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### 3 Understanding the Congo Crisis, 1960–1963<sup>1</sup>

Katanga's attempted secession from the Congo needs to be analyzed in any study of the international politics of separatism. As the first secessionist crisis following decolonization in Africa, it influenced future expectations and understandings about the nature of secession and its international consequences.<sup>2</sup> Even more importantly, the United Nations intervened in the crisis with troops, who, after some hesitation, fought and defeated the separatists. The Congo Crisis thus serves as a test case of the influence of international institutions on secessionism, since the armed forces of an international organization defeated a secessionist movement. As the Cold War seriously influenced how states responded to this crisis, a study of the Katangan secession may also reveal whether the domestic political interests of elites influenced behavior more than security concerns. Many states were involved on either side during the Congo Crisis, so there is a significant variation in the dependent variable: policies toward the secessionists. Thus, the Congo Crisis serves as a crucial case. This study finds that while East-West rivalry may have shaped superpower interests, the conflict itself was a tribal dispute that became viewed as a racial one.

The approaches developed in chapter 2 produce varying predictions and explanations for the politics of the Congo Crisis. Vulnerability arguments stressing the effects of international cooperation would expect very few states to support the secessionist movement, Katanga, because of the strong role played by the United Nations, and those states that do support Katanga would be those less vulnerable to secessionism. The United Nations is important

for vulnerability theorists as it represents both a set of norms governing boundary-maintenance (though not as explicitly as the Organization of African Unity), and a solution to the transaction costs of defining boundaries, cheating, and punishment for cheaters.

Realists, focusing on the support of secession for balancing threats, would suggest that states threatened by Katanga would support the Congo, and those threatened by the Congo would support Katanga. Neighboring states will be more likely to support Katanga as they feel the threat posed by the Congo more severely, according to this approach. Whichever side is perceived to be the lesser threat to others' territorial integrity will gain support. Those who are seen as likely supporters of boundary-changing efforts will encourage counterbalancing efforts.

The theory of ethnic politics and foreign policy predicts that those leaders depending upon the support of ethnic groups with ties to Katanga or enmity toward the Congo would support Katanga, and those relying on constituents with ties to the Congo or enmity against Katanga would support the Congo. Because most perceived the crisis as a racial conflict, leaders depending upon black supporters or on those hostile to whites would support the Congo, and leaders depending on white supporters would assist the Katangans. Politicians depending on support from both blacks and whites would be ambivalent or neutral during this crisis.

### The Crisis Begins

On June 30, 1960, the Congo became independent, even though the Belgians had scarcely begun the task of preparing the state for its new status.<sup>3</sup> Although the Belgians had not intended to free the Congo so quickly, France's painful experience with decolonization intimidated Belgian decision makers.<sup>4</sup> As a result, they shortened a four-year plan for independence to six months. Fears of instability were quickly realized as units of the Force Publique, the Congo's armed forces, began to mutiny shortly after independence, on July 5. Events quickly escalated, despite the efforts of President Joseph Kasavubu and Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba to settle the crisis, culminating in the declaration of Katangan independence, by the province's President, Moïse Tshombe, on July 11.

Katanga, containing the richest mines of the Congo, had been a site of separatist sentiment before independence, but Belgian opposition deterred

the movement.<sup>5</sup> “The mutiny of the Force Publique, and the resulting chaos combined with Lumumba’s refusal to call in Belgian troops, changed the situation completely. Those Europeans who had opposed secession now saw it as the only way of effectively restoring law and order and safeguarding Belgian investment in Katanga.”<sup>6</sup>

Tshombe strategically positioned Katanga as a bastion against the spread of communism in central Africa, seeking aid from Belgium and other Western states.<sup>7</sup> Belgian troops based in Katanga acted to maintain order within that province, while Belgium sent reinforcements. These troops also took action within the rest of the Congo to safeguard the lives of Europeans.

On July 12, the crisis became internationalized as officials within the Congolese government, including the Deputy Prime Minister, asked the United States Ambassador for American troops to help restore law and order. Upon learning about the appeal for American troops, Kasavubu and Lumumba called for United Nations assistance to “prevent aggression and to restore the internal situation;” and asked for troops from neutral nations rather than the U.S.<sup>8</sup>

On July 14, the UN Security Council met to discuss the crisis. The Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld, argued that “the United Nations accede to the request of the Government of the Congo,” and he recommended sending military and technical assistance.<sup>9</sup> As the only African state on the Security Council, Tunisia proposed a resolution calling for withdrawal of Belgian troops and authorizing the Secretary-General to follow his own recommendations. Passed with eight votes in favor and the abstentions of Great Britain, France, and Taiwan, the resolution provided the Secretary-General with a vague mandate, and each participant came away with a different understanding of the resolution. Regardless of the conflicting interpretations, the resolution clearly authorized the Secretary-General to take action in the Congo, involving the UN in one of its most controversial and complicated endeavors.

### The Ethnic Politics of Katanga

Due to the internal and external politics of Katanga, both before and after its declaration of secession, supporters and detractors alike perceived the Katangan separatists as friendly to and perhaps manipulated by white Eu-

ropean settlers, Belgium, and the white minority regimes of Southern Africa. The Katangan secession was perceived by many as a neocolonial plot to divide the richest African state, and to weaken the position of Patrice Lumumba, one of the most outspoken and influential Black Nationalist leaders. This crisis came to be defined in different, though related ways: as a racial struggle between black Africa on the one hand and white Western powers and white minority regimes on the other, and as an important battle between neocolonialism and the newly decolonized states of the third world. The Congo Crisis therefore had both racial and ideological implications, influencing the domestic political benefits and costs elites faced as they reacted to this conflict.

The Confederation des Associations Tribales du Katanga, also known as Conakat, led the secessionists. From its very beginning's, Conakat received support from the white settlers living in Katanga. Conakat's political allies during the pre-independence period were Union pour la Colonisation and of the Reassemblé Katangaise, [Ucol], formed by Belgians to encourage colonization of the Congo, and the Union Katangaise, the political party of the more extremist settlers.<sup>10</sup>

"Conakat became progressively more involved in the publication of political programs strongly inspired by the views of the Ucol and the Union Katangaise and in direct cooperation with the leaders of these organizations."<sup>11</sup> In exchange for material and technical support, Conakat pushed at the pre-independence negotiations for provisions very favorable to white settlers, including the limitation of universal suffrage for the election of the lower chamber of the national assembly; the right of Belgian residents of the Congo to be eligible for both voting and political office; and legal qualifications that would have prevented Patrice Lumumba from running for office.<sup>12</sup>

As a result of Conakat's close ties to the settlers, the Balubakat Party, which represented the Baluba tribe in Katanga, left the Conakat coalition, leaving the Lunda tribe as the dominant group among the coalition's remaining supporters.<sup>13</sup> This split became crucial in the elections of May 1960, for both the national and provincial legislatures that would shape Katangan and Congolese politics in the post-independence period. While the elections left Balubakat with a small plurality in votes in the Katanga province, Conakat gained a small majority in seats. The *Loi Fondamentale*, the transitional constitution legislated by the Belgian parliament and influenced by Congolese-Belgian negotiations, ensured that provincial

cabinet positions would be elected by a majority, which Conakat had. However, it also required that two-thirds of the provincial assembly vote for a legitimate quorum. Because the Balubakat controlled slightly more than one-third of the seats, they could block the formation of a provincial government in Katanga as long as they abstained from voting. The colonial Vice-Governor intervened and persuaded the Belgian parliament to change this provision, allowing the Conakat to form a cabinet consisting solely of Conakat Party members.<sup>14</sup> The new Katangan provincial government's first move was to prepare for secession from the new, nationalist state of the Congo.

In the first days of post-independence period, events and decisions strongly signaled how significantly white settlers influenced Katanga and the government of Belgium. Many of the important administrative positions were held by white European settlers and former Belgian colonial officials. The behavior of the Belgians, particularly that of the army, was very different in Katanga than elsewhere in the Congo, making it clear that Belgium was supporting the secessionist movement in Katanga.

