

PATRIOT, FIGHTER, HUMANIST



Patrice
Lumumba

Nikolai RESHETNYAK

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA



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Introduction

How Heroes Are Born

**What Lumumba Fought For and
Against**

The Struggle Goes On

A Blow to the Rebels

The Testament

Interview in Lumumba Street

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Introduction



The events described in this booklet took place in the 1960s, when millions of Africans freed themselves from long years of colonial slavery.

The period was marked by signal victories of national liberation movements, the birth of a whole series of independent states on the continent, and great hopes that the day of the complete and final liberation of Africa was not far off.

In mid-1960, quite a while ago now, the whole world's attention was riveted on the events in the Congo. This vast country, with a population of some 15 million and occupying one-twelfth of the area of Africa, firmly rejected its colonial past.

The Belgian colonialists couldn't let such a rich country slip from their hands. The Congo is one of the world's richest countries in variety and reserves of minerals. Its Katanga province is said to be a "geological miracle" due to its fabulous reserves of copper, cobalt, uranium, radium, silver, gold, iron ore and other metals. In Kasai province, in the south of the country, there are abundant diamond fields. And gold and tin deposits are found in the Eastern and Kivu provinces, in the northeast and east of the country.

Representatives of the Belgian leadership constantly affirmed that their intentions with regard to the Congolese people were honest and unselfish, that they wished to assist them in their development and to cooperate with them on an equal basis. In actual fact they were plotting against the people of the Congo in an attempt to provoke disruption and anarchy in the country, to strangle the national liberation movement and to restore and consolidate the colonial order.

In 1959-60, the Belgian authorities provoked violent clashes between various ethnic groups in many areas of the country. The clashes were particularly tragic in Kasai province and its administrative centre of Luluabourg, where hostilities broke out between the previously friendly Baluba and Lulua tribes. Many people were killed and hundreds of families became homeless.

It was at that time that the progressive national parties and organizations rallied the people to fight for liberation. Back in 1959, the whole country was swept by powerful strikes, and ruthless repressions by the authorities met with armed counteraction by the Congolese. The revolutionary national liberation movement of the masses threatened to wipe out the decaying colonial system. Under these circumstances, the Belgian government agreed to grant independence to the Congo, hoping that it would be largely sham, and that Belgium would therefore be able to retain its economic and political positions there.

In January-February 1960 the Brussels Round Table Conference, attended by representatives of Belgium and the Congo, discussed the terms for the Congo's transition to independence. It passed a decision granting the Congo independence on June 30, 1960. The new state was to be a federal union comprising six provinces.

In May general elections were held to the People's National Assembly of the Congo (Lower House) and to the Provincial Assemblies, and the national liberation movement parties came out victorious. After that the Senate (Upper House) was formed, its representatives being appointed from among the members of Provincial Assemblies. Local government bodies were formed in the provinces. The central government included representatives of the leading political parties. Patrice Lumumba, leader of the Movement National Congolais (Congo National Movement), was appointed Prime Minister, and the Parliament elected nationalist leader Joseph Kasavubu President of the Republic of the Congo.

Forced to surrender by the national liberation struggle, the colonial authorities pretended that they had granted independence to the Congolese people of their own free will. Patrice Lumumba, first head of the national government, gave his reply to the colonialists on the day of the proclamation of independence.

Addressing the Parliament of the Republic, he angrily told the King, Prime Minister and ministers of Belgium, who were present:

"No Congolese will ever forget that independence was won in struggle, a persevering and



Patrice Lumumba was one of Africa's first outstanding national democrats. His world outlook was not devoid of eclecticism; it contained elements of petty-bourgeois ideology, of the teachings of the Utopian Socialists, and of the ideology of early bourgeois society in Africa. Yet we cannot but agree that he was an honest and consistent revolutionary, a democrat and an anti-racist. He denounced neo-colonialism.

inspired struggle carried on from day to day, a struggle in which we were undaunted by privation or suffering and stinted neither strength nor blood."

On June 30, 1960, the day of the ceremonial proclamation of the Congo's independence, thousands of the new African Republic's flags were hoisted in Congolese towns and villages. The Congolese people joyfully celebrated the attainment of their long-awaited freedom. But only a few days later they were to endure grim ordeals.

The African nations had to fight hard and often shed their blood for their sovereignty and political and economic independence. But probably none of them was subjected to such aggressive and coordinated actions by a whole coalition of imperialist states, as was the case with the Congo.

I was young at that time. We—workers, students, schoolchildren and teachers—conducted mass rallies in support of the Congo's independence. I remember parcels being packed up for the Congolese patriots until late in the evening in the city club. We sincerely believed that our solidarity with the struggle of the heroic people would stop the butchers. But what actually happened was irreparable...

And we were deeply anguished. Patrice Lumumba was loved by everybody. People were drawn to him by his modesty, simplicity and sociability. In those August days of 1960, just before the tragedy, we saw pictures showing the Congolese Prime Minister surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd in the streets of Leopoldville. We read speeches he made at meetings and press conferences, and wished him victory and success.

And then came news about the massacre of Lumumba and his comrades-in-arms—a massacre we could have predicted but didn't want to believe in.

As fate would have it, as a correspondent of the *New Times* magazine for southern Africa I was posted to the Zambian capital Lusaka (the centre of the front-line states), where once again I met Patrice Lumumba, now the symbol or banner borne by his former comrades-in-arms in the struggle for national liberation. These were

simple Africans who knew and remembered and still loved Patrice Lumumba.

I toured the towns, villages and workers' settlements of Angola, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia, and visited Namibia and the Republic of South Africa. Everywhere I saw streets, schools, farms and factories named after Patrice Lumumba. And I heard people's opinions about him.

In the Patrice Lumumba streets in Lusaka, Harare and other front-line capitals the idea came to me of asking people their opinions about the outstanding fighter for Africa's independence, speaking about him with prominent political leaders in southern Africa and the rest of the continent, and collecting all the materials into a booklet.

How Heroes Are Born

Great feats are known to originate from the homeland and its people. Patrice Lumumba was born on July 2, 1925 into a poor family living in Kasai province in the central part of the Congo. His parents were peasants, so Patrice was fully aware of the back-breaking labour of the Congolese farmer. The life of the workers was no easier: from morning till late in the night they had to labour in the province's diamond mines belonging to the Forminère company. The image of the overseer's whip and red weals on black backs must have stuck in Patrice Lumumba's memory.

Had it not been for his outstanding abilities, Patrice, too, might have had to become a black slave of Forminère or Union Minière. Africa's future hero managed to finish one of the few missionary secondary schools in the Belgian Congo. He had a burning passion for books, a thirst for knowledge and a desire to seek justice.

