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Between colonial rhetoric and Cold War fears – the U.S. foreign policy toward the Congo in the 1960s

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**BETWEEN COLONIAL RHETORIC AND COLD WAR FEARS
– THE U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD THE CONGO IN THE 1960S**

Streszczenie:

W okresie zimnej wojny Stany Zjednoczone Ameryki Północnej prowadziły swoją antykomunistyczną politykę w wielu rejonach globu – m.in. w Afryce. Nieznajomość realiów tego bardzo zróżnicowanego kontynentu, niechęć zrozumienia złożoności występujących tam problemów, była powodem wielu błędów i niepowodzeń amerykańskiej administracji. Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu przybliżenie polityki Stanów Zjednoczonych wobec Republiki Kongo w trudnym dla tego kraju okresie lat 60. XX-wieku.

Summary:

During the Cold War the United States of America carried on their anti-communism policy in many world regions – including Africa. Ignorance of the African realities, the reluctance of understanding the internal policy problems of Congo was the cause of many mistakes and failures of the American administration. The aim of the article is to show the US policy towards the Congo at a difficult time of 1960s.

Słowa kluczowe:

Kongo, polityka Stanów Zjednoczonych, dyskurs, bezpieczeństwo, kolonializm

Key words:

the Congo, U.S. policy, discourse, security, colonialism

Today, the Congo, officially the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)¹ is the biggest country in Sub-Saharan Africa². Although it could be also the rich-

¹ Known also as Congo-Kinshasa. Its name has been changing since the beginning of its existence: it was called Congo Free State during 1877-1908 (as a personal colony of Belgian King Leopold II), Belgian Congo (1908-1960), Republic of Congo (1960-1965) just after the independence, renamed to the Democratic Republic of Congo (1965-1971) when Joseph Mobutu took power, then to Zaïre (Republic of Zaïre 1971-1997) and again to the Democratic Republic of Congo after Mobutu was removed from his office. The names of Congo and DRC will be used interchangeably in the text of this article.

est one, because it possesses abundant natural resources (diamonds, gold, copper, iron, uranium, cobalt, coltan, oil, etc.), huge human potential (over 79 mln people as estimated for July 2015, a very young society – over 60% of population at the age of 0-24³) and is characterized by fast economic growth (real GDP growth was estimated 9.1% for 2014, 8.5 % for 2013 and 7.2 % for 2012⁴), it is rather a place described as the worst place to live on the Earth. The country is characterized as a dysfunctional state with a record of poor governance, incompetent and helpless institutions, widespread corruption, inhibited development, violation of human rights, long-lasting instability and internal conflicts. It is very difficult to say what is the main reason for all these troubles, as both the history and current situation of DRC are extremely complex and many reasons are simply overlapping and interdependent. Yet, for sure, one of the factors influencing DRC's poor performance were years of harsh colonial rules and then a lack of political leaders to run the country in an adequate way. Not without impact has been also involvement of external actors, both from the region and from the outside of the African continent.

DRC's problems and their influence on peace and security in the region remain major challenges not only for the African continent, but also for the whole international community. The situation has not changed actually since the beginning of the Congo as an independent state. Situated in the central Sub-Saharan Africa, this huge country has posed a threat to stability of the Central and Eastern Africa. Apart from the human tragedy (millions of killed, wounded and affected in other ways in brutal attacks), destruction of social networks and general disintegration of the state, there is also a problem of ecological devastation. This, despite its relative minor importance in comparison to people's misfortunes, should yet be an essential issue also for the whole international community. As it was already mentioned, the DRC is one of the richest countries when it comes to natural resources, and one of these resources are natural forests⁵. Taking into consideration global climate change and its negative consequences, DRC's rainforests should be treated as a global treasure and protected for the future generations. Their destruction, due to ongoing conflicts and abusive resource scramble, can have devastating impact also for the whole planet.

The United States has been widely involved in DRC's affairs since its independence and even before it if taking into account its search for natural resources during the colonial times. Despite its promises and official statements

² Till 2011 Sudan was the biggest Sub-Saharan country, but the division of its territory into two countries, Sudan and South Sudan made the Democratic Republic the biggest one. Taking into consideration the whole continent the DRC is the second in term of territory, the first one is Algeria.

³ U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook: Democratic Republic of Congo* [updated September 24, 2015], [accessed September 26, 2015], <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html>.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ The second biggest (after the Amazon) rainforests in the world.

of supporting development through foreign assistance or engaging in peace building in the Congo, the U.S. has also been playing a very negative role. The consequences of some of the U.S. government's decisions aligned with its desire to pursue American interests are one of the numerous external factors that have shaped the current situation in the Congo. From the ambiguous involvement in Patrice Lumumba's⁶ death till the inconsequential politics regarding DRC's neighbors and its own leaders, the United States seemed to not have complied with its obligations as the world superpower and global leader, neither as an advocate of democratization, nor as a promoter of peace and stability.

It is then interesting to analyze at least a short period from the U.S.-Congo relations, that is the 1960s, just after the independence, in terms of what was their impact on the situation in today's DRC and the region. This will allow to learn how the U.S. policy toward the Congo then was constructed. More attention will be therefore paid to decision making in Washington and the rationales for them. The main objective will be to identify the dominant discourses. This paper will try to answer the following questions: 1) what were the main U.S. objectives?; 2) what was the dominant narrative of the U.S. policy toward the Congo?; 3) how was the U.S. supporting democracy in DRC?; 4) what was the influence of the U.S. involvement in the Congo on its security and political stability?

The Congo's extraordinary and complex situation

The history of the Congo is exceptional and unique in a way that its beginnings were totally different than of the rest of African countries. Martin Meredith put it in this way: "The Congo's origin as a state were different from any other African country. It began life not as a colony but as the personal property of Léopold II, an ambitious, greedy and devious monarch whose lust for territory and wealth was largely responsible for igniting the Scramble for Africa among European powers."⁷ This period had extremely negative consequences on Congolese society leading to its disintegration and leaving an open "sore" on the Congo's identity⁸.

As for the Belgian Congo, it was next fifty-two years of colonial rule, but this time by the Belgian state, not the King himself. The colony was one of the most centralized and bureaucratically run, without institutions that would represent local people. Belgian policymakers were convinced that indigenous societies of the Congo were not prepared for participation in sharing power. First election in which the Congolese people could vote was in 1957, but only at the

⁶ He was the first democratically elected Prime Minister of the Congo.

