

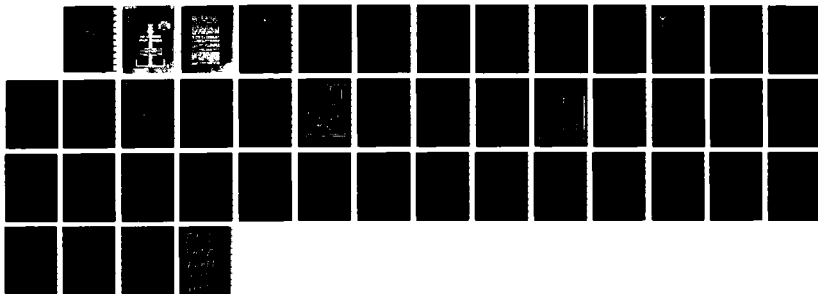
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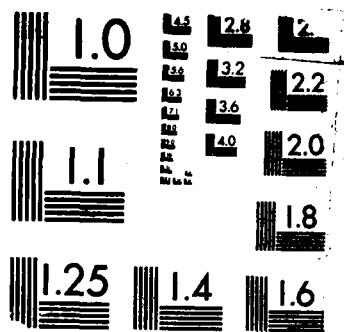
ANALYSIS OF THE UNITED STATES AIRLIFT TO ZAIRE MAY-JUNE 1/1
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AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

STUDENT REPORT

ANALYSIS OF THE GULF STRIKE FORCE IN
ZAHED, IRAQ - JUNE 1990

WALTER STONER L. SMITH

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REPORT NUMBER 88-2375

TITLE ANALYSIS OF THE UNITED STATES AIRLIFT TO ZAIRE, MAY - JUNE 1978

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Submitted to the faculty in partial fulfillment of
requirements for graduation.

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19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) The Shaba Province of Southeast Zaire has been the scene of many insurgent activities during the late 1960s through the 1970s. In May 1978, the Province once again became the scene of a bloody insurgent invasion which later became known as SHABA II. Thousands of European mining engineers and their families, employed by Zairian mining companies, became prime targets for the insurgent rebels. Responding to foreign requests for U.S. military intervention, President Carter authorized the USAF to use Military Airlift Command's strategic airlift resources to assist the Belgian, French, and Zairian combined military rescue/counter insurgent operation. This study gives a brief account of Zaire's history leading up to SHABA II and then details and analyzes in depth the USAF airlift operations in support of the rescue/counter insurgent operations known as ZAIRE I and ZAIRE II.					
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—PREFACE—

There are far too many statements about the importance of studying history to quote here. Let it suffice to say it is important to study history. We can learn valuable lessons from it, especially when it involves recent events. One such historical event involved the United States Air Force, in particular the Military Airlift Command, in the African country of Zaire during May and June 1978. However, more grandiose world events like the rapid collapse of Iran's Monarchy, tension erupting into another war in the Middle East, and the Jonestown, Guiana mass suicide overshadowed this extremely important yet little known event in our country's history. This event, known as SHABA II, involved the invasion of Southeast Zaire by communist trained Katangese rebels and their later expulsion from Zaire by combined military forces from Belgium, France, and Zaire. The significance of this event to the U.S. military involves the United States' response of deploying some of its strategic airlift forces to aid foreign military forces opposing the invading rebels. This paper will therefore identify, review, and analyze the United States' emergency strategic airlift support to Zaire.

To better understand the airlift, this paper is divided into six chapters. The first provides a general historical overview of Zaire (formerly called Belgian Congo and the Republic of Zaire) from the late 1800s up to the SHABA I invasion in 1977. The next chapter sets the stage for SHABA II by looking at Zaire from SHABA I up to SHABA II. This will entail a review of significant events during the period as well as U.S. activities that finally resulted in U.S. military involvement in Zaire. Then there is the chapter on the U.S. airlift itself. This chapter is divided into two sub-sections titled Zaire I and Zaire II to match the two corresponding phases of the U.S. airlift. In Zaire I, the initial airlift phase 16-29 May 1978, the U.S. government's reactions to international requests and the events within Zaire will be examined along with the airlift itself. The Zaire II section contains information about the U.S. airlift to and from Zaire during 31 May 1978 to 16 June 1978. Following this, the fourth chapter examines the results of the U.S. military airlift involvement. The fifth chapter analyzes some of the lessons learned from this airlift. The final chapter draws a general conclusion about the U.S. airlift to Zaire.

One question often asked is why do a paper on an airlift operation that was on a smaller scale than the Berlin Airlift in the late 1940s? My answer is, by studying this important military event, we will hopefully derive a greater understanding of airlift complexities (even when on a smaller scale than airlifts the size of Berlin's). Once we understand the complexities, we will hopefully avoid some of the problems airlifters encountered during SHABA II.

Throughout the research, I discovered some interesting pieces of information. Most of these appear within the paper, but there are a few worth highlighting here. One was that this airlift operation was the

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first overseas military action authorized by President Carter since his taking office in January of 1977. Not to be his last authorization, he met considerable opposition from Congress months after the airlift's completion regarding the legality of his actions in light of the War Powers Act.

Another surprise was how much conflicting information about this event exists in media sources. It appears the media failed to verify some of their data prior to printing their stories. It also seems evident that the media had little to no background information on Zaire or its history prior to the crisis. Along this same line, the information about Zaire in publications, both in media releases and in hardcover, is virtually non-existent. It's no wonder the news media covering the initial crisis had so much conflicting information.

On a more disappointing note, very little information exists about ZAIRE II operations in both news releases as well as military documents and histories. Data about what was airlifted aboard MAC's aircraft is available, but information about ZAIRE II unique airlift problems and what events lead to the decision to use MAC aircraft for this second operation is not available.

Few if any modern research products can be truly labelled as one's exclusive handiwork. This paper is no exception. My grateful thanks to all those who helped me by giving their patience, insights, and understanding during the hundreds of hours it took to complete this project. I am especially grateful to Major Dan Schellinger, USAF, whose countless hours of guidance and reviewing of materials were instrumental in producing this historical analysis. Also to Dr. John Leland, MAC Historian, who brought this airlift operation and many of its sources of information to my attention. Finally, to my wife Jenny. Her patience, support, and understanding were unwavering through the many weekends, late nights, and holidays I dedicated to this project...my sincere thanks and love.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Major Michael L. Sevier is a senior pilot with over 2,700 hours flying time. He has a wide background in airlift operations having flown as a WC-130 aircraft commander, CT-39 instructor pilot, and C-5 instructor pilot. A graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy with a Bachelor's Degree in Cultural Geography, he also holds a Master's Degree in Administration from Central Michigan University. He has served at wing level jobs to include current operations and as the chief of a combat readiness section, and has Air Staff experience in both Airlift Plans and Airlift Operations Divisions. A graduate of Squadron Officer School, he is currently attending the Air Command and Staff College.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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REPORT NUMBER 88-2375

AUTHOR(S) MAJOR MICHAEL L. SEVIER, USAF

TITLE ANALYSIS OF THE UNITED STATES AIRLIFT TO ZAIRE, MAY - JUNE 1978

I. Purpose: To identify, review and analyze the United States' emergency strategic airlift support into Zaire during May - June 1978. This analysis will also provide insight into the application of strategic airlift in execution of national security policy.

II. Background: Zaire, one of the many African countries gaining independence from European colonization since WW II, has been the scene of bloody coups and rebel attacks during the past twenty years. The third largest country in Africa, it is also one of Africa's richest in natural resources. With copper, diamonds, and tin deposits abounding, it is the strategic mineral cobalt that keeps the U.S. government so concerned about the country's turmoils. As of the late 1970s, the U.S. was 70% dependent upon Zairian cobalt. Despite these mineral resources, government corruption and fluctuating world mineral prices have nearly tumbled the country into bankruptcy and has made it the target of insurgent groups.

III. Data: In May 1978, former tribesmen of Southeast Zaire, known as Katangans, left their Cuban supported training camps in Angola and proceeded to invade the mineral rich regions of the Shaba Province in Southeast Zaire.