The road to higher education was barred to Patrice Lumumba. Only very few Congolese were sent to study in Europe, and they were mostly "reliable" people hand-

picked by the Belgian authorities. True, the Catholic missionaries' attention was drawn to the outstanding youth and they tried to appoint him to a seminary. At the time the Vatican had started training African priests on whom the colonialists could subsequently rely. But the Holy Fathers soon realized their mistake—even by that time Lumumba was expressing judgements that they were not too happy about. After a short time he was expelled from the seminary. Lumumba's "universities" were the factories and offices where he had to work to support his family—his wife, Opanga Pauline Lumumba, and four children.

As a youth Lumumba worked as a clerk in colonial administrative offices, in a post office and in a brewery. Moving from town to town, he met Belgian officials and Congolese workers, starving African intellectuals and visiting American businessmen who spent, in the twinkling of an eye, sums of money that no African, even an educated one, could earn in his whole lifetime.

With the very first steps of his political activities Lumumba adopted the stance of uncompromising struggle against the colonialists. Close contact with the people helped him to determine his country's principal goal—complete liberation from foreign domination. A staunch patriot, Lumumba believed in the Congolese people and their strength. Consistent democratism and a profound humaneness were characteristic of his world outlook.

Lumumba's literary work was imbued with patriotic ideas. The verse he wrote in his youth subsequently won him the fame of one of the greatest poets of Africa. The poems he published in the newspaper *Indépendance* and elsewhere reached the remotest parts of the country.

Weep, O my black beloved brother deep buried in
eternal, bestial night...
... Let them evaporate in everlasting sunshine,
Those tears shed by your father and your grandsire
Tortured to death upon these mournful fields,
And may our people, free and gay forever,
Live, triumph, thrive in peace in this our Congo,
Here, in the very heart of our great Africa!

These remarkable lines moved the Congolese people to the depths of their hearts.

Lumumba was also an active journalist and publicist. He published many articles exposing the evils of the colonialist regime. In Stanleyville, the centre of Eastern province, he sponsored the *Uhuru* (Freedom) newspaper, which became the mouthpiece of the Congo's freedom-fighters.

It was in that major city, which became the bastion of Lumumba's supporters, that he launched his political activities.

Lumumba was often seen addressing rallies and trade-union meetings, where he held the full attention of his audience.

He spoke calmly and with great power of conviction, his words conveying intense pain for his people and understanding of their aspirations and needs. The people soon began to refer to him as "our Patrice."

In early 1958, Lumumba set out to found a political party capable of uniting the broad masses. There were already several parties in the Congo at that time, but each stuck to the principle of uniting a given nationality or tribe. For instance, the oldest of the Congolese parties, the Alliance des Bakongo, headed by Joseph Kasavubu, consisted exclusively of members of this major tribe and was associated with the tribal nobility, who had been corrupted by the colonial authorities.

The emergence of new parties was a characteristic feature of the Congo's political life in those days.

According to various specialists, in that period the country had from 40 to 100 political organizations, called parties largely by tradition. These figures need to be verified, but it is apparent that the newly-founded parties—or groups, to be more exact—could not have had any serious influence on the country's political life and often fell apart immediately after the publication of their first manifesto.

I happened to observe a similar situation in Namibia in April 1989. The Information Department of the "transitional government of national unity" was registering numerous new parties. Some of them came into being only to disappear without a trace. April's statistics showed more than a hundred political groupings. Talking one day with the head of the local information service, E. Hofmann, I asked him what the requirements

were for founding a new party in Namibia. He smiled: "You, I and the attaché case between us are enough to proclaim the birth of a new party."

We recalled the situation in the Congo of those days, as described in this booklet. Yes, E. Hofmann remarked, there really were a great number of parties, but no more than ten or fifteen had any real force.

The major parties were mostly tribal or regional organizations with no countrywide influence. Only three of them—the Congo National Movement (Lumumba's party), the Congolese Union (Union Congolais), and the pro-colonialist National Progress Party formed in late 1959—tried to operate countrywide.

In January 1959, Leopoldville saw the foundation of the Rassemblement fédéraliste congolais (Federalist Association of the Congo). Uniting people from the Upper Congo (the Bangala, the Bassongue, the Batéké, etc.), it lacked a clear-cut political platform. Its leadership consisted mainly of representatives of middle African officials and office employees—a fact that predetermined the moderate character of the Association's activities. As the anti-colonialist movement gained ground in the country, the Federalist Association could not stand aside from the political activity, and in February it announced the formation of the Congolese Unity Party. This party called for the immediate proclamation of independence, for the preservation of the country's territorial unity, and for the fulfilment by the Belgians of the second ten-year plan of the Congo's economic development.

In 1959, the Congolese who had participated in the 1958 World Exhibition in Brussels established a group called "Le Mouvement pour le progrès national congolais" (Movement for the National Progress of the Congo) and announced that it would work for the gradual liberation of the country from the colonialist yoke by peaceful means—first securing autonomy and then independence.

The group spoke in favour of a unitary state as the best guarantee of the territorial unity of the Congo. Despite the considerable similarity between this group's programme and that of Lumumba's, its leaders did not wish to unite with Lumumba's Congo National

Movement; in this way they actually refused to strengthen the unity of the anti-colonialist forces, for which they themselves had been calling.

And then the Lower Congo saw the emergence of the Parti Democratique Congolais (Democratic Party of the Congo), which stood for the immediate stage-by-stage granting of independence to the country. Its social and economic programme was in essence a demand to create "national economic strength" by means of developing agriculture, redistributing the national income and re-investing profits obtained in the Congo. The Democratic Party called on the people and their leaders "to abandon tribal and philosophical disputes and to unite."

There was little differentiation among the peasantry and they adhered mostly to various forms of communal land use. The tribal elite had not yet become a class of feudal lords. Kinship proved to be stronger than production relations, and had a distinctive influence on occupational and production ties. The worker who came from the village was still attached to it both economically and emotionally. These workers were particularly dependent on traditional structures and relations.

The "peasant" way of thinking inherent in the Congolese worker, and his economic ties with a semi-subsistence economy (as seen, for example, in the workers leaving for the countryside in years of crisis) prevented the hired labourer from becoming a classical proletarian and developing class consciousness.

This being the case, the leadership of a number of parties was assumed by representatives of the Congolese petty bourgeoisie, such as merchants, plantation owners and officials. Under their influence these parties consistently advocated rendering financial aid to Congolese entrepreneurs, giving national capital access to industry and recognizing the local population's right to own real estate (particularly land), promoting the active development of agriculture, and encouraging foreign investments. The petty bourgeoisie's economic demands had the backing of the majority of the Congolese parties, since at that stage they reflected, to a certain extent, the interests of broad strata of society.

But because of the general weakness of the



It was Patrice Lumumba's belief that the people were the driving force of the struggle for independence and social progress. He said that the masses did not always put forward their demands openly, but when the politicians did so, they were being spurred on by the people.

Congolese petty bourgeoisie, its political parties failed to gain any significant political weight. And the lack of close economic ties between the country's provinces hampered the creation of a national party of the petty bourgeoisie.