⁷ M. Meredith, *The State of Africa. A History of Fifty Years of Independence*, London 2006, p. 94.

⁸ More on the subject of King Leopold II's brutal politics in the Congo can be found in: A. Rothschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa*, London 1998.

local level. What is more, the Congolese did not have access to higher and middle rank positions in the administration, the same was in the army. In other words, the Congo was totally dependent on qualified European elites⁹. For Belgium, even in 1958, the independence of the Congo was something to happen in a distant future and there was no radical changes to its colonial policy. Belgium the Congolese uneducated, there was a very poor higher education (although at the primary level the Congolese were well educated) – by 1960 only around 30 Congolese could be proud of being university graduates. African political parties were recognized as late as in December 1957¹⁰. Belgians treated local people as a source of cheap labor and they did not want to allow the emergence of Congolese elites, as it was in the British and French colonies, where these elites then became leaders of independence movements¹¹.

The history of the Congo since the independence in 1960, has been full of periods of dangerous instability and insecurity. Each decade was experiencing another series of crises that, if were not turning to internal conflict, brought widespread social tensions and economic problems.

The crisis in the Congo started in 1960 and lasted till 1967 was one of such periods. It involved intervention by variety of foreign actors, from the former colonial power, Belgium, most important Western power, the United States, through the UN peacekeepers (most of whom were coming from other African countries) to the Soviet Union and Cuba. Embroiled in the conflict were commercial interests of Belgium, Great Britain, the U.S., South Africa and the Central African Federation¹² that supported the Katanga's aspirations for secession. Pressures on the Congo's government, in fear of radicalism, were exerted also by the white-rules regimes of the Central African Federation and South Africa as well as a neighboring colonial power, Portugal¹³.

The Congo crisis was a convergence of many socio-historical factors: the appearance of African political movements, the fall of imperial supremacy, and the rise of the non-aligned movement, all of which were constantly shaking the balance of power between the two global superpowers at that time, the United States and the Soviet Union. In a consequence, the Congo crisis became one of the most crucial historical moment. The picture of the crisis, as well as its

⁹ M. Leśniewski, M. Pawełczak, *Konto-Katanga 1960-1965*, in: *Konflikty kolonialne i postkolonialne w Afryce i Azji 1869-2006*, ed. P. Ostaszewski, Warszawa 2006, p. 410.

¹⁰ E. Nwaubani, *Eisenhower, Nkrumah and the Congo Crisis*, "Journal of Contemporary History" 36(4), 2001, p. 607.

¹¹ M. Leśniewski, M. Pawełczak, *op. cit.*, p. 411.

¹² Central African Federation (known also as Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland) existed from 1953-1963 and was a self-governing British colony.

¹³ E. Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa. From the Cold War to the War on Terror*, Cambridge 2013, p. 57-58.

meaning is different according to African, European, and American participants.¹⁴

The Congo crisis in the 1960s¹⁵

The Congo became independent from Belgium on July 30, 1960. First free election was won by Joseph Kasavubu as a president and Patrice Lumumba as a prime minister. Unfortunately, happiness from independence did not last long, as a week later the Congolese army, still controlled by the Belgians started a rebellion and within next week Katanga, the richest province, announced its secession, of course with the Belgium's acceptance¹⁶.

The situation in the Congo after independence was that about 9,000 Belgian officials were still working in the administration of the Congo, occupying the highest positions. Plans were made that the Belgians would leave the country the moment the Congo was ready, that is the moment it would train their local cadres of officials. Belgian officers in the number of 1,000 also continued their presence in the Congo, being responsible for the army command¹⁷. Belgium has also maintained two military bases in the independent Congo: one in Kitona, near the Atlantic coast, and another in Kamina in Katanga. The army turned to be the reason of major instability in the Congo – its soldiers did not identify with the new state and was loyal only to itself. At the beginning the military supported Lumumba as they expected a fast Africanization¹⁸ of the army and obtaining promotions. When they learned that Africanization would last 10 year and practically opens a career to rather new people, they started a mutiny¹⁹.

A former colonial power wanted to keep control in the newly independent Congo, so it wanted its new government would stay pro-Western. U.S. expectations were almost the same. Additionally, the U.S. wanted to prevent Katanga from getting under the Soviet power. Lumumba's government did not guarantee neither of these things²⁰. Lumumba wanted to Africanize the colonial state institutions, to put Congolese in the offices still occupied by the whites. Similarly to other postcolonial leaders, he believed that the state is obliged to shape national unity. The 1960 crisis was in fact a direct result of the lack of such

¹⁴ J. J. Cole, *The Congo question: Conflicting visions of independence*, "Emporia State Research Studies" 43(1), 2006, p. 26.

¹⁵ In various publications the Congo crisis is divided into different periods, usually 1960-1961, 1961-1965 and later. However, the author of this article decided to present just a general picture without divisions, which allowed to concentrate on chosen episodes more than on others.

¹⁶ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorship, 1965-1989*, Cambridge 2006, p. 19.

¹⁷ Congolese army was 24,000 soldiers.

¹⁸ Replacing Belgian and generally non-African officers with the Congolese ones.

¹⁹ M. Leśniewski, M. Pawełczak, *op. cit.*, p. 413-414.

²⁰ E. Schmidt, *Foreign...*, p. 58-59.

unity²¹. Emmanuel Gerald and Bruce Kuklick described Lumumba as “a talented and unrestrained African nationalist” and charismatic leader who wanted his country to be seen positively both on the continent and in the world²². It is not possible not to agree that, to some extent, “Lumumba became the incarnation of the hopes and fears of common folks in the Congo, and of the African politicians (...). He entered the dreams and nightmares of Western leaders; of the *colons*; of the international left; and of the heads of emerging nations”²³.

As for Katanga, Moïse Tshombe, who was a leader of the secession, was closely connected not only with the Belgians, but also with other international actors having their interests in the province. Belgium supported him by providing him military, financial and intelligence assistance, and foreign (Belgian, British, American, South African and Rhodesian) mining companies paid taxes to a Katanga regime, not to the Congo’s central government. Lumumba’s government lost more than half of its annual revenue and most of its foreign exchange earnings²⁴.