CONTINUED

This insurgent action, aimed at bringing down the existing Zairian government, was a better organized and equipped invasion of Zaire than the one these same rebels staged the year before without success. Fearful that 73 Americans working in the region when hostilities broke out might be held captive by the rebels, President Carter authorized a possible military rescue operation. Military Airlift Command (MAC) aircraft from virtually every MAC continental U.S. base became involved in the rescue contingency. Some were put on home station alert while others deployed to the staging location at Pope AFB in preparation to airlift some of the Army's 82d Airborne Division to Zaire. Before the rescue operation was launched, the 73 Americans were able to reach safety after a daring escape. In response to foreign requests for U.S. military intervention, President Carter did not want to commit armed U.S. troops if American lives were no longer at stake. Therefore, he authorized deployment of strategic airlift forces to support the combined Belgian, French, and Zairian military rescue operation of over 2,000 European families held captive by the rebels. During the first airlift phase between 16-29 May 1978, known as ZAIRE I, MAC aircraft airlifted equipment and supplies for the three countries into Zaire. A total of one C-5 and 42 C-141 missions were flown in support of ZAIRE I. The combined Belgian, French, and Zairian military action, sustained by U.S. airlift support, succeeded in rescuing most of the Europeans while pushing the rebels out of Zaire. During ZAIRE II, the airlift phase between 29 May - 16 June 1978, 11 C-5 and 61 C-141 missions flew Pan-African peacekeeping forces into Zaire and subsequently flew Belgian and French troops and their equipment out of Zaire on the return flights.

IV. Discussion of Analysis: Several lessons are derived from problems or events encountered during ZAIRE I and II. The greatest lessons are ones previously learned from other airlift operations. Those lessons are the value of airlift and its responsiveness. From the quick response of airlift forces to the crisis to the success of the airlift operation in achieving national security objectives in Zaire, political and military leaders must never lose sight of these airlift characteristics as amplified by ZAIRE I and II. Lack of intelligence data, information shortfalls, communication difficulties, trans-cultural differences, overtaxed support facilities, and crew misunderstanding of U.S. Embassy roles are problems encountered during the airlift. Although having slight impact on the overall operation, their potential to adversely affect any airlift operation is great. Through understanding and tolerance, airmen were able to circumvent these problems and successfully complete the missions. The lessons of airlift's ability, flexibility, and force modernization were also reemphasized by this operation. Several of the above mentioned lessons can be generalized into three areas. These are knowing what resources and assets are available for use,

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being aware of the entire situation as it develops, and being tolerant of the problems encountered throughout the entire operation.

V. Conclusions: MAC's airlift operations during ZAIRE I and II marked the first overseas military authorization by President Carter during his Presidency. The combined Belgian, French, and Zairian rescue operation achieved success as a direct result of MAC's timely airlift support. The rebel invasion brought to light the drastic shortage of strategic airlift capability in Belgium, France, and in all of Western Europe. Belgian and French troops deployed to Zaire without the airlift ability to carry much of their required heavy equipment with them. Likewise, they lacked the airplanes necessary to establish a timely air line of communication capable of airlifting operation-sustaining supplies. MAC provided the required airlift to sustain the combined rescue operations, thus becoming the primary U.S. force behind the achievement of U.S. national security objectives in Zaire.

VI. Recommendations: Political and military leaders must never forget the importance of airlift, both in war and peace. MAC should continue educating these people and others around them about airlift by using historical examples such as ZAIRE I and II to highlight/reinforce airlift's characteristics and its value to our nation. Headquarters MAC should also act upon applicable lessons learned from this airlift operation to ensure they do not hinder future airlift operations.

Chapter One

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF ZAIRE

Zaire, a vast and beautiful land located in West Central Africa, has been the scene of bloody coups and rebel attacks during the past twenty years. This is in vivid contrast to a country that by geographical standards ranks as one of the most beautiful countries in all of Africa. (See MAP 1 on page 3.) What makes it so beautiful and what significant historical events helped shaped the country into what it is today are questions requiring study in order to better understand the very daring rebel attack upon the southeast region of the country in 1978 known as SHABA II.

The country is Africa's third largest in land mass comprising an area slightly larger in size to the United States east of the Mississippi River. (See MAP 2 on page 5.) (6:492; 8:353a) Spanning the equator, its high mountains (over 16,000 feet) to the east, the Katanga plateau (at 5,000 feet) to the southeast, grasslands and river basins to the central and northern regions, and about 20 miles of coastline to the west squeezed between Angolan land masses all combine in a somewhat tempered climate and lend themselves to a vast array of natural sites and vegetation. (6:492a-b; 7:740; 10:1119) The 27 million inhabitants (1978 figures) comprise over 80 tribes where over 200 known languages and dialects can be heard throughout the country. (6:492a; 7:740E; 8:353a) Geologically, the mineral rich regions primarily to the southeast provide the resources from which 80% of the country's export income depends. (See MAP 2 on page 5.) Of these resources, approximately 80% are within the Shaba Province. (57:17) In 1978, Zaire was the world's leading producer of industrial diamonds, provided 60% of the world's cobalt (a strategic mineral vital to U.S. military industrial production), and was a leading producer of copper, tin, and uranium. (1:741g; 10:1124; 54:19) From these mines came the uranium used in the production of the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, during World War II. (1:741; 57:17) These same mines were Western Europe's primary source of uranium during the late 1970s. (37:8)

With such vastness and natural richness, it's no wonder Zaire would fall into control of a European country like Portugal during the periods of European worldwide expansionism. (1:741j) From the 1500s through the 1800s, over 30 million Congolese people (from the region known as Zaire today) were exported by European slave traders. (8:353a) Through royal agreements, Belgium took control of the area in 1885 and colonized the area into the Belgian Congo in 1908. (7:740G) Then in 1959, independence riots occurred throughout most of the urbanized western regions. In response to the

unrest, Belgium's king announced plans for independence; however, he never established a date for the independence to occur. As the bloodshed spread, he hastily set a June 1960 deadline for independence. (5:1062; 7:740A,G)

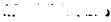
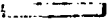
Zairians could not establish political plans on such short notice. The country was doomed to political uncertainty. Although elections were held, they proved indecisive. Realizing the futility of political feuding, two of the larger "vote-getters" agreed to join forces and formed a government. Not surprisingly, their government collapsed within weeks of its formation. (1:741k; 7:740B) To help maintain some semblance of peace, the United Nations intervened with peacekeeping troops in July 1960 and stayed until June 1964. (6:492b) As leaders started to rise to prominence, opposing tribesmen would many times succeed in assassinating them as tribalism abounded throughout the country. (1:741k; 57:Ch 3) Then in 1965, Colonel Mobutu, Chief of Staff of the Army, seized power and formed a centralized government. (7:740H; 23:13; 57:16) Disposing of the opposing people, his army defeated many uprising groups and leaders. One such group involved the combined armies of several prominent tribes of the Katanga region, known today as the Shaba Province. Offering these defeated Katangese troops amnesty, most of them fled the region, along with many of the tribespeople, into areas beyond the borders, mostly in Angola. (43:79) Those troops accepting the offer of amnesty were mysteriously murdered over the next several years. (24:12; 31:18)

Once firmly established politically, President Mobutu (formerly a Colonel and now General and President) set out to better establish his country's economic base. In 1967, his government imposed stiffer taxes and laws on all privately owned mining companies of which all but a few were owned by European firms. The largest of these companies, Union Miniere, refused to comply. Its property was then seized and under later settlement became the state-owned corporation called GECAMINES. This new Zairian corporation then subcontracted its operations and commercialization to a Belgian corporation. (1:741l; 7:741) As a result, large numbers of European engineers were again employed in the Shaba Province mining regions. Thus, the seeds of revolution had been planted and the gestation took place over the next 10 years.