Unclear class differentiation and the lack of distinct boundaries between social strata gave the Congo's political leaders the impression that Congolese society was classless and that all Africans had common interests. In their opinion, in the period of tackling the national task—fighting the colonial regime—class contradictions had receded to the background.

These views induced Lumumba to work out the principles of creating a single anti-colonial party. Realizing the need to unite all the popular forces in the struggle against colonialism and seeing definite confirmation of this in the 1959 events (separatism in the Lower Congo and Katanga, and inter-tribal conflicts in Kasai), Lumumba was inclined to give preference to a one-party system. He believed that what the Congo needed was a broad democratic front party uniting all, even the opposition groups, thereby ensuring the popular unity which was indispensable for victory over colonialism. The party would resolve controversial issues through debates ending in a vote, after which the viewpoint of the majority would be binding on all.

Lumumba maintained that in such conditions there would be no grounds for the existence of a permanent opposition, and that only temporary opposition groups could appear when debating a particular issue. In this battle of opinions he saw the inner source of development of social and political thought, a way of correctly solving the country's problems.

The Congo National Movement (MNC), founded by Lumumba, was not the only party in the Congo, but by mid-1959 it had become one of the strongest and most influential. While adhering to the policy of non-violent struggle, the MNC stood for the complete independence of the Congo. It had cells throughout the country and they operated in close contact with the population. **"In the struggle for independence,"** Lumumba said, **"we must count not on individual party leaders, who are often opportunist-minded, but on the**

people who are dissatisfied with their condition."

Another reason why the Congo National Movement consolidated was that Lumumba, more than any other political leader of the Congo, was associated with the national liberation movement and its leaders on the African continent. He was an active member of the Permanent Committee of the All-African Peoples' Conference and attended continental and regional meetings, including the seminar for cultural freedom held in Ibadan (Nigeria) in March 1959. He constantly studied the experience of struggle and development of the newly-free countries of Africa, and made use of it in his work.

Lumumba's political activities, his clear-cut and firm positions, and his ardent love for the people quickly made him a well-known and respected figure throughout the multinational Congo, where tribal strife and hostility towards leaders of other tribes were strong. Rising above racial and tribal prejudices and calling on the entire nation to fight for independence, Lumumba won popularity and authority among the people as a whole.

Lumumba's enemies were also well aware of his power and influence over the country's population. The British *Foreign Report* bulletin reported that Lumumba's distinguishing traits were persistence in his work, courage and a winning disposition. His strength lay in the fact that he was the only genuine nationalist, the only Congolese leader to oppose tribalism and regionalism. And he was the only political leader of the Congo to possess the necessary qualities for turning the Congo into a unified and powerful state.

What Lumumba Fought For and Against

We have already mentioned that nature was generous to the Congo. Apart from natural resources it has vast areas of virgin forest with valuable types of trees,

and large coffee, palm and cotton plantations. Even after many years of the colonialists plundering the country's natural wealth, the potential of the central jungles is estimated to be colossal. The jungle area covers more than 270 square kilometres.

And after King Leopold II of Belgium, all this wealth came into the possession of the imperialist monopolies. Controlling about 90 per cent of total capital investments in the Congo, five monopoly groups shared its riches between them. Belgian capital was the biggest plunderer, but the imperialists of other countries, above all the United States and Britain, were also great looters.

When in 1891 the now enormous concern Union Minière du Haut-Katanga modestly started its operations, it was merely a branch of the banking and financial group called Société Générale du Belgique. But from the very first days the British openly dominated the concern.

When the Union Minière began to exploit the uranium deposits during the Second World War, US monopolies, primarily the Rockefeller and Morgan financial groups, took an interest in the concern. They provided huge credits, and as early as 1955 the Union Minière stopped announcing its incomes from sales of uranium and data on its production. It was more convenient this way for the American monopolists.

The US monopolies gained control over the Forminière company and some branches of Société Générale. The Bank of America began to govern the Belgian-owned Socobanque. The interests of the American monopolies became more and more intertwined with those of their Belgian counterparts in colonial plunder. Over the last few years the Americans made the second largest investments in the Congo after the Belgians.

Britain had important positions, too. Apart from penetrating into the Union Minière, the British monopolies edged their way into other branches of industry. For instance, the Unilever company seized nearly half of the production of cocoa, coffee, palm oil and rubber.

The exploitation at foreign-owned enterprises was ruthless. Foreign companies made their fortunes with

the inhumane use of Congolese labour, and the Belgians built industry, roads and magnificent houses and villas for themselves.

When the colonialists first came to the Congo it had a population of 30 million, while today it is less than 14 million. This is the price the Congolese people paid for the "civilizing" mission of the Belgians.

Surveys conducted in the period under discussion showed a substantial decrease in the number of Congolese aged between 10 and 29. The reasons are well known: colonial exploitation, unrestrained intensification of labour, lack of medical care, constant malnutrition and bad housing.

The American journal *Leader* carried an article on labour conditions for the Congolese in Katanga's uranium mines. It said that there were a great many accidents which resulted in casualties. For extracting the world's most expensive ore (which costs several thousand dollars per ton), a local worker was paid less than three shillings a day. He was prohibited from establishing contacts with any workers' organization; he and his family had to obey the laws laid down by the company; they were tried by a court appointed by the company and sentenced to a punishment fixed by the company.

The foundation of American atomic reactors rested on the industrial slavery of thousands of Africans virtually deprived of suffrage.

Ever since the Second World War, when the American government concluded a secret agreement with the Union Minière, the latter has been sending most of its uranium ore to the United States.

Those who made enormous profits in the Congo loved to describe it as a "welfare state." They pointed to the high annual incomes of the firms, without paying any attention to the semi-slave labour of the Congolese.

If we look at the actual figures, which were deftly manipulated by the defenders of Belgian colonialism in the Congo, and use them to calculate the living standards in Belgium and in the Congo, this is the picture we shall get: Belgium, with a population of 9 million in 1959, had a national income of 400,840 million francs. The Congo, with a population of 14 million, had a

national income of 48,050 million francs. In Belgium there was one doctor for every 800 inhabitants; in the Congo—one for every 21,000 inhabitants. In 1957 mortality in Belgium was 1.19 per cent of the total population; mortality in the Congo, even among that insignificant proportion of the indigenous population who enjoyed medical care, was 17.79 per cent.

The capitalist enterprises in the Congo paid the 18,000 Europeans working there 7,400 million francs a year, and the 850,000 Congolese workers—8,460 million francs. Expenditure on the maintenance of the Congo's administrative, or rather colonial apparatus alone came to 5,700 million francs in 1959. The lion's share of the national income was spent on maintaining the mercenary army, the police and the gendarmerie.

At the same time there was not a single Congolese doctor, engineer or agronomist. In the last few pre-independence years there were six indigenous inhabitants of the Congo with higher education—one for every two million people.