Because of the close ties between Conakat and the white settlers in Katanga, and the post-independence efforts by Belgium and white settlers to support Katanga's secessionist bid, outsiders quickly perceived Katanga as a supporter of white interests in the Congo, with many arguing that Rhodesia's white minority regime and Belgium were pulling the strings of their Katangan puppets. The tribal conflicts between the Lunda and the Baluba received little attention from any of the external actors,<sup>15</sup> including the UN, and even Tshombe himself did not emphasize the tribal sources of conflict within Katanga and between Katanga and the Congo. Instead, he positioned himself as an anti-communist, rather than an oppressed minority, thus facilitating the definition by others of the conflict as a racial one and as one between Pan-Africanism and Neo-imperialism.

Many quickly viewed the secessionist crisis to be part of a larger racial conflict between the white colonial powers, Belgium, France, Great Britain, and the white minority regimes of southern Africa, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and South Africa on one side; and the Black Nationalist states of Africa on the other. Indeed, the secession was the first open conflict between neocolonialism and the nationalist, nonaligned movement in Africa.<sup>16</sup> The issues of race and neocolonialism would play an important role in the decisions made by elites and the policies their states followed as they dealt with the crisis in the Congo.

## Supporters of the Katangan Secessionist Movement

Although no state gave formal recognition to Katanga, some states provided other forms of assistance, allowing Tshombe's regime to last three years and to weather two offensives by the United Nations before being defeated by the third. The most important supporters of the separatists were Belgium, the former colonial power; the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the white-minority regime neighboring Katanga; and Congo-Brazzaville.

### *Belgium*

"The decisive aid, ensuring the very existence of the regime in July 1960, was that which the Belgian soldiers gave to Katanga on the eve of, and just after, the proclamation of independence. Without it, the Katangan state would not have been able to exist."<sup>17</sup> Belgian troops established order in Katanga after the post-independence uprisings, and Belgian officials urged the European inhabitants of Katanga to stay in the province to continue to run the administrative apparatus of the province-state.<sup>18</sup> The orders of Belgian troops in Katanga were different from those given to Belgian troops in the rest of the Congo: to expel Congolese troops loyal to the central government.<sup>19</sup>

Belgian officers trained and led the Katangan gendarmerie, until the UN removed most of them. The gendarmerie played a crucial role in preventing the Congolese armed forces from defeating Katanga's secession at the outset. Major Guy Weber, who was responsible for the establishment of order in Katanga, and was later military adviser to Tshombe, reported directly to Brussels.<sup>20</sup> Another Belgian officer organized the gendarmerie. Belgium gave Katanga arms and facilitated the recruitment of mercenaries.<sup>21</sup> Belgians also served as political advisers to Tshombe and his regime.<sup>22</sup>

Belgium's policies changed toward the end of 1962, as it became more reluctant to support Tshombe's duplicity and more interested in ending the crisis. To understand Belgium's policies, both the inconsistencies and the changes, one must examine the dynamics of Belgium's domestic politics during this time. It has been argued quite forcefully that economic interests solely motivated Belgium's policies in the Congo, particularly in Katanga, but these analysts cannot explain why Belgian voters embraced Tshombe

and his cause.<sup>23</sup> While the economic significance of Katanga was clear, it is less obvious why economically motivated Belgian politicians would support Katanga rather than build bridges with Lumumba and Kasavubu.<sup>24</sup>

At the outset of the crisis, Belgium was governed by a weak coalition of the Christian Democratic Party (the Christian Democratic Party) and the Liberal Party.<sup>25</sup> The main party in opposition was the Socialist Party. Analysts have argued that inconsistencies in Belgian policy, such as the policy of nonrecognition of Katanga, enacted simultaneously with the provision of aid to the secessionists, were the result of this weak and divided government.<sup>26</sup> While the Socialists declared that troops should not be sent to the Congo and that Katanga should not be recognized because such an action would alienate world opinion, the Liberals pushed for recognition of Katanga. The Christian Democrats sought to compromise between the two positions by giving arms, equipment, and other forms of support to Katanga, but refusing to give diplomatic recognition. A new government formed in spring 1961 as the result of new elections, leading to a coalition between the Socialist Party and the Christian Democrats. This government had stronger support, with Paul-Henri Spaak, Belgium's most distinguished diplomat and former Secretary-General of NATO, serving as the Foreign Minister. While constrained by public opinion, this government was said to have a greater interest in resolving the crisis and a greater ability to do so. Considering Belgium's ethnic politics may help to explain the behavior of the different parties.

Specifically, rising linguistic conflict within Belgium may aid in understanding the interests of Belgian politicians at this time. Linguistic division "was to become the dominant political issue of the 1960s and 1970s, breaking up the old party structure and making the state almost ungovernable."<sup>27</sup> While the cultural differences between Flanders (the Flemish-speaking region) and Wallonia (the French-speaking region) had existed for a long time and were exacerbated by the Nazi occupation during the Second World War, "the 1960s were a watershed in Belgian politics."<sup>28</sup> Flanders was undergoing an industrial revolution while Wallonia's mining and industry were in decline.<sup>29</sup> Changes in the economic balance of power can spark increased nationalism,<sup>30</sup> and this occurred in Belgium as Flemish nationalism became more assertive and Walloon nationalism became more strident, with open conflict finally breaking out during the winter strikes of 1960–1961.<sup>31</sup> The rise of linguistic conflict was problematic for each of Belgium's three major parties as each consisted of Flemish and Walloon wings. While each party tried to avoid it, the linguistic issue eventually split the three parties into six,

each dividing into Flemish and Walloon versions. The Christian Democrats split in 1964, the Liberals in 1972, and the Socialists were the last to divide in 1978.<sup>32</sup>

According to the logic of ethnic politics, since each of the three major parties had linguistically heterogeneous constituencies, all three would try to avoid using linguistic divisions as a political tool to avoid dividing their supporters. Consequently, each party would prefer to emphasize policies that stressed some common bond among members of their constituency, such as attachment to the Belgian state—civic nationalism. If politicians could overcome linguistic divides by mobilizing their followers through Belgian nationalism, they might prevent, or at least delay, the breakup of their supporting coalitions. The Liberal Party, due to its conservative background, and the Christian Democratic Party, due to its ties to the monarchy, relied on Belgian nationalism. The Socialist Party, due to its class and ideological appeals, relied on Belgian nationalism the least.

Events in the Congo provided Belgian elites with many opportunities to stress Belgian nationalism.<sup>33</sup> The Congo's Independence Day, June 30, 1960, triggered Belgian nationalism when Lumumba responded to King Baudouin's paternalistic speech with a tirade against Belgium's colonial policies.<sup>34</sup> The Belgian press and people reacted very strongly against Lumumba, increasing Belgian nationalism.<sup>35</sup> Because this sentiment was aimed directly against Lumumba, it favored Tshombe.

In Belgium, public opinion reacted sharply in favour of Katanga. Most Belgians were smarting at the accusations of aggression and were furious that the world had not shown more understanding of Belgian motives. . . . Tshombe's statement requesting Belgian help and showing that he believed in Belgian good faith came as a welcome solace and the majority of Belgians thought the government should do everything possible to help him.<sup>36</sup>

By supporting Tshombe, Belgian politicians rode the wave of Belgian popular opinion as they defended Belgium from the attacks of radical Black Nationalists like Lumumba. Although Belgium was splitting along linguistic cleavages, supporting Katanga was a policy upon which Flemings and Walloons could agree, as the conflict in the Congo was one of race, not language.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, Belgian politicians were so constrained by the pro-Katanga sentiment and Belgian nationalism that the government had to



oppose the UN resolutions of September 1960.<sup>38</sup> Otherwise, the government might have collapsed, as Belgian civic nationalism was the glue that temporarily held the multi-linguistic parties together.

Belgium's policies were expected to change when a more stable government entered in 1961, with foreign policy being made by Socialist and career diplomat Paul-Henri Spaak. In his memoir, he admits, "For me, the Katangan situation was most difficult. I was fundamentally and profoundly opposed to secession."<sup>39</sup> If Spaak was so opposed to secession, why did the Christian Democrats agree to appoint him Foreign Minister? As Spaak had served as NATO's Secretary-General and in many other important diplomatic positions, he was seen as one of the few national, as opposed to regional, factional, or ethnic, politicians. In a time of increasing ethnic conflict at home, it made sense to appoint a Foreign Minister who was seen as being Belgian, rather than as Walloon or Flemish.

Another important question: if Spaak opposed Katanga's secession, why did Belgium continue to support Katanga after his appointment? Even though the Socialist Party was less constrained by Belgian nationalism, they still could not afford to offend Belgian nationalists or its coalition partner. When Spaak took measures to meet UN demands, such as to repatriate Guy Weber and other Belgians serving in Katanga's internal security forces and gendarmerie, he met much opposition.