In the face of losing power first, Lumumba asked the United States for military help, but Eisenhower’s administration refused. So, then he appealed for help to the United Nations²⁵. UN troops were sent, but instructed only to bring order and stop the fighting, rather than to aid Lumumba to control the rebellion. The American government backed such a solution perceiving it as a way of blocking the communism from spreading into the Congo. President Eisenhower was convinced that the crisis in the Congo was a part of a communist endeavors to take control in this African country, and he also assumed that Lumumba was acting according to the communist plan. Washington relied on the UN and Belgium forces to keep the Congo stable for the next four years, but paid for 42 percent of the UN costs and supported some additional aid to the Congo too²⁶. President Eisenhower wasn’t eager to be involved in a conflict on the Congo. He was convinced the UN would back American interests and do whatever is needed, as it had debts to the U.S.²⁷.

²¹ K. C. Dunn, *Imagining the Congo: The International Relations of Identity*, New York 2003, p. 78.

²² E. Gerald, B. Kuklick, *Death in the Congo. Murdering Patrice Lumumba*, Cambridge 2015, p. 1.

²³ *Ibidem*, p.15.

²⁴ E. Schmidt, *Foreign...*, p. 60.

²⁵ The Congo was the first independent African state that asked for and received support from the United Nations. The UN Security Council sent the Opération Nations Unies au Congo (ONUC) which stayed in the Congo from July 1960 to June 1964. During that period the UN deployed thousands of military personnel (19,828 at its height). The ONUC’s mandate was to help the Congo’s government to maintain law and order, as well as territorial integrity of the country, and provide programs of trainings and technical support. Based on: A. W. Gambino, *Congo: Securing Peace, Sustaining Progress*, Council Special Report 40, New York, October 2008, p. 10.

²⁶ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 19-20.

²⁷ E. Gerald, B. Kuklick, *Death in the Congo...*, p. 57.

The United States policy at that time was “keeping the Cold War out of the Congo.” The assumption of this policy was that the Americans would fight the Cold War in the Congo in order to make sure that the Communists would not gain anything from the end of colonialism²⁸ Limiting explanation of U.S. objectives in the Congo only to the struggle against the Soviet invasion, as well as saying that the UN was the ‘transmission belt for American policy’ in not enough. Both the UN intervention and US policy were rather a result of concerns over Soviet expansion, not a solution to the Congo’s territorial integrity and security needs. More plausible would be to say that there was a number of strategic interests, such as access to the Congo’s natural resources or strategic position of the country²⁹.

Returning to Lumumba, soon he became to perceived as having connections with the Communists. At the beginning the American officials pointed more frequently to Lumumba’s lack of reliability that his connection to the communism. The State Department’s intelligence division claimed they have no proves of Lumumba’s alleged communist sympathies describing him rather as an African nationalist, “an unscrupulous opportunist” who is neither pro-Western, neither pro-Eastern, but would not refuse to accept help from either side³⁰. The Eisenhower administration’s picture of Lumumba mirrored his duality of character – some officials depicted him as “a highly articulate, sophisticated, subtle and unprincipled intelligence”, but others described as politically and culturally immature, irresponsible, inept, opportunistic, authoritarian, or simply “crazy”. A more frequent use of negative opinions was the reflection of the U.S. administration’s growing hostility towards Lumumba. Having no evidence of any misconduct of the Congo’s prime minister, the American officials utilized personal attacks to discredit Lumumba’s authority, and later on, justify his removal. Besides, the administration’s suspicions of Lumumba resulted from a deeply rooted distrust of African nationalism³¹. However, there were some U.S. officials who talked about Lumumba’s connections with communism and the need of removing him as he main be dangerous. Their opinions were based on little evidence, but had impact on U.S. government’s decisions. Among those officials were: the head of the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency)³² Allen Dulles, the U.S. Ambassador in Belgium and the CIA chief of station in the Congo Lawrence Devlin³³

On July 27-29, 1960, Lumumba visited the United States in expectation of receiving better support for his government from the UN and finally also from

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 57.

²⁹ E. Nwaubani, *Eisenhower ...*, p. 611.

³⁰ E. Gerald, B. Kuklick, *Death in the Congo...*, p. 59.

³¹ J. J. Cole, *The Congo question...*, p. 32.

³² The CIA played an important role in the Congo crisis, influencing vastly the U.S. decision making, and at the same time persuading many of Congolese politicians to cooperate with the U.S.

³³ E. Gerald, B. Kuklick, *Death in the Congo...*, p. 60.

the American administration. However, the U.S. president unwilling to help totally ignored Lumumba's visit to Washington D.C. Lumumba managed to meet only with the U.S. Secretary of State, Christian Herter, and the Undersecretary of States, John Foster Dulles, and asked them for assistance in removing Belgian troops and for financial support for the Congo. Nothing of this was promised by the American government³⁴.

Apart from achieving nothing, Lumumba did not make a good impression on the representatives of the U.S. government. Generally he became to be perceived even more negatively by American officials, also those working in the Congo. The CIA chief station in Leopoldville, Lawrence Devlin wrote in his diary that Lumumba "was a powerful, at times mesmerizing orator who could whip a crowd into a frenzy. A passionate nationalist, his emotions often swamped his political judgement, and as time went on he became increasingly unstable and unpredictable"³⁵. So, further "demonizing" of Lumumba was continued. Additionally, the U.S. administration's belief that Lumumba was cooperating with the Communists was reinforced by Lumumba's own behavior as at the end of the visit, he talked to the Soviet reporter whom he told that he was grateful for the Soviet Union's help to the people of the Congo. In addition, both the U.S. ambassador in the Congo, Claire Timberlake, and Lawrence Devlin³⁶ sent reports describing Lumumba as another Fidel Castro and confirming information that the Congo was in danger of communist takeover³⁷.

Alienated and helpless Lumumba took "the fateful decision" and turned to the Soviet Union for military assistance. Moscow immediately sent him Soviet vehicles (planes and trucks) and people (crews and technicians). With such support, Lumumba wanted to overthrow Tshome, as well as regain control in south Kasai³⁸ which also went into rebellion just after Katanga's secession. The U.S. government dubbed it a "Soviet invasion" and next month managed to persuade the Congo's Vice President Joseph Kasavubu to remove Lumumba from power, but Lumumba was quicker to announced his dismissal. So, the U.S. government used the help of the commander-in-chief of the Congolese

³⁴ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 21.

³⁵ L. R. Devlin, *Chief of Station, Congo: Fighting the Cold War in a Hot Zone*, New York 2007, p. 25.