More than 85 per cent of the primary and secondary schools were in the hands of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

The Vatican pursued a double ambition. Firstly, it aimed to convert the young people to Christianity and bring them under its influence. Secondly, it planned to train them to be preachers, proclaimers of "God's message." The Vatican was aware that however bombastic a European priest was, he would never be dear to the Africans. Whereas an obedient and industrious Congolese priest, trained in a Catholic school, would be a true and reliable accomplice in the further enslavement of the people.

Nearly the whole of the press and radio, controlled and subsidised by the Vatican, served its aims. The majority of the printing houses and stocks of paper were in the hands of the church, as were huge sums of money for propaganda.

No wonder the Africans say: "When the Whites came to us, they had the Bible and we had the land; now the Whites have the land and we have the Bible."

Addressing a press conference in Brussels two months before the proclamation of independence, a



Being very fond of children, Patrice Lumumba dreamed of a bright future for them.

spokesman for the Parti du peuple (People's Party of the Congo), Alphonse Nguvulu, said:

"The majority of the urban and rural population of the Congo receive a mere pittance for their labour, live in horrible conditions, are half-starved, and cannot afford to give their children an education. They practically get no medical care. Unemployment dooms a considerable number of Congolese families to starvation."

The catastrophic state of the Congo's public health service was a consequence of colonialism. Poverty, chronic malnutrition and lack of effective medical care promoted the spread of serious diseases, causing a very high mortality rate, especially among children.



With the family.

The average life-span of a Congolese was no more than two-thirds of that of a Belgian. Out of every 100 children born in the Congo, more than 60 died before they were 15 years old. In many areas the death rate was higher than the birth rate; some ethnic groups were becoming extinct. The standard of the Congo's medical service was extremely low. Medical institutions for the indigenous population were usually housed in poorly equipped premises and lacked even the most elementary facilities and medicaments.

Just before the declaration of independence, the economic situation in the Congo greatly deteriorated. The Belgian colonialists had been preparing for the establishment of a republic in their own way, well beforehand: while talking about their desire to establish friendly relations with the Congolese people and to give them every assistance, they consistently pursued a policy of economic sabotage in a deliberate attempt to bring about disruption, starvation and unemployment. They soon managed to cause a serious disruption in the economy and finances of the Congo, which was man-

ifest in the acute budget and balance of payments deficits, the catastrophic outflow of capital from the country, the devaluation of the Congolese franc and the high inflation rate.

In late 1958, the gold and foreign currency reserves in the Central Bank of the Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi were estimated at more than 9,000 million francs; by March 1960 they had dwindled to 2,500 million.

According to press reports, the Belgians had managed to take out 15 tons of gold from the Congo, the greater part of the country's reserves.

The situation in the army was unbearable. It was used mostly to suppress anti-imperialist actions by the Congolese people, and the troops served as a reliable support for the colonial regime. Monotonous drills, brain-washing propaganda and fear of ruthless punishment turned the soldiers into obedient executors of the colonialists' will. Just before the proclamation of independence, the Congolese army, the strongest in Central Africa, consisted of about 26,000 Congolese soldiers, with 4,000 Belgian paratroopers stationed at military bases.

But the Congolese people had no intention of putting up with a situation imposed on them by force of arms, economic pressure and spiritual stupefaction. They fought resolutely for the liberation of their country and the abolition of the hateful colonial regime.

The situation was becoming more and more charged. On January 4, 1959, an uprising broke out in Leopoldville. A rally had been fixed for that day, to be addressed by members of the Congolese delegation headed by Patrice Lumumba, who had just returned from the All-African Peoples' Conference in Accra. Frightened by the growth of the national liberation movement in Africa, the Belgian authorities prohibited the rally. But people defied the ban and marched in columns to the meeting place. Armed police blocked their way and opened fire on the order of Belgian officers...

The Congolese population of Leopoldville responded to the shooting down of the peaceful marchers by staging a strike and a general uprising. They took police

stations by storm and attacked soldiers with sticks and stones. Shops and buildings belonging to Belgian and Portuguese firms were set on fire in African neighbourhoods. Then the authorities called in Belgian paratroopers from the NATO bases in Kamina and Kitona. Brutal terror began to rage in the city. Anybody found in the street during the curfew was shot. Paratroopers, rushing about in their jeeps, fired at the houses of Africans just for amusement. All notable Congolese political leaders were arrested.

But the people's resistance was not broken. Real battles raged for three days, bringing factories, workshops and the city transport to a standstill. Spontaneous indignation grew into a unanimous demand for independence. Mass actions forced the colonialists to make concessions. On January 13, 1959 King Baudouin I of Belgium gave the Congolese people a vaguely phrased promise of independence.

This promise, wrenched from the colonialists in a grim struggle, gave rise to joy and hope in the Congo. People were rejoicing, looking forward to the day that would put an end to their humiliation, lack of rights, and poverty.

But Brussels was in no hurry...

The summer and autumn of 1959 saw a fresh upsurge of the struggle. In late October 1959, the Congo National Movement organized a meeting in Stanleyville attended by Lumumba and other prominent leaders. Before the meeting was over, Belgian policemen broke in and rushed towards Lumumba, trying to seize him. But the participants in the meeting defended him and prevented his arrest. The policemen opened fire...

News about this reprisal spread like wildfire. That same evening Lumumba and his followers organized mass protest demonstrations in Stanleyville. The colonialists retaliated with fresh shootings. The ensuing street battles lasted several days.

The whole country was roused by the Stanleyville uprising, led by Lumumba. The powerful wave of anti-colonial actions that swept the cities dealt colonialism in the Congo an irreparable blow. All the Congolese were demanding independence.

The Belgian government was compelled to comply

with the demand. A few weeks after the Stanleyville events it announced the convocation of the so-called Round Table Conference in Brussels to be attended by leaders of the Congo's main political parties. The conference, scheduled for late January 1960, was to specify the procedure and date for the granting of independence to the Congo and to pass a decision regarding the structure of the future Congolese state.

As they sat down at the negotiating table, the Belgian representatives were most of all concerned about retaining their domination in the new conditions and leaving themselves loop-holes through which they would be able to go on dictating their will to the Congolese. And their main worry was to ensure that the monopolies' interests were left intact, so as not to let the Congo's wealth slip out of their hands.

Nearly every point in the draft agreement on the granting of independence to the Congo provoked fierce disputes. The more radical Congolese delegates, headed by Patrice Lumumba, were emphatic in demanding independence without any provisos and the transfer of full power to the elected representatives of the Congolese people. This was all the more necessary since the Belgian representatives were trying to impose on the Congo the status of a kingdom, headed by King Baudouin of Belgium. It was only after long debates and as a result of resolute resistance from the majority of the Congolese delegates that the Belgian government renounced its claims to the Congo's sovereignty.

But at the same time the colonialists were plotting to ensure that their economic domination continued. In this endeavour their spokesman was Moïse Tshombe, head of the Katanga party CONAKAT. He was later to betray the freedom of the Congolese people, but even at that time he was doing his utmost to preserve the colonial order in his country and to prevent its unity. Playing into Belgium's hands and acting on instructions from the Union Minière, Tshombe insisted that the provincial authorities should retain control over the extraction of minerals in Katanga. But he failed to gain the support of the majority of the Congolese representatives.