Even Spaak resorted to nationalism and ethnic politics when he needed to fend off attacks made by domestic opponents. He denounced the November 1961 UN resolution, directly aimed against the Katangan secession, by calling it "a bid to hunt down the white man."<sup>40</sup> In December 1961, the UN offensive caused great resentment and violence in Belgium. Spaak addressed a joint session of the Belgian parliament, blasting the United Nations for acting "out of proportion" and using "intolerable" means. This speech was approved unanimously by the parliament, with the exception of the Communist Party.<sup>41</sup>

Belgian nationalism eventually decreased, as politicians and voters refocused on economic issues and linguistic problems. Tshombe's double-dealings, where he agreed to various negotiations and then later rescinded his compromises, also wore out public sentiment. Consequently, Spaak was more free to adhere to UN resolutions, to support U.S. and UN policy initiatives. He was able to eventually blame Tshombe and his European advisers for prolonging the crisis.<sup>42</sup>

Vulnerability theorists cannot account for Belgium's behavior. First, Belgium supported a secessionist movement precisely when separatist sentiment

in Belgium was rising. This is precisely the opposite of what vulnerability implies, according to the conventional wisdom. Second, the United Nations was strongly engaged in this conflict, and its membership aimed many of the resolutions directly against Belgium's policies, but the initial Belgium response was to defy the UN. The reciprocity hypotheses receive some support as Belgium engaged in conflict with actors with whom it had a history of conflict and engaged in cooperation with actors with whom it had a history of cooperation. However, this begs the question of why such histories existed. In sum, the vulnerability approach cannot explain Belgium's behavior.

Realism provides a better, but still relatively weak, account for Belgian policy. The Congo could not pose a direct threat to Belgium's security because of distance as well as the Congo's weakness. However, one could argue that the Congo posed a threat to Belgium's interests in the region. It is not clear how great a threat this would be since Rwanda and Burundi became independent in 1962, greatly reducing Belgium's interests in the region. Obviously, a hostile government in the Congo threatened Belgian access to minerals in Katanga. Assisting the Katangans clearly had economic benefits. Realists must, then, answer two questions. Could Belgium have protected its access by supporting the Congo's government? Would supporting Katanga threaten Belgium's security? Regarding the former question, Belgium could either have appeased Lumumba or worked against him to create a Congolese government more friendly to Belgium interests,<sup>43</sup> instead of supporting Katanga. Concerning the latter question, given the tremendous opposition Belgium faced from much of the world, supporting Katanga did pose some real risks. Belgium placed its most important ally in a difficult position, as the U.S. was competing for influence in Africa. Once it was clear that Katanga was opposed by most of the world, Belgium should have abandoned it to save political capital for other, more important, issues.

Belgian's politicians could support Katanga because the conflict in the Congo was of a different ethnic tie—race—than the one polarizing Belgian society—language. In this time of intensifying divisions at home, the Congo Crisis presented an opportunity to take pro-Belgian nationalist positions that was too good to ignore. Belgian nationalism does not necessarily indicate which foreign policies leaders mobilizing Belgian nationalism ought to follow. However, after Lumumba attacked Belgium and its King, giving support to Lumumba's enemies was the foreign policy most likely to mobilize Belgian nationalism and unite the multi-linguistic constituencies of Belgian elites. Although the narrow predictions of ethnic ties do not predict Belgium's behavior, the dynamics of ethnic politics provide a better explanation

of Belgian foreign policy than does vulnerability to secession or security maximization.

### *The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland*

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland's support of Tshombe's separatist regime was almost as important as Belgium's. Mercenaries moved through Northern Rhodesia to Katanga.<sup>44</sup> Smugglers ran arms and supplies across the border, including the fighter aircraft that attacked UN troops during the first two rounds of UN action. Katangan minerals were transported across Rhodesia for sale elsewhere, providing Tshombe with the hard currency necessary for the purchase of more arms, equipment, and mercenaries.<sup>45</sup> When the United Nations sought to place observers on the Federation's side of the border to block aid for Katanga, Prime Minister Roy Welensky refused.

Why did a political entity that itself would disintegrate less than a year after Tshombe's defeat make such efforts? It was precisely the fear of Black Nationalism and of Communism that motivated the policies of Welensky's government. At this time, Welensky was negotiating the transition of parts of the Federation to black majority rule. While he was reluctant to do so, the rise of Black Nationalism, the opposition of the world community, and the pressure of the British government forced the white rulers of the Federation to accommodate some demands of the Federation's black majority.

Rhodesia's white leaders perceived Lumumba and his followers in the Congo to be helping the Black Nationalists and Communists within the Federation. Welensky argued that: "To our mind the security of Southern Africa from Communism [i.e., Black Nationalism] requires that Katanga be recognised *de facto* by as many countries as possible. Such recognition would strengthen Tshombe's hand enormously."<sup>46</sup> Since Katanga covered a large part of the border between the Federation and the Congo, it was seen as a buffer zone that would prevent the unstable areas of the Federation from being subjected to radical influences, such as Lumumba's brand of Black Nationalism and radical ideology.<sup>47</sup> Support for Katanga was seen as a measure to prevent the spread of ethnic instability from reaching Northern Rhodesia and to contain communism.

At the same time, the events in the Congo distracted attention away from the disturbances occurring within the Federation. "For the moment . . . ,

Northern Rhodesia was driven from everyone's minds by the Congo."<sup>48</sup> Opposing UN efforts and blasting Britain's policies toward the Congo and Katanga as being "gutless" enabled Welensky to mobilize white Rhodesians in support of his regime, at a time when there was increasing opposition to his handling of Black Nationalism within the Federation.<sup>49</sup> Welensky's United Federal Party was being attacked by the Rhodesian Front, a more right wing, white supremacist party, for allowing Black Nationalist violence to occur in the Federation.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, to ensure Welensky's domestic political position, "It was felt that the Federal Government had to mount an anti-Pan-Africanist campaign."<sup>51</sup> Part of this campaign was Federation support for Tshombe, who was seen as both friendly to white interests and a target of the Pan-African movement. The logic of both realism and ethnic enmity apply: the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Because Tshombe was the enemy of the Pan-African movement, which opposed white rule in Rhodesia, he was perceived to be a friend of Rhodesia's white leaders.

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland is a case where racially homogeneous parties competed with each other for the support of one racial group, the whites, as each party sought to portray itself as the best defender of white interests, and a secessionist movement existed within a neighboring state that seemed to favor white interests. Because he faced parties attempting to outbid him, Welensky assisted the movement most supportive of white interests in central Africa—the Katangan separatists.

Admittedly, it is hard to disentangle realist accounts from ethnic political explanations in this case. Clearly, balancing power by itself would not predict the Federation's policy since the Congo was only potentially powerful, and focusing on power alone would cause the Federation to worry more about South Africa than the Congo. However, the Congo, led by Lumumba, presented a security threat to the Federation since it possessed the ability, as a neighboring state, and apparently the intent to destabilize the Federation by supporting opposition groups. Thus, the adjusted realist argument predicts the same outcome as ethnic politics, once the ethnic definition of enemy and friend are taken into account—that the ability of the Congo to threaten the Federation depended crucially on the role of race in both polities.

Finally, neither vulnerability nor the demands of international organizations inhibited the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The Federation was extremely vulnerable to separatism and ethnic conflict as Black Nationalism and secession were increasing at the time of the Congo Crisis. Rather than inhibiting the Federation's foreign policy, this situation caused the

country to develop a very aggressive foreign policy—to support secession nearby to reduce its own separatist threat. Likewise, defying the United Nations was good politics at home. Clearly, the racial conflict within the Federation and the competition for white votes drove the country's foreign policy to be aggressive, rather than acquiescent.

### *Congo-Brazzaville*

Congo-Brazzaville's foreign policy toward this conflict is very anomalous. "Congo-Brazzaville was virtually the only one [black African-ruled country] that faithfully defended to the very end the secessionist policy of Moïse Tshombé."<sup>52</sup> Congo-Brazzaville, indeed, was the only African state ruled by black Africans to support Katanga's secession. President Abbé Fulbert Youlou's crucial support of Tshombé took many forms. The ports and airports of Congo-Brazzaville were used for the shipping of arms and equipment to the separatists in the Congo. Youlou gave diplomatic support, as he called upon the non-African states to pull their troops out of the UN force during the first round of attacks.<sup>53</sup>

The conflictual relationship between the two Congos has many roots, as do the motivations for Youlou's support of Tshombé. Much has been made of French encouragement of Youlou and of his French advisers.<sup>54</sup> However, assertions of French dominance do not address the crucial differences between the policies and politics of Congo-Brazzaville and those of other former French colonies. Youlou was dependent upon the French, but this dependence was a consequence of Youlou's political strategies, not a cause.