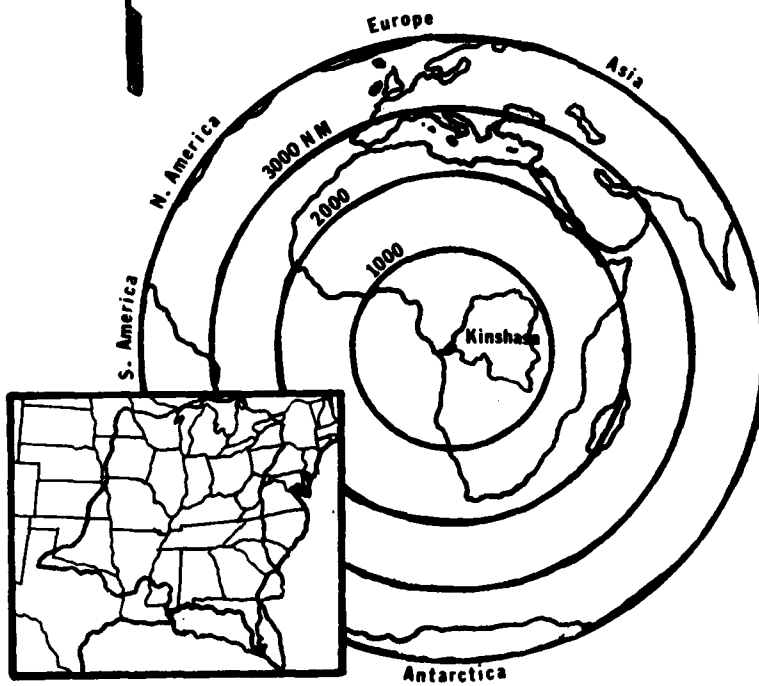
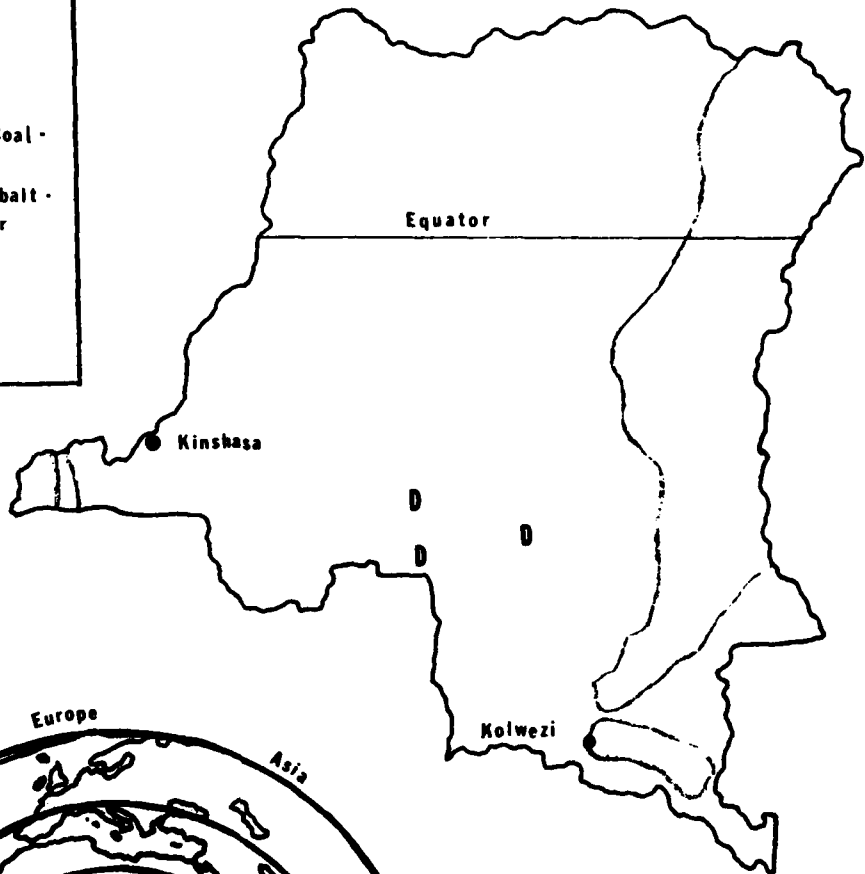
It was in neighboring Angola that other revolutionary seeds grew into revolution in 1976. Having found refuge there in the mid 1960s, the wandering Katangese troops helped the Angolan revolutionaries succeed to power. In return for their revolutionary support, the Katangese troops were given an official place of refuge within Angolan borders close to Zaire's southeast border. (43:79) Additionally, these Katangese troops were given weapons and military training from the Cuban aided regime in Angola. (9:4861; 13:35; 22:34) It was now a matter of time before the revolutionary seeds would sprout in Zaire.

ZAIRE

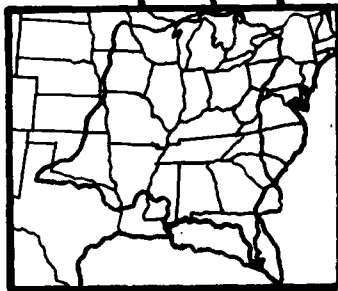
MINERALS

-  - Bauxite
-  - Tin - Gold - Coal - Iron - Beryl
-  - Copper - Cobalt - Zinc - Silver
-  - Diamonds
-  - City

0 miles 400



RANGE
nautical miles
from Kinshasa



SIZE COMPARISON
to U. S.

MAP 2

Sources: 4: 61: 56

Chapter Two

MARCH 1977 to MAY 1978

In March 1977, violence erupted in the Shaba Province, cultural home for the Katangese troops who fled Zaire nearly 11 years earlier. Thousands of these same Katangese troops, trained and partially equipped by the Angolan revolutionaries, crossed into Zaire during the previous weeks and reinitiated their revolution. Hoping to expel the existing government from the region and to replace it with a new government, the numerically superior rebels were poorly organized. Using hit and run tactics, relatively little bloodshed occurred. Responding quickly, Moroccan troops aided by French airlift intervened and repelled the rebels back across the borders. (12:18; 43:79) Eighty days transpired from invasion through completion of mop-up operations. Embarrassed by their defeat, the Katangese rebels vowed to return again to reclaim the Shaba Province. (22:34; 38:29)

Despite the length of time this rebel attack took, the Province's mines received little damage and were up to full operating capacity within weeks. However, the mines were shutdown long enough during the insurgency to adversely affect Zaire's economic posture. Even with the 1977 and early 1978 upsurge in cobalt exports, the country was reeling from internal corruption and a tremendous drop in world demand for copper, Zaire's leading export mineral. (12:17) The signals were already being sent to the world that another revolutionary attack would occur, but few if any countries acknowledged the signals.

In addition to the government's corruption and crumbling economy, the military showed increasing signs of unrest, declining morale, and corruption. (18:19; 22:34; 42:173,176) This was evident to General Nathaniel Mbumba, leader of the Front for the National Liberation of the Congo (the Katangese rebels' front). During an interview he stated, "We knew that Mobutu's army was extremely demoralized. It had suffered extreme humiliation, repression going so far as to eliminate a number of high ranking officers. Our friends in Kinshasa and in the main towns of Zaire told us...of the incredible spread of corruption." (26:13) Furthermore, during the three months prior to May 1978, Katangese rebels increased their Angolan border crossings to lay mines and harass Zairian troops. In London, a Katangese rebel agent was arrested for purchasing anti-tank weapons on the black market. (13:39) Likewise, the Soviet Union showed signs that another rebel attack was imminent. Although self-sufficient in cobalt, towards the end of 1976 they started to buy numerous quantities of cobalt from Zaire. By stockpiling this strategic mineral, they could drive its price up and force world customers to buy it from them should the Zairian source be cut

off. As it turned out, their actions helped double its market price in less than a year. (28:15; 39:1) Ignoring these signals, the U.S. government focussed on Zaire's debt and the increasing "cost" of cobalt, the vital mineral that the U.S. was almost 70% Zairian import dependent upon. (27:22)