The Round Table Conference ended with the victory of the Congo's progressive forces: it endorsed June 30,



The sovereign Republic of the Congo was proclaimed on June 30, 1960. As head of the first national government, Patrice Lumumba saw to it that its policy was purely the policy of the people. Though he did not manage to complete the government programme he was drawing up, the theses and materials he prepared give us good reason to conclude that he recognized the need for the struggle for political independence to develop into a struggle against exploitative relations.

1960 as the date for the proclamation of independence, stipulated the holding of general elections and specified the republican form of government. The future central government of the Congo was to obtain control over all of the country's natural resources.

A sharp political struggle flared up over the issue of forming the first government of the independent Congo. The polarization of views and goals of the various parties had by that time reached its highest point throughout the whole period of struggle for the Congo's independence. It was then that everybody clearly recognized the democratism of Lumumba and his allies, and their concern for the country's interests, on the one hand, and the egoistic ambitions of many political leaders, on the other. These ambitions were particularly dangerous because these leaders were trying to rely on certain ethnic groups and social strata of the population.

Lumumba, being the leader of the most influential party, demanded that he should be granted the mission of forming a government. He first made this announcement on May 31, warning that otherwise he would take advantage of his party's prestige and the Congolese people's support to form a government without the authorities' consent. At the same time Lumumba declared that the Congo National Movement had never been anxious to deter other parties from running the country.

Speaking at the ceremony of the proclamation of the Congo's independence on June 30, 1960, Patrice Lumumba summed up his party's heroic struggle for the country's independence and talked about its prospects. He told the gathering:

"Men and women of the Congo, who have fought for and won the Independence we celebrate today, I salute you in the name of the Congolese Government. I ask you all, friends who have fought unrelentingly side by side to make this 30th of June, 1960 an illustrious date that remains ineradicably engraved on your hearts, a date whose significance you will be proud to teach to your children, who will in turn pass on to their children and grandchildren the glorious story of our struggle for liberty.

"For while the independence of the Congo has today

been proclaimed in agreement with Belgium, a friendly country with whom we deal with on an equal footing, no Congolese worthy of the name will ever be able to forget that that independence has only been won by struggle, a struggle that went on day after day, a struggle of fire and idealism, a struggle in which we have spared neither effort, deprivation, suffering nor even our blood.

"This struggle, involving tears, fire and blood, is something we are proud of in our deepest hearts, for it was a noble and just struggle, which was needed to bring to an end the humiliating slavery imposed on us by force.

"Such was our lot for eighty years under the colonialist regime; our wounds are still too fresh and painful for us to be able to forget them at will, for we have experienced painful labour demanded of us in return for wages that were not enough to enable us to eat properly, nor to be decently dressed or sheltered, nor to bring up our children as we longed to.

"We have experienced contempt, insults, and blows, morning, noon and night, because we were 'black.' We shall never forget that a black was called 'tu,' not because he was a friend, but because only the whites were given the honour of being called 'vous.'

"We have seen our lands despoiled in the name of so-called legal documents which were no more than a recognition of superior force.

"We have known that the law was never the same for a white man as it was for a black: for the former it made allowances, for the latter it was cruel and inhuman.

"We have seen the appalling suffering of those who had their political opinions and religious beliefs dismissed; as exiles in their own country their lot was truly worse than death.

"We have seen magnificent houses in the towns for the whites and crumbling straw huts for the blacks; a black could not go to the cinema, or a restaurant, or a shop that was meant for 'Europeans'; a black would always travel in the lowest part of a ship, under the feet of the whites in their luxurious cabins.

"And, finally, who can ever forget the firing in which so many of our brothers died; or the cells where those

who refused to submit any longer to the rule of a 'justice' of oppression and exploitation were put away?

"All this, brothers, has meant the most profound suffering.

"But all this, we can now say, we who have been voted as your elected representatives to govern our beloved country, we who have suffered in body and mind from colonial oppression, all this is now ended.

"The Republic of the Congo has been proclaimed, and our land is now in the hands of her own children.

"Together, brothers and sisters, we shall start on a new struggle, a noble struggle that will bring our country to peace, prosperity and greatness.

"Together, we shall establish social justice, and ensure that everyone is properly rewarded for the work he does.

"We shall show the world what the black man can do when he is allowed to work in freedom, and we shall make the Congo the focal point of all Africa.

"We shall take care that the soil of our country really provides for the good of her children.

"We shall review all the laws of the past, and make new ones that are just and noble.

"We shall put an end to all suppression of free thought, and make it possible for all our citizens to enjoy to the full those fundamental freedoms spoken of in the Declaration of Human Rights.

"We shall effectively suppress all discrimination of every kind, and give everyone his true place as dictated by his human dignity, his work and his dedication to his country.

"We shall set up a rule of peace—not with guns and bayonets, but peace of heart and goodwill.

"And for all this, my dear fellow-citizens, you may be sure that we can count not only on our great forces and immense resources, but on the aid of many other countries whose collaboration we shall always accept when it is sincere and not an attempt to force us into any political alignment.

"In this connection, even Belgium who, having at last understood the way history was going, has no longer tried to prevent our independence, is ready to give us aid and friendship, and a treaty to that effect has

just been signed as between two equal and independent countries. Such cooperation, I am sure, will profit both our countries. For our part, while remaining on the watch, we shall respect the engagement into which we have freely entered.

"Thus, both within and without, the new Congo which my government is creating will be a rich, free, and prosperous country. But if we are to achieve this objective quickly, I must ask you all, legislators and citizens of the Congo, to do everything in your power to help me.

"I ask you all to forget the tribal rivalries that dissipate our energies and make us the laughing-stock of foreigners.

"I ask you all to hold back from no sacrifice that will ensure the success of magnificent enterprise.

"Lastly, I ask you to show unconditional respect for the lives and goods both of your fellow citizens and of the foreigners living in our midst. If these foreigners behave badly, they will be expelled from our territory by law; if, on the other hand, they behave well, then they must be left in peace, for they too are working for the good of the Congo.

"The independence of the Congo marks a decisive step towards the liberation of the whole of the African continent..

"Our government, strong, national and popular, will be the salvation of this country.

"I urge all Congolese citizens, men, women and children, to set resolutely to work to create a prosperous national economy and thus guarantee our economic independence.

"Honour to those who have fought for national liberty!

"Long live the independence and unity of Africa!

"Long live the sovereign and independent Congo!"

This was the manifesto of the victorious people. Patrice Lumumba's speech played an important role in further developments. The colonialists realized that the country had found a new master—the Congolese people; that independence had proved to be not merely empty talk, as they would have liked it to be, and that their unlawful privileges were slipping out of their hands forever. All the local reactionaries became anxious; they

were used to currying favour with the imperialists and were only waiting for an opportunity to poison the atmosphere and try to divide the new state.