Youlou's party and his rule depended on an ethnic group that was a minority in Congo-Brazzaville, and ethnic conflict was a serious problem as the state became independent. Because of the weakness of his regime, Youlou needed both to pacify the opposition and divert attention from domestic problems. Youlou followed a strategy different from that of other African states, and from those predicted by the theory of ethnic politics and foreign policy. Rather than build a national identity and party through the mobilization of Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism, as in Guinea or Ghana (to be discussed below), Youlou sought to lessen ethnic opposition through two different methods: a dam-building project that would ensure greater employment, and by bribing ethnic groups with funds solicited from abroad.

“All the country’s hopes for improving the economic situation had centered on construction of the Kouilou dam and on the industrialization of Pointe Noire. Youlou, for his part, had staked his whole political future on carrying out this project.”<sup>55</sup> By employing his country’s youth, Youlou hoped to limit the influence of the state’s radical movements. The dam project became a symbol of economic independence for Congo-Brazzaville, even greater than political independence from France. Ironically, funding the dam required greater compromises of Congo-Brazzaville’s sovereignty and foreign policy.

During his election campaign, Youlou revealed that he had received 100 million Congolese Francs from France to aid in the building of the dam. He traveled abroad to gain aid, and one of the greatest sources of finances in Africa was Tshombe’s regime. In exchange for economic assistance to build the dam, Youlou provided Katanga with the logistical support necessary for the maintenance of the secession. “So great was his [Youlou’s] obsession with the Kouilou dam that it affected his political judgment . . . , and his determination to build the dam became a factor in his alignment with Moïse Tshombe.”<sup>56</sup>

Youlou also sought funds to pay off ethnic groups directly, relying on foreign sources of money. He traded his foreign policies for the funds necessary to pay off his constituents.<sup>57</sup> In exchange for supporting Katanga, Youlou received enough financial aid to keep the domestic ethnic groups relatively satisfied. Only after the collapse of Katanga did Youlou seek to build a one-party system and civic nationalisms like Sekou Touré of Guinea or Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana to manage domestic ethnic conflict. It was too late for such an attempt, however, as ethnic unrest and civil strife of all kinds escalated until Youlou was overthrown.<sup>58</sup>

Oddly enough, Youlou and Kasavubu, the President of Congo-Leopoldville, shared the same tribal background, coming from the Bakongo, a large kinship group whose territory crossed the boundaries of the two states. Though Youlou provided Kasavubu with assistance in his actions against Lumumba, he continued to support Tshombe’s efforts against Kasavubu’s government.<sup>59</sup>

Given the ethnic conflict facing Youlou, he should have supported the Congo against the Katanga separatists, if vulnerability inhibits foreign policy. As a small, weak state, it should be surprising that Congo-Brazzaville resisted the will of the United Nations. Despite the constraints of vulnerability and international opposition, Congo-Brazzaville was one of Katanga’s most aggressive supporters.

Realist hypotheses receive more support. Because the Congo was both stronger and a neighbor of Congo-Brazzaville, Youlou's policies support two realist hypotheses: that weaker states will support secessionist movements in stronger states, and that neighbors are more likely to support secessionists than other states. Further, given Congo-Brazzaville's Western leanings and dependence on the French, one could argue that Lumumba was as threatening to Youlou as he was to Welensky.

The logic of ethnic politics predicts that Youlou would have supported the Congo in its efforts to maintain its territorial integrity because of shared racial and tribal ties of his constituency with the Congo's government. Although Congo-Brazzaville's behavior contradicts the theory, its behavior still indicates that politicians are generally motivated by the ethnically defined interests of their supporters when making foreign policy decisions. The theory of ethnic politics and foreign policy could not predict Youlou's policies because it fails to take into account an alternative way to deal with ethnic conflict—buying it off.

### *Other Supporters of Secession*

The patterns of politics and policies of these states are not unique. Elites with similar ethnic constituencies and strategies followed identical policies. In South Africa, as in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, political competition was between different white parties, with several competing to be better white supremacists than each other.<sup>60</sup> Like Welensky, white South African elites viewed Lumumba as a threat who would increase the influence and power of Black Nationalism in Southern Africa, and perceived Tshombe as a supporter of white interests and security.<sup>61</sup> Consequently, South Africa also gave significant assistance to the Katangans.

### *Defenders of the Congo's Territorial Integrity*

A number of countries supported efforts to maintain the Congo's territorial integrity. This support usually came in three forms: financial assistance to the United Nations, contribution of soldiers to the UN force, and diplomatic efforts, mostly at the UN, to end Katanga's secession.

*Ghana*

Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's leader, played an important role both before and during the Congo crisis. Lumumba considered himself to be Nkrumah's protégé, and followed policies and strategies in the Congo that had worked for Nkrumah in Ghana.<sup>62</sup> Nkrumah built a mass party on a radical, pan-African ideology, attempting to overcome ethnic divides, and Lumumba sought to imitate him by building the Mouvement Nationale Congolais, a mass-based party, focused on pan-Africanism as a bridge between ethnic groups.

During the crisis, Nkrumah was probably the most active African leader seeking an end to the secession, aiming to keep the Congo united and Lumumba in power. Ghanaian troops were among the first to arrive in the Congo as members of ONUC, and Ghana's contribution to ONUC was among the largest, despite its own small armed forces.<sup>63</sup> Nkrumah sought to influence the UN mandate by pushing for a more active role, and for intervention on the side of Lumumba, "as non-interference in the internal affairs of the Congo, is no longer tenable."<sup>64</sup> After Lumumba's death, Nkrumah continued to push for a UN role in the crisis, arguing that a withdrawal would aid Lumumba's enemies.<sup>65</sup>

An examination of Ghana's domestic politics, including Nkrumah's role in efforts to unify the state, may aid in understanding his foreign policies toward the Congo. In 1956, the Nkrumah's Convention People's Party ran as the only party seeking a nation-wide base of support. The opposition parties were based on deeply divided regional and ethnic groups. After winning this election with a Pan-African campaign, Nkrumah embarked on a set of policies to eliminate ethnically based challenges to his rule.<sup>66</sup> As the government shifted from a multiparty democracy to the personal rule of one individual, Nkrumah sought to build a national identity while reducing the salience of alternate identities.

"Of Ghana's regimes, Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) lasted the longest and had the most articulated policy on the subject of ethnicity."<sup>67</sup> This policy tried to build a Ghanaian civic identity at the expense of regional and ethnic divides. Two instruments that Nkrumah used to build this civic identity are of particular interest: ideology and his own popularity. The civic nationalism centered on his ideology and the role of Nkrumah and Ghana in that ideology.<sup>68</sup> Nkrumah's ideology stressed Ghana's historical role a leader of all Africa, with a mission to build a union of African states and to



oppose neo-imperialism.<sup>69</sup> Nkrumah referred to the glories of the ancient Ghana empire, and stressed the fact that Ghana was the first of the colonized African states to become independent, in 1957. Nkrumah went so far in his support of a radical vision of pan-African as to include an article in Ghana's 1960 constitution that provided for the surrender of sovereignty for "the furtherance of African unity."<sup>70</sup>

Nkrumah sought to use his popularity to increase support for his regime. He played a very strong role in the decolonization of Ghana, making him a national hero, so that Nkrumah became identified as a symbol of Ghanaian nationalism and a force for unity within Ghana.<sup>71</sup> Nkrumah's foreign policy continually emphasized his role as leader of the Pan-African movement. By leading conferences, speaking at the UN, and meeting with Lumumba, Nkrumah was able to use his foreign policy to improve his own political position and image at home.<sup>72</sup> Thus, foreign policy was a key part of Nkrumah's attempts to build a civic Ghanaian identity at the expense of more divisive ethnic ties.