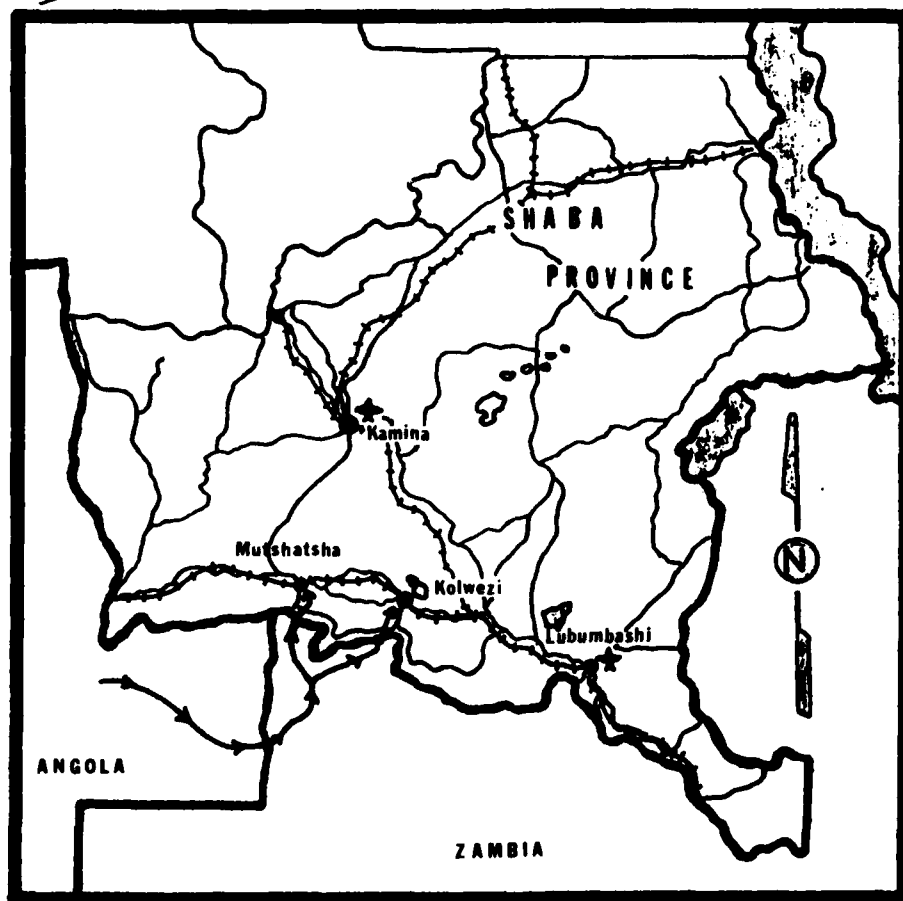
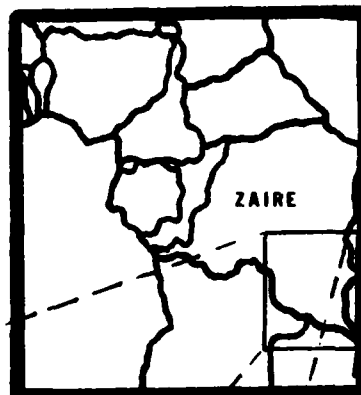
One year later, on 2 May 1978, the rebel invasion, code named "Operation Dove", was set into motion. (9:4856; 16:53; 30:1) Katangese rebels, equipped with more weapons, one more year of Cuban and Portuguese Marxist military training, and improved morale, moved again out of their refugee camps in Angola towards the Shaba Province. (See MAP 3 on page 9.) Almost 3,500 strong, they sought revenge in addition to their primary objective "to topple (President) Mobutu's dictatorial and anti-popular regime." (9:4855) Honed to a well organized unit, they targeted the mining town of Kolwezi, the railroad town of Mutshatsha, and the regions surrounding these towns. (9:4856; 13:34) Aided by sympathetic cooperatives in Kolwezi and some disloyal Zairian Army troops, the rebels prepositioned many of their munitions near their planned targets. (16:54; 25:41) As a result of these preparatory actions, they were able to travel lighter and quicker.

On the morning of 13 May, the assault began. The well planned attack met little to no resistance from the Zairian Army troops within the towns. (9:4856) Enjoying the fruits of quick victory in Kolwezi, the rebels looted the town and destroyed both strategic targets (airplanes, vehicles, radio stations, etc.) as well as French and Belgian homes. Two days later while still enjoying their victory, rebels monitoring news media telecasts from outside the region learned of French and Belgian plans to dispatch paratroopers to the region to repel the rebels. (25:41) Not willing to face the humiliation of defeat again, the rebels started executing scores of European white mine workers as vengeance for the SHABA I defeat the rebels suffered a year earlier at the hands of foreign troops. Blacks who did not cooperate with the rebels were also systematically executed. (9:4856; 13:36,39; 22:36; 30:2) The virtually bloodless invasion had just turned into a bloody slaughter.

SHABA PROVINCE & REBEL INVASION ROUTE

- - City
- ~ - Dirt Road
- ~ - Province Border
- ~ - Country Border
- ✈ - Airport
- +— Railroad
- ▭ - Lake
- Invasion Route

0 miles 200



MAP 3

Sources: 4:210:13:35:56

Chapter Three

SHABA II, THE UNITED STATES AIRLIFT

ZAIRE I

The shock and drama unfolding within the Shaba Province on 13 May remained in obscurity as the rest of the world went about its normal activities. Several hundred miles away, U.S. Air Force Colonel (Col) Sleeper, Chief Air Force Section, and Deputy Chief, United States Military Mission to Zaire, was at the Zaire Air Force (AF) operations headquarters in Western Zaire preparing to fly a proficiency flight. His preflight routine was interrupted when he heard the first reports of the attack on the Zairian military high frequency (HF) radio net. He immediately relayed the news to the U.S. Embassy personnel whom in turn notified other key Embassy personnel. Col Sleeper then monitored the rest of the radio broadcasts. The Zairian AF radio operator at the Kolwezi airfield continued reporting the attackers' activities before abruptly going off the air. However, broadcasts continued for several more hours over the Army radio net located within the hardened Zairian Army Command Post in Kolwezi. Intent upon rapidly securing Kolwezi, the rebels initially bypassed the Command Post. (34:22)

With limited information about the attack, status of 73 Americans employed by the Morrison-Knudsen Engineering Company working on an electric power project in the Kolwezi region was unknown. (41:1; 44:16; 50:1) They had not been heard from since the assault began. In addition, the fate of over 2,000 European employees of various mining companies in the region was unknown. U.S. Embassy officials notified authorities in Washington, D.C., about the situation as fear arose about these Americans possibly being held hostage by the rebels. (21:7; 34:22) Unknown to anyone outside the Province, the Americans were hiding at their camp at the edge of town. (21:11)

The situation was monitored the next four days by the U.S. Embassy while the American's fate remained clouded. During this period, the Americans were able to open a communication link with their company headquarters at Kinshasa, which then kept members of the Embassy apprised of the situation in Kolwezi. (21:7) President Carter, concerned about the safety of the Americans, authorized a possible military rescue operation. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) quickly set their staffs to work. The Commander in Chief, U.S. Readiness Command placed two airborne infantry battalions of the 82d Airborne Division (82d AD) at Fort Bragg, North

Carolina, in marshalled deployability posture. (46:78) Similarly, the Military Airlift Command (MAC), under JCS planning directives, sent a "Flash Message" to certain units. Major General (MG) Thomas Sadler, 21st Air Force Commander, was charged with directing the contingency's airlift operation for MAC. (53:16) The 317th Tactical Airlift Wing (TAW) at Pope Air Force Base (AFB), North Carolina, received their message at 1520 local on 16 May. (53:17) This message tasked them with providing airlift support for the 82d AD. MG Sadler vested the 317th TAW Commander with authority to assemble planes from every continental United States (CONUS) TAW to support the 82d AD deployment, if needed. (53:16) Due to its proximity to Fort Bragg, Pope AFB became the primary staging point for most of the identified MAC support aircraft.

Later on the 16th, both General Moore, Commander in Chief MAC (CINCMAC), and MG Sadler flew to Pope AFB to help coordinate the operation. (53:17) Eighteen C-141s were flown in from McGuire, Charleston, Norton, McChord, and Travis AFBs. (46:78) Twenty-two C-130s were flown in from Little Rock and McChord AFBs to pull alert with 32 Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System (AWADS) equipped C-130s stationed at Pope AFB. (53:16) Additional crews and aircraft were positioned at Charleston AFB. (48:25) Headquarters MAC (HQ MAC) also identified three C-5s and another 42 C-130s to pull home station alert. (46:78) Likewise, Airlift Control Elements (ALCEs) were identified and began deployment to staging locations for possible airlift to forward operating bases. (53:17; 54:28)

The airlift forces' alert occurred at a very busy time and explains the diversity of locations where resources were called from. Many of the east coast forces were involved in providing airlift for military exercises such as SOLID SHIELD 78. On top of this, the 317th TAW was in the middle of their Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI). They had launched two of nine C-130s in a nine-ship formation when the "Flash Message" was received. The two airborne aircraft were quickly recalled. In conjunction with this ORI, there were already 900 transient personnel at Pope AFB with hundreds of Pope AFB personnel dispersed to other locations. (53:17) For these reasons the generation of MAC alert forces became a very complex operation involving virtually every airlift wing within MAC.

