The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

MICHAEL P.E. HOYT

Interviewed by: Ray Sadler
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INTERVIEW

Q: The time is approximately 2:14 PM, the 30th of January 1995, Las Cruses, New Mexico, Breland Hall, campus of New Mexico State University, Department of History. He is a retired foreign service officer.

Let me begin by noting that Mr. Hoyt has a rather unique background as a foreign service officer. He is one of only a handful of FSOs who has received the Secretary's Award for his performance as head of the American consulate in Stanleyville, Congo (now Kisangani, Zaire) when he and his staff were held hostage of the rebel Simbas for 111 days in 1964.

Let me begin by discussing, if you would, when did you become an FSO, the Department of State, was this an interest of childhood? Why don't you explain why.

HOYT: Okay Ray. I always had an interest in foreign affairs, having lived in Europe as a very young child, having an outlook which looked overseas and appreciated what was going on overseas and during the war, of course, I was very conscious of it. I went to college and then went into the Air Force for 4 years, married just before I got out, and went to the University of Illinois. I was earning a Masters Degree and found myself with a very large family and decided that I would not stay on for the doctorate and instead try to get a job. Exams were being offered for the Federal internship program and for the foreign service. This was in early 1956. I passed the foreign service exam and passed orals and offered a job. By that time I thought it was a very good idea. A princely salary of $5,000 a year looked pretty good. So I entered the foreign service in October 1956.

Q: Michael, let me come back. You've indicated that you, in a sense, kind of grew up overseas. Was your dad in the military? Where were you overseas?

HOYT: My father was a theoretical nuclear physicist and taught at the University of Chicago. He had long vacations and sabbaticals. He would take off almost half a year and go to Europe and consult with the physicists over there. Several times my parents would leave my sister and me at a farm outside of Lausanne, Switzerland. So my early years, up to about 5 years old, I spent a lot of time overseas.

Q: Did you pick up any language?

HOYT: French was my first language but I soon lost it. I had to really study hard to relearn it after I got into the service.
Q: Was your father involved in the Manhattan Project?

HOYT: Yes.

Q: He was at college?

HOYT: He was at the University of Chicago. He was working on it but at the same time he was trying to keep the Physics Department going. He spent a lot of time working on the project.

Q: He knew Fermi and Teller, that group.

HOYT: That's why we're here in New Mexico, because I spent a lot of time with my mother and father after he retired to Los Alamos. In fact, I met my wife living in Espanola.

Q: When did your dad come to Los Alamos?

HOYT: We came right after the war. We'd come summers.

Q: 47, 48

HOYT: We would come summers and then after he retired.

Q: So you did get a taste, in terms of spending time in Switzerland and so forth.

I was looking at your curriculum vitae. You went to the University of Chicago, you received your undergraduate degree in History. The queen of all of the disciplines. I see you and I both appreciate it. Then you went on to receive your MA in Modern European history. What did you do your thesis in?

HOYT: It was on the Rhineland crises.

Q: Oh really, the diplomatic history.

HOYT: Yes, it was on specifically on the diplomatic exchanges between England and France during the Rhineland crises, the week or so after the invasion until it became clear there would be no intervention.

Q: Who's your thesis director?

HOYT: I can't remember.

Q: You obviously, with your background, with your experiences overseas, you were married and you decided that you would be a foreign service officer. The training that the State Department gives to it junior foreign service officers before they go off. Any notable colleagues in your class at the Foreign Service Institute, that you can think of?

HOYT: We were the largest entering class.

Q: Oh really, how big was it?

HOYT: I think it was something in the 50s. There were entering classes almost every month in those years. Ours was the largest ever, up to then and since. We had a lot of ambassadors, McNeil comes to mind, ambassador to Costa Rica. He resigned under pressure under the Nixon administration when tangled up with the Assistant Secretary, Elliott Abrams. Other ambassadors include: Terry MacNamara to Gabon and Cape Verde;

Goodwin Cooke to Central African Republic; Everett Briggs to Panama and Honduras; Harry E.T. Thayer to Singapore.

Q: After you have done this, your first post was as Third Secretary with administrative / consular duties at the US Embassy in Karachi, Pakistan. Did they make you learn Urdu?

HOYT: No. Let me back up a bit because there was a very unusual circumstance with my class. There developed a keen shortage of administrative people, particularly in the budget and fiscal side of the administrative sections of the embassies. They were really desperate and decided to haul out a bunch of us, about a half-dozen of this class. I guess they thought it was so large that they could make accountants out of some of us. It was very unusual; they did it very apologetically. They sent us for 3 months to a budget and fiscal school.

Q: Where was this?

HOYT: At the State Department.

Q: At the Foreign Service Institute, as a special course. So you had a bunch of CPAs running you through the course.

HOYT: I couldn't balance a checkbook at that point. Of course we were very disappointed because we wanted to go out, at least as consular officers, start our real work. So here we were, not only on the administrative side -- of course under the Wristonization program all the administrative people were made foreign service officers.

Q: This was the Wristonization program.

HOYT: This was the ultimate Wristonization, and they never did it again. They were very apologetic. I'm sure it affected my career because I was working in a field where FSOs just never went.

I went to Karachi and made an accounting assistant. I audited travel vouchers. I was also assistant disbursing officer, writing checks and counting money.

Q: You weren't particularly fond of all of this.

HOYT: No, I wasn't. I later rationalized that it did give me some basic grounding in the running of an embassy. I think that was the good side of it. There was a lot of bad side. Because at that point they also had a program whereby junior officers would rotate jobs in their first assignment. They would spend 6 months on consular duty, 6 months in the economic section, 6 months doing administrative work, etc. But the instructions went out that we were not to be a part of that. I had to stay 2 years in the Budget & Fiscal section. I did manage to go down and relieve the consular officer on several occasions and enjoyed that very much.

As I say, I got a fairly good grounding on the fiscal side of the administration of embassies and consulates which, I think, stood me a good stab when I later on headed 4 consulates or embassies during my career. I regretted it; it was a setback, but I did learn from it and did benefit.

Q: Given the events of 1947, 1948, what had occurred, the splitting of Pakistan and India. The religious disputes, the problems with India, had they begin to surface at this time?

HOYT: Let me address that, this was '57 to '59 and of course Karachi had born the brunt of the refugees--the Moslem refugees that fled from India. At that point the city was very very overcrowded. It wasn't evident then what is going on in Karachi now. People who are now causing the problems seems to be those ones that did come from India. They were not assimilated. We could tell this even then amongst our friends, a number of them had fled.

Q: Did they isolate themselves from the remainder of the community?

HOYT: Not particularly. A lot of them were wealthy businessmen, and they came and established businesses in Karachi. I think that created some tension. It's a big city but I don't think it was ever reconstructed to accommodate all those people. They wanted to get away from that and established the capital in Rawalpindi later on.

Being in the embassy, working in the embassy, I had very little to do and very little consciousness of the events going on in Pakistan at the time. I just might may comment that the only time we really got out of Karachi was a two-week motor trip through the northwest frontier.

Q: Khyber Pass, Rudyard Kipling

HOYT: Our best friends were people in the CIA who were responsible for liaison with the head of the intelligence, the ISA

Q: The Pakistani intelligence service. Would that veer into anything that might remain still even today classified? How big was the station?

HOYT: I imagine there weren't more than a dozen that I knew of.

Q: The agency always had the reputation that they had the best communicators.

HOYT: They had the only communicators. Up to the time I left the service, all embassy communications were run by the agency. The only exception in my experience was when I was consul in Ibadan, Nigeria. Then we had the only communication station run by State department communicators. In 15 years this might have changed.

Q: Who was your ambassador in Karachi during that time?

HOYT: I'll look it up.

Q: Was it a political appointee?

HOYT: It was definitely a political appointee.

Q: While you're looking that up. Let me just ask. It's always been, in my judgment, this is a personal opinion obviously, there has always been a lot of resentment by our professional diplomatic corps, by the foreign service association, concerning political appointments. The Earl ET Smith situation in Cuba, that's the time Fidel Castro came to power. In the case of Smith he was a Florida used car salesman, I guess is one way of putting it. Donald Francis was a single feeds grain dealer at the time the Bolshevik came to power in Russia 1917. Which is an indication that maybe we should have had some professionals there.

Among your colleagues, among the junior FSOs, did this come as a resentment? Did one accept it?

HOYT: Let's go back, to answer the question it was James L. Langley who was a political appointee in Karachi, a newspaperman, probably did not do very well there. His wife certainly didn't do very well.

My opinion is not so much resentment, I think most of my colleagues were not so much resentful against political appointees, but against bad political appointees. I certainly served under some bad ones, we can get into that later on, as well as good ones. I must say that most of the good ones I served under were real professionals, been training for the job for years. It seems to me that we shouldn't exclude, this is getting into an opinion, over the years I think most of us thought that the problem was that there were so many bad ambassadors who were appointed outside. It's not to say that some of the career ones weren't.

Q: From Karachi your next post was as vice-consul, economic officer, US consulate general in Casablanca. One of the great cities of the Mediterranean region, I guess one would say. Let me come back to Karachi, was that a hardship post?

HOYT: Yes.

Q: It was considered a hardship post.

HOYT: The weather and health. Health because there was almost continual dysentery of some sort.

Q: Did you all use bottled water?

HOYT: Boiled water. At almost all our posts we had to boil water.

Q: That's fun. Did the embassy have a doctor? A physician?

HOYT: Yes, there was a doctor and a nurse. They tried to keep up with the diarrhea and the malaria, of course. It definitely was a hardship post. The weather was pretty oppressive. Hot and humid.

Q: What's the altitude?

HOYT: It's a port. I served mainly in ports.

Q: Let me move then, if I might, to Casablanca, to Morocco.

HOYT: It came out of the blue, the assignment. Sometimes how you get assignments are interesting. My first two assignments I had nothing to do with. A telegram came and that's where I went. I was assigned as a very junior economic officer in Casablanca. Economic and commercial affairs, it's a port city. So I was the commercial officer trying to promote trade. I was also the minerals officer for the country. The Phosphate Office was there. Phosphates were the main export of Morocco. I was also responsible for reporting on all the mining. I had very little to do with policy.

One of things that I remember that went on was passing of Mohammed V, the old man who under whom Morocco had regained its independence. (It was never supposed to have lost it under the French, but they certainly had.) On his dying, I remember the Jewish community--which was very strong in Casablanca--was very apprehensive. Because Mohammed V had been the protector of the Jews, when his son Hassan took over, there was some apprehension. The fears proved groundless; there was very little done against the Jewish communities, who were most numerous in Casablanca.

Q: Let me move along on that line. If you're talking about the Mediterranean, as far as the United States is concerned, our relationship with Israel is the most important. How did it manifest itself among the Moroccans. Did they have relations with Israel?

HOYT: No, they had no overt relations. There wasn't a Jewish embassy there or consulate. But with the community, they were very good.

Q: Do you remember your consul general?

HOYT: At first it was Henry Ford from the administrative side under Wristonization. He came directly from the administrative side in the department. He seemed to run things reasonably well. Then came the one who had been consul general in Leopoldville at independence, Tommy Tomlinson. He was a great guy, a great guy to work for, a hard

drinker and liver. We would be up 3 or 4:00 in the morning partying, and he was always there at 8:00 in the morning. Never could be at the office before he arrived.

Q: He was a good CG.

HOYT: Yes, he was very good. That was his last post
The Labor Attaché for the country was stationed in Casablanca, Bill Schaufele. He later became Assistant Secretary for African affairs and Ambassador to Poland. I worked with him quite a bit, traveled around the country and saw what was going on.

Whatever opposition there was to the government was in the labor movement. They tolerated opposition pretty much, they didn't arrest them very much. It was a lovely place and a lovely time

Q: That was not a hardship post.

HOYT: That was not a hardship post. The French influenced remained in the restaurants. The wine was good, living was good, it's a beautiful city.

Q: You could think about Bogey.

HOYT: The airport was still right in town.

Q: After a 2 year stint there, the State Department decided to send you to Northwestern to do graduate study in African affairs.

HOYT: This was the time when they were asking for people who were interested in serving in the newly independent countries of Africa. I volunteered, but since North Africa was still in the African bureau, they weren't gaining any personnel by sending me. However, now they were respecting my desire to serve in Africa studies by sending me to Northwestern. The first African studies program in the United States was founded there by Mel Herskovitz. But, they didn't have a slot for African studies, so I had to study graduate economics. Right from the oral interviews, they thought that was my weakest subject. So I went to Northwestern. I had a great time studying under Mel and struggled with graduate economics.

Q: So you were there for a full year? Almost a year.

HOYT: An academic year.

Q: Did you have some other colleagues who were there in the same program?

HOYT: Robert Smith was the African affairs student. He went on to be the Ambassador to South Africa and Liberia before he retired. I'm trying to get Northwestern to revive an interest in African diplomatic history.

When I finished that year at Northwestern, I received my assignment to Tel Aviv as economic officer.

Q: Oh really, no kidding.

HOYT: I thought this wasn't logical so I went back to the department and tried to persuade them to send me to Africa. But they claimed that there was no posting open for an economic officer in Africa. I went to the Commerce Department and found one and got my assignment changed to commercial officer in the Embassy in Leopoldville, the Congo.

Q: Did you wonder later if maybe the department knew something that you didn't know?

HOYT: The department is not all-seeing.

That was a very interesting assignment. I arrived just before the end of the Katanga secession. Of course, the focus of all activities at that point was on ending the secession in the Katanga. The other various secessions, like the one in the eastern province, Stanleyville, had ended more than a year before that. The Kasai secession had also ended. So for 6 months or so after I arrived, every focus was on ending the secession in the Katanga by Moise Tshombe. Ed Gullion became the ambassador when President Kennedy took office. He redoubled efforts to end the secession. This, in our minds, would have to be done by Indian, and Indian-led troops. They were, by that time, in the Katanga ready to move against Tshombe's forces, local soldiers and mercenaries.

I remember a story one of my good friends, Colonel Knut Raudstein who was the Army Attaché, told. There was going to be the final push against Kolwezi where Tshombe's forces were lodged. At that time, the UN was headed by U Thant who had taken over when Dag Hammarskjold had been killed. U Thant was wary of having a war started down there and was trying to hold the Indians back. Knut very conveniently turned off his radio in his aircraft, a two-engined Beechcraft called Bugsmasher (we'll get back to that later) at the crucial time. The orders for the Indians to stop never came through. They marched and fought their way into Kolwezi and ended the secession.

I was concerned with several special projects. One was to terminate a contract, I assume a CIA-funded contract, to run Air Panama, an airlift program for the ANC(Armee Nationale Congolaise).

Q: Presumably that was a CIA proprietary.

HOYT: It was a contract with Air Panama, owned by Harry Winston, the jeweler. So I had to wind that down.

Q: Who were they flying?

HOYT: They were flying for the ANC.

Q: But they were using DC47s?

HOYT: DC3s, C47s, shipping in an awful lot of beer and women, ammunition to keep these troops happy.

Winding down the contract was kind of acrimonious. I got a distaste for it. It was not known that the US was funding this. I did not know the background. The CIA had handled it, then they turned it over to me and didn't want to have anything more to do with it.

Q: How much money was involved?
HOYT: It wasn't much money at that point, a couple million dollars just to wind things down.

After the end of the secessions, we shifted our attention. I was in the economics section as the commercial officer. Presumably there was more trade, but there wasn't much trade to promote. Our concern then was rapid inflation--a lot of money chasing very few goods. So we started import programs. First we just threw money at the importers and they bought everything in Belgium. We said they really needed to buy things in the United States. The Belgians just didn't understand. It was their country and they wanted to buy from their traditional sources. They didn't want any interlopers around. So we had to introduce this very carefully.

We had no USAID mission so I wound up heading the import support program, a $40 million annual program. Each quarter I'd allocate $10 million among specific products. First, they wanted capital goods, build factories, because the exchange rate was so favorable. What we were trying to do was sop up the excess liquidity. So what we wanted were consumer goods. So I wound up allocating a lot to such things as truck tires, goods I thought the US could establish a market for. I had dual purposes here.

I imported a lot of hops to make beer.

Q: Where were you getting hops? In the US?

HOYT: In the US.

Q: Upper midwest.

HOYT: Malt and hops.

I just said: “This is what it's going to be” and the suppliers came.

And tobacco, a lot of tobacco to make cigarettes, to try to control the inflation.

Q: This was raw tobacco cigarettes. Did you do business consumer goods?

HOYT: Tobacco to make cigarettes. They had cigarette factories.

Also, canned chicken. We financed imported canned chicken. One supplier developed what they called a "pili-pili chicken" made with spices popular in the Congo. So, they put the spice in the canned chicken and advertised it as "pili-pili chicken."

The problem was that the spices apparently caused some of the cans to burst open. The AID people launched a program to destroy all the pili-pili chicken" even though they had not detected botulism or anything like that. We were in the process of trying to destroy thousands of cans, and even before I was assigned there, I had planned a trip to Stanleyville to organize the destruction there. Later, I worried about this aspect when I was a hostage.

I had traveled all over the country looking at economic conditions, trying to figure out what it is the Congolese needed. I visited virtually every provincial capital, flying around in little planes and got very familiar with the country. I had been to Stanleyville several times.

Q: Is this the air attaché's aircraft?

HOYT: No. Whenever they went they would take some people, but mainly I used straight commercial planes.
Q: Air Congo.

HOYT: This was before Air Congo. There were some pretty strange planes that we flew in but the pilots were very good. They knew their country backwards and forwards.

Q: How big was the embassy staff?

HOYT: I think in 62, 63 we weren't more than 40 or 50. By 64, when I left, we had about tripled that because we had USAID, military missions, and all that stuff.

Q: Did you have a marine guard contingent?

HOYT: Yes.

Q: How large was that?

HOYT: A dozen, just barely enough.

Ed Gullion then left. Kennedy had sent him there to end the Katanga secession. When he didn't get a better job, he accepted appointment as Dean of Fletcher School, Tufts.

Then McMurtrie Godley, who'd been director of the Central African office, came out as ambassador. He was a real charger. He knew how to organize an embassy, from the top to the bottom, to get the job done. The job to be done then was to rebuild the country, to get it functioning again.

Then towards the beginning of 1964, we had a series of rebellions. One was a Maoist type rebellion in Kikwit. It was relatively easily, not put down but contained by the ANC. But then there was a much more serious rebellion developing in the east around Bukavu on Lake Kivu and on south around Lake Tanganyika, the eastern region of the country. These rebels were former followers of Lumumba and tried to get the support of the Chinese communists who had their embassy in Bujumbura, Burundi. They were trying to get money from them and received small sums. Their orientation was very much anti-west, as had been the Lumumbist movement after the assassination of Lumumba.

By July of that year, Moise Tshombe was brought back as prime minister. The forces of Mobutu were not very successful in keeping back the rebel tied to the east, although they did hold on to Bukavu. At one time when Bukavu was threatened, I remember that Dick Matheron, the consul, did receive orders from Mac Godley to stay if the rebels took the town. (Dick later told me he had no recollection of the cable, but I remember reading it in the reading file in the embassy in Leopoldville). However, the ANC repulsed the attacks with our logistical help. However, the ANC was retreating ignominiously everywhere else, and it became very evident their forces were not up to the job. As soon as Tshombe took office, he hired his former mercenary commander, Mike Hoare to begin recruiting mercenaries to come to the Congo.

We had also began supplying T33s training aircraft fitted with guns and bombs and some B26s.

Q: Flown by Cuban exile pilots.

HOYT: Yes, flown by Cuban exile pilots.

As a footnote to this, Che Guevara later came to the Congo to join the rebels, following the para-drop to save us, Operation Dragon Rouge. It was said that Che became so "disgusted" with the Simbas and their rebellion that he soon left.

The US, in the spring and early summer of 1964, was beginning to become more involved in fighting the rebellion, mainly supplying logistical support (C-130s and other aircraft) and with technical support from our military personnel. Meanwhile, at the embassy, my replacement, Mary Carmichael, had arrived in Leopoldville to be the commercial attaché. That kind of put me on the loose until the end of my 2-year tour in October. Mac Godley and Bob Blake, the DCM, asked if I were interested in going to Stanleyville to replace

John Clingerman, the principal officer, who needed to leave but his replacement wasn't due until later in the Fall. The consulate in Stanleyville covered the entire northeastern third of the Congo.

Q: This would have been your first post you headed?.

HOYT: Yes, the first time that I was taking charge of. To me, that's really what I wanted to do in the foreign service, to head a consular post.

Q: What did we have in Stanleyville? What was in the consulate?

HOYT: In terms of personnel, outside the consulate we had a 2-man USIS information library, cultural center. In the consulate proper we had, in addition to the principal officer, the consul, there was a vice-consul who was a CIA man running the operation in the Eastern Congo. I speculated that it was very useful posting because of the leftist orientation in Stanleyville. When there was a secession in Stanleyville, the Russians and the Chinese came, using the airport they landed their planes there. Under the Lumumbist flag there was very much leftist orientation there. So he had access to a lot of leftist people who were recruited by China and Russia for training in their countries. They, in turn, could be recruited by us, giving us a window into those countries. It was a unique location.

There was a communicator working under the station chief. He had a secretary. In addition, there was a State administrative clerk. That was the extent of the American personnel who worked under the general authority of the consul, much as they did in the embassy under the ambassador. With as active a program as we had in the country, under an active ambassador in Mac Godley, the consul's job carried a lot of responsibility.

Q: How many African employees did you have?

HOYT: There were about 8 plus the household staff. The house was a duplex. Then the USIS people had local employees. Under Mac Godley, he was literally running the country, so in a sense, the consuls were pro-consuls. We had military assistance programs going on, police programs, economic programs, and it was our job to oversee that. We were very visible in supporting the central government.

My job was to see that our programs and our policies went forward.

Q: This is Michigan State police program?

HOYT: It might have been. The only thing that I saw...

Q: It was also in the agency operation.

HOYT: I think it was a USAID operation, as far as I knew. We had a whole shipment of teargas launchers there. I remember going in and inspecting them. With Tshombe coming in as prime minister, he immediately put in his police chief in the Katanga into Stanleyville, name of DeCelle..

Q: Let me just mention since you might get someone who doesn't...for 3 1/2 months you and your colleagues were imprisoned by the Congolese rebels. While you were successfully extricated from this mess, and for your performance the Secretary of State presented you with the Secretary's award in 1965.

HOYT: The entire staff was given it. It's simply "The Secretary's Award". There is an award for valor and so on, other awards. It was brand new at the time, and subsequently only given posthumously. I believe we're the only living recipients of the award. People that were killed as hostages normally get this award. The inscription reads: "FOR OUTSTANDING COURAGE AND DIGNITY IN HIGHEST TRADITIONS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE WHILE A PRISONER AND HOSTAGE OF CONGOLESE REBELS AUGUST 5-NOVEMBER 26, 1964"

Q: The only non-posthumous recipients?.

HOYT: As far as I know. I guess from the department's view, we came so close we deserved it. When I came back most of the people I talked to had given up on us. They didn't think that we would survive. As I found out, they spent a lot of time and effort to extricate us.

We can go into this but before going into this I'd like to mention that I do have an unpublished manuscript that details this day-by-day, with all the cables that I received or sent out from the consulate leading up to this. As long as I could send cables, before our communications were shut off, and then on through. So there's a complete record, day-by-day, into this. I'm going to send that to the Oral History program so that this will be on file for anybody who wanted to do research.

Q: I'm sure that that would aid and abet to separate it as part of your oral history manuscript when it's been typed.

Let me do ask a couple of things. Did the agency try to run an operation designed to extricate you.

HOYT: Yes. There were various designs for an operation. They thought of everything they could possible think of. One of the operations was to drop people up river from Stanleyville and have them come down on rafts. That is until somebody pointed out to them that the reason Stanleyville existed is because it just down-river from Stanley Falls.

Q: It would have been quite a raft trip.

HOYT: It would have been the raft trip of the century. Stanley made it but he made it by portering around.

Q: It would have been quite a riverine operation.

HOYT: My call sign on the SSB radio was River Rat, very appropriate.

Q: Obviously your ambassador was quite pleased with what had happened, not just the fact that you all got out in time. You had done what you were supposed to instead of panicking which probably would have resulted in your getting killed. Isn't that probably fair?

HOYT: Oh yes, I think we behaved well.

Q: Was your wife back in the States?