³⁶ However, years later, in his diary, Lawrence admitted: "Most of us at the embassy regarded him [Lumumba] as a disaster in the making. There was no reason to believe that he was a Soviet agent or even a communist, but he was all too close to the Soviet Union and its allies for comfort. The ambassador and I concluded that while Lumumba though he could use the Soviets, they were, in fact, using him." Quoted from: L. R. Devlin, *Chief of Station...*, p. 25.

³⁷ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 21-22.

³⁸ M. Meredith, *The State of Africa...*, p. 105.

army Joseph Mobutu³⁹, paid by the CIA, to organize a coup, oust Lumumba and take control together with Kasavubu as a president⁴⁰.

After removing from power, Lumumba stayed at his own residence in Leopoldville. The building was guarded by the UN troops to prevent his arrest and surrounded also by Mobutu's soldiers in order to stop Lumumba from escaping. Meanwhile, the CIA made a first attempt to assassinate Lumumba. As Martin Meredith describes it, a senior CIA scientist, Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, prepared an assassination kit (a poison that would induce a fatal illness typical for this part of Africa). The kit was sent to Leopoldville, then Gottlieb met with Lawrence Devlin, to instruct him that the poison had to be put either into Lumumba's food or on a toothbrush. However, till Devlin worked out how to get into Lumumba's residence the poison reached its expiry date, so Devlin threw it into the Congo river⁴¹.

The U.S. was still continuing its effort to eliminate Lumumba⁴² pointing that he can return to power which would mean "Sovietization of the Congo". Efforts to assassinate Lumumba turned out to be unsuccessful, as he was still protected by the UN forces. However, at the end of November, Lumumba escaped from his house arrest in order to get to Stanleyville (today Kisangani) to his political supporters. Three days later he was arrested again by Mobutu's forces⁴³. Belgian military and intelligence advisors, backed by the CIA, working on a way of killing Lumumba, pressed Mobutu to surrender Lumumba to his enemy, Moïse Tshombe. Finally, Mobutu ordered that Lumumba would be sent to Katanga. On January 17 1961, Lumumba was murdered by the Tshombe's people with Belgian soldiers being witnesses⁴⁴. As Meredith concluded, sending Lumumba to Katanga "was a death sentence. While the CIA did not actually kill Lumumba, it was responsible for his removal from power and his delivery into the hands of Tshombe, who did assassinate him on 17 January 1961"⁴⁵.

One of the people who worked on the ways of eliminating Lumumba, Lawrence Devlin, prepared at least eight suggestions how to kill Lumumba, but none of them were realized. After the assassination he boasted about his role in the murder. But, after years he recollected the whole situation in a different way, trying to justify his behavior as a result of the Cold War pressures and fears. Devlin explained that the U.S. administration wanted Lumumba to be dead, so Devlin thought it could be done by the Africans themselves "in their

³⁹ Paradoxically, Mobutu was earlier nominated for a higher military rank by Lumumba himself.

⁴⁰ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 22.

⁴¹ M. Meredith, *The State of Africa...*, p. 108.

⁴² Plans of total elimination of Lumumba were also prepared by the Belgians who then played even a major role, directly in the murder of Lumumba.

⁴³ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 23.

⁴⁴ E. Schmidt, *Foreign...*, p. 65.

⁴⁵ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 23.

own fashion”⁴⁶. The CIA director, Allan Dulles, on the other hand, admitted in 1962 that the U.S. was too hasty in believing in the Soviet danger in the Congo, however Lumumba’s “fault” was that he chose the Soviet Union first and that behavior ensured the U.S. official and other Western powers of his elimination⁴⁷.

After removing Lumumba from power, Mobutu immediately broke relations with the Soviet Union and Kasavubu attempted, without success, to find a prime minister who would stay in the post for a longer time maintaining stability and unity. In January 1963, the UN eventually ended the secession of Katanga, which was backed by the United States. Mobutu was still considered the most important leader in the Congo, and the CIA continued to finance him. In May 1963 Mobutu went to the United States to visit American military bases and meet with president Kennedy, who thanked him for his involvement in the fight with the communism⁴⁸.

After the UN troops left the Congo in June 1964 riots and violence returned, which made president Lyndon Johnson and his administration very worried about the stability in this African country. Additionally, new special reports, prepared by the American officials, pointed to increasing efforts by the Communists, this time Chinese, to start a revolution. At same time, the CIA were still underlining that the African states are “politically primitive” and susceptible to communist influences⁴⁹.

To present a wider picture of the situation in the Congo, it should be added that there were actually several centers of rebellion outbreaks: eastern region and some parts of the west were controlled by the Lumumbist rebels, in the west there were also supported by China rebel forces of Pierre Mulele, while in the east their place found also the so-called Simbas – joined rebels forces led by Gaston Soumaliot, Christophe Gbenye and Laurent Kabila. The last one was for some time supported by Cubans under Che Guevera command, but was far from being Communist. However, the U.S. was trying to convince its European allies that the Congo was on the verge of the communist insurgency. Johnson administration went even further to ask Belgium, France and Great Britain to send military troops to the Congo in order to maintain stability. None of the countries believed in a real threat, so the U.S. was left with its own concerns⁵⁰.

Kasavubu finally settled a government of national unity with Moïse Tshombe as a prime minister, but in August 1964 rebel forces took control in Stanleyville. This led the U.S. administration, in the fear of potential collapse of the Congo, and the spread of communism (this time in a Chinese version – the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Averell Harriman informed

⁴⁶ E. Gerald, B. Kuklick, *Death in the Congo...*, p. 151.

⁴⁷ M. Meredith, *The State of Africa...*, p. 123.

⁴⁸ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 25-26.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 26-27.

⁵⁰ E. Schmidt, *Foreign...*, p. 71.

about Chinese plans of communist revolution in the Congo)⁵¹ to take action. Thanks to constant pressures, the U.S. made Belgium to agree for participation in a mercenary operation led by the Americans. Both countries clandestinely assisted Tshombe to recruit and train a mercenary army of 1,000 white men (mostly coming from South Africa and South Rhodesia, but also from Belgium, France, Britain and Spain). At the same time, Congolese army was trained, openly, by the American experts. Moreover, the Congo's army received planes from the U.S. and Italy and equipment from the U.S. and South Africa. As there was no Congolese pilots, the planes were to be flown by South African and European mercenaries, as well as the Bay of Pig's veterans⁵². To give more details, the U.S. National Security Council committee agreed to send 41 combat and transport planes and almost 200 personnel (Cubans and European). Additionally, at the beginning of 1965, the CIA provided a small navy, also with the Cuban crews in order to stop the transport of military equipment to the rebels from Tanzania across Lake Tanganyika⁵³.