Although active duty forces were tasked with the alert requirements, Air Force Reserve (AFRES) and Air National Guard (ANG) units played an important role in the contingency. When it began, eight AFRES and ANG C-130s were flying in support of SOLID SHIELD 78 out of Pope AFB. To free the active-duty aircraft and crews for the contingency, 14 additional AFRES and ANG C-130s were tasked with providing exercise redeployment airlift. All totalled, seven AFRES and ANG groups and wings around the country provided 22 C-130s for the exercise. (53:18)

On 17 May, the 73 Americans hiding at their camp since the 13th made their escape. (44:16) Their company's C-47 aircraft made a night landing guided by vehicle lights at a crude airstrip they had bulldozed at their camp. It then flew them away to safety. (34:22) What might have helped cover their escape was the confusion caused the day before when several

hundred Zairian troops parachuted into the region staging a counter attack at the recently constructed Kolwezi airport. (2:29:25) By the 19th, the Zairian troops had secured the airfield although their strength against a rebel counter attack was questionable. (17:33)

Meanwhile, French and Belgian troops were put on alert for possible rescue operations of their people still trapped in Kolwezi. Airlift was the only means of transportation capable of getting these troops to Zaire in time. This airlift requirement presented them with a problem U.S. forces would not likely experience during an operation of this magnitude. They were forced to use chartered civilian aircraft to help move their large quantities of materials and personnel. (21:8) The French initially relied upon five commercial jets. (19:25) The Belgians relied upon eight Boeing 707s, two Boeing 727s, and eight military C-130s. (17:32)

On 18 May, both French and Belgian troops began their long flights to Zaire. (See MAP 4 on page 15.) Due to North African overflight difficulties, both countries flew to Zaire via routes over the Atlantic Ocean. (17:32) This added several hours to the direct route flight time. The French took ten hours to make the nonstop flight from Corsica to Kinshasa while the Belgians, forced to make refueling stops along the route, took 22 hours for their slower C-130s to make the trek from Brussels to Kamina. (17:32; 19:25)

Sometime during their initial airlift operations, Belgium and France became aware of their airlift shortcomings. Their heavy, outsized logistical and transportation equipment couldn't fit aboard their aircraft and required deployment. (27:22) Then they discovered the airfields in East and Central Zaire did not have enough fuel stores to refuel the large quantities of contingency aircraft. (52:52; 54:28) These airfields only maintained sufficient quantities for the few routinely scheduled commercial flights. It wasn't until the European forces started operations out of Kamina airfield that they became acutely aware of the limited fuel situation. The Belgians found they couldn't fly their refugee evacuation C-130 missions out of Kamina as they had already depleted the fuel stores. (46:80) In addition to these airlift problems, the French would face a significant change of plans upon their arrival in Zaire.

By the time the last Belgian forces reached Zaire, French troops had already transferred over to Zairian military aircraft and were preparing to parachute into Kolwezi. This was a change from their initial plan to wait an additional day. The French urgency to jump resulted from an intercepted message that the rebels had been ordered to, "sabotage mining installations, kill or take with them as many hostages as possible, and withdraw to their base." (19:25) Therefore, the French had to get as many troops into Kolwezi to halt the rebels a day earlier than originally scheduled before darkness would fall and hamper jump operations. (21:9)

Back in Washington, D.C., word about the Americans' safe evacuation from the region reached the President on the 17th. One of President Carter's concerns from the beginning of insurgent activity was that U.S.

SOUTHWEST EUROPE and NORTHWEST AFRICA
(Belgian and French Troop Deployment Routes)

FIVE PAN-AFRICAN
PEACEKEEPING COUNTRIES

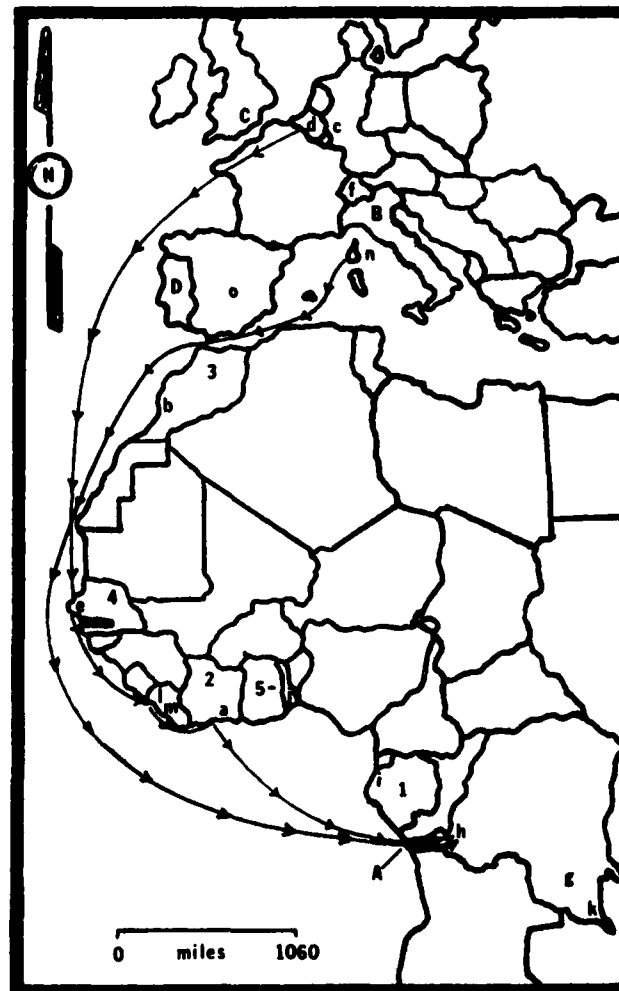
- 1 - Gabon
- 2 - Ivory Coast
- 3 - Morocco
- 4 - Senegal
- 5 - Togo

SOME LOCATIONS TRANSITED
BY U.S./EUROPEAN AIRCRAFT

- a - Abidjan, Ivory Coast
- b - Agadir, Morocco
- c - Bitburg AB, Germany
- d - Brussels, Belgium
- e - Dakar, Senegal
- f - Geneva, Switzerland
- g - Kamina, Zaire
- h - Kinshasa, Zaire
- i - Libreville, Gabon
- j - Lomé, Togo
- k - Lubumbashi, Zaire
- l - Monrovia, Liberia
- m - Roberts Field, Liberia
- n - Solenzara, Corsica
- o - Torrejon AB, Spain