HOYT: My wife and youngest child came to Stanleyville with me. That was the main reason I hadn't gotten the posting in Stan when it came up in the Fall of 1962. The consul initially assigned there freaked out and needed to be replaced. I was told that I would have been assigned there except that I had 4 children, 3 of which were at school age. There was no schooling available. Clingerman, who had no children, was assigned. Now, our young son, Evans, who was 6 years old, and my wife, Jo, came with me. She was Madame Consul. We were enjoying our first time as head of the post and so on.

When it became very clear that the rebels were coming, I was going to have her evacuated with the others. I went to the airport the day of the evacuation. One of the vice-consul's contacts in the military asked me where she was. I said that she was going out in the afternoon. He said, "you'd better get her out sooner because there might not be time in the afternoon." I sent my car in for her and put her on the same Raudstein Bugsmasher plane I mentioned before in connection with ending of the Katanga secession. His pilot flew her out. I was relieved to see her go. Now, she was safely out of it, and I could concentrate on doing my job.

Q: The CIA man's secretary?

HOYT: So she went out on the same plane. Jo wasn't on the last plane out, but there were rebels right around there airport as she left.

I had gotten to Stan shortly after the Fourth of July party at the embassy in Leopoldville. Mac Godley had said I could leave for Stan after I organized the 4th of July party. So I got there about the 15th of July and started my rounds of important people and tried to figure out what was going on. The news we received was not that the rebels were not advancing on Stanleyville but were taking towns 5 or 600 miles away, 1000 miles away, with the ANC fleeing before they even arrived.

Of course our sort of standing instructions, although not in any written form or given orally (mostly in the foreign service, you have to figure out the rules. You are rarely told.) was that we were expected not to be the first to panic in situations like this. We were suppose to keep our cool. Even reporting endangering situations was not considered "cool." We weren't suppose to be reporting that, "The rebels are coming, the rebels are coming." In fact the Belgian consul, who had been there a long time, who really knew what was going on had reported, and had told me, often that "the rebels are coming." For that, he was fired, relieved of his duties. They sent up young Baron Nothomb from the embassy in Leopoldville to take over. He arrived a few days before the rebel takeover. He did a superb job. He was sent there specifically with the idea that if the town were taken over, he was to protect his citizens. I read in book--just recently published (Dans Stanleyville, Ducolot, Brussels, 1993) that his job was to take care of the couple of thousand Belgians living around Stanleyville in the event the likely event the rebels took over. That was his job.

We had so few Americans in the area that I was never told anything like that. You understand that as a consul you are responsible for your citizens, that is no question. But, there were very few missionaries around and our interests in the Congo were so important, that the missionaries did not figure as important, at least not in any briefings I had (none were given to me before I left Leo) When I finally determined that the time had come, that the rebels were very close, on a Monday afternoon I called in airplanes to evacuate people. I did that on Monday, August 2nd. I called them that night. The next morning, Tuesday, they told me they were going to be there later that day.

I sent Jo out to talk to the missionaries, and I called who I could. I sent her with my driver to tell the missionaries who were in town that planes would be in to evacuate them. When she returned, she told me they all indicated that they wanted to stay. That said they had left before, their properties had been destroyed; this time they were going to stay with them.

The senior man of the missionaries, Larson, came to see me at the consulate that morning. He asked me, "Are you leaving?" I said, "no, I'd received orders from the ambassador that I was to stay with minimal staff." (The ambassador had cabled us the night before that "Hoyt, Grinwis, and communicator were to stay in case rebels entered the city." The rest were going to leave.) Larson said, "if you stay, we'll stay." I said that I didn't think it was a very wise idea, but it was his decision. So not one missionary left on any of the planes that left that day.

Q: How many people were out there?

HOYT: About 40 in the immediate vicinity of Stan.

Q: Women and children?

HOYT: Yes. I would say several hundred in the entire consular district, in the outlying territory.

Q: Were any of these twin engine or mostly civilian [in the evacuation]?

HOYT: DC4s mainly.

When I went out to the airport I did see that they had sent up a contingent of troops. I saw them unloading from a DC4, smart and proper, shirtless, black skin shining in the tropical sun, marching briskly off to fight the good battle. (I never received any work of their fighting the rebels)

Of course I was in very close contact with the military people. They seemed concerned with our safety but never did anything concrete about it. I was concerned that the town defended and did everything I could to encourage them to do so, in spite of my lack of any military training on those line. I was not interested in having the rebels take over for a variety or reasons our personal safety and for policy reasons, trying to keep the Congo intact and out of the hands of "leftist" elements. I must have been pretty visible in consulting with the military, with the police and with the other people commanding, which became evident later when the rebels accused me of constantly contacting army headquarters.

The actual situation at the time was to follow closely the situation at a junction 30 miles out of town. I had been told repeatedly that if that were taken, there would be nothing to stop them from taking Stan.

They took it on Sunday. Tuesday I had people evacuated. The ambassador had said Monday night that I was to stay with the vice-consul and the communicator. So we were busy Tuesday day destroying, burning, all documents, classified material. I didn't have very much in my files, but the CIA station had bunches and bunches of them. They burned all day.

Q: You didn't have shredders?

HOYT: Just barrels lined with incendiary material. You filled it, then lighted it. We had to keep refilling the things because we had so much material.

The consulate is situated right on the Congolese River, right next to the Falls. You couldn't see the Falls but you could hear them. But that road, to Wana Rukula, the vital junction that if it fell Stan would fall, was right in front of the consulate. So we were right on the eastern edge of town. There was an army camp, Ketele, in that direction, but in a northerly direction. The road was clear as far as we could see. An ANC squad would come in front of the consulate, set-up a recoilless rifle and shoot into the jungle. They couldn't see anything, nobody was shooting back.

Q: How large was the contingent?

HOYT: Of troops there? In the town there were probably 1500 or so troops but these weren't all fighting troops. I think they had one unit with the recoilless rifle that they sent out.

That night the army withdrew. I called army headquarters. I said, "I feel pretty naked out here, pretty shaky. I think we ought to go into town to our staff apartments." There's a high-rise apartment, the Immoquateur. The USIS people and our staff people were there. If we went there, of course we'd lose our communication, but I thought we would be safer there. The army said, "No. You stay put. We don't want you moving around."

They didn't want to send troops for us. I didn't want to fool around with those guys either. So by that time I'd gotten everybody evacuated out who was supposed to get out, USIS people there remained an extra communicator and Ernie Houle, our State clerk. The communicator, who had just come a few days earlier to replace the present communicator, Jim Stauffer, the one we were going to keep, had lost his way going to the airport coming down from the apartments, and had come to the consulate instead. We thought it too risky at that point to send him to the airport.

The State clerk, a retired Navy petty officer, I guess had become confused and wasn't dressed when the others left for the airport. So he was still downtown. There were thus 5 of us instead of 3 still in the city.

That evening, about 6 PM, at nightfall, I got a call from the airport. It was the Air Attaché from Brazzaville, who had been sent up to help in the evacuation. "I'm here to take you out," he said.

I said, "In the first place, I've been ordered to stay. Secondly, I don't think I can make it through." The airport was on the other side of town, another mile or so beyond, and I wasn't about to drive through that city with the ANC about. (Almost all the Congo's problems since independence stem from the indiscipline of the ANC, the former Force Publique, used by the Belgian administrations to control the Congo.) From my almost two years in the Congo, I knew when to stay away from these guys and that was at night, an even more dangerous time. You don't survive 2 years in the Congo with the extensive travel I had done in the interior without knowing the ANC and their ways. We had had problems with them even in Leopoldville. You just didn't go running around town at night. I knew that.

So this attaché said, "You guys are out of your minds, come out!"

I stopped to think for a moment. I knew it was foolhardy to stay. Grinwis and I had discussed it at length. The rebels had made it very plain in their public statements and to agents Grinwis had reported on, that Americans were on their list, on their shit list. In public statements that I had specifically targeted the Americans. We were flying T33s,

strafing. They knew they were American planes. They weren't marked American planes, but they knew. It was a very definitely an anti-American movement. The leaders, Gaston Soumialot, one of the leaders, made that very clear in some of the interviews he had in Bujumbura and Uvira. David, the CIA man, had been in Stan almost 2 years. He knew it was foolhardy to stay.

Q: Were his orders separate from yours?

HOYT: We got the order back channel. In other words, a lot of communication, in Vietnam (as can be seen in the Pentagon Papers they did this endlessly), if you wanted to send a message which was not in the regular series to be published and entered into the open logs, you just handed it to the CIA station chief and he would send it through his channels. That's what we called "back channel." It's not a numbered message. It's usually personal messages between Ambassador and Secretary. The ambassador does have his own privacy channel. He can have his State man encrypt a message which then the CIA communicator will send out encrypted, but they don't have access to it. Normally what you do is you just hand them the message in the clear. That was the back channel.

His station chief in Leopoldville, I assume, knew that we were ordered to stay. (Whether David got his own message or not, I don't know. Given my knowledge of the station chief, I suspect he bowed to the ambassador) It's up to the ambassador, as head of the country team, and the consul, as head of the local consulate, to make such decisions. If I'd said to leave, he probably would have left. I don't know. I never started the debate with him. Actually, we ran out of time. By the that time it was dark we were stuck. I told the attaché "we're not coming."

I heard something like "idiot" and the phone went dead.

Q: Did you have any arms yourself?

HOYT: I had one pistol, a loaded pistol in the house which I didn't think I'd use. I know that David had (one), I'd seen a pistol there. There was no question of our trying to defend ourselves.

Late that afternoon we saw a column of rattily dressed guys with branches and palm fronds attached to them, waving the palm fronds, go by from the left, from the jungle, in front of the consulate. This was after the army had left. They just filed by. A few moments later, we heard a lot of firing, this is towards the center of town. A few minutes later, the column marched back. We thought there were maybe a fewer of them coming back. They did notice the consulate because we'd see some of them pointing at us. They knew we were there. Of course we had the flag flying.

Q: You indicated that at this point you were in your apartment.

HOYT: No. We were at the consulate which is a duplex. The consul's residence is a part of the same building.

So I had one guy downtown, that was important. But the 4 of us were at the consulate. We spent the night there. The next morning was sort of a repetition of the day before. The army squad came and start firing again into the jungle.

In Conrad's trip to the Congo, in the Heart of Darkness, he describes his sailing off the African coast and seeing a French frigate sitting there firing into the deep jungle. Nothing happened. It just kept popping the guns into the jungle.

This is what they were doing. They just were popping their shells into the jungle.

We still had secure communications, sending back situation reports every 15 or 20 minutes, usually in the clear. They had destroyed their encrypting machine. Anything that was classified, of course, we didn't want to let fall into anybody's hands. Everything classified was destroyed immediately on reading or sending. We still had our teletype.

Q: What did you do with their money.

HOYT: I didn't see it. At that point I had never been in the CIA vault where the equipment was, where the communicator, where the CIA people had all their files and stuff. They generally won't let anyone outside in there. To communicate classified matter, they still had a one-time pad.

Q: To do it OTP.

HOYT: Yes. I did send some classified messages and others in the clear. I was still at that point trying to get downtown to our apartments. We were in a very exposed position where we were, and I wanted to move. ANC headquarters kept saying, “No, no, no. Just stay where you are. Stay where you are. We'll take care of you. Don't worry.” So about noon it seemed to be pretty quiet so I called over to the residence.

Q: The telephone system has not gone down.

HOYT: The telephones worked fine. Actually the telephone system works all through the rebel period. That never shut down. I called over to the cook to say we're going to come over for lunch. That Sunday I'd bought one of this big *capitan* fish from a fisherman who had just caught it. (The fishermen from Stanley Falls are famous. Stanley came back with drawings he drew of these fishermen.)

So I bought it. The cook was going to have it the day before, but everybody left before noon on the evacuation. So I said, “I've got a fish at home, come over.” I asked one of the communicators, “if you come over we'll have lunch and then David and the other communicator will stand watch and come later.” We felt we needed to have someone on

watch. We'd planned that if something did happen, those several Congolese employees who remained at the consulate, they would go into the small State vault, and we would go into the CIA vault which had a metal frame with a metal vault door.

This is the 5th of August 1965. Jim and I are just sitting down to lunch at the residence. I hadn't eaten breakfast, we'd gotten up early, I was pretty hungry by that time. Just about to take a bite and the phone rang. It was David, saying that, "I think you'd better come over here pretty quick."

I said, "Okay."

I put the phone down and was just about to leave when, maybe, I hesitated a second. "I'm not going to leave this delicious fish, this food," I may have been thinking. The phone rang again and this time David was screaming, "Come now. They're attacking."

Without hesitation this time, I dashed out. In the back...

Q: David is the?

HOYT: The vice-consul.

Q: He's the...

HOYT: Vice-consul, CIA.

So I dashed out the back. Normally the back was closed off from the consulate so that we'd have privacy. There was a swimming pool in the back yard to the resident. When we were burning everything, we tore down the fence and opened the back door to the consulate. I ran out without telling Jim, the communicator, anything. He had apparently caught on and was right behind me.

I go into the back door of the consulate to the reception area. There was a burst of gun-fire, and I drop to the floor. Jim rushes by me, dives into the vault. On the floor, I saw 2 or 3 Congolese employees huddled in the corner. I said, "come quick." I motioned them to get into the State safe, the smaller safe. (A light tight box connected the two vaults so that messages could be passed from the State-side to the CIA-side) So shoved the Congolese into the small vault and closed the door and then dove into the big vault.

All this time, I could hear shots being fired all around me. The others had been standing in the vault door shouting, "come quick, come quick." As soon as I got in the vault, they closed the door. They moved safes up against the door. David whispered to me that he had seen a group of what he thought would be the rebels. They were dressed in ANC uniforms but with branches and stuff attached to their uniforms, furs and stuff like that. They had automatic weapons and they were firing as they came.

We could hear outside of the vault still shooting, breaking into the front door, people stomping around and yelling and so on.

Q: The vault is closed.

HOYT: The vault door is closed. Normally in a room where you're doing encryption, you can't have a telephone. A telephone will pick up encryption signals. Since we had destroyed our encrypting machines, a telephone line had been strung in, so we had a telephone. I started calling around town telling them that we were in trouble. At one point David's driver came up to the message slot in the wall and whispered to us not to move, "*ne bougez pas*."

We assumed they had cleared out the employees from next door because we heard nothing of them. We could hear them at our vault door. To hide the fact there was a vault in the room, a wooden door was installed in front of it. That was torn down and someone started firing at the door. Then the lights went out. (We learned later that David's driver had told them the door was electrified.) Somebody had pulled the main switch. Actually we had been trying to send out a message. Jim had typed a short message saying the consulate is under attack, connected the tape in a loop and put it on the teletype. It thus ran continuously, repeating the message. But, Jim said had said he thought the people he had on the line when the attack started were transmitting themselves and thus could not receive our message. As far as I know nobody ever got that message.

All our equipment went down because they pulled the plug. We sat there for several hours, with them banging on the door, shooting at it, sometimes with a fairly heavy caliber because it sure made an awful noise. They kept this up for several hours. We kept, on a low voice, trying to talk on the telephone, to reach somebody to tell them of our plight. The people we did reach later said they had tried to reach somebody but on one could do anything. Everyone was staying indoors and out of trouble.

Q: Did you call long distance?

HOYT: To call long distance you had to go through the central PTT. That wasn't an option.

We also had a single side band radio which was under my control, but that was outside the vault. So we couldn't get at that. Anyway, what could anybody have done?.

For several hours the pounding continued. There was an air conditioner in a blocked off window, and I could see a little bit of light coming through, showing that we were in no danger of suffocating. I could also begin to see a thin bit of light next to the frame around the vault door. Apparently the pounding could collapse the door with the frame. (We, in fact, had a construction project to strengthen)

For no apparent reason, the noises outside the door began to subside. Soon we could hear the clink of glasses and bottles. We knew there was some wine or something that David had in his office, the anteroom to the vault. Soon there was complete silence. Had they drunk the wine and just left? But this was about 3 or 4:00 in the afternoon. Even though it was silent inside, I wasn't about to open that door.

After awhile, I could tell that it had gotten dark, about 6. We hadn't heard anything for a long time. We could hear some firing in the distance but not much. I thought that when they were pounding on the door, if that door gave way they would just come rushing in, and fire as they came. I couldn't imagine them saying, you know, "Livingston, I presume."

So I had been deathly afraid if they battered the door down, that would be the end. I was convinced of it. I had asked Jim for a cigarette. I had stopped smoking but I started again, right then and there. If this was going to be my last hour, I might as well enjoy a cigarette, I thought. What a jolt that first cigarette was. I can still feel it.

Time went by, it got dark. I said, "well, let's bite the bullet. Let's do it." I told them to very carefully pull the safes away from the door and to unlock it. I opened it a bit, slowly and cautiously and peered out. I could see nothing. It was dark, and there wasn't anybody around. I opened it all the way walked into the room. I could feel the floor was covered with bullets that they fired at the door and into the building.

I told Jim to go outside and turn on the juice, the electric power. Very little happened because they had shut it off during the day so there weren't any lights on. We turned on lights. We saw that they hadn't really made a mess of the consulate. There were mainly a lot of spent bullets and cartridges on the floor (I still have a small collection of them), a lot of glass, broken glass. We could see the bottles of wine that they had left. There was nothing else disturbed.

Of course, we were thoroughly shaken by these events. We had our complacency just utterly destroyed, like being raped I guess. Here you are functioning, you're a consul, you're dealing with people, you're a fully functioning person, your days are filled, you have the authority, and all of a sudden somebody is trying to kill you. A brutal awakening. It was a real shock.

I went to the single side band radio, which was my means of communication, and told Jim to fire up his equipment so that I could send a message. I raised the embassy on the line right away; they had apparently been waiting for us. I told him (Monty Stearns, the political counselor), cryptically, because the radio is not secure. For all I knew, anybody could be listening--the rebels, whoever they were, the Chinese.

So I had to be rather discreet. I had to explain, giving the gist of what had happened--that we had been attacked and that they finally went away. I later saw the cable that Monty had written after he received my radio call. I apparently had not told him we were in the

vault because he said we had locked ourselves in a toilet room (which, later on, we actually were kept locked up in a toilet at the airport)

Then I sat down and typed out a message which give full details of what had happened. Jim encrypted it and sent it out. I had called around town and confirmed the rebels were at the airport and ANC had fled. Rebels were in control of the town. They were not much in evidence, but it was obvious they were in control of the city. I called the Belgian consulate located in this big high-rise Immoquateur. From there they could see the streets were pretty much deserted. There wasn't anything for us to do so we retired for the night -- some in the vault, some in the consulate, and I in the residence.

The next morning I got on the SSB radio. Monty said a message coming, "were planning an operation." The cable came through. It said a helicopter rescue was set for Friday, the next day. They were going to land on the consulate lawn and take us out. I told Monty on the SSB that the only problem was that "we've got a guy downtown." "Don't worry about that," he said. "We'll worry about that. Try to get him down."

There was no way we were going to go out of the consulate. We were in touch by telephone with Ernie but didn't know about the operation because we didn't want to tell anybody about it. But we had a message that outlined it.

Q: That was an encrypted message?

HOYT: It was an encrypted and had been deciphered on the one-time pad. We all read it and then destroyed it. We didn't want to keep it around since we had no security. As I saw the text of the message later on I had missed one thing, or at least it hadn't registered with me. The cable said T33s were going to provide cover. That just didn't register with me, I didn't realize there would be cover and what that meant when I read it. I realized later they meant they were going to come in firing, they were going to clear the area before the helicopter came in. I just had it in my mind that the helicopter would come in and ignored the T33 part. As I said, I destroyed the message and did not go back and study it before I made up my mind what to do about the operation.

In discussing the operation with Monty, I said, "if you see the green truck parked outside, you'll know it's safe, if not, you will know it is not safe." Jim said he had an antenna running across the big front lawn. At the last minute, he would cut it, but that would mean we would lose our teletype communications.

In the afternoon a couple of guys came to the consulate. For the first time we heard the word "Simba", Swahili word for lion. They called themselves Simbas. They were yelling, "Mulele Mai." Mulele being the leader of the Maoist rebellion in Kikwit which probably had no connection with this movement. It was just too far away and different styles and so on. Mai meaning water. To them it meant that they were protected by Mulele's water which made them immune to bullets. As part of the ritual to be observed, they made it

very clear they would not accept being handed anything. One said to give him the keys to the cars. He indicated that I was to drop them on the ground so he could pick them up.

They took a couple of our vehicles. Every time they'd come in they'd yell “Simba” 3 or 4 times. So we had seared into our brains the word “Simba.” That is a word I still have trouble hearing. I haven't seen the movie “The Lion King” where the word is used often.

Q: Interview with Michael Hoyt. June 30, 1995.

HOYT: We were on the night after the attack on the consulate, Thursday, when the “Operation Flagpole” was to take place the next morning. It was pretty peaceful in the early part of the night, but then suddenly the city was being bombarded. We couldn't figure out for a time what it was. Then, we figured out is that there must be some elements of the ANC across the river, on the left bank, and were lobbying mortars indiscriminately into the city.

Q: 81 mm mortars?

HOYT: I don't know. Anyway, nothing landed very closely, very close by, but they were landing around. So we got under our steel desks. It lasted maybe about half an hour or so and then stopped. Then there was silence for awhile. Then all hell started to break loose. What we could tell, what we were communicating with our friends in the apartment downtown, is they could see, they said, that the Simba rebels had broken into the stores and had gotten all the arms and ammunition and were firing in the air.

Q: The Simbas had no semblance of organization, by and large?

HOYT: We couldn't tell. A band had attacked the consulate, and some individuals calling themselves Simbas had come around and stolen some of our cars. They were in ANC uniforms, dressed up with twigs and animal furs. They seemed to know how to use weapons. I'd guess they were former ANC people, soldiers.

Anyway, we heard they were running around indiscriminately in the streets. And, I could hear what I knew were tear gas grenades going off. In other words they had gotten into those stores and they were firing off tear gas. This lasted a good bit of the night. We got some stories from the high-rise apartment that the Simbas had broken in and were chasing people up down the staircases. They were having a pretty rough time with the Simbas. There didn't seem to be any leadership. This firing lasted a long long time, and then I finally went to sleep. When I woke up...

Q: You had somebody awake, somebody at watch.

HOYT: Yes. But nothing happened, nobody came by. I woke up in the morning and thought about the situation and the helicopter rescue due that morning. I thought that here we've got all of these guys with arms all around, not hesitating to shoot anything that

moves. I came to the conclusion that the operation was just too dangerous. I told David this, saying, “I’ve just got to call it off.” As far as I can recall he didn't say anything against it. I got on the radio, raised the embassy. I told them that I thought there were just too many people around, it was just too dangerous and I recommended they call them in. I just received a terse acknowledgment. I found out later that they called off the operation. Everything had been in place, ready to go. They had made it clear that it was up to me give the go ahead.

Q: What kind of helicopters did the embassy

HOYT: They were some pretty big helicopters, they brought some in. We had some helicopters in country.

Q: There were some Hueys?

HOYT: Something like that.

Q: Probably with a dozen guys and so

HOYT: I remarked to David that Godley had changed his mind in a hurry about wanting us to stay. I guessed he did that as soon as the attack came. I later saw that he had cabled to see if a nearby naval task force had the capability of going in to get us. He was given a polite turn-down.

This was really an in-house operation, they had their own people, the military assistance people, plus a couple CIA guys and so on. They had a team all ready to go. They were fully armed and would have come in guns blazing.

But the other thing in the back of my mind was one we had one guy downtown, I didn't want to leave him but what about all the other people? If they come in here killing people to save us, what are they going to do in frustration and for revenge? This Operation Flag Pole was never publicized. The Belgian consul's memoirs, in a book he published later, said that had been one of their nightmares. He had apparently heard a rumor that there was a rescue operation for the American consulate and was convinced there would have been a massacre of the European population. Of course, Ernie Houle would have been left behind. That fact had always been haunting me, in the back of my mind as I made my decision.

As it was, early in the morning the Simbas had taken a bunch of Belgian men from the apartment building and brought them out to Camp Ketele, the camp pretty close the consulate. Nothomb had gone after them and was told that the general had already let the guys go. Patrick was told to come back later in the morning and see the general. The rebel leader called himself General Olenga.

So the Belgian consul went to see him, went to see Olenga. Olenga assured him that he wanted to work with the Belgians, that they would look forward to cooperating with them, that they wanted everybody to stay in place, they wanted everybody to work, everything was suppose to function normally. He promised that cars would be returned to the owners and that "there would be perfect discipline amongst the troops."

When Patrick brought up the attack on the American consulate, that all the consuls should be protected and provided the means to look after their citizens, the general made it very clear that the Americans were not included in all this.