Nevertheless, by August 1954, Lumumbists managed to take control over one-third of the Congo's territory. They established their own country – People's Republic – with the capital in Stanleyville. Mercenaries and Congolese army rushed for Stanleyville making havoc and committing horrible atrocities, from destroying local transport infrastructure to robbing, raping and killing the civilians⁵⁴. Rebels went so far as to take hostages (American officials, missionaries, and American and Belgian civilians) to secure themselves. The U.S. together with Belgium organized an operation to free those people⁵⁵. The operation was followed by a campaign by the mercenaries and the Congolese soldiers against the civilians (more than 1,000 killed). In the answer, the rebels started eliminating local government officials and Europeans. The "People's Republic" ceased to exist, but bloody fights continued in the eastern part of the country until 1967, when the last mercenaries left⁵⁶.

In October 1965, Kasavubu removed Tshombe from office and another political crisis started. This brought new concerns for the U.S. administration, but president Johnson at first did not want to be involved in another conflict, being fully engaged in the Vietnam. So, the U.S. government asked Mobutu for help again. The American officials in the Congo (especially the CIA chief of station, Devlin) encouraged Mobutu to take the power over and guaranteed the support of the U.S.). Mobutu finally ousted Kasavubu on 25 November 1965 in a

⁵¹ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 27-28.

⁵² E. Schmidt, *Foreign...*, p. 72.

⁵³ S. R. Weissman, *What Really Happened in the Congo: The CIA, the Murder of Lumumba, and the Rise of Mobutu*, "Foreign Affairs", July/August 2014, p. 14-24, online version accessed 10.09.2015, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/democratic-republic-congo/2014-06-16/what-really-happened-congo>.

⁵⁴ E. Schmidt, *Foreign...*, p. 72.

⁵⁵ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 29.

⁵⁶ E. Schmidt, *Foreign...*, p. 73-74.

bloodless coup. The U.S. government backed Mobutu's actions, seeing it as the only way to stop chaos in the Congo. Later, "Washington did all it could to ensure Mobutu's success. It provided diplomatic support, aid, military, supplies and weapons, and intelligence"⁵⁷.

Johnson administration, in an evaluation of its relationship with Mobutu, stated that "he met all of the requirements of American policy". Mobutu provided order in the Congo; maintained national independence and territorial integrity; strengthened cooperation with the United States and other non-Communist states. This was seen as contribution to internal security and socio-economic development. Unfortunately, the Johnson administration forgot about such values as "freedom, human rights, or democratic institutions and processes"⁵⁸.

In the following years, the U.S. helped Mobutu when Tshombe wanted to overthrow him (twice, in 1966 and a year later). The CIA was praising Mobutu's government and his ability to keep order and generally progress in the country. The National Security Council claimed that the U.S. must support Mobutu, as "there is no acceptable alternative to him"⁵⁹. Vice President, Hubert Humphrey, who visited the Congo in January 1968, talked about "a new Congo" under Mobutu's rule. Last, but not least, "Mobutu was regarded as a particularly valuable asset by the United States" that wanted to keep a pro-Western embankment against the Soviet expansion in Africa⁶⁰. Mobutu's regime enjoyed the U.S. support despite the fact it became repressive and corrupt. The most important merit of Mobutu was his opposition to the Soviets. He was described by the U.S. administration as a 'friendly tyrant' and faithful ally willing to back the Western interests⁶¹.

However, Mobutu's flaws were known to the U.S. officials outside the CIA early enough. After the 1965 coup, the State Department was not sure whether Mobutu would stop using corruption and patronage to realize government actions. In the 1966-1967, U.S. cables and memorandums were describing Mobutu even more critically, as "somewhat inept" to change the situation in the Congo. The U.S. ambassador to the Congo, Robert McBride, called Mobutu "irrational" and "highly unstable". President Lyndon Johnson's national security adviser, Walt Rostow, claimed that Mobutu could "be cruel to the point of inhumanity". Furthermore, in 1968, McBride informed the State Department about "frivolous Presidential expenditures" – Mobutu bought a new luxury plane and planned to build Versailles-style parks, replicas of Saint Peter's Basilica and purchase of a Swiss villa⁶².

⁵⁷ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 30.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 34.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 30-31.

⁶⁰ M. Meredith, *The State of Africa...*, p. 294.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, p. 307.

⁶² S. R. Weissman, *What Really Happened...*

Nevertheless, the CIA were still sending money to Mobutu who, in this way, could pay off key officers, political leaders, and tribal chiefs. In late 1966, Mobutu stopped taking money from the Agency after an 'incident' with the U.S. ambassador who did not respect Mobutu's status satisfactorily. But, two years later, Mobutu asked the CIA for even bigger funds and received them⁶³.

Stephen R. Weissman writes that in the following decades, "the dominant narrative in U.S. foreign policy circles portrayed the U.S. covert action in the Congo as a surgical, low-cost success"⁶⁴. Even the conclusion by the U.S. Senate investigation by the Church Committee, conducted in 1974, was rather positive and stated that the operation in the Congo "achieved its objectives". The U.S. administration was believed to avoid a conflict with the Soviet Union and China, and to deter the communists in Africa. The CIA was not perceived as guilty of Lumumba's murder, although it was known that it contributed to his removing from power and also made attempts to assassinate him⁶⁵.

Another researcher, Jeanne M. Haskin writes about substantial military assistance that the Congo received from the United States during 1960-1969, both financial (198.5 mln dol.) and in the form of trainings (about 100 Congolese military personnel trained in the United States). The financial assistance included 170.7 mln dol. contributed to the UN operation in the years 1960-1964, support for Mubutu from the CIA (over 1 mln dol. to ensure that the Congolese Army would remain loyal to Kasavubu whom Mobutu then made the head of state). In the following years, the CIA paid additional 25 mln dol. to "buy" Mobutu's loyalty to the West. Additionally, the CIA provided the presidential bodyguard and the security service with technical support. During next three decades of Mobutu's regime, the US granted him with 2 bln dol. in foreign assistance. In return, Mobutu allowed the Americans to use Shaba⁶⁶ as a secure base from which they could conduct operations against the communist government in Angola⁶⁷.