SOME LOCATIONS MENTIONED
IN TEXT

- A - Cabinda (N. Angola)
- B - Italy
- C - London, England
- D - Portugal



ROUTES OF FLIGHT

- ~~~~~ - Belgian Route of Flight (NOTE: Brussels to Lubumbashi - 6020 Air Miles)
- - French Route of Flight (NOTE: Corsica to Lubumbashi - 5705 Air Miles)

MAP 4

Sources: 4: 14: 16: 19: 25: 21: 8

military intervention could escalate the hostilities into a direct U.S./U.S.S.R. military confrontation. (35:1) He was convinced the Soviet Union was extensively backing the Cubans whom he had positively linked to the rebel invasion. (2:29128; 9:4861; 29:4) Thus, if U.S. troops joined in the fighting, Soviet leaders might feel compelled to intervene militarily to protect their interests with their so-called Katangese ally. The President had spent days weighing a Belgian, French, and Zairian request for support against U.S. objectives to rescue the Americans (if held hostage). With the Americans safe, he only had to respond to the increasing international pressure for U.S. military intervention. Ultimately, he committed unarmed military airlift support as the first U.S. military international authorization of his Presidency. (34:1)

Although the launching of the 82d AD seemed less likely to occur after the Americans reached safety, airlift operations continued during the 17th. The 438th Military Airlift Wing (MAW) out of McGuire AFB, New Jersey, deployed five C-141s to Pope AFB. One of these aircraft dropped off six combat airlift mission deadhead crews at Charleston AFB, South Carolina. A sixth airplane, at Pope AFB flying proficiency training flights earlier in the day, was also held for the contingency. (52:51)

On 18 May, ten C-141s and two Combat Control Teams (CCTs) departed Pope AFB within a one hour twenty minute window to Torrejon Air Base (AB), Spain, to set up staging operations. Additional C-141s from west-coast bases continued to fly into east-coast bases for the contingency while two Pope AFB C-130s repositioned an ALCE team to Charleston AFB. (53:17)

By now, ZAIRE I (the airlift operations between 16-27 May) was well underway. The French were into full scale operations in Kolwezi against the rebels and the Belgians were assisting in the operations after having just landed at the airport. U.S. CCTs were being airlifted from Torrejon AB by C-141s to: Solenzara Airfield, Corsica; Agadir, Morocco; and Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Once at these locations, the CCTs set up operations, performing HF radio communications for aircraft command and control purposes. Each CCT had a variety of gear to include one vehicle equipped with a trailer and generator, back-up ultra high frequency (UHF), very high frequency (VHF), and HF radios, as well as landing zone lighting and navigation aids. (50:18) Unfortunately, the communication equipment lacked sufficient power to span the vast distances from Europe to West Africa and into Zaire. Consequently, on the 19th, the first C-141 laded with supplies entered Zairian airspace unsure of what to expect. Enroute to Kinshasa, Zaire, the crew encountered thunderstorms and electrical storms that made HF communications with U.S. Command and Control facilities virtually impossible. When the airplane reached the "Angola Gap" (a 20-mile wide corridor between Cabinda and Angola on the Atlantic coast of Zaire), they had no information on potential threats, airfield security, progress of the European rescue effort, or the extent of U.S. involvement in the operation. The airplane landed safely, but not without considerable crew uneasiness. (3:21; 14:15) Later during the same day, a second C-141 laded with supplies landed in Zaire. (52:51) Thus began the U.S. airlift to Zaire.

For the next eight days MAC flew C-141 and C-5 missions into Zaire airlifting supplies, fuel, and personnel in direct support of France and Belgium. (46:80) Although President Carter authorized release of the 82d AD from alert late on the 19th, MG Sadler did not direct the 317th TAW to return to normal operations until very early on the 21st. Seventy plus airlift aircraft were then officially released from alert. (53:17) By this time the airlift contingency was well under way. The French and Belgian troops had the rebels in retreat and evacuation of the Europeans out of Kolwezi to other cities in Zaire via Belgian C-130s was almost completed. (19:29) The fuel shortage at Kamina had been overcome by C-141s shuttling fuel in from Kinshasa.

With the tremendous influx of aircraft and crews, crewrest facilities and equipment at Kinshasa became scarce. Many crews spent time in the bunks aboard the airplanes after putting in full duty days. (14:15) Being short of equipment, the Belgians borrowed U.S. refueling and communications equipment. Then, on the 27th of May, U.S. airlift was no longer required to support the French and Belgian troops in the Shaba Province. ZAIRE I had come to an end.

ZAIRE II

On 31 May, MAC aircraft were again called upon to support operations in Zaire. This time the requirement was to airlift Pan-African peace-keeping forces and emergency supplies into Zaire. Since these forces would replace the remaining French and Belgian troops still in country, MAC aircraft would concurrently redeploy those troops back to Europe. (46:80) Between 31 May and 16 June (the airlift operations period known as ZAIRE II), C-141s and C-5s once again airlifted jeeps, trucks, ammunition, communications gear, other supplies, and troops from five African countries into Zaire. MAC also flew medical supplies in from Geneva, Switzerland, aboard C-141s. On the return trips out of Zaire, C-141s and C-5s airlifted the European troops and equipment back to their respective countries. (46:81)

As the active arm of U.S. policy during SHABA II, MAC provided short-notice airlift support in a two-phase operation that helped stop a crisis in Zaire. The amount of airlift accomplished and an analysis of some of the lessons learned are covered in the next chapters. Suffice it to say the airlift missions were demanding and MAC crews performed at the highest levels of professionalism. Despite the rigors, no accidents occurred as a result of the demands placed upon the crews and their aircraft.

Chapter Four

RESULTS OF SHABA II

MAC AS AN INSTRUMENT OF NATIONAL POLICY

Several results from this contingency are worth noting. Concerning U.S. political objectives, MAC was the only military instrument of U.S. national policy used despite the initial alert of the 82d AD. President Carter authorized MAC to support our allies upon their request for assistance since MAC probably would not be perceived by the Soviets as a serious military threat. This was not the first time, nor will it be the last, that MAC played the deciding role in achieving U.S. national security objectives. In fact, MAC's airlift role is so vital to U.S. national security strategy, President Reagan recently approved an updated national airlift policy to reemphasize its importance. (32:4)

KATANGESE REBEL RESULTS

To the Katangese rebels, their bloody attack had mixed results. Achieving their revenge, they had the added pleasure of seeing virtually every European and Moroccan citizen flee the area never to return again. Likewise, they further crippled the ailing Zairian economy, meaning an almost certain collapse of the ruling government. Yet, the rebels sacrificed 1,000 modern weapons and 250 rebels' lives to achieve this dream. (57:70) Whatever joy they felt about their supposed success soon fled away. The Zairian economy did not collapse and the Shaba Province never seceded from Zaire. Similarly, the revolutionary Angolan government turned against the rebels after SHABA II by refusing them arms and training camps within Angola. (11:116) This was a sign of Angolan goodwill in hopes of securing better relations with Zaire. (2:29127; 5:1067; 11:116)

BELGIAN, FRENCH, AND ZAIRIAN RESULTS

The Belgian, French, and Zairian victory and success was bittersweet. Over 500 blacks and 200 white Europeans were massacred by the rebels. (2:29127) These figures include over 200 Zairian civilians. (57:70) Rebel destruction of mining installations in Kolwezi halted mining operations for months until the facilities were repaired. All but a handful of highly skilled foreign employees of the mining companies, 2,155 in all,

evacuated the region forever. (2:29127) Even though the troubled Zairian economy desperately needed the monies brought in by mineral exports, outside economic support helped the economy survive the months following SHABA II. With copper and cobalt export shipments cut by 50% for the remainder of 1978 as a result of the insurgency, the major problem to resuming full mining production was the devastating lack of mining engineers. (2:29131) On the other hand, the Belgian, French, and Zairian troops chased the Katangese rebels across the borders, never to return as an insurgent force. Plus, Belgian and French troops returned to their countries within a couple of months after securing the Shaba Province to a peacekeeping force flown in aboard MAC aircraft during June 1978. These combined military actions also helped reinforce Zairian people's support for their existing government.

UNITED STATES RESULTS

The U.S. fared well in several aspects. From an international political standpoint, the results were positive. President Carter's first international military authorization resulted in the quick completion of the combined military rescue operation. (35:1) Despite international pressure on President Carter to send armed troops into Zaire to help counter the insurgents, his non-violent military response showed U.S. resolve to its allies. (36:1) It also supported a poorly defined U.S. national security objective towards Central Africa and allowed France and Belgium to prove their military ability and political resolve to protect their citizens in foreign countries. (9:4861; 38:30)

From the airlift perspective, this rescue was made possible by the long range and rapid response of MAC's C-5 and C-141 aircraft. (15:31) Ten C-141 missions were flown in support of Belgian operations from Brussels to Kamina during ZAIRE I. Five of these missions moved 50 tons of ammunition and supplies, a helicopter, a truck, two motorcycles, and 10 tons of canned fuel. Roberts Field, Liberia, was the initial stage point for these missions until aviation fuel quantities ran low. Then the staging operation moved to Dakar, Senegal, for the remaining missions. The other five missions airlifted 42 tons of aircraft bulk fuel bladder systems from Italy to Kamina where four bladder-configured C-141s then transported 352 tons of aviation fuel from Kinshasa to Kamina in 12 missions. This provided the Belgian C-130s at Kamina the necessary fuel to evacuate the European refugees to safety since the military aircraft surge into Zaire depleted that city's limited fuel supply rapidly. (46:80)