Q: Was there anybody besides the Belgian and the United States consulates?

HOYT: The only other professional consulate...

Q: Is that the word

HOYT: Yes. Besides the honorary consuls, because there were honorary consuls from businessmen, there were the French, the Dutch, and so on. The only other career or professional diplomats were the Sudanese. They had two or three employees in their consulate general. While we were in the vault and under attack, I called the CG. He simply said he couldn't do. When I called him a few days later, he told me he had received permission from the rebel authorities to leave by road, and he was about to depart immediately.

Q: When you were involved in making decisions of life or death, if your other guy had not been downtown in the apartment, would you all have thought about trying to slope out of the consulate, to get out of there?

HOYT: Well, you see, Stanleyville, being where it is, is the heart of darkness. It is all the way up river, it is in the middle of the biggest rain forest in Africa. It is literally in the midst of almost a thousand miles in every direction before you get anywhere. So where would we have gone? There is no place to go.

In Bukavu they are on the lake, Kivu, and they had a boat. So at the last minute they could slip down the embankment to the boat and they'd be in Rwanda in 5 minutes. But we had nowhere to go. There was no question of escape.

Q: And beside your single side band, you all wouldn't have any radio communication for support.

HOYT: Yes. We also had a portable one. I forget to tell you that there was a hand-cranked portable radio which was standard equipment. While we still had light they were trying to put it together. They found it require 2 handles to crank it and there was only 1 handle. So when the lights went out, we had nothing. So all we had was our regular

teletype equipment, which is very good, and the embassy side band. We still had that capability, and I was reporting regularly up to the 10th of August.

I was disturbed when I heard on the Voice of America broadcasts that reported such things as, "The consul reports that the city is quiet." I knew these broadcasts were made in French and Swahili and was worried the rebels might hear we were reporting on the situation in Stan. Over the SSB I said there should be nothing on VOA about us, "Shut off VOA." (This same thing happened to me later in Burundi during the 1972 massacres. The VOA would carry our reports saying such things as "We've gotten word from missionaries." Again, I had them turned off.)

Q: Had you all become good friends [with Nothomb] within this short time?

HOYT: He had been in town only of 3 or 4 days before the Simbas arrived. I had known him slightly in April or May in Leo. He's a great guy, such an extrovert. H bubbles with energy and enthusiasm. Just an actually perfect guy. He did just an absolute fantastic job. He took care of the Americans just as much as he did the Belgians, with great distinction.

Q: Did you exchange some correspondence?

HOYT: I met him later and corresponded just recently, after I read his book. He is the Belgian ambassador to Tokyo. I sent him a lot of materials, including copies of the cables I had gotten through the Freedom of Information Act for my book. His reaction was, "Boy, there sure was a lot going on that I wasn't aware of." In his case, he had been sent out there to take care of the Belgians, and he did. He was ready to do anything he was asked to do, say anything he dad to, if that would save lives, even for a few moments. Later, when we were held hostage together (for the first two months, the Americans were the only ones held hostage.), he wanted us to say certain things in the messages being sent out that I had resisted saying in similar circumstances before. He told me: "I'd say anything to save these people one day."

It's a difference in perception of what our duty was. Mine was primarily political. We were there to help pull the country together. It was very much on my mind that our mission was to help rebuild the Congo.

Q: Before I forget, were they still producing uranium?

HOYT: I think so, but mainly copper, cobalt, gold and diamonds. At that point uranium was not particularly scarce (as it had been during World War II). Our interests were quite varied. I think if the rebels would have turned their attention down south and gone to Katanga they could have. disrupted copper production, which was very important to us at that point.

Q: I was just curious.

HOYT: I think our interests were broader than that. The interests varied, as I found out later. Averell Harriman, who was the "principal" in charge of the State Department side of the Congo operation, could think only about was fighting the communists. He tried to convince the Belgians that we were fighting the communists in the Congo. (I later saw the CIA and the State Department analysis that these are not communists and were not receiving any significant support from the communists--that is until just before and mainly after the para-drop.) When asked after I got back, that they weren't communists, weren't supported militarily by the communists, but that if they had taken over the Congo, they would have had a regime much more friendly to the East. There was some justification in that.

(I think that many of us working in Africa and interested in Africa development, often used the communist threat in order to get more support.)

Q: In terms of foreign aid?.

HOYT: Right.

Q: To rebuild the economy.

HOYT: When Harriman was opposed to us building the Tanzania railway, the Chinese built it. So I said, well the Chinese built the railway, why don't we build a road. So we did.

Back in Stanleyville, you can imagine the predicament the vice-consul was in, being the CIA. The communicators were also CIA, but they were of no value to anyone. A full-blown agent would have been a tremendous coup for the Chinese. The Chinese communists, in fact, were supporting the rebels. If they found out that there was a CIA agent trapped in Stanleyville, they would have given anything to get their hands on him. We had just gotten a cultural attachés out of Bujumbura who had defected.

Q: You have remained in touch with the vice-consul David?

HOYT: Yes. He's retired now. He got to be a sort of "Chef de cabinet," of several of the directors, and then a station chief.

Q: Oh, he did. So he did very well. This helped his career then.

HOYT: Oh yes, much more than mine.

What I think, over the years, the fact that this episode is no longer recognized by the department, is not even listed as a hostage situation or a situation of attacks against personnel, I think the reason is they didn't want to publicize the fact that there was a CIA agent. The book, The Man who Kept the Secrets, by Thomas Powers published in 1979 there was no secret made of the fact that there were CIA people captured and held hostage

in Stanleyville. That was well known. There's a book out of Leavenworth, Combat Studies series called Dragon Rouge, Hostage Rescue in the Congo, 1964, identifies Grinwis. So there's no reason to keep it under wraps that I know of.

Q: The CIA has a series of awards.

HOYT: Whichever is the highest, he got it.

Q: Dave?

HOYT: Yes. We got the highest State one with the rest of us.

Q: Did he attend your award ceremony?

HOYT: Yes. He retired as a State employee.

Q: No kidding. So they preserved his identity.

HOYT: Yes, but he was identified elsewhere.

Q: Were they still publishing the biography of register of the State Department at the time?

HOYT: Until 74.

Q: Did it identify him?

HOYT: Yes, as a State employee.

Q: This is July 6, it is approximately 2:01 PM. My name is Roy Sadler, this is the 2nd floor of History Department of New Mexico State University. This is an oral history interview with Mr. Michael Hoyt, a retired foreign service officer. At this point this is a pick-up on Mr. Hoyt explaining a proposed Operation Flag Pole which was to extract he and his colleagues from the US consulate in Stanleyville. At this point Mr. Hoyt will pick-up where that situation went.

HOYT: Okay Ray, we left last time our discussion with naming names of CIA agents. I have before me now, and I will refer to in subsequent sections, a journal written by the vice-consul, whose name is David K. Grinwis. He was the vice-consul and CIA agent at the consulate at the time.

Q: He has been previously publicly identified.

HOYT: Right, there have been several publications including a publication of the Army Staff College in Leavenworth. A detailed book on the operation which I recommend to anybody.

Q: That's on Dragon Rouge?

HOYT: Dragon Rouge, the eventual operation which did extract us some 3 and half months later.

So, I'll pick up the narrative. This is the day the operation had been canceled, the morning of the 7th of August (1964). I don't just want to follow our journal, it is available in the State Department or Northwestern University Library and from various sources for those interested in it.

What happened over the next few days is that we have various attempts to arrange a meeting with the newly arrived rebels. We find out that the rebels are called Simbas, that's Swahili for lions. They have elaborate rigmarole's of rituals which are suppose to immunize the soldiers from bullets, the bullets turning to water if they go through proper procedures. Such as yelling "Mulele Mai" which is the Mulele's water. Mulele was a Maoist rebel who really had nothing to do with this rebellion which we will soon find out was leftist and very much anti-American.

Q: May I ask you, you obviously picked up better Swahili?

HOYT: No, just French. I knew very little Swahili. I spent almost 2 years in the Congo and the trade language...

Q: was French?

HOYT: No. The trade language used in the Congo, up to Stanleyville, was Lingala. That was the language of the ANC. Swahili was spoken east and south of Stanleyville. These rebels did come mainly from the southeastern region of the Congo, the Maniema, and were oriented towards the Katanga, towards the eastern Congo. They were mainly from the Batetela and related tribes, where Lumumba had his ties. If they spoke something besides their own language, they tended to speak Swahili and not French. They also spoke Lingala because a lot had been in the ANC.

Q: Did any of you, how many were there? There were 5 of you?

HOYT: There were 3 administrative types, 2 communicators and the State clerk, and the vice-consul and, of course, myself. None of us spoke Swahili or Lingala.

Q: Were you the only French speaker?

HOYT: David and I were quite fluent in French. Ernie Houle, the State Department clerk, was originally Canadian so he knew some French. But the other 2 spoke very little French. Jim Stauffer, who had been the communicator for almost two years, I found out a little later, had Congolese friends, and I assume spoke some French with them.

We pick on with the narrative.

We still had visits from various passing bands, but we had made no contact with the rebel authorities, led by the self-styled General Nicholas Olenga. The Belgian consul had just met him and was trying to arrange a consulate meeting with him. After a few false starts, in which I accompanied Patrick to his office several times, finally came about on Monday, the 10th of August. All of our vehicles had been taken by the Simbas, so Patrick came to fetch me in his Land Rover, accompanied by two Simba guards, assigned by Olenga.

For the rest of the time, until all Belgians and Americans were taken as hostages in October, Patrick was free to circulate and was able to (and did a very able job) to protect his citizens. He also helped Americans and British, mainly missionaries and business people.

So on Monday afternoon there was a meeting at the Chamber of Commerce room at the high-rise Immoquateur. I met for the first time with General Olenga. He was seated at the end of the hall, behind a table flanked by 6 or 7 officers with plumage on their uniforms. Off to one side were about 6 women, enormous fat women wearing blue UN helmet liners, left over from the UN intervention days, almost three years previously. During those difficult times of the Stanleyville secession, I had heard that these women played a significantly brutal role in harassing civilians, Congolese as well as Europeans. They were known to be the most vicious against their opponents.

The meeting started with a discussion between the general and mainly the Belgian civilian leaders. They presented Olenga all the problems they were having, particularly with the undisciplined Simbas. They wanted to be able to circulate freely, they wanted to communicate with the outside world, and wanted to carry on their business as usual but were interfered with by the Simbas.

Olenga made it very clear that there were to be no communications with the outside world. The telephones were open, telexes could be sent, but they all had to be reviewed by his officers and censored and so on. But no one was to leave. The civilian leaders said that the city had to be supplied, so commerce had to go on or people would just starve. He promised that they would make the arrangements, he promised that he would discipline his troops, and punish anybody that harassed the civilian white European population.

After this discussion, the meeting broke up into a smaller group in which the consular corps was to meet with General Olenga. The consular corps consisted of myself, there were British, French, Greek, Cypriot and Dutch honorary consuls. The Sudanese did not

show. (We understood that within a few days the rebel rioters had given him a pass and he went back to the Sudan.) Nothomb started to make a presentation. As the Belgian, in the Congo, he is automatically the Doyen of the consular corps, as the Belgian ambassador is the Doyen of the diplomatic corps in the capital.

Q: Normally, it's the senior person.

HOYT: Normally.

Q: Was he senior in terms of length of service?

HOYT: No, he had just arrived a few days before.

Q: Because of the obvious relationship between Belgium and the former Belgian Congo.

HOYT: Later, when I served in Burundi that was not the case. Certainly in the Congo it is automatically the Belgian diplomat who is the Doyen.

He proceeded to make some points to the general what they needed to do, that consular premises should be protected. Then just to back him up, I started to speak and I said, "I'm the American consul, and..." On identifying myself, General Olenga rose up. Up to this point he had been speaking in a very moderate tone, in French, and had been very reasonable. Now he started at a shout, almost, it seemed, as if he were foaming at the mouth! He started yelling and screaming they had encountered thousands of Americans on the way to Stanleyville and had captured some hundred of them. He said he declared us persona-non-grata and wanted us evacuated as soon as possible. I asked if the missionaries could leave also. He said no, that they'd stay.

He said he knew that the American consulate was giving advice to the ANC headquarters there and had requested reinforcements from Leopoldville. (This was partially true in that we had called local headquarters many times to find out what was going on and to appeal for protection. I may have also said something about needing reinforcements.)

Q: Had somebody monitored your calls?

HOYT: No, I'm sure what happened is that some of the people in the headquarters there, either were rebels before or changed sides. Obviously somebody had been at headquarters whom had talked about us.

But I declared innocence to Olenga. I said that there were no American troops. He said that he had their ID cards and that he would turn them over to me. His entourage, women included, kept repeating "Etats Unis d"Amerique" every time they heard him say those words. At that point he marched off, taking his entourage with him, and the meeting was adjourned.

At the end of the meeting all the other consuls around me were congratulating me, saying, "Oh, you're going to be able to leave now." I thought to myself. "that'll be the day."

Q: You had read this correctly.

HOYT: I didn't think there was going to be any way we would be leaving.

Q: What did you colleague, the Belgian consul, what was his reaction?

HOYT: There wasn't much that he could do. I know that he had complained to the General that the American consulate had been attacked, shouldn't be attacked. The general had agreed with him and said at one point he would call me. He never did.

We were driven back to the consulate. I was still in contact with the embassy by single side band, open radio. I told them briefly what had happened, saying even though we were told to leave not to make any transportation arrangements. I wrote a situation report on this, a very brief one to be encoded on a one-time pad, but Jim informed me that his main transmitter was not working and he couldn't repair it. In the back of my mind, I suspected that, in fact, it might not be unrepairable, because he exhibited at this point and subsequently, a marked reluctance to be sending messages out.

I suspect, and the rumor has never been confirmed to me, but it was generally thought that the communicators, although they fell under CIA jurisdiction, were not in fact CIA employees, but were NSA employees, National Security Agency. They were responsible not only for communications but also for electronic intelligence gathering. They did all the sweeping and had equipment to monitor and so on. In fact, they were quasi-independent. For now it was not a particular problem but later it did become a problem. From now until a good bit later we had no opportunity to determine if (1) that radio wasn't working or (2) needed tuning or repair.

This is the next day after Olenga had said that we were going to be evacuated. I was composing a commercial telex message to send out, to give to the PTT downtown to send out. I had requested the Belgian contractors to come around to the consulate and try to repair the windows and clean up the place from the attack. Also in the firing, at some point, the rope on the flag had been cut in two. The flag was still flying, but at half-staff. I asked them to bring it down, to climb up there. At that point, someone brought Ernie Houle down to the consulate, the first time we had seen him since the attack on the consulate.

They were in the midst of greeting Ernie warmly when a band of 4 or 5 Simbas dashed into the driveway in a jeep and started yelling and screaming at us. They started beating at us with their rifle butts. The Belgian contractor and those who had brought Ernie saw this and fled. I tried to tell the Simbas we were the American consulate, that we were not to be "disturbed," that General Olenga had said the consuls were not to be bothered.

Q: Was this done in English or French?

HOYT: This is in French. I was talking to them in French and, of course, they understood very little French.

They said, "Okay, sit there." They beat us a little bit. They said to wait there, and then drove off to Camp Ketele, leaving two behind to guard us.

Q: Were you struck at that time?

HOYT: Yes. They had rifles, they struck us a bit. Not viciously. I had seen ANC, other people, beat up people and they do it quite well. They're quite adept at it, and I had seen the sorry results of these beatings. What they were doing to us was quite gentle compared to that.

So we waited a few minutes and then a truck came in loaded with a platoon of troops led by a major who was later identified as Nasor. He took me, as I was the leader, he took me into the consulate, and we started a search of the consulate. He was looking for ANC troops. I said there were none. Of course, he didn't believe me. He pounded on the terrazzo floor and said, "There are ANC here, there are troops here." I said, "No, no."

He pointed to my glasses. I took them off and handed them to him. He indicated I should throw them on the ground. He smashed them with his rifle butt. He pointed to the ceiling. I found a way to get up into it.

Q: You're near-sighted?

HOYT: Yes.

Q: This is...

HOYT: Yes, it's the end of my glasses, no more. (I did not get glasses again until I returned to the US several months later.)

Q: That's a handicap.

HOYT: Anyway. We went all over the unfinished ceiling and found no troops. He motioned for me to come down. As I did, I scrapped my hand on a nail, and it started to bleed.

Then we came to the closed door of the vault. So he said, "Fungula, fungula." Swahili meaning key or open. I said that I couldn't do that. I tried to explain because what had happened, the outside dial on the door had been scraped off in the attack on the consulate. So we had no way of opening it once we closed it. We had made the decision to close it to avoid trouble over the vault. When we later decided we needed in the vault, Jim and Don

(Parkes) knocked a hole in the ceiling and had gone back in. But then, when the equipment no longer functional, we had closed the door again. While I was in the ceiling with Nasor, I had succeeded in steering him away from the hole (it would have looked mighty suspicious).

My entreaties fell on deaf ears, and Nasor insisted open the door. I said there was no way. Somebody handed me a small sledgehammer and a wedge.

Q: Chisel?

HOYT: Chisel, yes.

Nasor ordered, “fungula” So I started desultorily chipping away at the door, I didn't imagine that I could open it. I was doing this when David Grinwis came up to me and whispered in my ear saying, “Hurry up, hurry up. They're doing quite badly with us outside. They're really being rough on us.”

So I began more earnestly to attack the door. I put the chisel in the crack on the door, a few knocks on it and the door swung open.

Q: Was there anything at that point that you all had destroyed?

HOYT: All the secret stuff, all the encryptment materials, had been destroyed, I didn't know where the one-time pad was, that was the only thing classified. All the files and everything had been destroyed.

The door opened, and I stood back. The major said, “no no” and pushed me ahead. I could imagine what in the world they would think when that door opened and they saw all that communications equipment, and the desks, and everything like that. I thought, “my God, he'll think this is the headquarters for entire CIA and the eastern Congo.” (Which in fact it was.) I didn't know what his reaction would be.

As I saw in, there was an eerie light in there, with rays coming through the hole in the ceiling and through the doorway. Everything was covered with the dust produced by breaking through the ceiling which shone in the light. It all looked very eerie to me. But the major, apparently his only concern was with ANC soldiers, looked in, and, seeing nothing unusual, motioned me silently outside. We joined the rest of the staff having a frolic in front of the consulate.

As I said, Ernie Houle had been brought down after being stuck downtown in the apartment.

Q: The fifth guy?

HOYT: Yes. So the fifth guy was with us at this point.

I find out that the platoon has the 4 members of the consulate inside a circle. They had formed a circle around them. They were inside riding on secretarial chairs, smashing into our poor fellows, who were standing with the flag staffs at their sides, the ends of the flags in their mouths. They were playing bumper car. They would rush up and then bang against the guys. What they'd done was to take all the flags out, the American flag plus the consular flag. There were I think 2 sets, one behind my desk and one at the reception desk.

They were being forced to hold the staffs and then they had the ends of the flags in their mouths. They were told to chew on the flags, to eat the flags. I didn't think much about this then, but when it was all over, I found out we were known as the "flag eaters." When I meet somebody today that knows about our ordeal, I'm told: "Oh, you're the flag eater." I'd have to explain, for some reason, that I was never forced to eat the flag or to chew on it, but my staff was.

When we came out, they stopped the bumper car routine. We were told to get into the truck, a big truck, a USAID truck with the hand clasped decal. I high stake truck. We climbed in, and they threw our flags in with us. We climbed into the back. They began to chant, "Lumumba, Lumumba." It meant we were going to the monument to Lumumba monument. We had heard that this is where the rebels executed people, at the Lumumba monument. (It was a life-sized photo of a standing Lumumba encased in a concrete frame.)

So here we were driving in the back of the truck, out of the consulate lawn, told we were going to the Lumumba monument, and that meant to be executed. I noticed on the bed of the truck were bundles of dried fish, a staple food for the Congolese, but stale dried fish was not eaten by Europeans. One of the Simbas, apparently seeing me look at the fish, made it clear, I don't know how, that I was to eat some fish. I tore off a hunk and put it in my mouth. I didn't taste anything, I was too busy thinking about other things. What I was looking for was where they were the truck was going. If they continued on this road, it would go to Camp Ketele, headquarters now of the Simbas and where we could find Olenga. On the way there is a turnoff to the left leading to the Lumumba monument. So, I was more apprehensive about where we were going than this fish.

When I had been in the ceiling with Major Nasor, he had made me take my tie off. I always wore a tie while working. I looked down now and saw I had my tie clasp. I took it off and threw it down, thinking, "Well, I don't need this anymore."

Q: What kind of tie clasp was it?

HOYT: Just a gold...

Q: little one

HOYT: Yes, Jo, my wife, had given it to me for my birthday the year before.

As I say, I was looking where we were going and as we were coming up to the crossroads, where we would be turning left to go to the Lumumba monument. Much to my relief we went straight past it and right into Camp Ketele. I had heard that it was not a place for white men. As we drove in an enormous roar went up from the Simbas milling around the yard. "*American*! *American*!" they bellowed. They brushed up against the truck, beating on the sides. Our guard fended them off, and we pulled up in front of the head-quarters building. We were told to get out.

Our guard started beating us, striking at us with their sticks, with their rifle butts. We were told to take off our shoes and socks to humiliate us. Major Nasor actually did a second time what he had done at the consulate. He had a big FAL, a light automatic weapon.

Q: It's Belgian?

HOYT: Right, a Belgian light machine-gun with a little handle on the top.

He opened the breach to show there was a cartridge in it. He threw it at my feet and said, more in grunts than words, "I'm immune to bullets. Pick it up and shoot me." He'd done that at the consulate, and I had just ignored him. He did it again at the Camp Ketele. "J'n peux pas," I muttered. "So, that just proves it!" he said and stalked off.

So there was a few minutes of this sort of mild beatings, taunting and so on. It happened quite a few more times while we were there--I never quite got used to it. Then, I saw a short distance away, sitting around a table, it looked like they'd been judging prisoners. I could see people lying in the mud all tied up, some alive and some dead.

Q: How many?

HOYT: 3 or 4, I don't know. These were Congolese. I saw the officers sitting at a table and it looked like they were sitting in judgment. I saw the bearded captain who on the previous day Olenga had designated to be the liaison with the consular corps at that meeting at the Chamber of Commerce. I shouted over and said, "Olenga told you to protect us." He didn't respond immediately, but very shortly thereafter he came over and motioned us into the headquarters building. Our flags were thrown in after us, and our shoes and our socks. He quickly closed the door and said, "Don't worry."

Inside we were then protected from those hundreds of Simbas outside in the yard. We put our socks back on. A Simba with commandant rank on his shoulder came in and introduced himself. "My name is Commandant Sengha, head of the general's secretariat." He spoke excellent French and started to talk to us in a normal voice, asking us how we were. He was interested in our being Americans and asked about the American involvement in the Congo. I explained to him that we were trying to keep the Congo

together and so on. He said, “Okay okay, don't worry, the General will see you pretty soon.”

We were ushered into the general's presence. He looked at me and saw that I had this blood on my hand from scraping it at the consulate, and, having wiped my forehead, had blood on my forehead. The General said, “How are you? How are you? Are you hurt?” I started to say I was fine, then I realized I shouldn't be saying that. I said, “Well, it's pretty bad.” He apologized for not seeing us sooner, that he'd been very tired and was very busy.

Q: This is General Olenga?

HOYT: This is General Olenga.

He said that he had changed his mind, that we were not to be evacuated. That we were to stay there but he would provide us with a guard at the consulate. Which, after some tooing and froing, were taken to the consulate with a Simba guard.

Q: A single guard?

HOYT: A contingent of troops, some innocuous types with whom we had lots of difficulty communicating.

But anyway, they were there and they were suppose to protect us.

Back at the consulate, I sent another message through the PTT.

Q: You still had power at the building?

HOYT: Yes, we had power in the building and telephones, but our teletype was not working and we only had PTT which was still open.

I sent another message saying that the General had changed his mind about evacuating us. I still had our SSB, and told them what the situation was.

What happened is that they very next day...

Q: This is the 11th?