On July 5, unrest broke out in Leopoldville. The Belgian Commander of the Congolese Army, General Janssens, rushed to the military camp at Thysville. The soldiers were assembled in the enormous dining-room and the general addressed them, standing on a table, surrounded by a retinue of officers:

"Soldiers, I hear there is talk about independence and rights among you. Remember that in the army everything remains the same. Independence is for political chatterboxes. But here, my officers and I are in command!"

Janssens' words were drowned by the furious shouts of the soldiers. Maltreatment by Belgian officers, for whom the Congolese were not human beings, was still fresh in their minds. The soldiers drove the general away and made for the capital chanting: "Down with the Belgian officers! Long live Lumumba!"

The Prime Minister of the Republic hurried off to the military camp. He promised the soldiers on the spot that army salaries would be raised and that every serviceman would be promoted by one rank.

At the same time, Lumumba removed General Janssens from the army command and ordered him to leave the Congo.

The Belgians tried to divert the wrath of the Congolese soldiers by another dirty trick. A Belgian officer arrived at the military camp in a jeep and shouted to the soldiers: "You have been cheated! While you were driving out the Belgian officers, Lumumba invited Soviet officers to replace them. They are already landing at the airport."

The soldiers sent their envoys to Lumumba. The Prime Minister explained to them that this was another provocation by the Belgians and that they must not believe lies. The envoys were reassured and conveyed this message to their comrades at the camp.

Then the colonialists resorted to extreme measures. On the night of July 8, a group of Belgian officers broke into the Prime Minister's house. They arrested the guards and, brandishing their pistols, tried to enter his

bedroom. One of his secretaries managed to call the military camp, where the alarm was raised. The soldiers rushed to Lumumba's residence in army trucks. Two of the intruders were arrested, but the others managed to escape.

The situation had reached crisis point, but early the next morning Leopoldville was under the control of the insurgent troops.

The government met in an emergency session right in the barracks. It came to the decision that from then on the army would have only Congolese officers, while loyal Belgians would be kept on as technical advisers. The soldiers were delighted at this decision and pledged to immediately restore order in the capital.

But on July 9, a direct military intervention was launched against the republic. Belgian soldiers occupied Leopoldville airport, and the first paratroop battalions landed in the Congo.

Belgian soldiers in the capital immediately took over vital centres. Troops at the NATO bases at Kamina and Kitona seized the nearby towns.

Meanwhile, Belgian paratroop units, which had been brainwashed into hating the Congolese, were landing in various parts of the country. They were ruthless in dealing with the local people; they beat them up with rifle butts, broke up any group, and barred black men from entering "European" districts.

The aggression had obviously been well planned in advance. The Belgians had failed to secure control over the formation of the Congo's first national government, and therefore had to bide their time. The colonialists' logic was simple. If men like Joseph Kasavubu, Jean Bolikango and Moise Tshombe assumed power, Belgium would support the "independence" of the Congo. Should the power go to those who hated the colonialist regime and were ready to uphold genuine independence, Belgium would strike.

The Congolese government remained calm and was not intimidated by the imperialist threats and attacks. On July 10, Patrice Lumumba made a radio speech in which he said:

"We have learned that the Belgian government has decided to dispatch Belgian troops to the Congo. We

protest most resolutely because this is a violation of our national sovereignty. We would like to warn everybody that we shall defend ourselves against attempts to occupy our country by military force."

Lumumba also announced that in view of the new situation the Congo was severing diplomatic relations with Belgium and that he had asked the United Nations for help.

The Struggle Goes On

Even under these conditions Patrice Lumumba and his comrades-in-arms thought of the future of their country in terms of peaceful construction, rather than war. On July 5, 1960 the Congolese Prime Minister read out his government's programme before the press. "**We are not Communists, Catholics or Socialists,**" he said. "**We are African Nationalists. We retain the right to be friends with whoever we like in accordance with the principle of political neutrality...**" And he warned: "**The Congo will agree to no foreign aid which turns out to be imperialist intrigues in disguise...**"

Lumumba announced his intention to curb the arbitrary actions of foreign companies in the Congo, to place their enterprises under control and force them to guarantee adequate wages to the Congolese workers.

The Lumumba government began work on creating a new state apparatus and a new army, boldly appointing Congolese to the top posts.

It established diplomatic relations with many countries of the world, irrespective of their social systems. One of the first was the Soviet Union, about which Lumumba always spoke with great feeling.

Lumumba, however, did not manage to complete the transformations he had started; provocations by the internal and external enemies of the republic prevented him from doing so. In their attempt to hit the Congo, the opponents of the national liberation movement decided

on first killing Patrice Lumumba, in whom they saw not only the leader of the Congolese people, but also the man who embodied an uncontrollable Africa.

There is every reason to believe, the British bourgeois newspaper *News Chronicle* wrote in those years, that the United States had for many days been searching for a way to overthrow Lumumba...

The Western press launched a malicious smear campaign against Lumumba, depicting this profoundly humane, gentle and noble person as a vampire, a "black monster" calling for the "slaughter of the whites."

It was common knowledge, however, that none other than Lumumba flew at the first sign of trouble to the areas of probable racial clashes and, with his inherent power of conviction, restored the peace there. It was precisely the humaneness and gentleness of the Prime Minister that his enemies repeatedly tried to take advantage of.

The incursion by Belgian troops coincided—by no means accidentally—with the mobilization of their agents inside the country. Soon after the beginning of the Belgian intervention, Tshombe, the leader of the Katanga party CONAKAT, announced the secession of the mineral-rich Katanga province from the Congo. His example was followed by Albert Kalonji, the self-proclaimed head of an "independent mining state" in Kasai province.

These puppets had the backing of the leading capitalist powers who were keen to prevent Lumumba from mobilizing his forces to repulse the Belgian aggressors. The latter provoked inter-tribal clashes in the streets of Leopoldville and other cities, and incited European specialists who had stayed on in the Congo to sabotage the legitimate government. It reached the point when Lumumba could not even fly from Leopoldville when he decided to visit some other districts—the Belgian pilot refused to obey his order.

This was a terribly hard time for Patrice Lumumba. His staunchness in the struggle against colonialism, his statesmanship and ability to find his bearings in the prevailing political situation were all put to the test.

Lumumba's enemies harassed him and organized all sorts of provocations against him. The monopolies'

press labelled him as "Moscow's agent," a "Communist" and the like.

"Some call me a Communist, though I'm not one. They call me a Communist because they failed to corrupt me," Lumumba explained.

The decisions he took were bold and principled. He called on the Congolese people to be resolute in defending their freedom. **"If my death becomes inevitable tomorrow,"** he told the people, **"I'll die for my motherland."**


Lumumba declared martial law in the country and sharply condemned UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld and the command of the United Nations troops. **"We no longer have any confidence in the Secretary-General of the United Nations,"** he said firmly.