A politician's effort to develop a civic nationalism does not require a particular foreign policy. However, the content of Nkrumah's and Ghana's civic nationalism, Pan-African ideology, compelled Ghana to act decisively during the Congo Crisis. Ghanaians believed that "the Katanga secession was simply a case of neo-colonialism at work,"<sup>73</sup> providing Nkrumah with an important opportunity to emphasize his position as leader of Pan-Africanism and the relevance of his ideology for both domestic and international politics.

Because his support came from multiple ethnic groups though a single racial group, and his opposition relied on ethnic divisions, including active secessionism, Nkrumah developed a thorough strategy of domestic and foreign policies designed to de-emphasize ethnicity and to develop a civic nationalism. This civic nationalism may not have mattered for foreign policy during the Congo Crisis had this conflict been characterized by religious or linguistic conflict, rather than racial enmity and a battle against neocolonialism. Pan-Africanism mattered in this crisis because of the particular definition of this conflict and perception of Katanga. Consequently, when faced with a conflict perceived to be between Pan-Africanism and Black Nationalism on one side and neo-imperialism and white minority rule on the other, Nkrumah predictably became the most ardent supporter of the Congo's territorial integrity.

In this case, vulnerability and ethnic ties produce the same prediction. As Ghana faced its own separatists, it energetically fought Katanga. Further,

reciprocity arguments suggest that Ghana would support the Congo, since the leaders of the two countries had a good relationship and had worked well together in the past. Therefore, this observation by itself cannot tell us much about whether vulnerability or ethnic ties provides better predictions.

To make a realist prediction, we need to understand what threat the Congo posed to Ghana. In terms of relative power, Ghana could be considered weaker than the Congo in 1960. The Congo posed no real offensive threat to Ghana, because the Congo lacked both the capability and the perceived intention to disrupt Ghana's ethnic politics. Therefore, the Congo did not seriously threaten Ghana, so we should not expect Ghana to support Katanga. One could argue that Katanga endangered Ghana because of its alliance with white colonial interests and its opposition to Pan-Africanism. However, in terms of relative power, offensive capability, and proximity, Katanga could not seriously threaten Ghana. Given that the various components of threat point in different directions, realists cannot make a clear prediction in this case.

By itself, Ghana is suggestive, as its ethnic politics and resulting civic nationalisms produce policies predicted by both ethnic ties and vulnerability arguments, and the case also illustrates the difficulty of applying realism.

### *Nigeria*

Nigeria's support of the Congo's central government was extensive. Not only was Nigeria's contribution of troops to the UN operation in the Congo the third largest,<sup>74</sup> but Nigeria also paid all assessments as well as making voluntary contributions, providing food and an air base for transporting UN troops and equipment.<sup>75</sup> The total cost of Nigeria's contribution was over \$44 million, a huge amount for a newly independent state.<sup>76</sup> Nigerian personnel also played an important role at the UN. "The Nigerian delegation took a strong stand against the secession of Katanga, arguing that the end of secession was one of the sine qua non conditions for a viable and stable Congo republic."<sup>77</sup> Not only was Jaja Wachuku, Nigeria's UN representative, very assertive within the General Assembly and Security Council debates, but he also was named chair of the UN Conciliation Commission seeking solutions to the conflict.

Why was Nigeria so enthusiastic in its support of the Congo's territorial integrity? It is easy to say with hindsight that Nigeria realized that it was vulnerable to secession, and therefore sought to prevent separatists elsewhere

from seceding. However, other aspects of Nigeria's domestic politics influenced Nigeria's foreign policy as much or more than its vulnerability to secession. Nigeria's policies were so assertive in this crisis because it was one of the few issues that held together its own ruling coalition.<sup>78</sup> Nigeria's three major parties each represented each of the three largest tribal groups. The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons [NCNC] represented mostly Ibos, the Action Group [AG] represented the Yorubas, and the Northern People's Congress [NPC]'s constituency was made up of Muslim Hausa/Fulani.<sup>79</sup> During the campaign of 1959, foreign policy became a prominent issue, with each party supporting Pan-Africanism, while differing on other issues. After the election, no party had a majority, leaving the NPC holding the largest number of seats and forming a coalition with the NCNC.

Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tawafa Balewa of the NPC and Jaja Wachuku, the Minister of Economic Development, the head of the Nigerian delegation at the UN, and of the NCNC, shaped Nigerian foreign policy.

The moderate to conservative diplomacy which . . . typified the foreign policy of the Balewa government also reflected the need to maintain a viable coalition in Lagos. Given the severe internal strains and constant readjustments that had to be made to sustain such a coalition, the prime minister usually sought to avoid becoming embroiled in world issues that might have afforded his domestic opposition an opportunity to stir up debate.<sup>80</sup>

Wachuku consistently pushed Abubakar for a more aggressive policy against Katanga. As the public sought a harsher policy as well, Nigeria's policy toward Katanga grew more aggressive, and Nigeria took the lead along with Ethiopia in the efforts to end the Katangan secession.<sup>81</sup> The government consciously sought to use policy in the Congo to build consensus at home by publicizing the efforts of the Nigerian forces donated to the UN force.<sup>82</sup> Nigerian efforts in the Congo were very successful domestically in that "its participation in the Congo mission tended to divert critical attention from indigenous currents that proved to be dysfunctional to political stability in Nigeria."<sup>83</sup>

The logic of ethnic politics can explain Nigeria's foreign policy at this time. Each of the two most significant foreign policymakers, Balewa and Wachuku, were supported by tribally homogeneous constituencies. Along racial lines, however, each represented only a portion of a single racial group:

black Nigerians. Because each man required the support of the other's party to maintain their coalition, they had a common interest in emphasizing the ethnic ties binding their two tribally oriented constituencies. Thus, when the Katangans attempted to secede, and were perceived to be influenced or controlled by white settlers, Balewa and Wachuku could agree to support the Congo's efforts to maintain its territorial integrity.<sup>84</sup>

Vulnerability theorists also could point to Nigeria's foreign policy as supportive of their arguments. Nigeria fought a secessionist war only a few years after the Congo Crisis, so one could argue that Nigeria fought Katanga to deter its own potential separatists. Realists would consider Nigeria to be quite similar to Ghana: the Congo posed a threat to neither of them, and Katanga might have had nasty intentions but could not really threaten either state directly. Consequently, this case, like Ghana, supports both ethnic ties and vulnerability claims, but does not weaken nor strengthen the realist case.

### *Other Supporters of the Congo*

Several other states played an important role in defending the territorial integrity of the Congo, especially Guinea and India. In Guinea, Sekou Toure faced ethnic political problems that were very similar to those confronting Nkrumah in Ghana. Toure followed an ethnic-political strategy that was almost identical to Nkrumah's, resulting in similar foreign policies.<sup>85</sup>

The Indian National Congress Party also had to deal with the sticky problem of keeping a multiethnic party together.<sup>86</sup> As in Ghana and Guinea, the best political strategy was to build a civic nationalism.<sup>87</sup> By building ties to the state, it was hoped that ethnic divisions could be overcome. The pursuit of an activist nonaligned, anticolonialist foreign policy was seen as one way to build Indian nationalism.<sup>88</sup> Again, because the Congo Crisis was perceived to be caused by neocolonialists, the content of India's civic nationalism, anticolonialism, had relevance for this crisis. Indian elites could take strong positions on the Congo Crisis, highlighting India's civic nationalism at the expense of more divisive ethnic identities.

Ethiopia, Morocco, and Tunisia played very similar roles. They were among the first to contribute troops, and their contributions were among the largest in the early going, each numbering more than 2,500.<sup>89</sup> Tunisia, as the only African state on the UN Security Council for much of the crisis, authored many resolutions in favor of the Congo and against Katanga. Ethi-

opia, as a supporter of the United Nations, and a state facing its own border and separatist problems, actively supported ONUC and criticized those who attacked the United Nations. Morocco aligned itself with the more radical African states, such as Ghana and Guinea, and gave strong support to Lumumba and his successors. Morocco and Ethiopia support both the ethnic ties argument and the vulnerability hypothesis as they were both vulnerable to separatism, and ruled by leaders who depended upon supporters having enmity with Katanga.<sup>90</sup> Tunisia did not face separatism itself, but its leaders also relied on those who despised the Katangans and their allies.<sup>91</sup> Realism cannot really capture these states' behavior as they did not really face a threat from either the Congo or Katanga.

