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Note pour le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Memorandum for Secretary of State for External Affairs

CONFIDENTIAL

[Ottawa], July 15, 1960

CONGO

The long-range problems involved in the future of the Congo may be more serious and more difficult to resolve than the short-range ones of restoring peace and order which have now been assumed by the United Nations.

2. Prime Minister Lumumba has broken off diplomatic relations with Belgium, claiming Belgium violated the Convention signed on June 29, by sending troops into the Congo without the Congolese having requested them. It is reported that Belgium interprets the Security Council resolution to mean that regular troops will be withdrawn to the Belgian bases in the Congo. The Congolese and other African nations will almost certainly interpret the resolution to mean a complete withdrawal from the Congo of all Belgian troops.

3. The Belgians believe that the troubles are Communist inspired and that if Lumumba and Kasavubu are maintained in power this will constitute a victory for the Communists. The United States also see Communist inspiration behind the troubles. While they do not constitute proof of Communist inspiration, Khrushchev's latest threats⁴ are certainly proof of the reality of Communist involvement now.

4. Belgium seems to be dangerously willing to accept or even to encourage the secession of Katanga. Tshombe, the Prime Minister of Katanga, has stated that he will deny entry to the U.N. force (this is a separate and difficult problem). Tshombe has now requested free world recognition of an independent Katanga and we are faced with one more difficult problem. If any Western power (particularly Belgium) were to accord recognition, the results could be grave in the extreme.

5. Apart from these immediate dangers Katanga's withdrawal from the Congo might start a movement for further balkanization. In any event the Congo's economic future would be precarious without its richest province. The cause of those wishing to re-establish the historic kingdom of Bakongo which included most of what is now the Republic of Congo in the French Community, parts of Portuguese Angola and Northern Rhodesia, would be encouraged.

6. Even if Katanga should be reincorporated within the central republic there would still be an immense long-range problem of how the country can be administered until the Congolese can take over. This at the most optimistic estimate would be several years. Before the disorders there were approximately 10,000 Belgian administrators in the Congo. Unless the large majority consent to remain or return, which is highly improbable, or unless they can be replaced, the whole structure of the country could collapse. This would mean an operation of a magnitude which the United Nations is not at the moment even remotely equipped to face. It would be a monumental task to find 5,000 to 10,000 suitably trained and readily available personnel (and who in addition should be French speaking): United Nations technical assistance has been in terms of dozens, not thousands, of experts per country. The cost would be astronomical and many governments — even if agreeing in principle with the necessity of providing aid of such magnitude — might well balk at paying the price.

⁴ Voir/See Seymour Topping, "Russians Demand Troops Quit Congo," *New York Times*, July 14, 1960, p. 5.