The CIA operation in the Congo between 1960 and 1968, whether political meddling or paramilitary action, was very extensive, and at that time the largest one in the history of the agency. It also needs to be underlined that the U.S. intelligence involvement in the Congo was very destructive. The CIA's influenced almost every major political change, had political relationships with many Congolese politicians, frequently using bribes to achieve its goals. For instance, Lawrence Devlin had a very direct impact on the events surrounding Lumumba's death. As Weissman writes: "The agency's legacy of clients and techniques contributed to a long-running spiral of decline, which was characterized by corruption, political turmoil, and dependence on Western military inter-

⁶³ *Ibidem.*

⁶⁴ *Ibidem.*

⁶⁵ *Ibidem.*

⁶⁶ Earlier Katanga, renamed Shaba in 1971-1987 under Mobutu's regime.

⁶⁷ J. M. Haskin, *The Tragic State of the Congo: From Decolonization to Dictatorship*, New York 2005, p. 48-49.

vention”⁶⁸. Of course, it would not be wise to blame the U.S. government, and especially the CIA for all the maladies of the Congo. Yet, the impact of their action left results that from current perspective cannot be regarded as positive.

The U.S. support for Mobutu was justified as necessary in the face of the absence of other alternatives than chaos. However, in fact such approach caused that chances for any reforms in the Congo were wasted by the U.S. Nevertheless, for next three decades, each American president continued to support Mobutu by allowing him to stay in power and by being too cautious to push for a change of government⁶⁹.

Overall, it looks like the U.S. government relationship with Mobutu was of a mutual benefit – financial and military support for Mobutu and loyalty and realization of American interest for the U.S. However, it may also appear that this long lasting “affair” was more profitable for Mobutu who grew in power, accumulated massive wealth, at the same time becoming one of the worst African leaders of his times. The U.S. spent hundreds of millions of dollars only to create another dictator, a destructive leader on the African scene, whose politics resulted in a total collapse of his country, and whom they eventually wanted to get rid of, too.

Major narratives in the U.S. policy toward the Congo

The main features of American foreign policy toward the Congo had been rooted both in the way the United States constructed its own international image and in the way it constructed the picture of the Congo and U.S. relations with this country. The U.S. discourse on Africa and the Congo particularly was, of course, also heavily influenced by international events and existing West-East rivalry, that is between a free, democratic world of the West and a communist eastern part of the world. The rest of the globe was somehow seen as a “mirror” and a battleground for these two clashing visions.

American approach to supporting democratic transition in the Congo is not straightforward, nor a glorious part of the U.S. policy toward this country, as well as the whole African continent. It has been rather a manifestation of pragmatism, choosing the lesser evil, manipulation of policy according to U.S. national interest and undertaking actions that would guarantee U.S. security. Moreover, support for authoritarian regimes demonstrates that promotion of democracy was not necessary the most important pillar of the United States policy toward the African continent. Instead, the U.S. frequently bet on stability, order and allies that helped in realization of American foreign policy goals.

The U.S. had played a key role in shaping Congo's destiny even before it officially became a colony. In April 1884, seven months before the Berlin Congress, the U.S. as the first in the world, recognized King Leopold II of the Bel-

⁶⁸ S. R. Weissman, *What Really Happened...*

⁶⁹ *Ibidem.*

gians's rights to the territories of the Congo Basin. Later on, when information about the atrocities and brutality of economic exploitation in Leopold's Congo Free State became known, the American government changed its approach and started to push Belgium state to take control over the colony. Moreover, during the colonial period the US got access to strategic places in the Congo, abundant in natural resources. After the Congo became independent, both the U.S. and the former colonial power did not want to resign from the control over strategic raw materials. Probably this was one of the reasons why they wanted to eliminate Lumumba who strained for full independence and full control over Congo's resources to use them for improving the living conditions of the Congolese⁷⁰.

It should be stated thought, that generally Africa's position among U.S. interest was very low, which had a direct impact on U.S. policy toward the region: moderate proportions of U.S. aid operations, not much involvement of the military and supplemental character to the policies by the former colonial powers. The benchmark of U.S. policy in Africa since the end of World War II to the end of 1960s was the 'Europe first' approach which simply identified American interest with European colonial ones. Generally then, the U.S. policy toward Africa was a manifestation of Eurocentric orientation of the U.S. approach to the African continent⁷¹. Just before the Congo's independence, the United States started to adjust its policy to a changing geopolitical climate. In order to play only a supporting role in the process of decolonization, the U.S. promised to cooperate with its NATO allies, the European colonial powers in order to transfer the power to the Africans. This cooperation resulted in economic assistance, as well as educational grants for Africans who wanted to study in the U.S. The situation in the Congo forced the Americans to be engaged directly in the process. The Congo was pointed to be a potential place of conflict due to huge political aspirations of the Congolese people⁷².

As for the Congolese, the Americans officials usually presented them as not civilized and too immature to comprehend the Western understanding of democracy or other political concepts. The prevailing perspective was that "the Congolese were incapable of ruling themselves"⁷³. Generally, the U.S. policy-makers constructed their vision of the Congo on the basis of colonial narrative of this African country as a place of "barbarity and chaos". What is more, they perceived post-colonial Congo through "stereotypes of cultural backwardness, immaturity, and irrationality". It was especially visible later, in the way of presenting the Congo's prime minister, Patrice Lumumba. There were not only

⁷⁰ G., Nzongola-Ntalaja, *Patrice Lumumba: the most important assassination of the 20th century*, "The Guardian" (online), January 17, 2011, accessed August 20, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/jan/17/patrice-lumumba-50th-anniversary-assassination>.

⁷¹ E. Nwaubani, *Eisenhower ...*, p. 599–600.

⁷² J. J. Cole, *The Congo question...*, p. 29-30.

⁷³ K. C. Dunn, *Imagining the Congo...*, p. 89.

assumptions about his connections with the communists, but also criticisms of his ineptitude as a country's leader. Despite racist rhetoric, the U.S. engagement in the Congo was a reflection of an evolving policy toward the decolonized Africa, as well as the U.S. role in the region. The U.S. struggle to remove Lumumba was "not a conflict between East and West, but rather a conflict between competing international visions of a postcolonial world order"⁷⁴.