The Congo Crisis was defined as a conflict between Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism on one side and white-minority rule and neo-imperialism on the other. This enabled leaders in most African states to act decisively, because each elite could build support at home by using the crisis to emphasize Black Nationalism, anticolonialism and/or civic nationalism.<sup>92</sup> While civic nationalisms, as developed by several politicians seeking to downplay ethnicity, do not necessarily imply particular foreign policies, the content of these civic nationalisms mattered for this crisis. Pan-Africanism, Black Nationalism, and anticolonialism indicated support for the Congo, because of the perception of Katanga as a white-dominated movement with a tainted history.

### Ambivalent and Neutral Actors

While many states took a strong stand on one side of the conflict, some countries were less certain in their support. These states either followed ambivalent policies or tried to stay neutral. The interests and actions of these states need to be analyzed so that comparisons can be made between those states that are strongly involved and those that are not.

#### *United States*

American foreign policy in the Congo was inconsistent and often contradictory. During the first few months of the conflict, the U.S. simultaneously supported UN efforts and tried to develop a more pro-Western government

in the Congo. The U.S. supported all resolutions sponsored by the Afro-Asian states, and footed a disproportionate amount of the UN bill.<sup>93</sup> American transport planes flew most of the UN troops into the Congo, and the U.S. provided other forms of logistical support as well. However, during August and September of 1960, the U.S. encouraged Kasavubu and, later, Mobutu to dismiss Lumumba and take power.<sup>94</sup> Even after Lumumba was removed from power and placed under arrest, the U.S. sought to eliminate him. Katanga was, at first, regarded in the U.S. as possible insurance against the whole of the Congo becoming communist, and the White House gave some thought to recognizing it. However, the U.S. was reluctant to alienate the rest of Africa.<sup>95</sup>

After Lumumba's death and the new U.S. administration took office, American policy became more consistent. The U.S. supported the formation of a new regime through the Congolese Parliament, with a pro-Western leader, Cyrille Adoula, at its helm. Meanwhile, American support for ending Katanga's secession increased, including the use of force by ONUC. The UN mandate was expanded as the U.S. backed each resolution, and the U.S. gave logistical support for all three UN offensives.

David Gibbs argues that early in the crisis the financial ties of the individuals within the Eisenhower administration were closely tied to Belgian interests in Africa, while officials within the Kennedy administration had divergent preferences: some had ties to Belgian interests and others had investments in companies seeking to replace Belgian firms in Katanga.<sup>96</sup> Gibbs contends that Kennedy's policy was more inconsistent, as a result of the different economic ties, and that Eisenhower's policies were more consistent. Gibbs is right on two sets of issues: U.S. policy was motivated by anti-communism, and the change in Presidents played a crucial role, but he fails to explain why the problem and the ensuing suggested solutions were perceived differently by each president.

Eisenhower viewed the Congo Crisis through traditional Cold War lenses: Lumumba was "radical and unstable," "a Soviet tool," and "a Communist sympathizer if not a member of the party."<sup>97</sup> This is not surprising, considering his background: he became President by defeating a party charged with losing China, and was elected at the height of McCarthyism. Therefore, foreign policy in Africa was seen strictly in Cold War terms. The United States " . . . could not afford to see turmoil in an area where the Communists would only be too delighted to take advantage."<sup>98</sup> As a result, U.S. policy was fixated on getting rid of Lumumba, who had asked for Soviet

help, and the U.S. was less resolute when dealing with Tshombe, who strategically painted himself as staunchly anti-Communist.<sup>99</sup> Further, the desire to avoid alienating Belgium also constrained the Eisenhower administration. Until 1958, American relations with Africa were routed through the embassies of the colonial powers, and the U.S. generally deferred to their wishes.

President Kennedy signaled a completely different approach when he named his Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs before identifying his Secretary of State, and by arguing that “We can no longer think of Africa in terms of Europe.”<sup>100</sup> While anti-communism primarily motivated Kennedy’s Congo policies, his views were more nuanced, due to his experiences and his successful campaign strategies. In July 1957, Kennedy had made a name for himself in foreign affairs when he became the first elected American official to oppose French policy in Algeria. While Democrats and Republicans immediately criticized him, Kennedy’s predictions were appreciated a year later, when French President Charles De Gaulle allowed the French colonies in Africa to vote on independence. “For African visitors in Washington, Kennedy became the man to meet.”<sup>101</sup>

Kennedy’s statements on Africa were the results of his views of nationalism, and they were also a key part of his own political agenda. The Algeria speech was “in part, a bid to attract support from the party’s liberal leadership.”<sup>102</sup> Within the Democratic Party, JFK’s left flank was his weakest, and he realized that he needed liberals’ support to get the party’s Presidential nomination. However, he was reluctant to push for civil rights in the U.S., as he feared alienating Southern voters. To get more of the liberal and black vote without losing the Southern whites, Kennedy used African issues to his advantage, making 479 references to Africa in a three month campaign. “Kennedy’s handling of the Africa issue in the 1960 campaign . . . was a minor classic in *political exploitation of foreign policy*.”<sup>103</sup>

As a result, among Kennedy’s first actions as President was the establishment of a committee to explore all policy options in the Congo. From the reports of that committee, he came to see the Congo Crisis in a different light than had the previous administration, which had seen Katanga as a fall-back position—insurance against the loss of the Congo to the Communists. Instead, Kennedy saw Katanga as the cause of the Congo’s instability,<sup>104</sup> and the moderate regime put in place in the Congo largely due to Kennedy’s policies of early 1961 was threatened by its inability to handle Katanga. If Adoula could not handle Tshombe, he would lose power to more extreme elements, including Communists. Therefore, Kennedy permitted

and, later, pushed for broader UN mandates for more assertive actions by ONUC.

However, Kennedy's policies were constrained by domestic opposition. The Katanga lobby in Washington, led by Sen. Thomas Dodd of Connecticut, included some of the most formidable Senators. Most of the groups supporting Katanga and opposed to Kennedy's policy in the Congo were anti-communist, anti-UN, and right-wing, including the John Birch Society and the Young Americans for Freedom.<sup>105</sup> The Katanga lobby "also attracted certain Southern whites who seem to have regarded Moïse Tshombe as the African incarnation of Uncle Tom."<sup>106</sup> Having won the support of the left wing in the Democratic Party in part by using foreign policy in Africa, Kennedy faced opposition from the right wing. It is not surprising, then, that the most assertive attempts to end the Katangan secession, using American fighters and pilots, were most seriously considered after the Cuban Missile Crisis, when Kennedy's right flank was more secure.<sup>107</sup>

Thus, Kennedy's domestic political interests influenced his perceptions of the crisis and the forces constraining his policies. He viewed African nationalism and instability in the Congo differently from Eisenhower, as he sought to include liberals and blacks in his electoral coalition. Kennedy's actions were initially limited by the influence of the Katanga lobby, but this constraint became less important after the Cuban Missile Crisis strengthened his political position at home. The changes in policy during the crisis illustrate the difficulties a politician faces when his constituency is not only ethnically heterogeneous, but also consists of divergent ideological forces.

The alternative arguments are indeterminate. The United States did not face a severe separatist threat at the time, and severe ethnic conflict was a few years in coming. So, vulnerability cannot explain the choices of the U.S., although American interest in preserving the United Nations might. As the Soviet Union and others harshly criticized the United Nations and proposed changing the Secretary-General to a troika system, the United States needed to give greater support to the institution and to make it effective in the Congo for this international organization to survive.

Realist accounts are also indeterminate, as the contrasting policies of Eisenhower and Kennedy demonstrate. Eisenhower believed, in part, that giving support to the richest part of the Congo, Katanga, might benefit American interests by providing an island of pro-Western support in case Lumumba ruled the Congo. Kennedy perceived Katanga to be the problem. Realists would be right in arguing that the Congo was an important place



and deserving to be a Cold War battleground, but Realists could easily disagree with each other about what was the best strategy at the time.

### *The Central African Republic*

The Central African Republic provides an interesting contrast to Congo-Brazzaville. The Central African Republic shared many political, social, and economic characteristics with Congo-Brazzaville, but followed different policies. Like Congo-Brazzaville, the Central African Republic was a former French colony, and was very dependent upon the French for economic assistance. Similarly, the newly independent government faced the problem of tribal divisions. Most importantly, the Central African Republic's leadership depended heavily on the support of its European settlers.