Supporting the French operation, one C-5 and 20 C-141 missions staging through Dakar airlifted 437 tons of essential vehicles and supplies, and 120 passengers. These missions were flown from Solenzara, Corsica, to Lubumbashi, Zaire. Due to critically short fuel quantities at Lubumbashi, five more C-141 missions were added at Dakar. This was required since the C-141 allowable cabin load forced some cargo off the original C-141s to insure enough fuel was onboard each airplane to make the round trip flight without refueling at Lubumbashi. (46:80)

An additional five C-141 and two C-130 missions flew a U.S. communications satellite terminal from Bitburg AB, Germany, to Kamina. These missions also positioned ALCEs at Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Kamina, Dakar, and Solenzara. On top of supporting MAC airplanes involved with this operation, these ALCEs also helped numerous Belgian and French aircraft which were evacuating refugees back to Europe. (46:80)

OVERALL AIRLIFT RESULTS

In support of Zaire I operations (16-29 May), MAC flew one C-5 and 42 C-141 missions. Initially, France moved its forces to Zaire aboard its military aircraft while Belgium forces were transported in military and civilian aircraft. (46:79) As mentioned in Chapter Three, they lacked the airlift to transport the supplies and equipment required to effectively support their ongoing rescue operations. The only means of transportation in the free world capable of moving their cargo and personnel in the short period of time were MAC's C-141 and C-5 assets. Although time was not as critical an element during Zaire II, MAC's airlift assets were again called upon to airlift a large volume of cargo and passengers in a relatively short period of time.

MAC's commitment to Zaire II operations (31 May - 16 June) were 11 C-5 and 61 C-141 missions. These missions airlifted Pan-African peacekeeping forces and emergency supplies into Zaire and on return flights flew redeploying Belgian and French troops and cargo back to Europe. In supporting this phase, 1,619 tons of cargo and 1,225 passengers were transported aboard MAC aircraft. (46:80,81)

More specifically, the peacekeeping force was comprised of 416 troops from Morocco, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Senegal, and Togo. They were deployed to Zaire along with 1,214 tons of support cargo aboard nine C-5 and 41 C-141 missions. From Geneva, Switzerland, two C-141 missions flew 51 tons of International Red Cross food and medical supplies to Zaire. On the return flights out of Zaire, two C-5 and 12 C-141 missions withdrew 809 redeploying French troops and 225 tons of cargo from Lubumbashi to Corsica. Likewise, in supporting the Belgian withdrawal, six C-141s transported 129 tons of cargo from locations in Zaire back to Brussels. (46:80,81)

In all, during the one month period covering 16 May to 16 June 1978, MAC flew a total of 12 C-5 and 103 C-141 missions carrying approximately 1,350 passengers and 2,550 tons of cargo in support of SHABA II contingency operations. (3:20) This tremendous surge occurred simultaneously with thousands of other MAC airlift missions worldwide. As with any operation of this magnitude, certain lessons were learned from this airlift operation. The next chapter will analyze some of these lessons.

Chapter Five

ANALYSIS OF MAC'S SHABA II AIRLIFT

VALUE AND RESPONSIVENESS OF AIRLIFT

ZAIRE I and ZAIRE II contingency operations afforded Headquarters MAC (HQ MAC) and many of its operational units hands-on experience and confrontation with many of the problems inherent to airlift operations conducted in developing countries. (45:8) Some of these problems surfaced within command and control channels while others appeared in operations related areas. Discussed below are airlift-associated lessons derived from ZAIRE I and II problems or events, most which were mentioned in earlier chapters.

Perhaps the most valuable lessons learned were not problems, but previously learned lessons which the SHABA II contingency airlift reinforced. Two of these are very important lessons political and military leaders of this country must never forget. They are: the value of strategic airlift in accomplishing national security objectives and the responsiveness of these airlift forces.

Although the success of the combined military rescue operations of SHABA II have been viewed with varying degrees of objectivity, there is no documentation denying the fact that the long range and rapid response of MAC's C-5s and C-141s made the rescue possible. (15:31) Without the timely response of these assets (the only aircraft in the free world capable of providing this type of strategic airlift), the rescue operations would have stalled. During ZAIRE I, the required French forces would have made it to Zaire as they did without MAC's support. However, their commercial airplanes had other commitments and would not have been able to resupply them with critical items.

Similarly, the Zairian forces already in the Shaba Province lacked critical supplies and munitions. Without MAC's airlift of these goods to them, the low stockpiles on hand could not sustain their participation in the mop-up operations against the rebels.

Belgian operations would likewise have stalled shortly after their arrival in Zaire. Many of their critical operations-sustaining supplies were still in Belgium while their airlift aircraft were tied-up in Zaire. Thus, the combined forces would have stalled far short of driving the rebels out of the country.

Then, when the evacuation process began, fuel would not have been available in the Shaba Province for the Belgian C-130s that flew the civilians out of the region. As it turned out, MAC airlifted the fuel and required pumps for these C-130s to use for evacuation operations. These are just a few examples of how MAC's response made the rescue possible.

The airlift operation of ZAIRE II further proved MAC's invaluable capability. Even though hostilities had ceased, the very important task of rapidly getting European military forces out of the country while being replaced with the Pan-African peacekeeping forces was of primary importance. The European forces had accomplished their mission and any delay in their redeployment from Zaire might have had serious political repercussions from within Zaire as well as the international arena. An example of a repercussion involved France. With a military presence in Africa second only to that of Cuba's, France was already feeling pressure from over 20 countries. They charged France with using SHABA II as an excuse for "colonial expansion of French influence in Africa." (9:4859) In 17 days, European troop replacement operations were completed. MAC's capabilities were instrumental in providing almost all of the airlift required to perform this rapid swap-out.

European countries were not the only ones to feel international pressure. Despite some allies remaining critical of the U.S.'s "lack of determination" by not sending fighting forces into Zaire, President Carter recognized MAC's unique ability. (44:4,9) MAC assets can and did carry out national policy within the region and throughout the world without presenting an armed threat to other countries, especially the Soviet Union. Through MAC's operations, the U.S. enjoyed several important political results, some which were mentioned earlier. One was showing the U.S.'s resolve to help its allies during insurgent activities without having to resort to armed intervention. Also, it allowed Belgium, France, and Zaire to conduct a small scale counter-insurgent operation. This showed the world their professional capabilities to operate successfully and in conjunction with other military forces in carrying out their countries' policies. Likewise, it proved the serious shortfall NATO has in airlift capabilities. (27:22) Even though airlift operations of this scale might not figure into NATO plans, there might be times such as SHABA II that an airlift shortfall could have devastating consequences.

Along these same lines, MAC accomplished the airlift without incident on very short notice. This is attributable in part to MAC performing its wartime mission every day by airlifting a variety of cargo to locations throughout the world. For ZAIRE I, MAC shifted forces to cover this contingency. Then it used its remaining forces, along with AFRES and ANG forces, to provide airlift to other worldwide operations. In response to the very heavy airlift requirement during this period, AFRES and ANG airlift units responded with the same professional results in augmenting the active duty forces. Being responsive and well trained afforded MAC the ability to surge in meeting SHABA II's airlift requirements of international urgency as well as meeting more routine peacetime and exercise requirements.

INTELLIGENCE/INFORMATION SHORTFALLS

From a command and control perspective, many of the problems encountered and subsequent lessons learned were in the area of information and intelligence. There is little doubt intelligence data concerning status or intent of the Katangese rebels was not available to U.S. officials, let alone Zairian officials. The SHABA I invasion the year before should have resulted in a greater U.S. intelligence gathering effort towards Zaire and its enemies. As mentioned in Chapter Two, events including the Katangese rebels' harassment activities from their camps in Angola, the arrest of a Katangese agent in London, government corruption within Zaire, and Russia's sudden purchase of vast quantities of Zairian cobalt should have alerted intelligence specialists. If properly analyzed, intelligence experts should have concluded another rebel invasion was imminent.

With timely and adequate information, SHABA II's impact upon Zaire and the victims could have been reduced or prevented altogether. Unfortunately, hundreds died and some international military intervention was required to resolve the insurgency. From a military perspective, SHABA II should serve as a lesson why emphasis must always be placed in supporting intelligence gathering activities.

Additional shortfalls came to light once contingency operations began. These involved a lack of complete data on airfields within Africa, minimal aeronautical chart availability, and inadequate weather data acquisition. (47:--) Fortunately, these were partially solved by the deployed ALCEs. Singularly, these problems might not amount to anything serious, but when tied together with other problems, it becomes more difficult to overcome them without jeopardizing safety, timeliness, and operational integrity.

COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

Equatorial Africa has extensive regions with poor radio transmission and reception capabilities. This is largely due to very few ground reception and relay stations existing in this area. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the first C-141 mission into Zaire during ZAIRE I was unable to update the threat situation by radio prior to entering its airspace. This was not an isolated case as communication difficulties continued to hamper MAC operations almost daily throughout the remainder of ZAIRE I. (46:81)