HOYT: I had just described the 11th, now we’re the 12th, the next day

Q: This is August the 12th

HOYT: Yes, okay, we are now the next morning, August 12. We heard of stories about people having what they call a “Phonie” which was the SSB. The Simbas called all radios a “phonie.” Worried about it, I called headquarters to say I wanted to get rid of our phonie

and wanted to turn it over to somebody. I didn't want it to be discovered by a wandering Simba. However, I got on the phone a fellow by the name of Kinghis who had just been appointed by Olenga as the president of the "Popular Republic.". David had told me about him. He had been in one of the Lumbumbist secessionist governments and had been dismissed when the secession was ended. Central government troops caught him just as he was about to crucify one of his ministers. He headed an outgrowth of the Watch Tower society, a religious groups called the Kitawalists.

Q: Jehovah's Witnesses?

HOYT: Right.

Q: No kidding.

HOYT: The Jehovah's Witnesses Watch Tower people. It was an indigenous movement that took the trappings of Jehovah's Witnesses.

He had spent a lot of time in prison. He answered the phone, and I talked with him. I told him I wanted to give up our phonie. He said, "No. You stay right where you are." A few minutes later drove up to the consulate.

I had not mentioned it, but Commandant Sengha, the fellow who had been so reasonable at Camp Ketele, had meanwhile come to the consulate. He said he wanted to rent the *vice- consul's residence.* We decided that would be fine. We needed a friendly face however we could find it., David said we should draw-up an agreement, make an inventory, and so on. That gets moving and he goes away.

Q: Was this in the duplex?

HOYT: Yes, we're in the duplex, the residence. At this point, over the radio, I tell the embassy to tell my wife, who is actually waiting as usual on the radio as she was always waiting at the Army pilot's house which had a SSB. I had talked to her several times before, very discreetly, of course. I told her to go to Jerome, that's where we were going to go, Jerome, Arizona, on home leave after Stanleyville.

Since the general had canceled our evacuation, which I didn't believe in anyway, that she should give up the Congo and go to Jerome. I found out later that this had caused a scramble in the embassy. They went to Jerome Anany, the ANC commander who I'd worked with in winding up the Air Panama contract.

Q: The best laid plans..

HOYT: So then almost immediately, Kinghis drives up to the consulate and demands to know where the vice-consul's car was. He obviously knew the vice-consul. I told him the

Simbas had taken it. He said, “Well, come with me,” indicating David and I were to come with him.

I had sent the other three staff to their apartments downtown. I thought there was no sense in their hanging around the consulate. We got in his car. Our guards let us offered no objection. He drove us to a brick building I had not seen before. David whispered to me that it was the central prison. Kinghis motioned us in the door of the prison. The director of the prison welcomed us, being quite chatty. There were no other prisoners (I assumed we were prisoners). He said everyone had been cleared out the night before. I could see a lot of dried blood everywhere.

He led us to a cell, which, we found out later, was the same cell Lumumba had been kept in when he was a prisoner in Stanleyville before independence. We stumbled into the room. Two Simbas lay asleep on a table in the middle of the room, the only furniture there. The director ordered them out and closed the door behind him and left us alone in the cell.

It would take a lot to describe my emotions at the time. Suddenly, a couple of days after being a consul and working the streets and so on of Stanleyville, and having suffered the attack, and all of a sudden, here we are locked up in a prison. Nobody there, nobody saying anything. I was devastated. All we could do was to slump down on the floor and sit for the next few hours. After awhile, I looked around the bare cell and saw there was a small courtyard outside. I looked out there and returned to sitting. Nothing happened, nobody came.

A 6 PM, the door opened. It was director of the prison. He said to me, “Come outside, there's somebody who wants to see you.” I followed outside and there was Sengha in his car. He said, “Hey, come on, let's go out to dinner. I went by the consulate and they told me that you were in prison. I'll take you to dinner.”

I said, “David's still inside.”

So we went back inside and got David, “Wait a minute,” Sengha said, “I'm going to stop by the Congo Palace and see if General Olenga had ordered you to prison.”

So he went inside and returned saying, “No, he didn't order you to prison. Let’s go back to the consulate.”

At the consulate, we toasted our newly won freedom with drinks. Sengha agreed with my suggestion that we should all go to our apartments in Ommoquateur and join our other staff there. When we got there, we found the three were gone. Sengha had already left. We went to Nothomb, the Belgian consul, and he said he would go to try to find them. He said for us to return to the consulate and wait for him.

We went to the consulate. I was very worried about what had happened to the 3 guys. I thought that David and I had some understanding about what was going on, but that the other three might be terrorized about how they might be treated. How would they react to being put in prison? About half an hour later, Patrick comes up with them. He had found them also in the prison. In other words, Khingis had also ordered them into prison.

I said, “Oh my God, I'm so glad to see you!”

Here were these guys who didn't speak much French, who didn't understand. I had been terribly worried and then so relieved to see them safe. I greeted them like they had been gone forever. They said, “Nothing happened to us. They just brought us into prison, no big deal!”

Q: Tell me, you're near-sighted, they'd crushed, broken your glasses. Are you pretty near-sighted?

HOYT: Not that much.

Q: Not terribly?

HOYT: At that point I was 34 years old. Only one time, did I have difficulty in recognizing people. But usually they were dressed in such a way or something, that I could recognize them. David is even more near-sighted. He wore contact lenses. The problem with contact lenses is that if you are beaten about the face it could damage your eyeball permanently. So, he kept them off most of the time.

The consulate had not been looted. We had just brought all of Clingerman’s supplies, the previous consul. So we had a good supply of food which stood us to good stead because we fed out of this for several months. But we had booze but that went fairly quickly.

The next day, very early in the morning, a major comes to the consulate with a military police squad and orders us, again, into his cars. We go out again to the camp again. Almost a repeat of the previous day. Major Nasor came up and repeated his FAL trick. I could see Khingis standing off to the side. I was very disturbed.

What it was, was that somebody had discovered our messages of the past few days. I'd sent a message through the telex, PTT, that we were going to be evacuated. Then I sent another message saying that we were not going to be evacuated. That apparently, I came to the conclusion later, was what they were very disturbed about.

So, we were waiting outside headquarters, waiting to see Olenga. We were having a pretty bad time, we were being harassed, mainly verbally, but that really put a strain on us. We were finally ushered in. There was a Simba, a certain Amisi. David whispered to me, “Hey, that's one of my guys.” It was one of David's agents. He announced himself as confidential secretary to Olenga.

Q: He's a paid contract agent for them?

HOYT: David didn't go into details , but I assume he was one of his guys.

Amisi assured us that he would take care of us, that we would be all right. He spoke very carefully, he said that he would arrange a new guard for us. He was talking to somehow evacuate us still. He apparently hadn't gotten the message from Olenga that he had changed his mind. He said, “I'll take care of you, don't you worry.”

We went back to the consulate with this new guard.

Q: Chaos in the command structure.

HOYT: It was very obvious to us that Olenga, who was a Batetela, from the very large tribal group in the eastern Congo, Lumumba’s group. They formed the backbone of the Force Publique (and their defection from the Arab slave traders under Tippu Tib had led to the defeat of the Arabs by the Belgian forces in the 1890s, and, at independence, had been the main ones to revolt of the ANC and caused all the problems.)

Amisi was a Batetela, and he brought some of his buddies to guard us. Amisi and Olenga departed that night to continue the assault on Bukavu and we saw no more of him. The rebels had been defeated once at Budavu, and they would try again. This would give them access to the outside world and possibly the ability to be supplied by arms from leftist countries. One of the guard was a former teacher. He didn't speak much French, he must have taught in Swahili. That was to be our trusted guard.

Amisi was thus lost to us. He could, of course have betrayed us. He must have known something of whom David was. It was a very touchy situation. My limited experience with recruited CIA agents is that they are very loyal. I found out later that he was probably killed in the attack on Bukavu.

During the next few days, there was much goings back and forth.

Q: Prison back to the consulate?

HOYT: No. At the consulate. We're not taken to the prison, presumably protected from Khingis by orders from Olenga and probably Amisi.

Q: Did Amisi have a rank?

HOYT: Commandant.

Q: He was a commandant.

HOYT: Commandant, same as Sengha. Sengha continued over this period to be very friendly. We are still kept in the consulate. We learned that the Red Cross is trying to get a Red Cross plane to come in to do whatever it could. We learned that the PTT had pretty much been closed down. We couldn't send messages. Of course we can't leave the consulate. We did get one message from the embassy but then when we tried to send one back

Q: PTT?

HOYT: Post. Telegraph, and Telephone.

Q: It's a telex.

HOYT: Yes, but you had to go there. You had no way of linking into it from the consulate.

Q: I see.

HOYT: We had people around us and there isn't much that we could do. Things pretty well settled down until the 21st of August.

We were having a quiet morning. We had heard, we had radio receivers so we could hear VOA and BBC. We heard that the rebels had attacked Bukavu and had been repulsed. So we were a little apprehensive.

On the morning of the 21st, late in the morning, Patrick, the Belgian consul, rushed up with his vice-consul, Duque and asked, "Do you have any last messages?"

He explained that there was a cable from Olenga (they were using the railway radio communications network), a long cable with a diatribe against the Americans, ending with an order to the military commandant to take the Americans "to judge them without mercy." That, everyone knew, meant we were to be executed.

Some of the guys went into the back room with the vice-consul to compose some last messages. But David and I stayed with Patrick, asking, "What are we going to do?" We sat down to discuss it.

Patrick said, "Why don't you send a message out to your ambassador, to the State Department, to President Johnson and tell them what predicament you're in."

I said that sounded like a good idea. At that point, Cmdt Sengha also arrived. He also thought such a message was a good idea. Nothomb had met him in the street and told him about Olenga's message.

Patrick said he would go out to Camp Ketele because he knew the message was going out to the camp. He said he would try to find a Colonel Opepe who he had been dealing with. He had been left in command by Olenga and had proven to be fairly cooperative. Patrick and Sengha would to and try to get him to come to the consulate.

They left, and I started to compose a message. They returned with Colonel Opepe, a stout, older fellow who spoke almost no French. I couldn't communicate with him directly. Sengha started talking to him about sending a message. Sengha asked me if I really was against American military intervention in the Congo, something that had to be said in the message to save our lives. I mumbled something to the effect I could hardly say that. But he was translating for Opepe and, somehow or other, Opepe finally agreed to what we were doing. So, it was just a matter of composing the message.

At that point, another colonel comes in with a couple of officers, Kifakio. He is obviously coming to get us to go and "try us without mercy." There ensued a shouting match between the new colonel and Opepe. I didn't know which way it was going to go. Finally the new colonel stomped out. Somehow Opepe, with Sengha's help, had prevailed.

Then, it was a matter to complete the message I had started. Patrick helped turn it into French as my French writing wasn't up to my speaking. The wording ended that American assistance to the Congo should be "reconsidered."

Q: A very diplomatic way to put it.

HOYT: Patrick, who, I learned later, had and would say anything to gain a few moments, encouraged me to lay it on thick. Sengha added some language about how well the "Popular Army"--the official name of the Simba army, was behaving itself. We finally got a message to Opepe. He agreed, it sounded good to him.

I had no idea what we would be doing next. We were told to get into a car, the 5 of us. Sengha and Nothomb by that time had left (I learned later Patrick had some of his own citizens in trouble and went to help them). We drove up to the PTT building. It was closed, but they found somebody to open it up. We went up to the room, where all the teletype machines were,

Q: This is PTT

HOYT: Yes, which was closed, but they started to crank up the machines.

My knees were pretty shaky at this point because I knew that we'd come pretty close to seeing our end. When they started up their machines, I could see that the first message that came out was tagged for the American consulate.(I don't know how it got into the PTT system)
The message is in 5 group numbers which coded messages always come through as.

Q: For your own OTP?

HOYT: I assumed it was an old message stuck in the system somehow. “Oh my God,” I thought, “what are they going to think? It's so obviously a message enciphered.” However, they didn't pay attention, they're waiting for it to clear so that they could set up my message to send out.

Q: Have you seen all the message traffic that you subsequently received?

HOYT: Yes.

Q: All the message traffic?

HOYT: Almost all.

Q: That's gone back and forth.

HOYT: I don't know what this message, I never found it.
At this point, my knees were shaking so bad I felt I'm going to fall down. I'm looked around desperately for a chair. Finally found one and just collapsed into it.

Q. The consulate had enough food, this is canned food basically.

HOYT: The consulate was well stocked. Up to this point, we had been living in the consulate. The servants could get out, they could get some food, whatever was on the market. We didn't have very much problem.

They finally got the message. T thought we'd go back to the consulate. Instead, we went across the street to the offices of President Khingis. I saw a group of Belgians being herded along, obviously with some force. Kinghis ordered us taken to the airport. At the airport, we were herded into the baggage room and were turned over to the airport guard contingent, headed by our old friend, Major Nasor.

I don't know what these guys were told to do with us, but the contingent turned out to be a pretty nasty bunch. They beat us and hurled us into what we found out was the women's toilet. Shoved us in there and there were already 5 or 6 Congolese. They turned out to be businessmen who’d kidnapped and held there, waiting for their families to bring in ransom money to get them out of hock.

We were alternatively put in and take to the women’s toilet, beaten, shoved, and taunted. Where the door knob fits into the door, they put the point of the bayonet and twisted it to open the door. Anyway, it was in and out, in and out.

Q: What day is this?

HOYT: This is the 21st of August, in the evening.

So we get knocked about and so on. We spend a very bad night trying to sleep. There were, by this point, 10 Congolese with us, with the 5 of us in there. It was pretty crowded. We said nothing to the Congolese. They had their problems, and we had ours.

We spend a few days in the baggage room, in and out of the women's toilet. When I finally asked one of the guard how we were to get fed, they drove me down to the consulate and the servants prepared some food and brought it back out to the other guys. They said our servants could come and bring us food, which happened only sporadically.

Q: This is the evening of the 21st of August.
Hoyt By this time, it was the 22nd. It's a pretty quiet afternoon, Major Nasor is gone and there's only one guard. Things are pretty quiet but things got awfully quiet. Then we hear, in the distance, the roar of a crowd. It's obvious to us that a crowd is coming. Pretty soon it gets very noisy. By this time the Congolese prisoners are gone. Our lone guard obviously knows something serious is happening. He says, “Be quiet,” and he motions us into the toilet, closes the door without locking it and rushes to take care of the situation.

As it turns out, he did. He came back and told us to be quiet. Apparently he was told to guard us and he guarded us. He kept the crowd from us.

A few moments later, the door opens and there is Major Nasor with a white couple and 2 kids. He motions them into the toilet room. We take the woman to the back and sit her on the stool with the kids. I don't know whether they're Belgian or French or what since we haven’t been able to exchange any words.

The man says his name is Charles Davis, a missionary. He says, “we were brought here, they told us we could see the American consul.” I had to break the bad news for him, I said “I'm the American consul.” That obviously devastated him, knowing the American consul was in the same predicament they were in.

There was a lot of noise going on outside. The door opens and Major Nasor comes in. He motions for Mrs. Davis and the 2 kids to come out. Of course, Chuck Davis didn't want that at all. But, I sensed the situation--that I didn't think they were going to harm her--and said, “let her go.” What choice did they have. She went out with Major Nasor, and they closed the door. Of course, Chuck is devastated. His wife wasn't there. I really didn't think that they were going to harm her.

As a matter of fact, they didn't. They took her downtown and ensconced her with a missionary family. But, it was many days before we had any news of them.

We had another pretty bad night. In and out of the toilet room, some beatings.

Q: Did your guards stay with you?

HOYT: This was the airport contingent. Along about midnight the commandant said that we could come out of the toilet room. They had some chairs and told us we could stay outside. They even offered us beer. I wasn't one to refuse. I was the only one to accept the offer and had a few beers and the food of theirs which they offered. Our servants hadn't come out.

There was still a lot of activity right outside the door, outside the building for most of the night. Someone was beating on drums outside. I went to sleep, the beer helped me a bit. We were able to spend a reasonably quiet night and when eventually the drums stopped.

The next day

Q: This is the 23rd.

HOYT: Yes, on the 23rd we were moved to the Sabena (airlines) guest houses. It's a term for the installation out there. What it is, is perhaps a hundred cottages there for transit passengers to stay.

So we spent a number of days there. We had visits, Kinghis came out one day and brought David and me downtown to write another message. He turned us over to his ministers. He sat with his gun to write a message condemning American policy, saying that they were interfering in Congolese affairs. I said, “I'm like you, a soldier, you can't go against your bosses.” He lifted his gun up, as if to threaten me. I offered compromise language. He said, “okay, that sounds fine.” We drafted another message and then were taken to the radio station where I read it into a tape recorder.

Q: This is the side band?

HOYT: No. They recorded it at the radio station, they've got a broadcasting station.

Q: Was it commercial or Belgian owned?

HOYT: It had some range. It was monitored from the outside.

Then one morning General Olenga came, the morning afterwards.

Q: Everybody has been defeated at Bukavu?

HOYT: He got back after sending the message that they were “to judge us without mercy.”

Q: Did they feel a little besieged?

HOYT: They're beginning to, not so much then, not yet, but they will.

Olenga was rather normal. He said that he was going to talk to Washington by radio, but his tone was normal.

Meanwhile we were asking about Mrs. Davis. We still didn't have any news of her. One evening a drunk Simba guard came in and knocked us about. The next morning they put the guy in prison. We were being fed by my servants.

Q: This is the 27th, 28th

HOYT: The 30th. Finally, Mrs. Davis came out and told us that she had been taken downtown by Major Nasor, found a missionary for them to stay with. We got some news about what was going on. Several doctors came to visit us and told us that when Olenga had left for Bukavu, Khingis had organized a torture/slaughter of many many Congolese dissidents, torn open their hearts and ate them at the Lumumba monument. Doctor Barlovatz lived right around the corner of the monument and could see a lot of this stuff. It was pretty horrible. I thought that if Sengha and Olenga hadn't rescued us from prison, we'd probably be one of those guys.

Q: Chopped up.

HOYT: Then there was a change in government. Khingis was dismissed and another government was formed. Then, we heard that (we're now on the 5th of September) Christophe Gbenye had arrived. He was the head of the remnants of the Lumumbist party.

Gbenye was president, and Soumialot the Minister of Defense, in the new government. We heard that there was going to be a meeting with Olenga and the consular corps to present the new government. Patrick and Peter Rombaut, the British honorary consul, came to get us to take us to this meeting at the presidential palace.

We were just about to go into the door of the palace when Olenga drove up with his entourage. He was obviously very angry. He directed his soldiers to grab David and me. Somehow, he did not want us to be there. They beat us up and put us in a car and we drove back to the Sabena cottage. They picked up the other 3 members of the consulate plus Chuck Davis, still with us, the 6 of us. After some beatings, they drove us to the central prison. We were shoved into the prison and taken to a cell opposite the one that we had been in before. We were shoved into a bare room. They shut the door and that was that.

So, here we were again in prison. Obviously, Olenga did not want us free, did not want us to operate the way the Belgian consul was operating. For some reason, he felt uncomfortable with the American consulate personnel on the loose. We spent some days in there, with only filthy straw mattresses. Olenga did not come for a few days.

There were a lot of Simbas in the prison and other Congolese, who, for various reasons, were shut up in the prison by the rebel authorities for various infractions of discipline or loyalty. There were a lot of Simbas, and the Simbas, of course, didn't like us. They didn't beat us but they would harass us.

At one point, Olenga came to talk to the Simba prisoners. He came over and said he had captured 108 American mercenaries at Bukavu. He had not killed them and would bring them to the prison. Of course, he never did.

One afternoon Olenga came over to us and said somebody had told him there was a missionary amongst us. I said yes that Davis was a missionary. He said that he shouldn't be in here and ordered him out.

Q: Did they really capture American mercenaries?

HOYT: No, but that comes up many times.

Soumialot, who is the Minister of Defense and Interior and Information, came and talked to me, lecturing me on American intervention in Congolese politics. On the 15th of September, Soumialot said we were to be released from prison and asked us where were we wanted to go. I immediately said that I wanted to the apartments at the Immoquateur. (This was a recurring and frustrated theme of mine. We never made it there.)

We were indeed taken out of the prison, and, after some hesitation, we were taken back out to the Sabena guest houses. We stayed there some days, each of us in individual cottage. It was a much more relaxed regime for us. Colonel Opepe, the one who had sent in the message to President Johnson, came by and asked us where we wanted to go, again. I said the Immoquateur.

Soumialot came and said he wanted to use our consulate offices. I said I agreed “in principle.” Soumialot said that since we were to be leaving anyway (a carry-over from Olenga’s original idea of evacuating us), he might as well occupy the consulate. He took me down to the consulate and we had some conversations. He was generally friendly. He obviously wanted to talk. Soumialot also mentioned that a Red Cross plane would be coming in soon.

On the 25th of September, we could see from our cottage that a Red Cross plane did land. From our cottage window we could see the terminal and the plane. We were elated with the prospect of seeing someone from outside our closed world. The occupants were driven away, presumably downtown. Nothing happened with us. I was beginning to get the feeling we would not meet the Red Cross officials.

The next day, the 26th of September, 2 Simba officers came to us, handing us Red Cross forms. They said to write 25 words, in French. After some hesitation, David and I decided

not to. I said “No, we would not write anything.” The Simba officers looked puzzled, didn’t insist, and strode off.

We then saw the Red Cross people come back to the terminal. They got into the airplane. It taxied away and took off. This was one of the darkest day for us. Here we were, very hopeful that something might happen. We were utterly devastated. We knew we were there for the long term.

Q: How long, at this point, the 25th of September, you had been held?

HOYT: The attack on the consulate was on the 5th of August, six weeks.

Anyway, Soumialot and his people were getting serious about using the consulate. We went down to the consulate. I went down with David. The Belgian doctor, Barlovatz, who had described the massacres to us, came to visit and said that he had seen the Red Cross people. He said that he told them clearly what our situation was, that we were the only expatriates to be mistreated and imprisoned.

On the 28th of September, an officer from Colonel Opepe's staff came and told us to gather our things. We were taken down to the Congo Palace, the best hotel. We learned from them that Opepe and the other rebel leaders were very disturbed that we had not sent messages with the Red Cross. I was asked why we didn’t. I just shrugged my shoulders and didn't go into it. It was too complicated a thought for them that we felt by writing we would legitimize our treatment.

Then we were taken to see President Christophe Gbenye for the first time. The conversation was weird. Gbenye had actually gone through Brussels on his way to Nairobi and Bujumbura on his way here and had seen the Spaak, the Belgian foreign minister. (In fact, the Belgian government had paid his way, I guess because they thought he would bring some sense into the rebel movement, having been a minister in Lumumba’s and subsequent governments. How wrong they were. In the end, it was Gbenye who was most responsible for the massacre of expatriates after the para-drop)

He said that in Bujumbura he had seen Larry Devlin who had been the CIA station chief in Kinshasa in the Lumumba era and for several years after. Larry Devlin was the one who recruited Mobutu, who in turn had sent Lumumba to Elisabethville to be assassinated. Direct involvement of the CIA in that was suspected but never proved.

Devlin, of course, had been David's boss until about a year previous. Gbenye said they had discussed our situation and had about reached an agreement about what to do with us when they were interrupted by the news that Uvira, just across into the Congo, had been bombed by American airplanes. And so he broke off contact and was not able to contact Devlin again.

I don't know, but I would suspect he did or would have offered money for us. Gbenye had been bribed before by the CIA in Leopoldville. I also know there were some other people wandering around East Africa, they had money in their jeans (one had $50,000), that they were ready to give for us.

Q: Were the bombings going on all this time?

HOYT: Right.

We had been taken to the Congo Palace. We were told that Soumialot had moved in to the consulate. Soumialot came to us and said that he wanted to re-establish radio communications. I said that our communications equipment was down, that they had to be repaired.

David and I had a long conversation with Jim, our communicator, who, as I had said before, was reluctant to work on the equipment. I said, "why don't you just work on it, to see if you can get it back into operation. Before we actually get it into operation, we'll consult again. So on that basis he agreed. He went down and started working on the equipment. We were taken down there several times, then brought back, taken down.

Q: This is the single side band?

HOYT: No, this is the regular teletype. Actually, I'd miss saying that much before this, I had, in fact, given our single side band to one of the passing Simbas to take to headquarters.

On the 4th of October, we had been taken to the Congo Palace. We were each given a room, a nice big luxurious room. Next day we were moved from the second floor to the top floor, a little less luxurious. We were told that was in case the city were bombed.

Q: Then you were beginning to get nervous.

HOYT: The 2 communicators went down to the consulate to work on the equipment. On the 7th of October, Jim told me that, yes, he could put the transmitter back on. That it was all ready to go. I said, we would wait and see what happened before we made a final decision on actually putting into operation.