President David Dacko relied on the European residents for his position. Not only did they occupy the most important positions in the government and the economy, but they also gave money for trucks and bribes when Dacko needed to flood the capital with members of his own kinship group to counter his opposition. This particular event indicates that Dacko was dependent not only on the good will of the white settlers, but on his own kinship group. Because of this dual dependence, and of the Europeans' ability to direct the assembly (due to unity of the white settlers),<sup>108</sup> "Dacko was not in a position to contemplate an adventurous foreign policy."<sup>109</sup>

The Central African Republic's foreign policy was, therefore, neutral, though it preferred the United Nations not to intervene. As a neighbor, the Central African Republic was very concerned with the conflict. The European settlers, in particular, were alarmed, considering themselves vulnerable to the same sort of crisis.<sup>110</sup> While they may have been interested in supporting the Katangans, the other portion of Dacko's constituency, his black kinship group, was less concerned with the welfare of the white settlers in Katanga. Consequently, the Central African Republic opposed interference in the Congo by the United Nations, arguing that the UN " 'should keep its hands clean in respect of the problems of African internal politics,' "<sup>111</sup> but avoided any more tangible support for the Katangan separatists. Unlike almost any other African state, the Central African Republic's support came from different racial groups, constraining its foreign policy.

Again, vulnerability produces no predictions about how the Central African Republic would respond since it was not vulnerable to separatism. Real-

ism suggests that the C.A.R should have responded as Congo-Brazzaville did and supported Katanga, but it did not. The two states acted differently because the leaders of each followed different strategies for handling their domestic political problems.

### Ethnic Politics and the Congo Crisis

The analysis of Congo Crisis suggests that coding threat and producing the resulting predictions is much harder than distilling expectations from vulnerability or ethnic ties, and the realism's correct predictions are largely produced by the incorporation of ethnically defined threats. Vulnerability provides the fewest correct predictions and the most indeterminate expectations. On the other hand, focusing on racial politics gives us the clearest, most accurate predictions, although even this approach wrongly predicts a few cases.

### *Balancing Threats and the Congo Crisis*

This case study reveals several difficulties in applying realism. Because threat contains several components, it is hard to tell when sufficient threats exist to cause a state to engage in "balancing" behavior, such as supporting Katanga. What should we expect of states that are not threatened by the Congo nor seriously threatened by Katanga? Further, the case reveals that states motivated by security may still have multiple options, and we need more information to predict which choice a state will make. The Congo Crisis suggests that larger security interests and competitive dynamics may matter. Finally, the expansion of offensive capability to include ethnic threats produces much of the predictive power of realism in this case.

Of the thirteen observations studied, the adjusted realist approach got four right, was indeterminate in six, and wrong in three. This case suggests that since Walt's approach does not have a method of weighing the various components of threat, it is hard to make determinate predictions, unless each component points in the same direction. "One cannot determine *a priori*, however, which sources of threat will be most important in any given case; one can say only that all of them are likely to play a role."<sup>112</sup> As a result,

TABLE 3.1 Applying Realism to the Congo Crisis

Country	Weaker or Stronger than the Congo*	Congo's Offensive Threat	Katanga's Threat	Neighbors of the Congo	Predicted Policy	Actual Policy
Belgium	Stronger	Moderate	Low	No	Unclear	Supported Katanga, Weakened
Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland	Stronger	High	Low	Yes	Support Katanga	<b>Supported Katanga</b>
South Africa	Stronger	Moderate	Low	No	Unclear	Supported Katanga
United States	Stronger	Low	Low	No	No Support for Katanga	<i>Ambivalence</i> shifted to support Congo
Central African Republic	Weaker	High	Low	Yes	Support Katanga	<i>Neutrality</i>
Ghana	Weaker	Low	Moderate	No	Unclear	Supported Congo
Guinea	Weaker	Low	Moderate	No	Unclear	Supported Congo
Ethiopia	Stronger	Low	Moderate	No	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Morocco	Stronger	Low	Low	No	No Support for Katanga	Supported Congo
Tunisia	Weaker	Low	Low	No	No Support for Congo	<i>Supported Congo</i>
India	Stronger	Low	Low	No	No Support for Katanga	Supported Congo
Nigeria	Stronger	Low	Moderate	No	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Congo-Brazzaville	Weaker	High	Low	Yes	Support Katanga	<b>Supported Katanga</b>

\* This is coded by a ratio of the country's power relative to the Congo's, using measures of military and economic capabilities and population measures, as discussed in chapter six. **Bold** indicates a correct prediction. *Italics* indicate an incorrect prediction.

we cannot provide clear predictions when some of the indicators of threat point in one direction, and other indicators point in the other direction.

A state neighboring a country possessing the capability to threaten its territorial integrity is most likely to perceive a threat and react accordingly. The Congo threatened both the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and Congo-Brazzaville, so it makes sense that both supported Katanga. However, the Central African Republic is very similar to these countries, yet chose to remain neutral during the conflict.

For those states stronger than the Congo but not neighbors, it was hard to make conclusive predictions. One could expect these states not to support Katanga, as they did not need to balance against the Congo, due to the low threat they faced. We can only predict that these states would support the Congo if Katanga threatened them. Since threats motivate states, the absence of threats suggests an absence of motive. Because Katanga could become a base of white or neocolonial interests in Central Africa, it could have posed a threat to sub-Saharan African states. However, these states could have done nothing as well, since the Katangan threat was only a potential one, and not nearly as alarming as other threats.

Several states faced no significant threats, particularly India, Morocco, and Tunisia, due to their distance from the conflict, but they still chose to support the Congo. For these cases, realism is ultimately indeterminate, since realism suggests that these countries would not support Katanga, but given the absence of threat, no prediction could be made for supporting the Congo.

American behavior during this crisis neatly demonstrates a key problem—when a security threat exists, a state can respond in a variety of ways, and realism, by itself, may not provide a clear prediction. The U.S. could have defended its security interests by supporting Katanga, building a bridgehead of support in the region, or it could have changed the Congo's government to one that is friendlier to American interests. Eisenhower considered the former, but Kennedy chose the latter. Threat for realism, thus, is like vulnerability for neoliberal institutionalists—it is less determinate than the theorists suggest.

I must note that the simple predictions of table 3.1 ignore the larger geopolitical game going on, as states may not be balancing against the Congo or Katanga, but with or against Belgium, South Africa, and the other major players in the conflict. Obviously, the Congo Crisis became embroiled in the larger white-minority/black nationalist conflict and the Cold War as well.

States may have reacted to what the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was doing, rather than Tshombe's policies. Still, racial politics would influence how states reacted to the Federation as much or more than how they reacted to Tshombe and Lumumba.

Realism can account for some of the behavior of states in this case when it is expanded to include ethnically defined threats. Katanga was a threat to African states because of its perceived alliance with and dependence upon white settlers in Katanga and in the larger region. Belgium, the Federation, and South Africa considered the Congo a threat because of their ethnic divisions and because of Lumumba's stand as a Pan-Africanist and Black nationalist. If South Africa and the Federation were not white-minority regimes, the Congo would not have been a threat nor would Katanga have been an appealing ally. This is a problem for realism because the inclusion of ethnicity as a determinant of threat is a significant move away from the parsimony that realists value, and forces us to pay more attention to domestic politics.

### *Vulnerability and International Cooperation*

Were states vulnerable to secession inhibited from aiding Katanga? The cast of countries abetting Katanga undermines the vulnerability argument. All the four states giving significant support to Katanga were vulnerable to ethnic conflict. The threat of secession was particularly strong for Belgium and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, yet their vulnerability did not deter support for a secessionist movement in another country. Many of the Congo's supporters were vulnerable to secession, so one could argue that they wanted to maintain the Congo's territorial integrity to set a good precedent for their own situations. For three remaining observations, vulnerability could not provide a prediction since separatism was not a threat. At best, as table 3.2 below indicates, vulnerability predicts six cases correctly, gets four completely wrong, and cannot make a prediction for three others.