In the wake of African independence movements, the U.S. started to debate Africa and colonialism. Vice President Richard Nixon paid a visit to the African continent in 1957 "on a fact-finding mission". The same year, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles sent his executive assistance Julian Holmes on a tour to Africa too. In result, two opposing versions on U.S. possible policy toward African states emerged⁷⁵. After returning, Nixon noted that Africa "has been regarded as a remote and mysterious continent which was the special province of big game hunters, explorers and motion picture makers" for too many years. He recognized the importance of an emerging Africa for the global affairs, especially in the bi-polar world, and therefore recommended the creation of a separate Bureau of African Affairs within the State Department, which was achieved in 1958⁷⁶. Nixon was convinced that newly independent African states would defend their hard-achieved status and develop their nationalism. He was predicting that the Soviets would try to "recruit" new African satellites, therefore to avoid it, the U.S. should support African nationalistic tendencies as much as possible. Nixon claimed that the U.S. strategic and military interests in Africa were minor, so that the U.S. government should concentrate rather on supporting African economic development and left Africa outside the Cold War. Dulles, on the contrary, claimed that the U.S. should be prepared for a competition for power and influence with the Soviets on the African ground. He was convinced about premature nature of African states' independence. Dulles wanted the U.S. to engage African states into the Cold War rivalry and forced them to choose between the United States and the Soviet Union⁷⁷.

At that time, the winning vision was the one by Nixon. President Eisenhower made decisions about the U.S. Africa policy that lasted for a long time. The core ideas were: recognition of newly independent African states, establishing diplomatic missions, focus on economic development, and accepting African neutrality in the Cold War, as well as a non-interference of the U.S. into African internal problems. The beginnings of Eisenhower's administrations was then rather positive toward young African states. The situation changed however, when an independent Congo joined the scene⁷⁸.

⁷⁴ J. J. Cole, *The Congo question...*, p. 28.

⁷⁵ H. J. Cohen, *A Perspective on Fifty Years of U.S. Africa Policy: The Nixon Legacy*, "American Foreign Policy Interests" 32, 2010, p. 209.

⁷⁶ P. J. Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy toward Africa. Incrementalism, Crises and Change*, Cambridge 1994, p. 2.

⁷⁷ H. J. Cohen, *A Perspective...*, p. 210.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 210-211.

Because the U.S. has defined itself as the defender of “Western” values and global power it felt to be entitled to solve the world’s problems, one of which was the so-called “Congo Question”. The U.S. government approach to the Congo was a continuation of colonial rhetoric affirming the Congo’s image as a “chaotic, savage and primitive” place, reframed by the Cold War narrative of the Congo as an easy target for communist conquest. This led the U.S. to perceiving the Congo’ first prime minister Patrice Lumumba as “the embodiment of this image”. Portrayed as irrational and immature, either a communist or under the communist influence, “Lumumba was constructed as being the cause of the Congo’s problems” and therefore he should be removed⁷⁹.

Lumumba’s and American understanding of the Congolese independence were contradictory as they perceived differently both the history and identity of the Congolese. Lumumba treated the independence of the Congo as an end of Belgium rules and influences, although he allows cooperation with the former colony, but only if based on equality and friendships. The United States, on the contrary, saw Congolese independence through the prism of Africa’s interdependence with Europe: ‘EurAfrica’. Africa was perceived as “the hinterland of Europe”. Such approach, together with other factors, led the U.S. to elimination of Lumumba⁸⁰.

Almost all U.S. Presidents had looked upon Africa as “a special area of influence and responsibility of the former European colonial powers”. Furthermore, till the 1960s, the U.S. policymakers generally thought that European colonialism in was "progressive. They even tended to believe that colonial rules would eventually bring modernization and stability to the African continent. When anticolonial movements became more widespread and a bunch of African stated gain independence, the U.S. policymakers worldview evolved – they started to balance between the beneficial prospects of decolonization and continuation of close relations with the European allies⁸¹.

The interests of Europe were more important for the U.S. than the interests of Africans. Officially the U.S. claimed to support the emerging African leaders and their strive for independence. But, behind the scenes politics of the U.S. tended to be in favor of EurAfrica. Although the Americans talked about independence, democracy, equality, and self-determination, the new U.S. Africa policy assumed only limited freedom for the African nations. The slogans of cooperation and support for development were only euphemisms for foreign domination. Thus, independence was once more deferred to fit the prerogatives of foreign powers, namely Europe and the United States⁸².

The U.S. attitude to African independence may seem surprising and difficult to understand, bearing in mind the U.S. history, that is the struggle for independence from the British Empire. On the other hand, such attitude somehow

⁷⁹ K. C. Dunn, *Imagining the Congo...*, p. 86-87.

⁸⁰ J. J. Cole, *The Congo question...*, p. 29.

⁸¹ P. J. Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy...*, p. 14.

⁸² J. J. Cole, *The Congo question...*, p. 30.

went align with the overall U.S. performance homeland – the perception of Blacks, Afro-Americans, who had not only been slaves for so many decades in this country that envisioned itself as a freedom promoter and democracy leader, but they also were still struggling for their rights in the U.S. Civil Rights Act was passed not earlier than in 1968.

Presidency of John F. Kennedy was supposed to introduce a new policy toward the Congo and Africa. During his presidential campaign, Kennedy met with some African leaders and showed interest in supporting newly-independent African states. After becoming a president, he chose pro-African politicians for key positions in his administration (e.g. G. Mennen Williams, Chester Bowles, Adlai Stevenson). However, the Cold War reality and fear of the communism spreading into the Congo, Kennedy remained faithful to the status quo. Any attempts of changing the U.S. polity would be eventually blocked by the government officials who preserved the old attitude toward the Congo, perceiving its problems as the result of Soviet actions⁸³. The support for authoritarian regimes also continued during the John F. Kennedy's administration. In 1962, the Policy Planning Council stated that the military had to play a crucial role in maintaining stability and protection against the communist influence – pro-western authoritarian regimes were described as the “ultimate guarantors of internal security” in young and unstable African states⁸⁴. Kennedy administration policy toward the Congo added, however, a new element to the U.S. discourse – “liberal Messianism” that was realized by promotion of American Liberalism. One of the results of this was the emerging discourse on development known as Modernization theory (presented in W.W. Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Growth*)⁸⁵.