We never got the opportunity. On the 9th of October, a Simba guard came pounding up the steps, very angry, and told us to gather our things. We soon found ourselves sent to prison again. This time we are put into a cell off to the right. The prison is a huge rectangle. If you'd seen the TV movies of the prison in Kigali, Rwanda, with all the Hutu prisoners, that is the same standard Belgian central prison.

Anyway, the VIP rooms were off to the left, at the front. Along each side of the rectangle were a series of cells all the way down to the end where the latrines were. They cleared

out a bunch of people from one of the cells over to the right. We were put in there, dormitory number 8. We spent the next month there.

Our servants were forbidden to feed us anymore. The people of a Protestant missionary library, just across the street from the prison, prepared food for us, sent it in twice a day. They're the same people that took in Mrs. Davis. We established routines. The latrines were all the way down at the end of the prison. Of course to get there, we had to pass through other prisoners, many of which were Simbas. So it wasn't very pleasant. They very seldom would strike at us, but we were always harassed. The latrines were in miserable shape. Once a week they would clean them out but in between they filled up. A lot of our guys were pretty constipated by the time that we got through with that.

I was discussing conditions in the prison. This is the 3rd and, as it turned out, the last time that we were in prison. We were kept in a cell to ourselves, that is the American consulate staff, at this point.

Actually, very soon they put in with us 3 what we called “Pax-boys.” These were fellows serving missionary duties in lieu of military service. We had 3 of them at this point.

Up to this point, I had been trying to work with the rebel authorities, not cooperating so much trying to deal with them. If they wanted something I tried my best to deal with them in as straightforward as I could.

Q: Develop a rapport?

HOYT: To develop a rapport with them and to ease our situation as much as possible, trying to encourage them to let us out of prison or being under guard. Mainly, I was trying to get into our apartments downtown, perhaps with a guard or something like that. I thought we would be safer, a little bit less close to them, and among other Europeans. Being so isolated, I feared that if anything drastic happened, we were too handy to be executed or something like that. Before being put into prison this last time had been a very frustrating time for me. I would start to deal with them, then there would be 3, 4, or 5 days they did nothing with us. I was quite concerned and worried about our predicament, but I was also frustrated in trying to work with them.

Then they put us in prison for the last time. Here we were, after all the cooperation I had tried, here we were, we were put in prison again. Essentially, it was because once again, Olenga had been repulsed from Bukavu. He blamed the Americans.

The low point came when someone, the prison authorities or somebody else, gave us prison uniforms and told us to put them on instead of our own clothes, short blue shorts and a striped wool jersey. I felt this was the ultimate humiliation. By removing our civilian clothes they were attacking our dignity.

At that point, I decided I would ask nothing more of the rebel authorities, that I would not try to negotiate or do anything with them. If this was the way they were going to treat us, I would be completely passive. If they asked something, I was going to do it. But, I would never, I vowed, would not ask them for anything. I wouldn't ask them even give us blankets. At that point, we had neither blankets or pillows, ;just hard wood planks laid out on a short wall in our cell. I wasn't going to ask for anything.

Q: Can we date this approximately, what date is this for the benefit of the transcriber

HOYT: According to our diary, a journal, this was the 10th of October.

From then on, except one more time, I refused to ask them for anything. One time I did. There was another reason why I didn't complain to them about the absolute filthy conditions in the latrine. The floor would be covered with excrement. You get in there was a real experience. I feared if I complained, they would make us clean it up.

They began to put in other prisoners with us. We became the western cell. The various officials and so on who for one reason or another who had crossed the Simbas were put into our cell.

Finally on the 19th of October, in the afternoon, they brought us blankets and pillows. It was Dr. Barlovatz who had sent them.

At this point I'd like to go back to a point which I missed. This relates to the visit of the Red Cross plane. Of course we didn't get a chance to see them.

In doing research for my book, I came across a cable from the department written on September 20th to our embassy in Bujumbura with instructions for the ICRC officials on the airplane coming in. They said to discreetly as possible, if necessary verbally, to deliver the following message to me. The message was on how deeply they, the Department, was concerned for all our welfare, that they'd been in contact with our families, etc. Then they say that if the ICRC mission can effect an evacuation of the Americans in Stanleyville, including me and my staff, if only one American should be permitted to leave, Grinwis should come out first. If only a few Americans are allowed, “you should endeavor to arrange for the departure of Grinwis and women and children and missionaries.” That's the second time that's mentioned. And then at the end of the message it reiterates the priority in evacuation of “the American consular official.”

Q: Can you just cite the number of it for the benefit of the transcriber?

HOYT: This is the Department's message 692, 20 September to US MISSION Geneva and AmEmbassy Bujumbura. The message said, of course, that I'm expected to stay until the last leaves.

There were a number of things going on the prison at this time. Just to go to the highlights, on the 23rd of October, an American, slightly built, was put into our cell. He was Dr. Paul Carlson. Carlson had been the American missionary doctor in the northern Congo close to the border with the Central African Republic. He had stayed at his post too long and been captured by the Simbas.

I questioned him closely, as I had Chuck Davis before, asking them if they had been warned at all by the embassy there about the danger to the missionaries posed by the rebels. I had assumed the State Department and the embassies had issued warnings, particularly after the attack on the consulate. However, both said they had received no warnings. (Recall, that I said my mission in Stan was a political one. Our concern for our citizens came second--in contrast to the Belgian attitude). In Bangui, CAR, Ambassador Ross and the embassy consular people had not expressed any concern for Carlson's safety. He had evacuated his family there and had returned to his medical clinic to care for his people.

Q: Upper Volta is the Emperor...

HOYT: Not Upper Volta, the Central African Republic. I stand corrected.

Carlson said he had been on the Missionary Radio Net and no warning had been issued. When he returned to his station, he was caught by the Simbas. This was some months earlier. He'd been picked up and beaten quite badly, then been left with Belgian Catholic fathers in Buta, just north of Stan. What had happened is that Gbenye visited Buta, his hometown, and was told there was an American there. He immediately seized on it, accusing Carlson of being an American mercenary. He was now "Major Carlson" in spite of the fact that he was told by a Simba, who had known before, that he was a missionary doctor. Carlson was bundled into a truck and brought to Stan and put into our cell.

Needless to say, Carlson was not a very happy person. He was somewhat confused. Of course he did not know the politics of the country and just did not realize he was playing a role imposed on him.

In any case, the next day he was taken out of the cell and was taken over to the Congo Palace. He was killed in the para-drop.

Q: Was his view that being an MD would save him?

HOYT: I think so, yes, he thought that being a doctor, he was needed at his clinic. He was the only medical person there. They needed him, and he was very devoted to his clients. In my view, he should have been warned off, a general warning should have been issued after the attack on the consulate, and certainly after the August 21 message we sent to President Johnson. A general warning was eventually issued but well into August, too late for Carlson and the Davises and many other missionaries caught up in the aftermath of the para-drop.

Q: Somebody obviously wasn't paying attention.

HOYT: There was never a general broadcast put out until quite a bit later. There was a circular put out on August 29, circular 392 by the Department, which described our plight in Stan to all African diplomatic posts. I described how we were taken hostage and the danger we were in. It makes it clear, for the first time I could determine, that the Americans in the area were threatened by the rebels, that Americans were in danger. Even then there is not a specific instruction for people to evacuate areas threatened by the rebels, a warning I had issued to the embassy before the end of July.

By that time the rebels had pretty much reached the full extent, they had taken over by that time approximately a third of the Congo.

Q: Was there a general feeling that we do not pay enough attention to the treatment of the American diplomatic personnel? That's World War II, insofar as American prison exchange by the Japanese, Germans, etc. were often very slow.

HOYT: The only previous American diplomat held hostage that I know of was our consul to Tripoli in early 1800s. There was also the situation created when the communist Chinese took over China. They did not imprison but held a consul general and his staff for almost a year. Of course, they never threatened their lives. I would say that perhaps almost every single day, from the time since October 5th, our lives were threatened. At times we were physically threatened, but at all times there was no doubt in mind that our lives were in danger. We were told that sometimes several times a day.

Q: Did it depend on how slow the uptakes were. It's not like a situation where American embassies have been stormed. The events of the last couple of decades shows how much they are in danger.

HOYT: Right. It happened to us very quickly, as you recall. It was on a Tuesday that the evacuation airplanes came up. Actually on Monday night we received instructions from the ambassador to stay, that we were expected to stay, not to be evacuated. In looking over the messages later, it was only the next evening, the day of the evacuation that Godley for the first time informed the department that we were, in fact, staying. He said, at the end of the message reporting on the evacuation--without saying that he had given us instructions--that "for the moment that I and the vice-consul were staying."

I remember talking to the members of the Congo task force later on, that the Department had immediately questioned that. I hadn't seen the traffic on this, but I was told that by the time the ambassador was asked on the wisdom of our staying, it was too late. There was no way then that we could be evacuated.

Certainly Stanleyville had been known to be the trouble spot of the Congo, the headquarters of the Lumumbists. Frank Carlucci had been in trouble up there. He covered

Stan before a consulate was established, during the secession. In fact, Gbenye had held Carlucci a few days in his hotel room, threatening him. But the international furor over it developed so quickly that he was released. But he was held hostage, literally, for a days.

Godley had been the Office Director at that time. He certainly knew the history of it. Of course to evacuate our consulate personnel completely would have been, in hindsight, a great idea. The reason given to stay we heard verbally was "to report from behind enemy lines." That was assuming our communication capabilities were intact and that we could get around, an assumption that our diplomatic immunity would be respected. The other reason, only in hindsight, was to protect the American missionaries, just as the Belgian's always assumed their consular people would stay. Our numbers were small, and I had given them the opportunity to leave. Not one of them had taken it.

I really had no reason to stay as distinct from the Belgian consul who was specifically sent there because he had just handled a similar incident with Simba-type rebels elsewhere in the Congo. He had replaced the previous consul general who had given warning of the impending rebel takeover. The Belgians had a couple of thousand people there.

Q: Let me pose a question. What was the agency role here?

HOYT: That may have been part of it. Knowing the personalities involved, and who happened to be the station chief at the time in Leopoldville, I don't think that he was capable of crossing Godley or playing an independent role. It has been suggested to me that Mac Godley had his ulterior motives in having us stay, that he deliberately ordered us to stay and become hostages which would provide him justification in calling for US assistance in fighting the rebellion. That's pretty far out. I heard differences of opinion on that. Some people said maybe, other people have said no. I doubt it.

Q: Have you already discussed this with the ambassador?

HOYT: I have not discussed it with Mac. I did discuss it with his deputy at the time, DCM Blake. His answer was equivocal.

Q: That's interesting.

HOYT: I discussed it also with the army attaché, Raudstein. He said that he just didn't know. Mac Godley runs a very very tight shop. He doesn't do anything that he doesn't want to.

Q: What is his last post?

HOYT: After the Congo, he was sent to Laos to be ambassador where he was...

Q: ran the war

HOYT: ran the war. Laos was a State Department war and he ran it.

Q: That's right.

HOYT: Cambodia was a White House war, Laos was the State Department war and Vietnam was the Agency war.

Back in Stan, it was fairly quiet until about the 30th of October when the rebels decided to take all Belgians and Americans hostage. We found out when the Belgian consul, Nothomb and the vice-consul, Duque were brought to our cell. We found out that the previous day the order had gone out for all Belgians and all Americans to be taken hostage, a very large operation.

The previous night Olenga had summoned Nothomb. Up to that time, General Olenga had worked very closely with Nothomb. There had always been a cooperative spirit between them in trying to protect Belgians. Of course, the Belgians still ran things. This was 4 years after independence, but wholesale commerce was in 100% European hands, all manufacturing and so on. If you didn't have the Europeans the whole economy would just collapse, people would starve. Olenga apparently was furious. I think again it was due to either another defeat at Bukavu or the realization, on the rebels' part, that they were being defeated all the way around. Mercenaries had been recruited. The Belgians were providing large amounts of technical assistance, arms and so on. We were too.

Up to now we had been the only hostages. They made it very clear that we, the Americans, were to be hostages and if the town was re-taken we would be used as shields. The had made that clear to us on many occasions.

Now, the whole Belgian and American population was put into the same status. As a matter of fact, in regard to our personal safety, this was a welcome development. I immediately saw that before their fury would be concentrated on us, the few of us. If the town was re-taken, either a bomb or whatever, we would be killed immediately. But now we had numbers. We had now at least a thousand people, hundreds of people. There was now “safety in numbers,” I thought. I saw a group of fifty Belgians being marched into prison with us. I welcomed them into the fold. This, I knew, would improve our chances of survival greatly.

Q: Were you being well fed?

HOYT: At this point we were still being fed twice a day from Leco, the Protestant library just across the street from the prison. After a few days, after all the Belgians were taken hostage, the Asian community and the Greek community, the people who were not being held hostage, organized feeding of all the hostages. They cooked up enormous pots of food, rice and stuff, and went around to all the places in the city where hostages were being kept.

What happened is during the day people would be released to go and make beer and cigarettes and make the economy work. We were cut off from Leco and got fed with the others.

Q: But you weren't being starved.

HOYT: Oh no. That was the least of our problems.

At one point, one night, (We could see out in front of our cell from a little window high up on our cell.) a sort of a silence fell on the prison as when something extraordinarily ominous was about to happen. We looked out saw about 30 or 40 prisoners were being hurried out the door. Silence. Something very serious was happening. These people had been kept in the *cachot*, the dungeon, the punishment cells which are very cramped cells, for the last couple of months.

They had been rounded up because their pictures had appeared on a poster for a political party which is known for backing the former prime minister, Adoula. One of the parties backing Belgians. The next day we found out that they had been taken out and thrown over Tshopo Falls and fed to the crocodiles down below. They wouldn't have survived the fall, it was very high.

So they were executing their prisoners. We knew that at one point the guards from Osio, where Khingis had been kept, came into the prison yard to collect prisoners. The place had a very bad reputation. The guards had rhino whips. As they passed us, they said, "You're next. You're next." People rarely returned from Osio.

We stayed in the prison over the next several weeks. We heard many rumors. We communicated with a bunch of what we imagined were trustees who were in a cell right opposite the little window. We talk a lot to them. They had a radio and would tell us what was being said. We found out that there was an election. That Johnson had been elected President against Goldwater. We knew there was a campaign but did not even know the candidates. That was one election I was forced to miss.

Q: You didn't get to vote absentee.

HOYT: I didn't send in my absentee ballot.

You learned from the BBC and the Voice of America that the ANC was approaching. The reports said they had taken Kindu and were approaching from the west and the south. We knew that there was no way that the Simbas could resist the advance of a well-organized drive, spearheaded by mercenaries, plus a whole contingent of Belgian soldiers who were suppose to be providing technical assistants, and supported by the Katangese gendarmerie that had proved effective in Tshombe's secession.

The only time we were struck in prison was by Martin Kasongo (a typical Batetela name, from the heartland of the Batetela, where Tippu Tib had met Morton Stanley and helped him on his trip down the Lualaba, turning into the Congo River, "discovering" Stanleyville.) David had known him as a long time Lumumbist around Stan. (Later on, the name comes up in the Hutu attack in Burundi which led to the 1972 massacres.) Kasongo, obviously drunk, went around the cell, striking everybody. Not very hard, but it wasn't a very pleasant experience. Kasongo was put in the *cachot* the next day for this.

The 16th of November was my birthday. Although they had stopped sending in food from the library, we got 2 boxes that day, one from Leco and the other from Dr. and Lucy Barlovatz. Each contained a birthday cake. It brought tears to my eyes.

Q: How many days had you been jailed up to this moment?

HOYT: This go around was a month and 10 days.

Q: Plenty of days.

HOYT: Plenty of days, yes.

On the 18th of November, 2 days later, a hush went over the prison. You could tell something was about to happen as I had said when they brought out those 30, 40 prisoners and executed them, I remembered the same silence. The same when we were being held in the women's toilet out at the airport and the crowd descended on the airport with the Davises. Everything all of a sudden went silent.

And then we were aware of the noise of a very large crowd outside the prison. (I'll tell you about another noise later.) A Simba rushed up to our cells and said he wanted the Americans. He said the Americans were to come out. So the 5 staff members, the 2 Pax boys, and Dr. Carlson, the 8 of us, were told not to bring any of our "things'" We were ushered into the anteroom leading in and out of the prison.

We were told to write our names on a sheet of paper. It was very ominous. It was the first time this formality had been required. Before this, it was always in prison, out of prison, no formalities. Outside the prison there was a legless midget pushing himself around on a little cart. He yelled and screamed what I guessed were obscenities, at least by the tone not very nice things. We were loaded into a jeep. 6 of us in a jeep and the 2 others in a Volkswagen. We weren't told anything but we knew this must be "it."

In my heart I somehow felt that it wasn't. Likely, but not necessarily. I tried to tell an obviously nervous Carlson and the others to calm down. "We've been through this many times, maybe again we will survive." The jeep pulls up to the Lumumba monument where there is an enormous crowd filling the entire square. The other 2 guys in the Volkswagen were put in with us.

We were piled in the back of the jeep. The crowd gathered outside. Those close by started poking at us. Through gestures and yelling at us, they were describing what was going to happen to us. It wasn't very pleasant. They talked about which parts of our bodies they were going to cut off and eat. Some pointed to their genitals. We knew, very likely, what was to come. They managed to get through the curtains of the jeep and jab at us.

They talked about Carlson, Carlson all the time, Major Carlson. They didn't know which one of us was he. We were the major and his "cohorts."

Q: This is being done through these kind of local soldiers?

HOYT: Yes, but in the end, they were the ones who saw us safely through the ordeal.

Finally, we were ordered out of the jeep and motioned to move towards the Lumumba Monument, in a column led by me. I could see Olenga was there, right before the monument. He had a large crowd around him. We continued to move towards him. I could see the general talking vigorously to somebody. I don't know whether he shot him or he shoved somebody down. There was apparently a big argument.

Suddenly, on some unknown signal, our guard told us to stop, turn around and go back to the jeep. We all piled hurriedly and thankfully back into the jeep. The problem was that the person whose jeep it was, who had driven us there, who I had seen before, one of the security types, had taken the key with him when he left. He did not want anybody stealing his jeep.

Our guard, four 4 guys, started pushing us towards the surete office to get the key. The crowd was still all around us, "*Mateka*." *Mateka* means such things as rancid butter or dead flesh. That is what becomes of you when you are dead. Carlson knew Lingala so he understood it better than we did.

We get to the surete. Our driver comes out, acting surprised to see us. Maybe he hadn't expected us to survive the Lumumba Monument. He says, "okay, okay." and jumps into the jeep. However, it won't start. So our trusted guard get some of the crowd to help and they give us a push-start.

Q: Is this a US jeep?

HOYT: Yes.

Now, I'm on the bottom of 8 guys, being the first in. I am stuck down there with seven guys weighing on me. I'm pushed against something sharp. and I get claustrophobic. I'm just about to burst. I said, "guys, you've got to do something, I'm bursting." I was almost overcome with claustrophobia. Everybody shifts just a bit, and I can move a fraction of an inch. This relieves the pain and the feeling of closeness. "Okay, fellows, I'm fine," I said.

Then I realized that we weren't going back to prison. We were headed for the presidential palace, the driver told me. “You have General Olenga to thank for saving you,” he said. At the Palace, there was another big crowd filling the vast lawn. We were unloaded from the jeep, lined up. There was a, it looked like a Portuguese or Greek, photographer. He's snapping pictures. We lined up and we get our pictures taken. These pictures later appear in Life Magazine

Q: Oh really, no kidding.

HOYT: I have the pictures. The only pictures they released were the ones that didn't include Grinwis. I have those pictures. The 4 pictures that were released wound up with Life.

Anyway, after the picture taking session we were led to...

Q: A reporter presumably?

HOYT: They take pictures of everything. Maybe. I hadn't thought of that because there was a journalist around who we'll come to later.

Gbenye is giving a speech to the crowd. He says that we were suppose to have been executed that day. He spoke some in Lingala, some in French so I could understand only part. But he said that Kenyatta of Kenya had appealed for our lives so he was going to spare our lives until the next Monday. This was Wednesday. He was obviously playing the crowd, getting the crowd built up--which had been assembled to see us executed--I don't quite know. The 8 of us were in 2 rows sitting in from of Gbenye. I looked at Carlson and he just looked absolutely awful. He looked like a man about to go out of control.

Of course, nobody had identified us, no one yet knew which one was Carlson. I saw one of the rebel leaders right behind Ernie Houle, our state clerk. What he was doing was raising his knife, reaching for Ernie's ear. He was bringing up his knife to cut off his ear. Gbenye saw this as he was speaking and made a sharp motion down. The man stopped.

Gbenye said we were spared until next Monday. Major Carlson and his cohorts were to be spared. We got back into the jeep to go back to the prison.

Q: This day is the

HOYT: 18th of November.

The prison director greeted us as we came in and complemented us on “our dignified bearing.” I recall that up to that point, no one had imposed his religious feelings on the others. Carlson, being a missionary and having been absolutely devastated by this, wanted us to pause for a moment of silent prayer. I respected his wish. It was the only time.

Chuck Davis talk about religious topics, something about African masks being the work of the devil and how sinister they were. I didn't understand what it was all about, and the subject was dropped.

The 20th of November, the second day after this, Saturday the same driver who had taken us to the monument, and Palace, came to get me in a VW bug. He acted as if we were in some danger. He took to the presidential palace.

I was ushered in to Gbenye's presence.

What Gbenye had brought me there for was to translate a message of the usual sort saying that our lives were in danger because of continued American assistance to the central government. It was very similar to the one we had sent out August 21.

Gbenye left it for me to translate from French to English. (Copies of all these messages are available in our Journal.) Before he left, I told Gbenye that we were still in prison. A few days before, the Belgians had been moved out of prison, and Gbenye had promised us)following the Kasongo incident) that we, the Americans, would be moved out of prison. This was the only time, after my vow not to ask anything of the rebels, that I appealed to them for something. Gbenye said he would take care of it. I set to do the translation. Apparently my translation passed muster, and I was sent back to the prison.

A few hours later, some Simbas came to get us, the Americans, out of prison. Outside the door, the legless midget again harangued us. I ignored him this time. We were marched down to the Residence Victoria. When we arrived, all the Belgians were in the lobby being harangued by a Simba colonel. He was threatening to take everybody out and shoot them. Patrick took David and me aside to apply his usual remedy to such a situation--another message. We wrote an even stronger message than we had before, laying it on thick, that Belgian and American interference in the Congo was putting at risk lives of all the citizens here. By that time, my thinking was, any message we got out like this was reporting on the desperateness of our situation. I was doing my job as a reporting officer.

Q: Certainly that was the assumption made by anybody in Washington.

HOYT: Not necessarily so. The ambassador in Bujumbura, Dumont, was very disturbed about this. From the cables I saw later, we were close to being traitors.

Q: Really?

HOYT: He offered a plan whereby he would come to Stanleyville and take our place.

Q: He's crazy.

HOYT: In the first place, he couldn't get a plane in any way. The Department was gentle in putting him down. They obviously thought him a bit tetched.

But not everybody was very happy with our messages. But as far as I was concerned, it was getting the message out that we were in danger. I had no other way to communicate.

Q: What did they say later?

HOYT: Nobody ever complained to me.

Q: They hadn't the guts.

HOYT: Anyway, when we finished our message, somebody took it to the colonel. Apparently he was satisfied because the word came back that we could go up to our rooms. For the first time in 40 days I went to sleep in a bed with sheets. I took a shower and shaved off forty days of beard I had been photographed in a few days before.

After I shaved and showered, I heard the Simbas had passed the order that we were all to shave, to show our white faces in case the enemy came to attack and we could be identified to be shot.

In the morning, the 21st of November,

Q: Sunday

HOYT: No, Saturday. The colonel of the night before came to take Nothomb and me to the airport control tower to read our message over the radio. By the reaction of the Simba officers, I could see that their main concern was to establish a cease-fire. That was the important part.

Q: You did this in English

HOYT: I did it in English and Patrick did it in French.

I could see down below the control tower they were still training recruits. In the afternoon, about 100 of us men were ordered down from the hotel and loaded on to a bus. We were hurdled onto this bus and we were taken out of town. We were told that since the Americans and the others were attacking the city, they would take us into the bush, for us to remain. Not a very good prospect, of may be spending months in the bush, with no accommodations, no nothing.

The bus kept breaking down. Of course they asked for volunteers from us, the passengers, to go fix it. Nothomb saw to it was not fixed. We unloaded from the bus, loaded into...

Q: There were a 100 of you

HOYT: About, I would say, about 72

Q: This is a bus?