Since this was the first major separatist crisis of Africa's decolonization, it set precedents, rather than being shaped by them. It is hard to argue that norms of territorial integrity influenced states since the conflict between self-determination and territorial integrity was only becoming apparent at the time. This conflict was only resolved by the creation of the Organization of African Unity in 1963 and its subsequent declaration legitimizing the former

TABLE 3.2 Vulnerability and the Congo Crisis

Country	Vulnerability	Vulnerability Predictions	Actual Policy
Belgium	High	Support Congo	<i>Supported Katanga, Weakened</i>
Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland	High	Support Congo	<i>Supported Katanga</i>
South Africa	High	Support Congo	<i>Supported Katanga</i>
United States	Low	No Prediction	Ambivalence shifted to supported Congo
Central African Republic	Low	No Prediction	Neutrality
Ghana	High	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Guinea	High	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Ethiopia	High	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Morocco	High	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Tunisia	Low	No Prediction	<b>Supported Congo</b>
India	High	Support Congo	Supported Congo
Nigeria	High	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Congo-Brazzaville	High	Support Congo	<i>Supported Katanga</i>

**Bold** indicates a correct prediction.

*Italics* indicate an incorrect prediction.

colonial boundaries. Therefore, it would be unfair to say that the willingness of states to support Katanga challenged international norms since such norms were not really established.

On the other hand, any assertions about the role of international organizations are fair game since the United Nations played a very strong role here, defeating the Katangans on the battlefield. Most states did not support Katanga, and many gave help to UN efforts, particularly after the UN's effort and the institution itself were challenged after Lumumba's assassination. However, it is hard to disentangle the effect of the UN on individual states from the pre-existing preferences of states since the UN's efforts were a product of lobbying and voting by states. In other words, did the UN cause states

to support the Congo or did states cause the UN to support the Congo? Because of the strident diplomacy, including threats to withdraw troops from ONUC, and these states followed through on their threats, it is clear that states drove the UN to take more and more aggressive stands against Katanga, rather than the UN's anti-Katanga policy shaping what states did. Belgium, ordinarily considered a good international citizen, resisted the United Nations, and continued to support Katanga despite active UN opposition. A pattern that was to develop and repeat itself from the 1960s until late into the 1980s was that UN opposition did not deter, inhibit, or alter the foreign policies of the white-minority regimes.

Finally, arguments about reciprocity receive support here. States that had a good prior relationship with Lumumba and the Congo gave support, while states having a bad history gave support to his enemies. This gives the vulnerability argument some support since it is based on a logic of reciprocity. The problem is that this approach begs the question of why does a history of cooperation or conflict exist. Ethnic politics addresses this question.

### *The Theory of Ethnic Politics and Foreign Policy and The Congo Crisis*

The Congo Crisis indicates that ethnic politics influences the foreign policies of states. In this dispute, racial divisions played an extremely important role, both in the domestic politics of states and in their impact on the conflict between the newly independent states and the former colonial powers and the white-minority regimes. Out of a total of thirteen countries, ethnic ties between leaders' constituents and the combatants in the conflict predict the policies of ten countries accurately. Variations in political competition help to explain the three exceptional cases: Congo-Brazzaville, the U.S., and Belgium.

A narrow focus on ethnic ties predicts that Congo-Brazzaville would have supported the Congo and not Katanga. Still, the demands of ethnic politics shaped this country's policies, as elites sought an alternative way to deal with ethnic conflict. Because President Youlou faced less immediate political competition, he could seek alternative strategies in the short term, including buying (or at least renting) potential opponents. While the heart of the theory of ethnic politics and foreign policy argues that ethnic ties matter, leaders facing less competition will be more likely to act contrary to the ethnic ties

TABLE 3.3 Racial Politics and the Congo Crisis

Country	Racial Ties To:	Ethnic Competition	Ethnic Ties Predictions	Actual Policy
Belgium	Katanga*	High	Support Katanga	<b>Supported Katanga. Weakened</b>
Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland	Katanga	High	Support Katanga	<b>Supported Katanga</b>
South Africa	Katanga	High	Support Katanga	<b>Supported Katanga</b>
United States	Both	High	Ambivalence or Neutrality	<b>Ambivalence shifted to <i>Supported Congo</i></b>
Central African Republic	Both	High	Ambivalence or Neutrality	<b>Neutrality</b>
Ghana	Congo	Low	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Guinea	Congo	Low	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Ethiopia	Congo	Low	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Morocco	Congo**	High	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Tunisia	Congo**	Low	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
India	Congo**	High	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Nigeria	Congo	High	Support Congo	<b>Supported Congo</b>
Congo-Brazzaville	Congo	Low	Support Congo	<b><i>Supported Katanga</i></b>

**Bold** indicates a correct prediction.

*Italics* indicate an incorrect prediction.

\* The Belgian case is as much about its enmity, not ethnically oriented, against the Congo.

\*\* The Indian, Moroccan and Tunisian coding focuses more on ethnic enmity with the Katangans, which produces the same foreign policies as ethnic ties with the Congo.



of their constituents. Thus, Congo-Brazzaville's policies are not as aberrant as it might appear.

As the leader of a multiracial party, Kennedy's policies, as predicted by ethnic politics, would be ambivalent rather than increasingly hostile to the Katangans. The theory predicts that Kennedy would face opposition from his white constituents if he backed the Congo's government, and would dismay his black supporters if he did not support it. Kennedy, indeed, faced these kinds of obstacles and opposition as he developed policies toward the Congo. The Katanga lobby constrained Kennedy until his position became more secure. Though the specific expectations of the theory of ethnic politics and foreign policy do not accurately predict the more assertive policies of the U.S. toward the end of the crisis, this approach does help explain the difficulties Kennedy faced when developing policies toward Katanga and the Congo.

Explaining Belgium's foreign policy during the crisis is difficult, as ethnic politics does not provide strong predictions when the ethnic conflict within the state making foreign policy decisions is not perceived to be related to the ethnic politics of the secessionist crisis. While all of the parties in Belgium were led by and supported by whites, race is not a salient ethnicity around which Belgian politics was organized. Linguistic conflict mattered, however, and most politicians of the three major parties sought to de-emphasize language. Civic nationalism could be emphasized to downplay linguistic identity. Because of Lumumba's and Tshombe's statements concerning Belgium, it was easy for Belgian elites to support Katanga as Belgian nationalism was inflamed during the crisis. The hardest part of Belgium's policies to explain is the declining support for Katanga. One possible explanation is that when Spaak took power, his socialist party may have been less dependent on using Belgian nationalism. Having a class-based ideology may have allowed Spaak to be relatively less compelled or interested in Belgian nationalism.<sup>113</sup> A complementary explanation is that Belgium was worn down by the opposition of the United Nations and eventually of the United States.

Overall, this case indicates that ethnic ties and enmities greatly influence the preferences of these decisionmakers, determining which side of the conflict they assisted. However, this case study does suggest that there are other ways for politicians to deal with threatening ethnic identities and conflicts, besides mobilizing an alternative ethnic or civic nationalism.

In particular, reducing the sources of ethnic strife may be desirable. In Belgium, economic decline increased communal tensions. Policies that

ameliorate or improve a state's economic fortunes may aid in reducing ethnic conflict. Therefore, there was a greater economic interest for Belgium to support secession in the Congo. Likewise, in the white-dominated regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa, preventing the spread of Black Nationalism and Communism in the Congo by assisting Katanga was seen as a necessary policy to limit increased ethnic strife at home. In Congo-Brazzaville, Youlou attempted to buy off ethnic conflict, but only delayed his own demise. In each case, important domestic political imperatives, driven by ethnic politics, affected foreign policy though not always in ways predicted by the theory of ethnic politics and foreign policy.

This case also indicates the external perceptions of a conflict are crucial. Because the conflict in the Congo was seen as a black/white, Pan-African/neocolonial conflict, politicians in other states, and their constituencies, had strong preferences. If the conflict was seen purely as a struggle between different black tribes within the Congo, most states would not have cared as much, and the UN would not have gotten involved. The definition of this crisis as a racial struggle and a contest between neocolonialism and the newly independent states was a consequence of the Katangan secessionist movement's pre-independence history, the behavior of white settlers and Belgium, and the agenda-setting efforts of various states within international fora.

## Summary

A single case cannot falsify a theory, but the Congo Crisis suggests that each approach has some value and some weaknesses. The impressive role played by the United Nations supports the arguments made by Jackson and Rosberg and Herbst about the influence of international organizations, but the willingness of states vulnerable to secession undermines the fundamental assumption guiding their works. This crisis indicates that a broad conception of offensive capability and a focus on perceived intentions can be helpful, though other adjusted realist variables such as geographic proximity and aggregate power do not seem to play as strong a role as hypothesized. Finally, the Congo Crisis indicates that there is a strong correlation between the ethnic ties and the side supported. The next case study, the Nigerian Civil War, should indicate whether the Congo Crisis was unique.