the angry inhabitants of a village through which he fled. Munongo preempted denunciations of foul play: “If people accuse us of killing Lumumba, I will reply, ‘Prove it!’” He then thanked the fictitious villager assassins by announcing a reward of \$8,000 for ridding the Congo and the world of “a problem” that had “menaced the existence of humanity.”¹

What had actually happened to Lumumba was in fact even more gruesome than Munongo’s story. On December 1, 1960, Lumumba fled across the Sanzaru River on his way to Stanleyville, but he was overtaken by the forces of army chief Joseph Mobutu, who enjoyed “technical assistance” from the Belgian Sûreté (the former Belgian police force in the Congo, then operating out of Katanga) and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). On orders from Congolese president Joseph Kasavubu, backed up by advice from the CIA station chief, Lawrence Devlin, Lumumba was quickly captured and brought to Camp Hardy in Thysville, a military prison near the capital city of Leopoldville (figure I.1). Meanwhile, U.N. troops, as part of ONUC (Opération des Nations Unies au Congo, United Nations Operation in the Congo), stood by and refused to protect him. Despite the endless accusations that Lumumba was a communist puppet because he had accepted some aid from the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, not one communist country came to his rescue.

Figure I.1. Lumumba Faces Mobutu after His Arrest, December 2, 1960



Source: Associated Press photograph, used with permission.

After pro-Lumumba riots erupted at Camp Hardy prison on the night of January 13, 1961, key Belgian officials in the Congo working for the government of Gaston Eyskens strongly urged Kasavubu to get rid of his infamous prisoner. Although Devlin himself expressed no objection, his silence in the context is indicative of tacit approval.²

In response, an apprehensive Kasavubu, along with Mobutu and Victor Nendaka, chief of the Sûreté Nationale (National Security Services), made an emergency trip to Thysville. Mobutu explained the daring trip to Devlin as an attempt to deal with the “all-or-nothing situation” there. The trio planned the transfer of Lumumba and two other prisoners—former minister of youth and sports Maurice Mpolo, and the former president of the Senate, Joseph Okito—to Bakwanga in Kasai Province. Nendaka was the one to shuffle the prisoners onto a small plane in the wee hours of January 17 and, en route, their destination was switched to Elizabethville, the capital of Katanga Province. All three were so badly beaten on the flight that the pilot, nauseated and disgusted, ordered the cockpit door shut. CIA agents in Elizabethville seemed unaware of what was going on, but wished otherwise. After the “package” had arrived, they thanked their superiors for sending Patrice, lamenting, “If we had known he was coming, we would have baked a snake.”³