

CHAPITRE PREMIER/CHAPTER I
NATIONS UNIES ET AUTRES ORGANISATIONS
INTERNATIONALES
UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS

PREMIÈRE PARTIE/PART I

NATIONS UNIES
UNITED NATIONS

SECTION A

CONGO

1.

DEA/6386-40

*Note du sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
pour le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

SECRET. CANADIAN EYES ONLY.

[Ottawa], July 12, 1960

POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE CONGO

A grave development in the Congo situation occurred last night when Premier Moïse Tshombe of Katanga Province declared the province to be "totally independent." He had previously declared a state of emergency.

Up to the present the disturbances in the Congo have been of an unexpected kind, i.e., a widespread mutiny of Congolese units of the Force Publique against their Belgian officers and against Europeans generally. What had been expected was disorders between the many strong tribal elements within the country and between tribal authorities and the new central government. It had been feared, moreover, that the central government, even with the backing of a loyal Force Publique, might be unable to maintain order. This pattern has been largely absent, however, until the present.

The Katanga revolt raises several new and disturbing elements. The province contains almost the whole of the Congo's potential wealth and natural resources, is the most highly industrialized, and is the location of the most important outside investment. Without the Katanga all possibility that the Congo might be a unified and economically viable state would disappear. The area is coveted by its white neighbours in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland whose rich copper belt adjoins. A few weeks ago Prime Minister Sir Roy Welensky caused considerable trouble by announcing that if the Congo were to break up the Rhodesias might find it necessary to take over the Katanga. He was probably rapped over the knuckles by Whitehall for this statement, but even since the disorders in the Congo broke out he has said that the Federation could only consider intervention in Katanga if its assistance were requested by the proper authorities. We know that this too caused great embarrassment to the United