Communications experts working at Headquarters MAC (MAC/DOK) were aware of the circumstances from the beginning of the contingency. They immediately started working with Air Force Communications Service (Air Force Communications Command as of 15 November 1979) to identify the proper communications packages to support the airlift deployment and follow-on support of the 82d AD. (40:92) When the operations became strictly airlift oriented, MAC/DOK recomputed communication package

support. While the airlift requirements for communications packages was briefed, key HQ MAC personnel decided the package was too large and heavy to be airlifted aboard the few remaining airlift assets. Consequently, all that was deployed were organic CCT Command Digital Communication Systems to Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, and Corsica. Simply stated, these organic systems proved inadequate since they did not have enough power output to span the distance involved in this contingency. An example of this were forces at Kinshasa not being able to contact forces at Lubumbashi by radio. In another situation, U.S. personnel at Dakar had to use the commercial telephone system to the tune of \$3,500.00 to relay critical information to 21st AF at McGuire AFB. (47:21)

This communications problem was solved early during ZAIRE II. The JCS, at the request of HQ MAC, deployed satellite terminals to Solenzara, Agadir, Dakar, Lome, Kinshasa, and Lubumbashi. Since size and weight of the terminals were of concern, only the unsecure voice package was deployed. Despite this limited package, the terminals enabled simultaneous command and control for ZAIRE II MAC contingency operations. (46:81)

The lesson here is communication experts identified new technology packages capable of preventing this problem from occurring. It highlights the continuing need for HQ MAC to equip, train, and deploy airlift units with lightweight communications packages that enable crews to communicate regardless of location. Such systems have existed since before SHABA II, but U.S. military quantities are limited and are seldom employed.

TRANS-CULTURAL DIFFICULTIES

Flying a contingency spanning many cultures presents unique problems seldom encountered in a training or exercise environment. This occurred within Zaire where kerosene is the primary cooking fuel. With civilian tension running high, the government could not allocate all the fuel required to support the contingency's airlift without fear of widespread civilian rioting. The Belgian, French, and Zairian contingency aircraft had depleted the limited inland fuel reserves by the time MAC aircraft started arriving in Zaire. Consequently, MAC's airlift operations were tailored with reduced cargo loads to allow enough fuel for each aircraft to make a return trip with little to no refueling within Zaire.

In addition to these shortages, many of the airfields had difficulties handling more than two or three MAC aircraft on the ground at any one time due to limited taxiway widths and ramp space. The Solenzara Airfield, Corsica, had to close when a C-5 landed there. Its taxiways were too narrow for the aircraft, so it had to be parked on the runway. (53:18) N'DJILI Airport at Kinshasa also experienced airfield closure during the periods of heavy MAC traffic as aircraft were forced to hold on the runway until parking space became available. (34:23,24; 51:1)

UNITED STATES EMBASSY'S ROLE

Military planners' and some MAC contingency aircrews' lack of knowledge about the U.S. Embassy's military liaisons' abilities and responsibilities during a crisis presented more problems. The U.S. Embassy in Zaire was not formally prepared to provide or arrange for aircrew transportation, rest facilities, or communication support on the scale required by MAC during SHABA II. The primary responsibility of the Embassy and its military liaisons during this period was to provide information to the State Department and the Department of Defense (DoD). While trying to support those Departments, several other demands were occurring simultaneously. Military planners and aircrews alike swamped the two U.S. military liaison officers in Zaire for data that was current and readily available in the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) computer's information banks. The liaisons were also asked for flight publications and information that was available at most MAC base operation facilities. Then, several other government agencies called or wired for information to be included in briefings to people not directly involved with the airlift. On top of this were the media's demands for information. The liaison officers handled the situation superbly, preventing many minor airlift associated crisis from arising. (34:22-25) The lesson is simple, planners and aircrews must understand the extreme workloads a contingency places upon all support facilities and personnel, including the military liaisons to the U.S. Embassies. This can and must come through education and experience.

SUPPORT FACILITY PROBLEMS

As with virtually every airlift operation, support facilities at each base transited were overtaxed by the volume of airplanes and aircrews. This holds true for stateside bases as well. Aviation fuel availability is an item falling into this category. Other items included aircrew ground transportation, aircrew security, and crewrest facilities. In Zaire, the tremendous influx of MAC crewmembers and media personnel resulted in crews spending nights in their airplanes or being billeted far from the airfields as the closer facilities filled up. This resulted in tenuous transportation problems, questionable security for the aircrews, and increased aircrew stress. (14:17) With the exception of aircrew security, Pope AFB experienced the same situation during the alert phase involving the 82d AD. At the alert's peak, crews were billeted as far away as 35 miles from the base. This overtaxed the motorpool resources resulting in crews waiting for transportation. (53:18) The lesson from this is the same as mentioned in the previous paragraph, understandability on everybody's part is critical to a successful operation.

ABILITY. FLEXIBILITY. MODERNIZATION

The lessons of airlift ability, flexibility, and modernization are reemphasized by SHABA II. Ability is having aircraft and crews capable of

airlifting large quantities of cargo worldwide in a timely manner. Flexibility is being able to shift forces to cover a contingency concurrently with other world airlift requirements on very short notice. The last lesson mentioned here is perhaps the most important of the three, modernization. Through it, ability and flexibility are enhanced. This contingency was flown with C-141A models (C-141s without the fuselage stretch and air refueling modification). Today, all of MAC's C-141s have been modified. Imagine MAC's ability, flexibility, and responsiveness today if SHABA II were to occur all over again with airborne tanker support. The end results would be fewer airlift aircraft required and possibly fewer congested ramps and crew staging operations. Then imagine this same contingency after the C-17 enters the inventory with its greater lift and range capabilities. (55:--) Suffice it to say, SHABA II reemphasized the lessons learned many times before during similar contingencies...the importance of airlift ability, flexibility, and modernization.

THREE OVERALL LESSONS

Several of the lessons mentioned above, can be generalized into three areas. These are knowing what resources and assets are available for use, being aware of the entire situation as it develops, and being tolerant throughout the entire operation. Communications equipment, airfield support data in computer banks, aircraft status and locations, and the Embassy's responsibilities are some of the examples of needing to know what's available. The need to be aware is highlighted by the communication limitations for the region and world cobalt price changes. Embassy response to requests, billeting facility location, and aircrew transportation are examples of why being tolerant is sometimes the only course of action someone can and should take.

The common thread found in every example is the human element. Although some of the problems of this contingency centered around equipment or facility inabilities, the human element worked around them to bring SHABA II to an end. Thus, it is the human element that must be taught these lessons in order to cope, overcome, and succeed regardless of the challenges.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION

A lot has been said during and since SHABA II about the atrocities and how certain countries could or should have responded differently to resolve the problems there. Regardless of what should have been done, the facts speak for themselves. The SHABA II rescue operation snuffed out a communist trained and equipped insurgent group that hasn't resorted to such widespread violence since SHABA II. This afforded the Zairian government time to implement numerous governmental and political changes to better benefit its people. This was all a result of MAC's airlift abilities. As one defense official put it, "the U.S. Air Force is the only air force in the world capable of performing the air'lift." (15:31)

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GLOSSARY

AB	Air Base
AD	Airborne Division
AF	Air Force
AFB	Air Force Base
AFRES	Air Force Reserve
ALCE	Airlift Control Element
ANG	Air National Guard
AWADS	Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System
CCT	Combat Control Team
CINCMAC	Commander in Chief, Military Airlift Command
Col	Colonel
CONUS	Continental United States
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DoD	Department of Defense
HF	High Frequency
HQ MAC	Headquarters, Military Airlift Command
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
MAC	Military Airlift Command
MAW	Military Airlift Wing
MG	Major General
Operation Dove	Code name given to the SHABA II invasion by the Katangese rebels.
ORI	Operational Readiness Inspection
SHABA I	The eighty day period between 8 March - 25 May 1977 when Katangese rebels invaded Southeast Zaire in their first attempt to overthrow the existing Zairian government.
SHABA II	The period from early May 1978 to 16 June 1978 when Katangese rebels invaded Southeast Zaire in their second attempt to overthrow the existing Zairian government.
TAW	Tactical Airlift Wing
ZAIRE I	The U.S. airlift phase supporting Belgian, French and Zairian rescue/counter-insurgency operations in Southeast Zaire between 16-29 May 1978.
ZAIRE II	The U.S. airlift phase moving the Pan-African peacekeeping force into Zaire and airlifting redeploying Belgian and French troops back to Europe from 31 May 1978 to 16 June 1978.

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