The Prime Minister was always on the alert and kept a submachine-gun in his study. He relied on the people in his activities. His policy was consonant with the interests of all Congolese, whatever tribe they belonged to. And the people reciprocated with support. Whenever he appeared in the streets of Leopoldville there was a powerful demonstration of solidarity with him.

Lumumba was becoming increasingly popular among the military, too. Whole army units which Tshombe and his supporters considered to be "theirs" were going over to the side of the legitimate government. In most of the provinces the majority of people also supported Lumumba. Finally, Lumumba had the support of the majority of MPs—not only the representatives of the National Movement but of other parties as well.

All this enabled Lumumba to take resolute actions against the Belgian aggressors and their puppets.

In late August 1960, the government army, commanded by General Victor Lundula, one of the Prime Minister's true comrades-in-arms, mounted an offensive on Kalonji's and Tshombe's troops, which were armed and equipped by the Belgians. After inflicting a number of defeats on Kalonji's gangs, the government army occupied their "capital," Bakwanga, and in early September entered the territory of Katanga, the main bastion of colonialism in the Congo.



In September 1960, with the help of the imperialist powers, an opposition group, whose policy reflected the interests of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and other prosperous strata of Congolese society, removed Lumumba from power. In December the same year he was caught by security service agents and thrown into prison where he was ruthlessly tortured.



At this point, the imperialists, frightened by the victories of Lumumba's supporters, resorted to extreme measures: they set into motion a secret internal plot, prepared by their agents.

Involved in this intrigue were people whom Lumumba considered, if not supporters, at any rate allies in the anti-colonialist struggle.

The plot had been thoroughly prepared. The first stab in Lumumba's back came from Kasavubu. He made a radio statement to the effect that Lumumba had been discharged from the premiership, that his government had been dissolved and a new one appointed. This action was illegal: under the Constitution of the Congo, it was the exclusive prerogative of Parliament, not of the President, to appoint a government or make it resign. On hearing of Kasavubu's betrayal, Lumumba had Parliament convened; it passed a resolution of confidence in his government.

But Kasavubu's abortive manoeuvre was only the beginning.

The strengthening of the forces of the country's legitimate government in Stanleyville scared the rebels and their patrons. They were particularly frightened by the possibility of Lumumba uniting with his supporters in other parts of the country. They reinforced the guard around Patrice Lumumba's residence. For two months he lived like a prisoner, surrounded by two rows of guards. But on the evening of November 27, he managed to escape.

Nobody knew in what direction he had driven. Minister of Defence Maurice M'polo and President of the Senate Joseph Okito had left the city secretly at the same time.

There was a great commotion in Leopoldville. The chase lasted four days. Airlifted armed gangs blocked all roads leading to Stanleyville and Lumumba's home province, Kasai.

On the evening of December 1, it was announced that the mercenaries had caught Patrice Lumumba and his companions in Port Francqui, a town 500 kilometres to the east of the capital.

A plane was immediately sent there. On December 2, the Prime Minister was brought to the Leopoldville airport under heavy guard. He and his companions, tied with ropes, were thrown into lorries and taken to the prison of the paratroopers' camp at Binza. There new torturers were awaiting them.

A Blow to the Rebels

Patrice Lumumba's arrest and brutal treatment by the bandits triggered off a storm of indignation among the patriotic population of Eastern province, whose authorities decided to close the provincial boundaries and introduce additional precautionary measures. But this did not deter the patriots in their desire to bring back the country's independence and freedom, to crush the enemy and launch a struggle to unify the whole of the Congo.

In mid-December, the country's legitimate government was reconstituted in Stanleyville; it was headed by Deputy Prime Minister Antoine Gizenga. Stanleyville was declared the Congo's temporary capital.

The rebellious outbreak was successfully stamped out, but realizing how unstable this "appeasement" was, Kasavubu went and paid his respects to Patrice Lumumba in prison. He wanted to offer the Prime Minister a deal, to persuade him to accept a "reconciliation." But Lumumba flatly refused to talk to a traitor guilty of direct complicity in colonial brigandage in the country.

Lumumba's position, confirmed by his heroism in jail, convinced the puppets once again that they would never be able to strike a deal with the true son of the Congo, using the language of treachery. Therefore, they agreed to hand him over to Tshombe.

On the morning of January 17, Patrice Lumumba, Maurice M'polo and Joseph Okito were taken in complete secrecy to Elizabethville, where even greater torture awaited them.



"Neither brutality, nor cruelty, nor torture will ever bring me to ask for mercy, for I prefer to die with my head unbowed, my faith unshakable and with profound trust in the destiny of my country, rather than live under subjection and disregarding sacred principles."

Here is a description of the airport massacre by an eyewitness—a Swedish soldier from the United Nations troops:

"It was a horrifying sight. Lumumba and two other prisoners were pulled out of the plane, tied and bound together. They could hardly move. Then Katangan gendarmes—both Europeans and Africans—surrounded them and gave them a sound beating.

"Lumumba and his two comrades-in-arms fell to the ground. They continued to be beaten and were hit in the face with sticks, feet and fists..."

Even in these terrible moments, having blows showered on them, Lumumba and his comrades did not utter a single word; they remained staunch, as befits heroes and real fighters.

For three weeks Katanga kept silence about the fate of Patrice Lumumba and his comrades. It was not until February 11 that the Katangan "Minister of Internal Affairs," Godefroy Munongo, summoned a press conference at 9 p.m.

"Lumumba has escaped," he told journalists. "Searches are being conducted on all roads by plane and helicopter. There is a big reward for his recapture..."

On February 13, the Katangan authorities officially announced that Patrice Lumumba, Joseph Okito and Maurice M'polo had been murdered. The murder, they asserted, was perpetrated by some villagers in the jungle, and the bodies were secretly buried in an "unknown place."

Details of the murder surfaced later on. The pilot of the plane which brought Lumumba and his comrades-in-arms, Okito and M'polo, to Elizabethville, a Belgian named Bauvens, was to write some time later:

"The prisoners were beaten up so terribly that the crew shut themselves in the cockpit, disgusted by what was going on. I even asked them to take it easy, otherwise they would damage the plane."

Meanwhile in a small house outside Elizabethville Colonel Hughe and Captain Gat (both Belgians) were loading their pistols. A few hours later Lumumba's heart stopped beating. Hughe and Gat also killed Okito and M'polo.

The Testament

Lumumba was not only a political leader, a staunch and courageous fighter for the great cause of liberation from colonialism. He also loved his people ardently and whole-heartedly. Eyewitnesses tell the following story.

Lumumba and his comrades-in-arms were making a heroic attempt to get to Stanleyville. The Vice-Chairman of the *Parti de la solidarité africaine* (Party for African Solidarity), Gabriel Yumbu, and Minister Louis Akunda managed to get there. Had Patrice Lumumba kept moving, he would have made it, too. But he saw crowds standing by the roadside in small villages and settlements, waiting for him to pass by. They wanted to hear him speak.