HOYT: A regular school bus, yellow school bus

We were jammed in there.

So then they jammed all of us in to a Congolese hut. We had nothing to eat, to drink, we had nothing. I was wondering how we were going to relieve ourselves.

About 9:00 I heard somebody shouting, "The consuls, the consuls." Grinwis and the two Belgian consuls were with us. We were literally passed over the heads of all these guys to the front. There was our colonel of earlier in the day. He said a mistake had been made and ordered us back to town. They loaded us onto a truck and drove us back to town.

In town, the streets were deserted. At each corner was stationed a jeunesse, the youths. They had caused a lot of problems in the Congo with these gangs of youth. They were all lined up in the empty streets. We went back to the hotel and the others soon followed,

The next day, this is the 22nd, this is Sunday. I was brought out to go Gbenye at the Palace. He showed me a telex message Godley had addressed to me saying that he appointed me as official negotiator with the rebels. For this, he asked that I be given a secure means of communication! Gbenye said he didn't think that was quite appropriate. But, he had their representative, Kanza, in Nairobi, who was their foreign minister and would negotiate with the American ambassador there, Bill Attwood.

As I left, I was introduced to a Trinidadian journalist...

Q: What in the world...

HOYT: He was a Trinidadians journalist, Hugh Scotland.

The next day, Monday, the 23rd, we four consuls were taken out, again, to the palace where there was a reception for Mr. Scotland. I recognized Khingis in the crowd. There was high-life dancing, and we were offered beer. Scotland said he was on a tour of rebel territory and was going back the next day to Nairobi. He wanted to interview each of us, to show, of course, that the hostages were in fine shape.

I was very circumspect of what I said. Later at the reception I managed to have a private word with Scotland. I said to him, "you'd better be careful. We and you are in a lot of danger here." We went back to the Victoria hotel.

The next morning was the 24th of November. At 6:00 we awakened to the sound of airplanes flying overhead. We now this poses an immediate danger to the hostages. We all get up, get dressed, and have a quick breakfast of beer and sausages--a typical Belgian

working man's breakfast. We don't know anything of what was happening. We telephone around town. All we hear is that airplanes are flying around. Somebody says they saw paratroopers.

Our usual guards had not yet shown up. About 7:00, a group of Simba soldiers come pounding up the stairs. They ordered everyone down onto the street. Some people hid behind closets, under beds and so on. But about 200 of us are gathered in front of the hotel. The Simba troop was led by our old acquaintance, Colonel Opepe. Nothomb had worked well with him and had saved our lives by letting us send the message out to President Johnson on the 21st of August.

We were told us to start marching down the street. Along side the column was this security type who had driven us to the Lumumba monument. He told me, "we were trying to work with you. And, now--this." What "this" was I don't know but I sensed I was targeted for whatever was about to happen.

We started walking down the street. A pickup with a machine gun mounted on the bed drove up, loaded with Simbas. A deaf-mute Simba, whom I had noticed before, and those with him began to argue with Opepe. It was obvious to us that they wanted to shoot us, right then and there. But, Opepe was able to persuade the group in the pickup to leave. We marched down the street a little bit further, and when we turned the corner another argument took place with some other group of Simbas. I heard something like, "but they're already here."

It was apparent that Opepe's orders were to take us to the airport and use us as shields against whoever was attacking. With that, we were to sit down while they decided what to do. We had been seated for a few moments when I heard gun fire and saw chip fall off the corner of a building above us. I looked over and one of the young Simbas with a rifle still at his waist started shooting at us, shooting into the crowd.

Before I could move, Grinwis shouts, "let's go Michael." So we started running, going down a gravel alley. I fell down, picked up and ran some more. David also fell down. I looked around, and David was gone. I ducked behind a little wall and waited a few minutes. I heard the sounds of firing and yelling. I looked to the side. My rear was exposed to the whole street there. Anybody walking down that street would have seen me.

I waited about 15 minutes and then I saw a couple, looked like an Asian couple, come out on a balcony above me, looking down on the street. I think they're not African people exposed there. There, there must be something friendly there. So I got up, and then I saw a soldier across a field. Without my glasses I couldn't make out what he was. I raised my hands and he motioned me on, still his rifle pointed at me. I climbed over a fence, crossed a field and came to him. By that time I could see his beret and assumed he was Belgian. I said, "I'm the American consul, take me to your leader."

Q: This is a Belgian paratrooper.

HOYT: A Belgian paratrooper who took me to his commander, looking at a map on his jeep.

I realized that we were safe.

My immediate concern at that point was the American missionaries who were out on the outskirts of town. I said, “Look we've got some missionaries out there. Give me some troops and let's go find them and bring them in.” The colonel said his orders were to stay right where they were, To secure the city. They weren't going to move, to go out of town or anyplace else.

One of the little three-wheeled jeep drives up. I could see that it was Clingerman, my predecessor as consul there, in fatigues, and a pistol strapped on his side. He didn't recognize me at first, then he did and we embraced. I again explained to him that we had to go out to Kilometer 8 and get those missionaries. He said, “Look, we've just spent 4 million dollars getting you out of here. You go out to the airport, get on the airplane and get out of here.”
Which we did, David and I.

Q: Was David down the alley?

HOYT: David came up almost immediately. He had gone into a different spot and had had some scares. I was behind a little wall. that formed a stairway to the door of a toilet. David may have been in there. He said a cat had come up to him and he had tried to shoo it away.

Anyway, he was saved. I asked about our other people, our other 3. No one knew anything. Nothomb and Duque were okay.

David and I started on the road to the airport per instructions. There had been a massacre of our group in the street. There were probably 20 killed and another 40 wounded. A number of them died on the way to Leopoldville. I saw one woman with her baby in the street. Someone led her away. We went out to the airport. There was still firing heard around. Not all the Simbas had fled.

The enormity of it began to sink in to both David and me. This was a massacre of innocent people. Somebody told us that Carlson had been killed. He'd been the last to go over a wall and had been shot dead. Terribly sad not to survive the final moment.

When we got out to the airport, we went to the same baggage room where we had been before, in front of the women's toilet. We had to keep our heads down because bullets were still firing over us. One of the officers brought in Hugh Scotland. “This guy claims he’s a British subject. He was in presidential palace with a bunch of Congolese. He showed us his British passport. Do you know him?” I said I knew him. David suggested

he be put on the airplane, believing, he told me, he might provide information on the rebels. (I saw later that Tshombe's orders were that no Congolese be permitted to leave Stan.)

David and I were led to the second airplane out. We climbed up to flight deck and sat on a bench behind the flight crew.

Q: Were these C54s?

HOYT: No, these were C130s. The most beautiful plane in the world. Here we were, transformed. An hour earlier we had been in mortal danger, had been in prison, and now were here in this most modern marvelous equipment, flying back to Leopoldville.

It took some days before they cleared the Simbas from the runaway and from the city. In fact, it took the mercenaries and the Congolese army a full year to get the remnants of a few hundred Simbas confined to a small area in the Fizi Baraka hills on the edge of Lake Tanganyika.

It was during part of this year that Che Guevara went to the Congo to work with the Simbas.

Q: Was there any cannibalism?

HOYT: There certainly was some ceremonial cannibalism. But these were undisciplined troops. The para-drop had been finally decided on because we were being held hostage. Gbenye had made public pronouncements over the radio that all the hostages would be killed if the city were attacked. and had What they did, of course, they had to prepare a drop, of course they had held us as hostages. Over the next year, the Simbas would slaughter the white missionary hostages whenever they were threatened to be over run. Very few of the hostages survived, English, Belgians, Americans.

It wasn't just because of the paradrop. Before the paradrop, the Simbas said they would kill everybody if they were attacked. There was an international furor over the paradrop, led by the Soviets and radical Africans.

Once in the air, we were told that the other 3 staff guys had survived the massacre and had gotten out on the first plane. Ernie had just stayed right in the middle of the street until the paras arrived. Mac Godley was overjoyed to see me.

He took me to his residence, and before I knew it, there I was, still in my shirt with blood on it from the dead child, a the white linen dining table with the cream of the Belgian business community. I was, of course, the center of attention. The only thing I could say was that the devastation by the Simbas would make the task of the restoration of the Stanleyville economy a tremendous task. In fact, if you read Naipaul's "A Bend in the

River," it never recovered anything of its former status. In fact, the Congo never really recovered.

Mobutu, after the Simbas were finally defeated a year later, dismissed Tshombe and took over as president. He used the excuse of the Simbas to brutally repress any dissidents. It set the whole tone of his regime. He was never going to let this happen again. He had been humiliated by the paradrop. Tshombe was in on the planning. Mobutu was told very late and wasn't asked his opinion.

At the same time the paradrop took place, the morning of the 24th, there was also a huge land column under Belgian Colonel Vanderwalle, spearheaded by the mercenaries, which was scheduled to arrive more or less at the same time. (There was some confusion as to when it was to take place.

President Johnson was reached at his ranch and had made the final decision for the rescue operation. Dean Rusk told me in a letter he had told the Belgian Foreign minister, Spaak, that it was really your his choice. He had the most people involved.

Q: Were there US paratroopers and Belgian paratroopers?

HOYT: Belgian paratroopers flown in American C130s. The only Americans involved were the flight crews and the aircraft guards. Of course, the former consul, Clingerman, also went in with the planes.

The refueling took place at Ascension Island and the final jump-off was from Kamina, a big Belgian air base in the southern Congo. The final "go" wasn't given until early that morning.

It was almost an inevitable "go" because everything was set and, primarily, because the rebels had broadcast over the radio, and published in the papers, the very terrible things about what they would do to the Europeans if Stan were taken--like making lampshades out of their skins. The land column, which eventually arrived just before noon, was certain to have taken the town, even without the paradrop, but it was thought they could not do it fast enough. As it turned out, the column stopped its progress at 3AM in the morning because the mercenaries--Mike Hoare--insisted they would go no further under the ambushes they were encountering in the dark. The main worry was that the rebels would hit the barrels of gasoline they were forced to carry.

If the column had arrived at dawn, they undoubtedly would have taken the town even more quickly than the paratroopers did. They had landed, cleared the runway, landed the rest of their troops, got into their transports, and started into town. Then, unfortunately, although was not in their briefed mission, according to the Leavenworth *Dragon Rouge* book, Clingerman they, not their mission order, but according to Dragon Rouge, the book, Clingerman directed the first contingent of paratroopers to the presidential palace, hoping to capture Gbenye. Meanwhile, of course, the massacre started in the street. (The

three main rebel leaders, Gbenye, Olenga, and Soumialot fled in time, taking with them gold they had captured from a mine nearby. Gbenye and Olenga eventually--some six year later, took advantage of an amnesty given by Mobutu and returned to the Congo. Soumialot eventually was slain by his own troops in Fizi Baraka)

In addition to the international furor over the rescue, when I got back to the States I found that among blacks were some who considered this simply as "whites against blacks," killing blacks to save whites.

After the lunch at the ambassador's residence, David and I had a press conference. It was then I discovered we were know as the "the flag eaters." Somehow news of this early incident had gotten out. With the press, I tried to get through the character of the Simbas, making it clear that these were not the sort of people that should be sympathized with. Not only did they murdered whites, but they were very brutal to their own people. Of course, when Mobutu and his people flew into Stanleyville, there was a terrible massacre of all those suspected of being rebels or sympathetic to them.

That night after everything was quiet, and we had a few drinks, I finally had a chance to talk to Mac Godley. "Well, you know Mac," I said. "One thing kept us going was the thought that if we got ours, you'd get it too." He didn't say anything. I don't even know whether he heard me or not. We had had more than a few drinks. The DCM, Blake, tried to disappear in the sofa. I never had a chance to talk to Mack again.

Subsequently, he has told different stories. Sometimes he admitted he had ordered us to stay. At other times, he denied it. My wife remembers very well, that when she was still at the embassy after being evacuated, she met somebody in the hall who said, "Jo, isn't Michael so brave for staying." Mac said, "No, I ordered him to stay." Jo said, "Well, I'll remember that and I have witnesses."

Q: Your agency colleague, did he stay there, did he remain?

HOYT: No, we flew back to the States the second day after the rescue. We went back to the State Department for debriefing. Debriefing took about, we were met in New York. The flight went Rome, Paris, New York, on Air France. We were met everywhere by press. In New York they had flown our families there for our reunion on Thanksgiving Day. It was on all the news broadcasts. A DC4 Air Force plane took all of us to Washington.

In the State Department the next morning David and I had our only official debriefings, about an hour. There was some concern over the orientation of the Simbas, whether they were communists or not. I told them there was little evidence of this.

Averell Harriman was hot on this. His whole pitch to the Belgians was based on this, trying to gear them up to fight the Simbas. In fact, the Belgians were only interested in their citizens. I saw later many CIA papers saying that they were not communists. They

were an indigenous people revolting against the terrible conditions of governance in the Congo. But this was the big thing.

Harriman said we'd have a press conference in the afternoon.

Q: David was still posing as a diplomat.

HOYT: Yes, he was vice-consul. He was not revealed as CIA.

The Assistant Secretary of Public Affairs started to brief me on what we should be saying at the press conference. I said, “wait a minute, that doesn't sound right.” Harriman waved him of, saying “never mind, Mike knows what he's doing, he doesn't need a briefing. any questions about communists, David can answer.”

At the news conference, the first question was why weren't the other 3 there. I was startled by the question, and brushed it off, mumbling something about our being the substantive people, the others were support staff.

There were questions like “what was your worst moment” and “what did you eat.” They did ask about the communists. I answered that I didn't think they were communists. If they had won, they would have probably produced a regime which would have been more sympathetic to the East than the West.

Q: Continuing conclusions after the rescue in Stanleyville, Congo and the return to the US What are you conclusions, Michael.

HOYT: I think the main lesson there is that you shouldn't leave your people in danger when you know that (1) of course, you might lose them. There should be concern for your people. When there's a situation where rebels can takeover, particularly when you know they're anti-American, you shouldn't leave your people there. It seems pretty obvious a lesson but one that hadn’t been learned at that time. I may say that it was also not learned at the time our Tehran was left out of consideration when the Shah was admitted to the US for medical treatment. And, our embassy had been attacked a little while before!

I remember in Nigeria in the Biafra revolt when the rebels threatened Enugu. We had a consulate there and we got our guys out in a hurry. This is some years later.

Then there is the question of what to do when you do have hostages. I've been following this as hostage policy. How do you deal with your people taken hostage?

This was ,of course, the first incident in modern diplomacy. Subsequently, in the years after, in the early 70s when terrorist incidents started in Latin America our Ambassador in Brazil, Elbrick, was taken hostage. We did everything possible to force the government to meet the rebel demands, which they did. Later, our policy evolved into a very hard line against even dealing with kidnappers.

We finally commissioned the Rand organization to do a study on hostages. I welcomed this. However, they started the review with the Brazil incident and did not include our situation. In the end, the report showed up our vacillations and was suppressed.

In about 1983 or 84 the State department published a list of terrorist incidents in which our personnel were attacked or held hostage. Again, our episode does not appear. When I questioned the person who wrote it, he refused to do anything about it and did not return my phone calls.

So, I don't know, there's something about it. I thought that maybe because the vice-consul was CIA they wanted to ignore it.

Because I worked with hostage policy, subsequently, I had an obvious interest in this. I worked particularly under Kissinger where we developed a very hard line about not negotiating with kidnappers, not even talking to them. There's an excellent book out on the diplomats that were assassinated in Khartoum. President Nixon, in spite of being told not to address the issue, said that we would not do anything to help our hostages. Within hours of statement our people were shot.

So we tried to argue that there is something beside of refusing to do anything for our personnel held hostage. The argument of not doing anything to encourage future hostage-taking. I doubt there is any such thought in the mind of hostage-takers. They are intent on making a point and will do it regardless of past policies.

In domestic hostage situations the first principle is to talk. The longer you talk, the longer the hostages are alive, the longer something can happen to save them. In our situation, of course, is whether the paradrop should have taken place, which was the immediate cause of the massacre, or whether they should have left it to the ground column. I think in hindsight we probably would have been better off in letting the ground column take the city. There could have been Simbas who warned of the coming of the column, but that was a chance to take. In any case, for the column to stop--all those hard-boiled men being afraid to advance, that was regrettable. Of course the paradrop did save us, so I shouldn't knock it. In the end, we ran in the right direction.

It's a difficult situation saving hostages in the middle of a city. Landing at the airport taking an hour to get downtown does not seem to me like a very wise strategy, tactic.

Q: Let me ask this kind of a general question about this episode. Did the Rand corporation people talk to you?

HOYT: No.

Q: Incredible.

HOYT: They were prohibited

Q: from talking to you and your colleagues. That's crazy.

HOYT: Because I asked Brian Jenkins, who undertook the study, when he presented his conclusions, why he hadn't included us? "We were told not to," he told me.

As a matter of fact the Rand study, because it was so critical, I assume, it was never published. It is not to be found to this day. People doing research have not been able to find it.

Q: Incredible.

HOYT: Anyway, as a matter of general hostage policy, as a government, you are responsible for these people by placing them overseas. You are responsible for putting them in danger, and you should be doing everything you can to save them. At the same time, you don't want to play dead from the beginning and give in to all demands. It seems to me there's something in the middle, being a bit aloof, but in fact doing everything you can to save them. Maybe even in some instances ransom could be paid. I know that somebody was going around East Africa with $50,000.00 in his back pocket, willing to give it to save us. I wouldn't have objected. Of course, you don't publicize such things. But, we have even gotten to the point where we discourage anybody paying ransom!

Q: The subsequent fate of the Stanleyville men?

HOYT: David wound up to be the Executive Director--sort of Chef De Cabinet, or whatever they call them--to several CIA directors. Then went on to be station chief somewhere. He recently retired.

Q: What about your own group, the communicators?

HOYT: Parkes was, I would say, disgruntled, mad at everything, all the way through. When was to have left, he took the wrong turn and didn't get to the airport. He resigned immediately on our return. Jim Stauffer went on for a full career. Ernie Houle went on in State and died a few years later. When his obituary came out in the State Department newsletter I noted they said nothing about Stanleyville. So I wrote a letter and I said that this guy has gotten the highest honor that the State Department awards and held up well and survived as a hostage. They printed my letter.

Q: Good.

You think the department's kind of ashamed about what it had done in terms of remembering and learning from your experience?

HOYT: I think they never faced it. They certainly never faced the fact of why we were there, and, as far as I can see they're just trying to forget about the whole thing. I know that at one point the historical-legal section did a paper on this, reviewing the rights and laws of this kind of intervention to save our citizens. The word came down not to publish it.

Q: Well, I think that it's fair since it's a violation of international law, for god's sake, to threaten them.

HOYT: They did get the approval of Tshombe, the prime minister, for the rescue operation. I was in the ambassador's office, the day we got back, when Tshombe came in to get briefs on the operation. The only thing I said to Tshombe was to save the former governor, Aridjabu, as he was the only one I knew who could lead the province through reconstruction. I learned later Mobutu had him executed immediately for collaboration with the Simbas.

I didn't tell you about what had happened to Hugh Scotland, the Trinidadian. When he got down to Leopoldville, Tshombe recognized him as a leftist journalist he knew in Madrid and clapped him in prison. He eventually got out. Apparently he thought I had saved his life, as he told me so years later when I was at a UN General Assembly meeting in New York many years later.
(Note: a portion of the tape here is blank)

HOYT: I think we've erased something at the beginning of this side.

Q: Oh, okay.

HOYT: We were talking about whether there were any lessons learned in the process. I've said, and I'll say again, that the obvious lesson is that you don't leave your people when they are obviously in danger.

In Enugu, when it was about to be taken by the Biafra rebels, we evacuated our people in a hurry. But I think it goes beyond that. When you do...

Q: Was Enugu before Port Harcourt?

HOYT: It's in the interior to Port Harcourt, the capital of the Eastern region, where the consulate was. Later, the consulate in Ibadan, where I was principal officer, was closed and one opened in Port Harcourt in view of its importance to the oil to us.

But it goes to the Tehran hostage situation. We had had a previous attack on our embassy, very similar to the one that we had when the hostages were taken. All the right elements signaling danger were there. At the time of the first incident, we put a lot of pressure on to get our people released. But when the decision was made to permit the Shah's entry, there was apparently no preparation made to protect the embassy.

So in a sense...

Q: The lesson had not been learned.

HOYT: Well, yes. The Department should have been conscious of the fact that when you take certain actions that put your people in danger, you should be sensitive, to the possible effects on our people. It doesn't mean that you can always do something about it but, at least, you should be aware that your action can have certain affects on your people overseas. I think the State Department should again make a thorough review of our hostage policy.

There was no hostage situation for several years after ours. It was ‘69 that our ambassador in Brazil was taken. At that point we pressured the government to do everything possible to meet the demands of the rebels and we got our ambassador released. Then we slowly changed our policy until, finally, under Kissinger where we absolutely refused to negotiate, much less pay ransom. That was when our ambassador and DCM were killed.

After they were assassinated, the Sudanese government seized the assassins but released them a few days later. We broke relations over that. However, a few years later we re-established relations without getting anything in return, like at least an apology.

So I guess we can leave Stanleyville behind us. (I wish I could do it.)

After an extended leave, I took up my assignment as editor and watch officer in the Department’s Operation Center, a kind of 24-hour watch to alert the government on current events. I was there from about March to September 1965. It was a very exciting period, many things happened. There were several Congolese crises. There was, of course, the Dominican Republic intervention, and the Vietnam situation developed. I was strictly a spectator. However, on time I did see the message that went out announcing our intervention in the Dominican Republic. It openly stated that the given reason for our intervention, our need to protect American citizens, was only a pretext. I thought the cable should have a much higher security indicator on it than it did and put one on it. That's the closest I came to having any influence on events there. But I did see all the events unfolding that year.

As an editor I was able to reduce dozen-page cables from our ambassadors in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic, and so on, down to 5 lines. It's a good lesson in being concise.

I wanted to get more involved in events and asked to be relieved of duties at the operations center. The African bureau said they'd take me back. I reported to the Rhodesia desk on November 11, 1965, the day of UDI, the Unilateral Declaration of Independence by the white regime.

I worked on the desk and became desk officer for a while, helping impose the sanctions program which had been carefully crafted and prepared for the anticipated move. In essence, the Rhodesia desk was the center of the sanctions program, and I had wide powers to declare exceptions. It was a very exciting job.

What I do remember is the delicate position that the United States was put in. We, in the African bureau, were convinced that nothing short of military intervention would, in fact, stop the independence, the seizure of power by the white minority. The 7th floor, particularly George Ball, did not want the United States to become involved. In particular, he did not want the British to intervene militarily. He knew if they did, we would inevitably be drawn in to support them.

When the British proposed imposing sanctions, our analysis was that sanctions wouldn't work, wouldn't do the trick. But when the British came over to discuss the sanctions program with us, Ball's office specifically prohibited us from telling them that, that we thought the sanctions wouldn't work. Later, George Ball wrote in one of his books that he always thought that sanctions wouldn't work. Well, he did not let us tell the British that.

Q: Did the British ever consider using military power?

HOYT: I think they considered it. Of course they didn't do it. They always talked about "Instant Wilson." He always had a solutions he would come up at the last minute.

In fact, those were pretty exciting times. The British tried to negotiate with Smith, the PM of the white regime, even brought him to a battle ship. But, he always wiggled out. It finally took 15 years before Rhodesia was given its independence. I don't know if the sanctions worked. I think the fact sanctions were in place did help. It made the rest of the world feel better about it. But it was in fact the 15-year insurgency, and the fact the South Africans withdrew some of their support that finally let to independence.

For various reasons I was put back on the Rhodesian desk in 1972, after coming back from Burundi, for almost a year. I did visit (sanctions were still in place) visit South Africa, talked with some low-level obviously, Afrikaners, in the foreign office. They made it clear to me that they didn't think the white settlers could hold out in Rhodesia. They thought that they were not wise, that they had chosen an impossible task in view of their small numbers compared to the blacks. In my mind, after talking to them, that is the Afrikaner in South Africa, I came away convinced that the South Africans would find a way to make an accommodation with the majority black population.

Back to 1966, I spent some months as Rhodesian desk officer. When the offices were reorganized, I became the desk officer for Malawi and Zambia, the other 2 countries that were formerly with the Central African Confederation.

Kaunda was president. Our main concern at that point was in helping Zambia deal with the sanctions program. It was a delicate balance because we had to keep him from

breaking all ties with Rhodesia. All communications, except what went through the Congo and some other places, particularly the rail lines, went through Rhodesia. So, in fact, a compromise was essential because all copper shipments would have ceased, an important part of world copper supplies. In fact all through the crisis Zambia continued to use the Rhodesia railroad.