Differently than President Kennedy, who tended to raise the profile of Africa in U.S. foreign policy, at least at the beginning, President Lyndon B. Johnson tended to keep Africa “off the agenda”. Before the critical situation in Stanleyville, the Congo's affair were more in the hands of the State Department. Johnson was afraid that occurrence of a more complicated political crisis in the Congo could have a negative impact on the upcoming 1964 presidential elections. Similarly to previous administrations, U.S. policy toward the Congo under Johnson was built on the assumed necessity to keep a pro-Western government in power, instead of one that would cooperate with the Communists, which would not be in the interest of the West. The U.S. was not only concerned about its access to natural resources in the Congo, but was also afraid of any possible radical takeover of the power in this African state by outside gov-

⁸³ D. F. Schmitz, *The United States...*, p. 23-24.

⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 18.

⁸⁵ K. C. Dunn, *Imagining the Congo...*, p. 97.

ernments. To some extent, the Congo was “discursively constructed” as the key “domino” element on the African continent⁸⁶.

To sum up, the United States has had "rediscovered" Africa at several critical points in the history after the World War II era. US policymakers tended to ignore the African continent till the moment a political or military crisis occurred. Therefore, the U.S. policy was more of “a jump in, jump out” policy that was applied only to some chosen events. In this way, the American policy toward Africa was driven by what was happening instead of shaping the events itself⁸⁷.

Conclusion

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has always been a place of colliding influences and interests of various actors – foreign countries, international organizations and private companies. The U.S. government and the American firms have had their part in this rivalry too, adding to even greater chaos and, what is worse, encouraging directly or indirectly other actors to become more involved in this African state.

It would not be an overstatement to say that during the Cold War period the U.S. policy toward the DRC (then the Congo) was characterized not only by prejudices, reluctance to help and Eurocentric approach, but also by hasty, based on one-sided perspective and influenced by general anti-communist “fever”, decisions, not to mention an overall unwillingness to delve deeply into the Congo’s problems and attempt to understand the situation taking at the same time a more rational and balanced position. What is more, the U.S. seemed to become an expert in avoiding its own core values and ideas, that is freedom, democracy and human dignity. By choosing to realize a pragmatic policy that is designed to protect only American interests and guarantee its security the U.S. decided for even a more drastic and very discrediting approach, that is supporting authoritarian regimes in the name of the fight with the communism.

It needs to be said that by meddling into Congo’s political life the United States caused more troubles than it probably had supposed to cause. Of course, it is not true to claim that today’s problems of the DRC are only the U.S. fault. There were more guilty actors on the Congo’s scene (Belgium and the UN played great roles too) as they are also in a contemporary DRC. Nevertheless, the U.S. decisions, such as installing Mobutu as the president in the Congo, had a long-term and rather negative, although indirect influence on further events in this country.

⁸⁶ J. H. Michaels, *Breaking the Rules: The CIA and Counterinsurgency in the Congo 1964-1965*, “International Journal of Intelligence and Counterinsurgency”, 25/11, 2012, p. 133-134.

⁸⁷ P. J. Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy...*, p. 2.

The first decade of independence was just the beginning of the Congo's problems. As for the U.S. policy to this African state two, (although there were some others too) compatible and complementary discourses emerged – one on development and one on security. Development discourse, rooted in the modernization theory, was used as a justification for further imposing of various development schemes and at the same time as a reason for U.S. constant interfering into the Congo's (then Zair's and today the DRC's) internal problems. Security discourse, based on the Cold War bi-polar view of the world led to the situation when security equaled two things – suppressing the communism and avoiding instability in the Congo and the region. This, of course forced the U.S. to maintain its already “established” policy of supporting authoritarian regimes (in this case Mobutu Sese Seko) as a lesser evil.

The end of the Cold War brought a general change in U.S. foreign policy. And although Africa seemed to disappear from American agenda for some time, at least till the tragedies in Somalia and Rwanda, the U.S. approach was finally free from the bi-polar perception of the world and from the constant fear of communism. However, a new century brought a new danger, this time in the form of terrorists attacks. The U.S. has progressively increased its engagement on the African continent, seeing it as a place of highest concentration of the so-called dysfunctional states and possible bases of terrorist organizations. One feature of American policy toward Africa remained the same till now – its support for the authoritarian regime, this time perceived as good allies in the fight with terrorism and best protection against instability.

Consequences of American actions are difficult to measure and there is no sense calculating what would happen if they were not taken, but it is worth remaining that the U.S. behavior was far from just, objective and reasonable. It is also doubtful whether all U.S. decisions pertaining to the Congo or today's DRC have brought benefits to the U.S. national interest, especially whether they helped to increase security of the United States. The Democratic Republic of the Congo still remains one of the most unstable and dangerous places in the world. Although so far, it has not been a place of interest of any bigger groups of terrorist it may be only a matter of time. Moreover, DRC as a dysfunctional state is a place where other security problems are thriving, such as corruption, illegal mining and poaching, human rights abuses, refugees flows, widespread violence and uncontrolled military groups (among them child soldiers)⁸⁸. And although, again it is not possible to talk about any direct influence of all these

⁸⁸ Some parts of DRS are places of constant humanitarian crisis. Violence and other hardships have led to displacement of millions of Congolese. Additionally, thousands of refugees have flown from neighboring countries (the Central African Republic, Rwanda, and Burundi). DRC ranks lowest on the International Food Policy Research Institute's Global Hunger Index, that is it has the highest number of undernourished people and underweight children, and the highest number of child mortality. The list of problems is much longer. More can be found in: A. Arieff, *Democratic Republic of Congo: Background and U.S. Policy*, “Congressional Research Service”, February 24, 2014, p. 11.

problems on the American security and integrity, they have an indirect impact on realizing the U.S. interest in the DRC and the subregion of Central Africa, by destabilizing the situation and being a source of potential conflicts.

As for the American policy toward Africa and the Congo itself, the short period of time analyzed briefly in the article shows that the United States is a country that brought to perfection its way of conducting policies that are supposed to assist other countries, but in fact are direct realization of strategic interest. The U.S. is presenting itself as a global leader of freedom and democracy, concerned with the human rights and justice, but at the same time is being more inclined to pursue its own interests than really care for the problem. The Congo case is also a great manifestation of how the U.S. can construct its policy and its major discourses in the way they help in realization of American goals. The events of Congo crisis presents how pragmatic and determined the U.S. state is in manipulation and in exaggeration of certain chosen facts. Unfortunately, the only superpower, though still regarded as the leader in supporting democracy or freedom is at the same time continuing its politics of supporting authoritarian regimes if it suits the objectives, and it is also continuing to “manipulate” reality in order to reach its targets, as it was recently in the case of 2003 war in Iraq or generally war on terrorism.

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