Lumumba did not think of himself; he stopped to address the crowds. For hours, the vehicles that were to take him away from the chase stood waiting. He just couldn't have acted otherwise. This is probably one of the most heroic pages in Lumumba's life. Pursued by enemies, he continued to be a tribune, a fighter. Had he not stopped in the towns and villages to talk to the people, he would most likely have managed to reach Stanleyville and find safety there. But he preferred to be himself and stay true to his principles.

That is why even in those days it was written of him: "Alive or dead, Lumumba will become African history."

On November 30, Lumumba was in the city of Port Francqui when some black spots loomed up on the shining highway. The chase. He should have moved on at once, simply to escape. But in the small town of Mweka nearby, people had gathered for a meeting. He decided to address it.

"Lumumba realized that this could be the last speech he ever made. He spoke about the Congo's future and seemed to be saying farewell to us," Gabriel Yumbu was to remark later on. "At the end of the meeting the enemy's paratroopers appeared on the square."

It is well known that the Katangan authorities concocted a cheap detective story about the escape of



Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba with his closest associates, Maurice M'polo and Joseph Okito, before being sent to Thysville prison.

Lumumba and his comrades through a broken wall and about their death in a small village, where they were allegedly torn to pieces by Tshombe's "vigilant" supporters. Nobody believed this story.

It was not until November 1961, when the report of the special commission of the United Nations was published, that the truth about Lumumba's death became known. My account of the Congolese hero's last days is based on facts from this report.

In a letter to his wife Pauline, written in Thysville prison just before his death, Patrice Lumumba said:

"My dear wife,

"I am writing these words not knowing whether they will reach you, when they will reach you, and whether I shall still be alive when you read them.

"All through my struggle for the independence of my



Brutal treatment of Lumumba's supporters.

country, I have never doubted for a single instant the final triumph of the sacred cause to which my companions and I have devoted all our life. All we wanted for our country was its right to an honourable life, to unstained dignity, to independence without restrictions. This was never desired by the Belgian imperialists and their Western allies, who found direct and indirect support, both deliberate and unintentional, amongst certain high officials of the United Nations, the organization in which we placed all our trust when we called on its assistance.

"They have corrupted some of our compatriots and bribed others. They have helped to distort the truth and bring our independence into dishonour. How could I speak otherwise?"

"Dead or alive, free or in prison by order of the imperialists, it is not I myself who count. It is the Congo, it is our poor people for whom independence has been transformed into a cage from beyond whose confines the outside world looks on us, sometimes with kindly sympathy but at other times with joy and pleasure. But my faith will remain unshakable. I know and I feel in my heart that sooner or later my people will rid themselves of all other enemies, both internal and external, and that they will rise as one man to say 'No' to the degradation and shame of colonialism, and regain their dignity in the clear light of the sun.

"We are not alone. Africa, Asia and the free liberated peoples from all corners of the world will always be found at the side of the millions of Congolese, who will not abandon the struggle until the day when there are no longer any colonialists and their mercenaries in our country.

"As to my children, whom I leave and whom I may never see again, I should like them to be told that it is for them, as it is for every Congolese, to accomplish the sacred task of reconstructing our independence and our sovereignty: for without dignity there is no liberty, without justice there is no dignity, and without independence there are no free men.

"Neither brutality, nor cruelty, nor torture will ever bring me to ask for mercy, for I prefer to die with my head unbowed, my faith unshakable and with profound

trust in the destiny of my country, rather than live under subjection and disregarding sacred principles.

"History will one day have its say, but it will not be the history that is taught in Brussels, Paris, Washington or in the United Nations, but the history which will be taught in the countries freed from imperialism and its puppets. Africa will write her own history, and to the north and south of the Sahara, it will be a glorious and dignified history.

"Do not weep for me, my dear wife. I know that my country, which is suffering so much, will know how to defend its independence and its liberty.

"Long live the Congo!

"Long live Africa!"

Patrice Lumumba."

The time that has passed since Patrice Lumumba's tragic death shows that the day of his murder marked the beginning of his second life and immortality.

Interview in Lumumba Street

Patrice Lumumba Street in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, is one of the longest—"the working highway," as they call it here. Day and night there is heavy traffic on this road, which links the industrial towns of the Copper Belt with the capital and the provinces. Lumumba Street is lined with offices, shops and banks. Here we also find recreation places where lovers fix dates and business people meet.

I went to Lumumba Street on a weekday to interview several people, asking them exactly the same questions: "What do you know about Patrice Lumumba and his struggle?" "What significance does the Congolese hero's exploit have for the young, developing nations of Africa?" Below are some of the replies.

S. Tshindu, 21, a Barclays Bank employee: "Lumumba, whom I first learnt about at school, showed



For millions of people in Africa and other continents, Patrice Lumumba remains a symbol of patriotism, love of freedom and fortitude in the national liberation struggle.

an example of what a great deal one man can do for his people if he is selflessly devoted to their interests. We have our own leader, Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda, who began his struggle during the same period as Patrice Lumumba and brought our country to independence. I believe that in this way the cause of the Congolese hero is being continued by his friends and comrades."

V. Banda, 42, a farmer from Eastern province: "When the enemies of the Congo murdered Lumumba, I was a youth. But I still remember how mournfully the women of my village sang, bewailing the death of Party, as we used to call him in those days..."

N. Kanoka, 26, a student at the University of Zambia: "The history of the anti-colonialist struggle knows many names which belong not only to those countries where the heroes were born, but to all who cherish freedom. For example, Miguel Hidalgo was murdered in 1811 in Mexico, and 150 years later Lumumba was murdered in the Congo. Yet there is no halting the national liberation struggle. Today the last colony on our planet—Namibia—has embarked on the realization of UN Security Council Resolution 435, which has opened the way to its freedom."

D. Kabua, 32, unemployed: "People like Lumumba give us hope that not only God, but also ordinary mortals can make this life better..."

S. Machéké, 31, a worker: "Lumumba's death has made us realize that every minute we must be ready to defend our country and hard-won freedom. We always bear this in mind because we live in the centre of the front-line states, which are constantly threatened by South Africa."

Afterwards I had occasion to talk to President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia. He said it was perfectly clear that the events in the Congo were a consequence of international reactionary forces' hostile actions against the Congo and all African nations fighting for complete independence. The murder of the Congo's national hero demonstrated to the whole world that the monopolies which are out to plunder other nations are capable of any crime.

President Kaunda said: "Patrice Lumumba will remain in African history as one of its most illustrious names."

* * *

And so the life of Patrice Lumumba, a true son and hero of Africa, goes on. The following lines written by him are a passionate call to fight:

You see, my brother, it's dawn,
day is coming.
Don't you see light spots on our
brightening faces?
In old Africa, brother, a new day
is breaking.
The land and the water and the mighty rivers
will belong to us alone.
Let our people, free
and happy,
Live and triumph in our
Congo,
Here, in the very heart of great
Africa!
There's no better way of putting it!

Николай Иванович Решетняк

ПАТРИС ЛУМУМБА
на английском языке

Цена 25 к.