But at one time they were really in desperate straits and we negotiated a contract to fly in barrels of diesel fuel, to keep mines going, from Leopoldville. It was amazing using 707s, I think they were, filled with diesel, barrels of diesel fuel. Can you imagine anything more inefficient. But, it got them over the crisis.

We wanted to encourage alternate communications other than through South Africa and Rhodesia. I noted before that time Averell Harriman had vetoed any thought that we would finance the Tanzanian railway which went from Dar-es-Salaam to Ndola in the Zambian copper fields. The Chinese stepped in and did it. What I was pushing for was for us to finance the great North road, a parallel road to go in there.

How we got it was when Vice President Humphrey went on a trip to Africa, I think it was to Dar-Es-Salaam, we put in his speech that we would, in fact, help finance the Great North Road. AID was very reluctant to do it, arguing that it was not economically feasible. Well, the entire road was barely feasible, but we were being asked to finance the Rift Valley portion, the most difficult portion, because we were the last to come in. AID maintained that section of the road was not cost-effective.

We put on a lot of pressure, and they finally agreed to spend a minimal amount for it. In actual fact, what happened is they built the road and it washed away. AID had to re-build it at tremendous expense. But we had gotten a pretty nice road. I has been a great success. The Chinese built a railway, but it's not very efficient. It's a pretty dinky little operation. The Great North Road has provided economic development all along that whole area.

When I reached the end of my tour there, I sought and was appointed as consul, principal officer, of our consulate in Douala, Cameroon. We don't have too many consulates in Africa. The main reason we have one there is that Douala is the air hub for that part of Africa. Our classified courier operation required a secure place for their bags. We met the couriers and stored their pouches in the consulate vault.

Anyway, it was a delightful place. My jurisdiction included what had been West Cameroon, an English-speaking area, plus the southern French-speaking area. A fascinating country. It was a place, though, where I learned that the consul in our system has a really tough type getting the attention of the capital. It is like the beltway mentality. In at a senator's local office, I find that our main task is getting the attention of the Washington office. That's what we have in the consulate. We knew the conditions, we knew local conditions. In particular I remember an incident where we had a very successful Peace Corps operation going on in West Cameroon, that is, the English-speaking area. But in the capital, the French embassy people were working very much

against the Peace Corps. They were not in favor of a non-French operation being successful. They had, in fact, persuaded the Peace Corps director in Yaounde, the capital, that the Peace Corps just wouldn't work in Cameroon. And he then, in turn, persuaded the ambassador, without any consultation with me, and ordered the deputy director, the local director, of the peace corps, to go home.

I objected. I objected, one, that he was doing it without any reference to the local situation, without even a chance for people to demonstrate that it was working. I asked ambassador if he knew what we were doing there? I had been helping the deputy director carry on his program. Finally, the Peace Corps sent people out and saved the program in Cameroon, a very successful one.

But, ambassadors in the embassies are very reluctant to use their consuls. He's got his ears down there. That's the function of a consulate. But, it's sometimes very difficult to get through.

From there I was transferred in 1970 to be the Deputy Chief of Mission in Burundi, Bujumbura. After home leave arrived there just before July 1, 1970, their independence celebration.

Q: This is the 12th of July, approximately 2:00 p.m., Las Cruces, New Mexico. A pick-up on number 10, side 10, with Michael Hoyt, retired foreign service officer, regarding events which occurred in Stanleyville, Congo. We're picking up an item which should be inserted above.

HOYT: When we were talking about the hostage policy and so on, I didn't remark on the policy towards dependents, of families. As you can well imagine, and I can assure you that the period I spent in Stanleyville after the 10th of August, without getting any news out whatsoever, this was extremely hard on my wife and kids. In reviewing the cable traffic, later on, I did discover on two occasions that they did have some indirect news of us in Stan. Some traders had escaped, there was a Greek and I think an American, I don't know who they are or were. They described the flag-eating incident and described, sometimes accurately and sometimes inaccurately, as it turns out, the events.

One of the persons being described as being very badly beaten and very badly treated which was much more extreme than what had, in fact, had happened. To us, of course, during the whole ordeal the main danger was survival. It wasn't so much deprivations or beatings that were bad.

Q: This is a good point to ask, during these 111 days, in terms of food and water, by and large did you

HOYT: Yes, except on just one occasion did we miss a day's meal. Usually it was reasonably good, if not very good, but sometimes not good but certainly adequate.

None of the beatings were very severe. At the end, one of the communicators did get a pretty nasty cut over his eye, but that was about the extent. We came close, of course, to being much more badly treated.

But, in essence, my wife, Jo, had no direct news of us for 3 and a half months.

Q: She is back in the States?

HOYT: She initially went to Jerome, Arizona, then very quickly moved down to Tucson, Arizona where her sister and brother-in-law now were. She put the kids in boarding schools to get them out of the news, because there were sporadic episodes where there was news about us, mostly not good.

Initially my wife called the State Department every day and talked to different people. Often, they were unsympathetic. People did not understand the stress she was under and objected to her strong language, her frustrations and her anger at the State Department for not doing anything. She was very angry, particularly during the first half of the time. Then about, I think it was the middle of September, she had calmed down enough so that her brother-in-law said perhaps it was time for her to go to Washington, to see people in Washington.

Up to this point my wife had been calling everyday to the State Department at her own expense. Talking sometimes to people we knew, like Bill Schaufele from Casablanca days, now the Congo desk officer, and to others.

Anyway, she went to Washington. They asked her who she wanted to see. She said she wanted to start at the top. She had an appointment with Secretary Rusk, accompanied by Walker Diamanti. I have a memo of conversation of it and also my wife's recollections of it.

He told her very frankly that there was very little that they could do. That they were doing all they possibly could and they would keep her informed. If anything was about to happen that she would be informed. Out of that process, Walker Diamanti was assigned to her. She was given the toll-free numbers to call and so from then on she...

Q: Walker Diamanti is...

HOYT: Walker Diamanti is a member of the Congo Working Group, a task force in the operations center.

Q: Did you know him?

HOYT: No. I didn't know him at all. I didn't know that there was anything like a working group formed. I'd just assumed that since I'd heard nothing, nothing was going on. Of course there was. I did go to the Congo working group later and saw that there was quite

an establishment and there was a great deal of concern. I'm convinced that's why they pushed so hard for the para-drop because they thought that was our best chance.

I talked to people later. Most people had written us off. They realized it was an extremely dangerous situation that we were in, saw little hope that we would survive. I agree with them. Sheer luck that we, in fact, did.

Anyway, I tried to point out in future hostage policy, prime attention should be given to the families of hostages. Half way through this episode, they did recognize that and did something for her and the other families. Of course you can't do enough for families of hostages, and they're always going to complain. But there ought to be concerted efforts to keep them informed, briefings and so on.

As a matter of fact, the instruction went out, when the paradrop launched, the instruction went out that no one was to be informed. In fact, Walker Diamanti did inform Jo, told her what was coming and that this was it. She realized that, he made no bones about it, it was a very risky operation. But it was sort of the same feeling that I had when the bullets started flying, into the group of hostages, I felt exhilarated because this was finally the day. I was finally able to do something, able to run, able to be active. I knew that our ordeal was about to be over, one way or the other.

Anyway, I want to emphasize the fact of the importance of the families. I heard from Dean Rusk recently, just before his death, a very nice letter, in which he had nothing but praise for Jo, how she held up, how she handled the situation.

Q: How nice.

HOYT: Yes, it was very nice.

Q: I take it you think well of the late-Secretary Dean Rusk.

HOYT: Oh yes. In the operations center I never did talk to him directly but we were very close to his office. We could feel his presence. He would spend hours poring over Vietnam battle reports. One time one of his staff asked us to read through these things and pick out the important parts for him so he won't spend so much time on it. He was consumed with Vietnam.

Anyway, there are several versions of the paradrop, even in his memoirs and in the books written about him. In his letter, he says the real decision maker was Spaak. Spaak, he said, was very humbled by the fact that he rather than the great power could make the decision.

I think that just everything was evolving to the point where it almost had to take place. I don't think there was any holding it back.

Q: Let me just ask in that regard, following the paradrop, what kinds of things did Rusk say to Spaak, or did Johnson say to Spaak. Was the paradrop the subject of communications between the US and the Belgian government?

HOYT: I don't know. Most of what went on were telephone conversations between Rusk and the president and Rusk and Spaak. Some of which has been transcribed and is at the library in Austin.

I was concerned about for my book was what they were doing about us and how. The cable traffic revealed that Mac Godley, was the strongest and most effectively in lobbying for the paradrop.

Q: There never was any consideration given for an operation, by US army special forces or the agency personnel?

HOYT: There were some plans. There was "Low-Beam" described in the Leavenworth book. It was first an assault operation designed to extract us alone, at a time when we were in the Sabena Guest Houses. Then it evolved into a croup of black Cuban exiles, a sort of commando group of them, a sort of group of heavily armed men accompanied by a colonel, attached to the Vanderwalle land column. It was specifically designed to rescue us. By the time they arrived, we were gone.

They, in fact, finally did go out by to Kilometer 8 and rescued the missionaries that were left alive. Simbas had gone out there and killed an American man shortly before they arrived. The area was still under the control of the Simbas. They just passed their way through and loaded everybody up and brought them out.

We could go on endlessly on this Stanleyville episode. I think while there are points that need to be recorded, I think we should go on in my career.

After home leave, and on my way to Bujumbura in the spring of 1970, I stopped by the department for briefings. I really didn't get much of anything. Hank Cohen was still the director of the central African office. I don't recall seeing him. But, I did see David Newsom, who was the assistant secretary for African affairs. He had asked to see me.

In our talk, he saw me, obviously the reason why he wanted to see me, he said that, (this is of course under the Nixon administration and not much attention is being paid to African affairs) He said that the department had been given only 2 political ambassadors. Two people had been foisted on them. One of which was Thomas Patrick Melady, who had worked in the Rockefeller campaign and was not particularly high on the list to be given ambassadorships. Bujumbura is generally considered to be the lowest on the rung on the ladder.

The second ambassador there(the one after Dumont who had objected to my treasonous messages from Stan) was Renchard, an AID employee who had been RIFed (reduction in

force) out of the service. His wife had given so much to the Republican party that Renchard was appointed ambassador to Burundi. It was a case known all over the service, as the kinds of political appointees that the service resents highly.

Melady had a long history of activity in African affairs. So it wasn't so far off to have him. Newsom made it clear to me he was happy to just have only these 2 people imposed on him by the White House and that my job was to keep his nose clean. He wanted me to keep things on an even keel.

When I got out there in July, 1970 in time for the 10th anniversary independence celebrations with the Belgian king in attendance. It was a lovely country on the banks of Lake Tanganyika. The embassy had a boat and the CIA had a boat. But, of course, everything in Burundi, particularly to the uninitiated, is controlled by the relations between the Hutu and the Tutsis. The Tutsis being, of course, a minority, they say 15%, almost all the rest being Hutu.

Q: Number 11, July 12, 1995. An interview with Michael Hoyt, retired foreign service officer who is now headed to Burundi as Deputy Chief of Mission.

HOYT: I was explaining the relationship between the Hutu and the Tutsi, just about the totality of Burundi politics and events. As I see it now, it was and is certain groups, certain elements, in both the Hutu and the Tutsi ethnic group who caused and are causing the troubles. Certain elements among them are manipulating and using the emotions and feelings between Hutu and Tutsi to further their own ends. Their manipulations caused the slaughter of hundred of thousands of people on both sides, but the overwhelming majority of the killings of the Hutu.

At the time of 1970, when I arrived, the Tutsi were pretty much in control but with a number of Hutu in the government and holding prominent positions. Attempts at true joint rule had collapsed in 1969, the UPRONA, the Tutsi party, was pretty much in control. The Hutu in the government and military were just more than figure heads but not in positions of real power.

The main concern of Ambassador Melady at that time, he made no bones about it, was that he wanted to establish good relations with the ruling power. In other words, with the Tutsi President Micombero had taken over a few years before in a coup from the Mwami, the king of Burundi. He was a lower caste Tutsi, a Hima from Bururi in the south. They were in conflict were the upper class Tutsi, the Banyarguru as well as the Hutu.

Melady made it very clear that our job was to establish good relations with the Tutsi, in particular with the ruling group of the Tutsis. American should not be identified with the Hutu, as had Ambassador Dumont who had been declared *persona non grata* and been forced to leave the country. Generally, the American missionaries, who had come relatively later than the Belgian missionaries, had been allowed only to work among the

Hutu and were identified with the Hutu. The Catholics from Belgium had pretty much cultivated the upper class Tutsis.

Melady worked very hard at getting assistance funds for Burundi, a time when American government assistance was at a low ebb under the Nixon administration. With what little US AID funds were available, he financed a monstrosity of a market complex in the central market area. It was more like a concrete fortress, a labyrinth which wasn't used because the merchant would not go in there. He preferred to stay out in the open, where everyone could see, and he was relatively safe.

Q: Some kind of perspective, insofar as the Hutu and the Tutsi, in terms of the scale of violence, is this roughly comparable to what had occurred to the Nigerians, so far as the Ibo?

HOYT: I'm not too familiar with it, but as far as I know, there was never a wholesale slaughter on the part of the Ibo against anybody and not a slaughter of Ibo after the Biafra secession was defeated. When the war was brought to a close, there were tremendous efforts made to prevent any of those killings. From my knowledge of it, there was nothing on the scale.

Q: No comparison.

HOYT: No comparison. There were apparently deaths by starvation, but mass killings, which were shortly were to take place in Burundi, had not taken place in Nigeria or elsewhere. I think the only real comparison doesn't come until we get the Uganda's killings under Idi Amin. In a later time, and most recently, there have been more mass killings in Africa. Of course, the recent wave of genocide in Rwanda is certainly comparable. I mean you're talking about half a million Tutsis killed in Rwanda. I find it difficult because the Tutsi population was so small, you're wiping out half of the Tutsi population.

When you talk about Hutus, the Hutu in Burundi, you're talking about, at least at that time, 3 or 4 million. So 3 or 400,000, or 2 or 300,000 is not a great number.

I think that when I look at the work I did in Burundi up to the start of the massacres, I tried to, well let's face it, I tried to make Melady. His tendency was to charge out in many directions all at once. He wasn't happy unless he was charging around, writing messages, on one crusade or another. I got his confidence enough so that he would show me his messages, and I would discuss them with him. Discuss how to say things a little better or more “diplomatically.”

Q: How long had you been a foreign service officer by this time?

HOYT: This was 14 years.

Anyway, I think I had his confidence enough so that he listened to me. Apparently, he had done such a good job, or I had done such a good job, that his appointment as ambassador to Uganda came through in the spring of 1972. He was preparing to depart the post to go to Uganda. I subsequently found out that the department was furious at that appointment, Newsom in particular. Melady just did not know how to handle Idi Amin, and his DCM let him alone.

It was Sunday, April 25, 1972, and I had gone to Nairobi to discuss my next assignment with the executive director of the African bureau. We would do what were called non-professional courier runs to Nairobi.

Monday morning, I went to the embassy. I had seen in the morning newspapers that there had been some sort of attack by the Hutu in Burundi. I got to the embassy and found a message for me reporting on what had happened. There was a very good junior officer who I worked very closely with and trusted highly. He was Kim Pendleton, the economic officer. He did all reporting at the post, economic and political.

Anyway, I got a copy of the message in which Kim reported on a serious attack by Hutu on Tutsi in southern Burundi. The message said nothing about my coming back, but I immediately I immediately took my bags and got on the first plane to Bujumbura.

When I arrived in Bujumbura, there was a pall around the airport. The military was all over the place, searching all our bags. Fortunately, I didn't have a diplomatic pouch. In a later incident they did not respect the pouches. We managed to preserve their integrity, but it was tough.

Anyway, I got to the embassy and saw that the situation was very critical. I went to the blackboard in my room, my office was just opposite to the ambassador's, with our secretary in between. I wrote on the blackboard, "Kool it." It stayed there all through the crisis.

Most important, of course, was to get the facts, get a line on what was going on. That was Kim Pendleton's main job. He had established good contacts among the missionaries and the businessmen. I worked mainly with the other diplomatic missions, their personnel, and businessmen that I knew, and various people in the government. Of course it was almost impossible to contact anybody in the government unless they wanted to be talked to.

We learned that a Hutu band, accompanied by Simbas or former Simbas, had come from the Congo, across the lake and were slaughtering Tutsis.

I was queried, some time later, with my experience with the Simbas, what I thought Simba involvement was. I said, as far as I could tell, all the symbols, all the rituals and so on of the Simbas, were being used. I was a close friend of the French air force captain

who was the French technical military assistance man. From his descriptions, I felt they acted like Simbas. Whether they were, in fact, Simbas I didn't know.

Martin Kasongo's name was mentioned as being in the group. He was one of the crazies of the Simbas that I had known in Stan. But Kasongo and Martin are even more common that John Smith amongst Batetela, so it's hard to tell.

Anyway, they quickly learned that certain of the Tutsi elite, the extremists, the Bururi Hima group, Shibura, Rwuri, and so on, had, on the night of the attack, had immediately gone to Katanga, where some months before they had sort of lured the exiled Mwami, Charles. They killed him. And then they began a round up and slaughter of all Hutu people in government, all the important Hutu in Bujumbura. And then started a slaughter of Hutu country-wide.

This we could tell was going on. Melady, was in a kind of shock. It took us, Kim and I, several days to persuade him that, in fact, that what was going on was not a slaughter of Tutsi, which the government was claiming, but mass killings of Hutu. For us to report that fact, took some doing. But he finally he just gave up and left it for us to run. He said for us to do whatever you want to do.

His concern was getting out of there.

Q: Why is that?

HOYT: He wanted to get to his next post. He paid a farewell visit to Micombero by himself, even got a medal from him which I don't think he even reported.

Of course, my concern was first to get the facts out. Which I think we did successfully though, in the end, probably to excess. We would cable sometimes twice a day on developments. We had morning situation reports, afternoon situation reports, describing this terrible massacre going on country-wide. The utter passivity of the Hutu was something that was really difficult to believe.

We were constantly hearing stories such as a truck would drive up to a village and order all the Hutu men out. They would load the trucks, there would still be some men left. They would tell the men to go home and come back the next morning. They would drive off and come back the next morning and pick up those men.

There were instances where people were buried alive. The Tutsi military would bring Hutu to the prisons, kill them, haul them away in trucks to bull dozed trenches near the airport. We had people counting those trucks as they went by, so we could get pretty accurate a fix on the numbers. We had contacts with the missionaries, both Catholics and Protestants. We would get rundowns of individual parishes, and could determine the numbers involved.

In one of my cables, [I've obtained most of the cables through the Freedom of Information Act and a complete set is available at the Northwestern University Library in Evanston, Illinois], called “The Number’s Game,” 3 or 4 months into this, estimating that there were between 150 to 200,000 killed up to that point.

The other objective that I had was of course to try, other than getting the information out, was to try to find some way of putting pressure on the government to halt, slow down these killings. Melady was good at this. He came up with his African friends, Nyerere, Kaunda, and so on. We sent cables encouraging approaches to African leaders, to go to the UN. In fact, at the time George Bush was the head of the mission, in New York. I later saw one exchange of cables that he was instructed to go talk to the secretary-general but failed to do so. Just like at one point that Bev Carter, was appointed ambassador to Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania, at the same time as the new ambassador to Burundi. When they went before the senate committee for confirmation, there are written transcripts of their joking about chopping off the feet of the Tutsis to make them like the Hutu! Carter was instructed to raise Burundi with Nyerere when he presented his credentials. We were copied the traffic and I learned Carter said he had decided not raised the issue. The next day, the foreign minister came to him and asked him why he hadn't raised and asked if that marked the level of our concern about the situation.

Anyway, I tried to get UN involvement, it was the path that I saw most promising. As a matter of fact, 3 different missions were sent out by the UN at various stages. The Tutsi government was denying anything was going on. At first they said that they were fighting for their lives. It became obvious that they weren’t, and were just killing off a lot of Hutu.
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At one point some journalists, Marvine Howe amongst them, came to Bujumbura. This was after Ambassador Melady had left, the 25th of June. I had moved into the ambassador’s residence and President Micombero came and was interviewed. I had briefed them prior and after too. Their articles were very good, relating clearly horrible things that were going on. Micombero had them taken out the next day to fly them over where all the bodies were. I went with them in the helicopter. We did see a lot of bodies. floating in the rivers, but it was pretty hard to tell whether they were Hutu or Tutsi. Anyway, the government was very defensive about the whole thing.

The Papal Nuncio had proposed a letter to Micombero, very carefully drafted, an appeal to stop the killings. Although caged in language which was so delicate that it's hard to imagine, reading it afterwards, that it was an appeal. Anyway, it apparently was strong enough that the French ambassador refused to sign it. I sent at least 3 cables to the embassy in Paris to try to get the foreign office, the Quai D”Orsay, to instruct the ambassador. Each time, our embassy people were assured the necessary instructions had been sent. Still, the ambassador refused to the end to sign. In fact, of course, the French were playing their own game, as in Rwanda with the Hutu, backing militarily the government.

Eventually, when I say eventually I'm talking about July, the killings almost died down to such a point that things were perhaps back to as normal as they could be. In August the new ambassador came. I stayed long enough for him to present his credentials. I had not thought we should have sent an ambassador that soon. However, I couldn't make that recommendation because it would have appeared to be too personally connected. It was not my place to do so. Besides, I was very anxious to get out. I had had enough of this sad country. Also, my wife had been forced to be gone from the post for many months to take care of our youngest son in Tucson.

It was a very emotional thing for me to leave. As I we pulled away from the airport, I looked down and saw the row upon row of trenches that had been dug for the killed. It was sad, but I was glad to be leaving.

I learned before I left that I had been appointed desk officer for Rhodesia. I expressed some surprise to be re-appointed in the same job as before, but there was no record that I had been Rhodesia desk officer. I went back to that. I found a pretty cold reception in the department in the African bureau over my Burundi experience. I was never debriefed. I never saw Newsom about it. Hank Cohen never saw me on Burundi.

I found out that, in fact, the African bureau had tried to play down events in Burundi. The only reason that we were as active as we were was that the international organization side of the department, were very concerned. In fact, there were 2 fellows there who did practically all the work. My reporting provided justification for us to go to the UN and encourage them to be more involved.

In the end, almost nothing was done. The UN reports were suppressed. Burundi has gone on in the same way since, with almost no reaction. It was only late in the 1980s that the Congress got very concerned over recurring episodes where Hutus would attack some Tutsis, and the Tutsis would retaliate by killing 10, 50, 100, thousand Hutu. The Congress finally enacted several different resolutions and laws which served to encourage the Burundi Tutsi leadership, under President Buyoya, to institute reforms, leading up to the ‘93 election of a Hutu president. He was assassinated in the Fall, and essentially since then, there have been massacres on both sides. Hutus and Tutsis chopping each other up at an ever increasing rate to this day.

Q: This is tribal.

HOYT: As I'd tried to explain, it's people playing on tribal differences. Actually, it's not...

Q: They're tapping ancient animosities?

HOYT: They're not, that's what I discovered looking at this in depth. I have consulted with the Belgian professor, Vansina, and Rene Lemarchand. Rene has published a book recently showing what is happening in Burundi. I gave him copies of all my cables, and he used them.

But they're both of the opinion that the Hutu and the Tutsi are not 2 different ethnics. There are more social and economic differences between them, it is more a question of rank and so on then ethnicity. It has devolved into a sort of an ethnic struggle but only very recently. Both of these professors believe it's largely an input from Rwanda. Well, we were talking about 1965, 1969. But ever since then, this particular group, this Hima Tutsi group from Bururi, have seized power. They control the army. And certain elements of them are always itching to get the slaughter started again. They really don't think there's any way of controlling the Hutus except like this.

So, it's not really ancient tribal animosities. The Hutu and the Tutsi got along for centuries without chopping each other up. There was a hierarchy but there was always the Mwami, the king, who mediated between the two. But then they removed the Mwami. They removed the colonial administration, and you get these emotions played upon by these particular groups.

Q: Were there any external forces in play?

HOYT: Not really. There's a new one coming up now. Rwanda and Burundi are the most populated countries in Africa. There's a theory going around that the problem is overpopulation.

Q: Something to do with when a certain percentage of the population reaches a median age...

HOYT: I think that the 2 countries have always been overpopulated. They aren't increasing that rapidly and there's nothing new. They work the land together, the Tutsis and the Hutus. There should be no reason for them to be fighting each other over the land. They're fighting each other because the emotion, I think, because the emotions have been put into play by certain groups. Each time the killings start anew it gets further ingrained. Right now it is pretty stark, the animosity between the 2 groups

Q: There is something like that in Colombia. There were killings starting in 1948. Colombia, Bogota, Latin America, you can see Man's capacity to do this sort of thing?

HOYT: It's infinite.

Certainly in Burundi and in Rwanda, which I know little about. In Burundi the only hope, in my mind, is to isolate those extremists on both sides and let the people get on together. That's the only hope. There's not much hope, but it's the only one. You can't give them more land. I think the population factor is almost irrelevant and certainly not the immediate cause.

The immediate cause is people, really very evil people.

I got back to the department in 1972-74, I was the desk officer for Rhodesia. This is a republican administration, not particularly interested in Africa. On Rhodesia, it was known that Nixon, before he became president, visited white ruled. It was still under its unilaterally declared independence under Ian Smith. I think he had a certain sympathy with him.

I found a directive in my files which made it very clear that we were to back-off sanctions and try to rectify the situation. The directive was never put into effect, it was a draft. Under the republican Nixon administration saw that they could not dismantle the sanctions. The sanctions were voted in the UN and were legally binding on us.

But Harry Byrd, in the senate, did their work for them. He promoted and got passed a...

Q: Harry Flood Byrd?

HOYT: Yes, Harry Byrd who put through the famous Byrd amendment, Byrd provision, which exempted chrome, the main element, of the UN sanctions.

Q: Oh, okay.

HOYT: The famous Byrd provision.

I spent a lot of my time trying to get that repealed. Finally got the administration to get everybody to agree that we should push to have the provision repealed. It was strictly illegal. We were legally obligated to support the sanctions. We voted in the United Nations, we voted for them, there was no way to except them. I worked very hard.

Newsom tried to keep a low key. It finally came down to closure votes in the senate. It had to get 60 votes. We were working on them. I went with Newsom to see Senator Taft. He was one of the key republicans who was against repeal of the Byrd provision. I went with Newsom to talk to him and his staff. Newsom made a presentation which I thought was very weak. Taft's staff man was very far out, and he indicated there was no way the senator was going to support repeal.

I just broke in, and I said, “Well, you've got to realize that this is illegal. We have a legal obligation under the UN charter, under the laws of the United States, to follow the sanctions program.”

The senator looked at me and thanked us for our presentation.

When it came down to the vote--there were 3 closure votes. Two failed and it came to the third one. This is only the second or third closure vote in history, by this time. In the final vote, Taft left. The opposition collapsed and it passed--the Byrd provision was repealed in the senate.

I felt quite elated about it. I reported in to Newsom who was very glad to hear it but he had, of course, kept a very low profile during this thing. WI sent briefing papers to Kissinger, but he would invariably come up with the wrong testimony. We'd have to correct it later.

But, it never got through the House because it was never popular with the Black Caucus. Representative Diggs, who was the head of the African subcommittee, did not push repeal. He was charged and later went to prison siphoning off part of his staffs' salary. He went to prison the day I retired in 1980. His wife, who was a foreign service officer, resigned on the same day. I met her the same day he went into prison.

Anyway, there just wasn't much steam behind it in the House so it did not pass the House. I think, I'm not sure, it was repealed a few years later. It may have become moot when Rhodesia received its independence in 1980.

Anyway, my job as Rhodesia desk officer, my main job was to maintain the sanctions. Everything with any sort of exceptions, foreign assets withdrawal, had to go through my desk.

I remember one thing. There had been a Rhodesia mission in Washington, the Rhodesia Information Office. After UDI they kept one lower-grade officer in the mission. It became clear that we would make no move to expel him--given the furor over the Katangese office in Washington at the time of the secession. We couldn't even get the FBI to watch him in case he was breaking some law. Hoover just refused to have anything to do with it. So he stayed but he knew that if he ever left, he'd never come back.

But then the query came through, unofficially, they wanted to know if his wife could go on to Rhodesia for Christmas and come back. I said that we were not fight the families and pass the word that we would let her back in.

Q: In terms of ammunitions, was there any trafficking of munitions through the United States?

HOYT: I wasn't aware of it.

The only thing I was aware of was trying to keep the sanctions program going. I tracked down aircraft spare parts going to Rhodesia. In one case they took a couple of 707s out of the airfield in Geneva and flew them down to Rhodesia. I spent a lot of time trying to track down those people, trying to apply sanctions to them, the people that did it.

The Swiss were not cooperative. It was very difficult to work with the Swiss because you can't go to Switzerland and enforce any kind of sanctions. We did call them to Washington. They claimed, of course, that they had nothing to do with it. That somebody else grabbed the airplanes and pulled them out.

But, more important, were DC8 shipped to Gabon. There was a license working through to export a DC8 to Gabon. In fact, this was the second one that they were exporting. I was opposing it vigorously. Newsom supported it. For some reason, Kissinger supported it, he wanted to do it. I said, "I have proof here that the first DC8 you sent there is in the meat trade and they're flying meat from Rhodesia to Holland."

However, the export license was granted. Actually, it was Ferguson, the acting assistant secretary for African affairs, who issued the approval. When later the recriminations came down for having approved, Newsom said he hadn't approve it, Ferguson had. I had been to a staff meeting in which Newsom said he was in favor of granting the license. That did not set well with me.

Anyway, I continued to try and stop the actual export. When came across some later information, I brought it to the attention of the Central African desk, under Hank Cohen. He delayed action on it until it actually left the country.

But Hank Cohen was the also the fellow that gave me quite a critical report on my time as DCM and Charge in Bujumbura that I did not see until later. I complained to him that the report was not accurate. I pointed out that I had been really the leader of the diplomatic corps and had been responsible for the actions the US had taken. Hank sent in another report but did not retract the old one. When Ambassador Melady put me in for the Superior Honor Award, he was told it could never go through. That is the normal level of award when you're DCM or Charge and you do a good job. Instead it was

Q: Side 12, July 12, 1995. Interview with Mr. Michael Hoyt, retired foreign service officer, and he's discussing his tenure on the Rhodesia desk.

HOYT: I'm just reaching the end, I was going to..

Q: Now, Cohen, why did he become angry?

HOYT: The African bureau was not interested in hearing bad news, as far as I could tell.

Q: That's terrible.

HOYT: Newsom was not interested in using up any of his influence with the administration.

Q: The Nixon administration cared less about...

HOYT: It's interesting though, in the Fall of 1972, before the presidential elections, the State Department got a directive from the White House saying that President Nixon, in going over issues that he wanted to be prepared to face that might come up at the last minute in the elections, asked about what the US had done about the Burundi massacres. During the Biafra secession, Nixon had been effective in attacking the administration

over inaction there. He didn't want anything like that to happen on his election. Apparently he had personally looked at the situation in Burundi and queried the department on what the department had done.

So Hank Cohen--I saw the reply--cobbled together a list of 6 or 7 things that the department had done, like going to the UN, going to African leaders, every single one of which had been suggestions of mine.

A year later, Melady, in spite of being told not to, had put me up for Superior Honor Award. The African bureau downgraded it to a Meritorious Honor Award. I almost didn't accept it.

At the award ceremony, awarded by Newsom, he said that people had accused us of not having done anything about Burundi. “We did do something,” he said, “and this is the man responsible.”

So I felt somewhat vindicated.

Someone, in fact it was Clingerman, undertook a review of my promotion record in the foreign service, trying to determine why I had not been promoted since I had gotten back-to-back promotions from FS)-6 to 4 in 1965-66. I should have been promoted to 3 about the time that I left Burundi. I'm sure I would have if there had been a good report on me.

But what happened is that I appealed and I finally got them to remove Hank Cohen's original memo from my file. But I didn't make 3 until 1977. I spent 11 years as an FSO-4 which is just incredible. I suppose I'm lucky enough to have stayed in the service but I should have been promoted to a 3 much quicker.

Anyway, at this time, I looked for a way out of the Rhodesian job. There was no other real job prospect in the African bureau. I found an opportunity to get detached to the Postal service for 6 months in 1974, first part of 74, to be the State Department man at 100th anniversary of the Universal Postal in Lausanne, Switzerland. On of the attractions was to be able to return to where I had been as a 5-year old.

I worked in the Post Office for 2 or 3 months preparing for the meeting. I was to give them guidance on global issues like South Africa. I was working out of IO, the International Organizations bureau, which was responsible for our participation in multilateral organizations.

I was not very welcomed by the post office delegation and had to insist on staying for the full term of the conference. This was my introduction to working in the UN system.

I was assigned to IO as desk officer for ICAO, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and IMCO, now IMO, the International Maritime Organization. I went to a

lot of meetings. The only thing I can think of that had a real lasting interest as some work I did with ICAO. At that time, the big issue was terrorism and airline hijacking.

The main method for combating terrorism under Kissinger was to draft conventions and get everyone to sign off on condemning terrorism. The Arab nations just would not go along, and Israel would continually attack the Arab nations when terrorist incidents occurred.

This would happen in ICAO. The meetings would end up in shouting matches between the two, and nothing would get accomplished. Sometime in 1975, there was an attack at Orly Airport in Paris and many people were killed. The Israelis called for a meeting in Montreal of the ICAO council. It was assumed there would be the usual acrimonious meeting, and nothing would be done. I developed and implemented a strategy whereby we prepared for the meeting very carefully, circulating instructions to our embassies in all the countries, including Israel and the Arab countries, the ones on the council. We asked each country to come to the meeting with concrete suggestions of what should be done in international civil aviation to prevent hijacking and attacks on airports.

Everybody on the council professed to be interested in protecting civil aviation. At the same time, I asked the FAA and the economic bureau, which was responsible for aviation affairs, to make their own proposals. The FAA said that they had been making suggestions for years but were always stopped by State in presenting them in ICAO. This was the result of bureaucratic bungling in the economic bureau. We succeeded in getting clearances all over State for the FAA proposals to screen all passengers at international airports and requiring them to have and implement an airport security program. It was as simple as that. We went to the meetings, the FAA proposals were passed, and proclaimed as international law. These two simple provisions virtually shut down terrorist attacks on airplanes and airports.

I went to many meetings of IMCO in London. I found UN work stimulating and interesting, a contrast to the kind of direct diplomacy practiced in small consular or diplomatic posts.

When I was due to go overseas again, in 1976, I found the principal officer's slot in the consulate in Ibadan, Nigeria was open. So I applied for it and got the assignment. I then found out that the ambassador, Don Easum, wanted to close the post. I argued against the closure and succeeded in saving it for the moment.

Talk about overpopulation, there are 4 million people in the city in Ibadan, with no sewers and no central water supply.

Q: Hardship duty.

HOYT: The problem there was that the communication and road structure in the area was very inadequate and overcrowded. With all the oil revenues, everyone had cars, but the

road building program had just gotten underway. To get from Lagos to Ibadan, about 100 miles, it took hours and hours just to get out of Lagos, and several hours after that on inadequate roads. Just to get from one side of Ibadan to the other took could be a two or three hour journey. The only road across town went right through the center of town on a narrow road.

As it turned out, it had been a mistake to fight to keep the post open. The ambassador was adamant about closing the post.

Q: Who's the ambassador.

HOYT: Don Easum. He had been fired as assistant secretary for African affairs by Kissinger after Easum had made a speech about Rhodesia that was not to his liking. As solace, he was appointed ambassador to Nigeria.

There seemed to be a continual misunderstanding between us. He favored the USIS, the branch public affairs officer, at the post, who they both thought should be the consul.

It was finally decided by the Department that the post in Ibadan was to close and one opened in Port Harcourt.

With my previous experience in IO, I was able to lobby for and get the job of counselor for human rights in our mission to the UN in Geneva. This was now under President Carter. With his emphasis on human rights, they created the rank of counselor for the job. I was the first and last to be have counselor rank. The advantage of that was we received a much higher housing allowance than normal. We were able to rent a lovely apartment overlooking Lake Geneva. Geneva was where the UN Human Rights Commission was located, and the principal meetings on human rights took place there. It was a fascinating job, but I found we could accomplish very little in promoting human rights there. At best, very small steps forward were taken.

Again found out that the ambassador, Vanden Heuvel at that point, had in fact wanted a counselor for legal affairs rather than for human rights.. He soon left, but his replacement, Helman, apparently was of the same mind because when I retired in mid-1980, my replacement was a first secretary, and a legal affairs counselor was soon appointed.

I went to two General Assembly meetings in New York and numerous human rights meetings in Strasbourg, Paris, and finally, Monrovia, Liberia.

Personally, I found it to be very interesting working on the multilateral level. Sometimes there were 100 to 150 delegations at a meeting. I worked very well with the Soviets and started to with the Chinese who were getting their feet wet in international organizations. At a bilateral level, I had spent a good deal of time and currency on keeping the Chinese Communists out of the UN.

I thought things were working out well. It seemed to me that the Soviets were getting a better attitude towards an international organization and in human rights. That is, until the Afghan invasion came. From that time on, we lost contact with the Soviets. I told my counterpart that I thought they had made a very serious mistake. He said, of course, "we were invited in."

Incidentally, the Burundi ambassador to Geneva was the former representative to the US and UN, Terence Nsanze. He was the one, at the height of the killing in Bujumbura, had stopped me on the street and waved the New York Times article in which I was quoted as saying that they were burying people alive. He said then that he would take me to places they were not burying people alive.

Q: Awfully nice of him.

HOYT: I also met in New York, as the Burundi ambassador, Artemon Simbananiye, the "intellectual" leader behind the 1972 massacres. He had been exiled as ambassador to the United Nations. He barely recognized me when I came up to him, but I knew he knew that "I knew."

At one point at a Human Rights Commission meeting, I worked in a mention of Burundi as an example of where genocide had occurred. It was at the same time we were dealing with the Armenian massacres. Turkey was fighting tooth and toenail to avoid having it characterized as a genocide. As usual, the question was slid around and came up ambiguously.

Q: Which it certainly was.

HOYT: It was, it most certainly was. At that point the Armenians were virtually the only people supporting President Carter with money. We had an Armenian on our delegation. We worked very hard and finally got vague language that kept the issue open. It was a struggle each year. As Turkey's importance in NATO increased, we felt more obliged to hide the issue. Any attempt to call the Armenian massacres a genocide, the Turkish representatives will tell, condemns us the death by assassination by Armenian radicals.

I worked with the Africans to develop an Africa charter for human rights. They wanted their own charter. We met in Monrovia the Fall of 1979 to draft an African charter. At the meeting, I discovered something weird going on with my eyes. When I finally got the embassy, they sent me to a doctor. He diagnosed a badly detached retina. I was flown to Washington and had a complicated operation.

I Jo flew Washington for my recovery. When I went to the General Assembly in New York, I discovered I could not function very well. I went on leave for a month and returned to Geneva. My father died in January and I went back to New Mexico. I decided then that I would retire from the foreign service.

I had been promoted to FSO-3 two years before, but I had spent 11 years as an FSO-4. The ambassador in Nigeria didn't do me any good. And the embassy wasn't very happy with having a counselor rammed down their throats. I thought my prospects of my getting up much further in the service were not very good.

I also had responsibilities in New Mexico. I decided to retire after the next meeting of the Human Rights Commission. I left the post in July and retired in August. We moved to Santa Fe where we had built a house five years earlier.

Q: Your dad lived in New Mexico?

HOYT: He lived in Los Alamos.

So that's really the extent of my service. The thing that I've done recently is to work on Burundi. I have a continued interest in the worsening situation there. I've periodically written to the State Department giving them my views, calling them at times of troubles, talking to them, but I have never received more than a cursory reply. Just recently I worked with Physicians for Human Rights on Burundi.

I went to the Department in May and was able through Physicians for Human Rights to get appointments around town, State, the Hill, NGOs, Amnesty International, etc. Nobody disagreed with the analysis that I had given previously about problems in Burundi being caused by extremists who were aggravating the situation for their own ends. Now, almost a year later, the situation has developed to embrace larger and larger segments of the population. It may no longer be able to isolate those extremists.

So, I continue my interest in Burundi and hope to be able to work with the Physicians for Human Rights. I hope to make some difference.

Q: Let me ask you a few general questions. Who were some of the people you worked with in State you most respected?

HOYT: Tom McElhiney is the first one that comes to mind. McElhiney, who headed the East and Southern Africa office, when I went to work on the Rhodesia desk, was by far the best one I worked for. He analyzed the complex and urgent Rhodesian and Zambian situations and came up with the appropriate solutions. He was an excellent leader of people. He was ambassador to Ghana and then Inspector General of the Foreign Service. He couldn't pass the medical exam for Ethiopia and went to be a secretary general in a UN agency in the Middle East.

Q: What is your impression of Foreign Service Institution in terms of both its internal politics and external politics now and at the time that you entered the foreign service.

HOYT: I thought the foreign service, up to the Nixon administration, was a pretty impartial place as far as external politics was concerned. I did see the tremendous concern

for not permitting another Cuba. There was a lot of difficulty in getting aid for countries other than to fight Communism. But, with the Nixon administration, Kissinger created a group around him, and those people, beginning with Eagleburger, really took over the department. The hiatus with Carter didn't have much effect. The whole group came back in with Reagan. Although Kissinger didn't come back in, his people, including Eagleburger, came back and have literally have run the department since then.

I have concern for the institution. People seem to be more concerned with getting individuals in certain places so they can be controlled and can control the institution. That is my impression, although I've been out 15 years.

Q: In your dealings with the American intelligence community, the whole problem with the agency cover within embassies. Did this create difficulties, almost a kind of tradition in the State Department to having a number of fixed slots filled with agency personnel. Where operations undertaken to provide diplomatic cover?

HOYT: I don't think the agency ever occupied their slots as such. There may be some places where there are limitations of post, such as Arab countries, in that sense a certain number of slots were reserved for them. But, of course, they had their own personnel. We were generally able to get the people we wanted to do our job. There was a certain amount of petty jealousies locally, sometimes like agency people had bigger and better houses because they obviously had a greater flexibility in reimbursing their people for housing. They'd go out on the market and get whatever housing they wanted.

My personal experience in working with the agency, particularly in the embassies when I was in charge, I thought that we had excellent relations and worked very well together. John Stockwell was the agency man in Bujumbura most of the time that I was there. He later turned against the agency. He had grown up in the Katanga, in the Congo, where his father was a technician for the missionaries. He knew the area well and did an excellent job. He was faulted for not concentrating enough on the Soviets stationed there, but we used him for internal stuff, to find out what was going on in the local scene. He also kept an eye out on rebels across the lake. One of them, in fact, one time had threatened to kidnap me when I was in charge. It turned out to be a hoax, a scam. For a few days there I packed one of the agency's pistols in my briefcase. I said they were never going to get me again.

Q: Did you find their personnel very able?

HOYT: I found them able. I found they did their work very well and professionally. In the Congo when we were held hostage, here was one of the CIA agents who could have had his cover blown away. We would have been killed instantly if he would have been found out. He kept cool, but most of us did, also.

My impression of whenever I'd come into contact or knowledge about them, they've got their techniques down well, they have ways of protecting their sources and preventing

their sources from blabbing later on. In only one instance did they have an agent who we, in the embassy, were working with where they didn't tell us. This was in Burundi. I found out later that they had an agent/informer who was a friend of the embassy. That's a no-no. They have a rule, at least that is what was understood by my colleagues, to let us know if such is the case.

Generally, we worked well together, we shared information. They give us copies of their reports. I have a lot of stuff obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, which is very good. David's stuff was very useful in Stan, and he shared with me. I saw it at the time. Looking back on it, I didn't read it as closely as I should have. On hindsight, it revealed a hell of a lot more than I realized at the time. It showed how imminent the rebel takeover was. It was not entirely an invasion. There were people inside the city who also played their part in the fall of the city.

Q: Did you have any, in that kind of danger, did Russians, etc., ever try to pitch you?

HOYT: No, not really. In Burundi we had very good relations with the Russian DCM and worked rather closely with him. He had left by the time the massacres came up and so there wasn't anybody really that we could have dealt with. He was a known KGB agent. In fact, he was running the embassy.

Q: Probably an able guy.

HOYT: A very able guy, very friendly. I remember, not him, but when I was going to leave Burundi, the Russian embassy people invited me for lunch. There were 3 or 4 of them, at least one woman, whom I had never met before. We had a beautiful lunch with the most exquisite caviar and pancakes that I have ever had in my life, washed down with many glasses of vodka. By the time the lunch was over. they were completely smashed. I was in a hell of a lot better shape than they were.

In Geneva I worked quite closely with them. I did not have major problems with them, although on one occasion, they pulled the typical trick of agreeing in advance to a compromise, then later, making that the basis for further negotiation.

Q: Who was under secretary general of the UN who was a Russian who defected shortly, did you come across him?

HOYT: No. In fact we were thinking of maybe we ought to approach this guy in Burundi, in Bujumbura, to become a defector.

Q: Did you make a pitch to him?

HOYT: He was so open and so easy to work with, sort of westernized, we thought he might be susceptible. However, nothing came of it. I guess the agency decided against it because I heard nothing more about it.

Q: Did you ever have any dealings with the bureaus legal attaché?

HOYT: Legal attaché?

Q: That's really the term, LEGATT's.

HOYT: Which agency did they work for?

Q: Federal Investigation.

HOYT: When I was in the operations center I know they were sent to the Dominican Republic. As I understood it, the CIA was not trusted and the FBI agency was sent there. I don't know really how effective they were.

I notice in the list of questions here, it talks about presidential or high level visits, CODELs, and so on. One of the ones I found most difficult was in Bujumbura, Gale McGee headed a delegation visiting Burundi. I think he had ulcers or stomach problems, and we had a very exacting schedule. I was trying to schedule him. He had his own DC4 or DC6, military plane. They were scheduled to take off for Goma, in Zaire, very early in the morning. The consul in Goma was Raymond Seitz.

Raymond subsequently became one of Kissinger's, Eagleburger's boys. He worked in the embassy in London, worked in African affairs, became executive director for Shultz, then sent as Deputy to the embassy in London, and then under Bush was appointed ambassador to the UK. After he was replaced by Admiral Crowe, he lashed out at the administration for lack of policy. He's apparently well admired by The Economist. The Economist listed him at one point, when he was deputy in London, as one of the most knowledgeable people in London, amongst the diplomats. They ran a piece by him, a long piece a couple of weeks ago, in which he blasted the administration for lack of policy. Anyway, that's Raymond Seitz who was then the consul in Bukavu, junior to me at that point.

The timing of the departure was, I thought, too early because I knew Ray was expecting at a later hour. I had no way of communicating with him on the earlier hour. I suggest the CODEL. This was refused out of hand, without explanation. I had, meanwhile, been trying to arrange a meeting with the foreign minister for the group. What happened is that McGee went out to the airport. There were two of the senators staying with me at my residence when a phone call came in saying the foreign minister would see them.

I knew the schedule was tight, so I said we'd drop by on our way to the airport. We did and subsequently were a few minutes late arriving at the airplane.

I can still see Senator Gale McGee, standing in the doorway of the plane, absolutely furious, yelling at me that it was all my fault, I had deliberately delayed them, defying his

orders, etc., etc. On top of it, I had let the other senators see the foreign minister without him. I mean, he was so furious he was still spluttering as they closed the door. I thought, well, that's the end of my career. But I never heard anything of it.

I actually worked with Gale McGee's staff on the Byrd provision on Rhodesian sanctions, but I worked with his staff. I told the one I worked most closely with the story. He said he'd find out if there were any repercussions. He said there had been none. Apparently he'd forgotten about it as soon as he took off. He had some sort of stomach problem which required him to eat regularly at set intervals. That was the excuse given for the outburst.

The only other high-level visit I was involved in was Secretary Rogers. He transited Douala on his way to Yaounde. He was also on the other end of my cables coming from Burundi on the massacres. When I got back I was told at the operations center, they told me that the word had come down from his office that they didn't want to see any more cables on Burundi and didn't want the cables summarized. Some people were just sick of Burundi. I think they were more frustrated in being unable to do anything.

Anyway, he visited Cameroon when I was consul in Douala. The party had to land in Douala and go on smaller planes to Yaounde, the capital. As a matter of fact the smaller plane lost an engine going into Yaounde. They were grounded there for awhile before another plane came in.

Q: This is the end of the interview with Michael Hoyt.

End of interview