

# Senators Hear C.I.A. Sent A Poison to Kill Lumumba

NYTimes

SEP 16 1975

By NICHOLAS M. HORROCK  
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15 — The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence has heard testimony that the Central Intelligence Agency transferred poison to an African outpost for use in killing Patrice Lumumba, the Congolese leader, but that the poison was never administered, sources familiar with the testimony said today.

Mr. Lumumba was deposed as Premier of the Congo (now called Zaire) in December, 1960, and was taken as a prisoner to Leopoldville. On Feb. 9, 1961, the central Government announced that he had escaped with two companions, and on Feb. 13 it said Mr. Lumumba had been murdered by Congolese tribesmen.

The testimony about poison, taken in closed session, is expected to become part of the

committee's report on assassination plots. The committee also has testimony that poison was contemplated as the method for killing Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba.

The information in the Lumumba case, according to the sources, was the intelligence officer in charge of the poison in Africa. His name will not be used in the public portions of the committee's assassination report to protect him from retaliation by African nationalists, committee sources said.

The committee will begin public hearings tomorrow on disclosures that the C.I.A. stockpiled a deadly shellfish toxin and a poison made from cobra venom and did not destroy these two poisons in 1970 in

Continued on Page 16, Column 4

Continued From Page 1, Col. 3

compliance with a Presidential order to destroy biochemical warfare agents. The committee is expected to hear testimony from Dr. Nathan Gordon, a former C.I.A. employe, who in 1970 was in charge of the chemical section of the technical services division of the agency.

Dr. Gordon, committee sources said, asked that his testimony be taken without recorded radio or filmed television coverage. Under the committee rules the request can be granted. The committee will permit the public to attend and will allow all but live electronic media coverage.

According to sources familiar with the episode, the poison was preserved in 1970 on the authority of a middle-level C.I.A. employe who decided not to comply with the Presidential order. Dr. Gordon is expected to shed light on this matter.

Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, chairman of the committee, said that William E. Colby, director of Central Intelligence, and Dr. Sayre Stevens, the C.I.A.'s associate director for science and technology, would also testify during the three-day hearings.

Helms, former Director of Central Intelligence, and Thomas Karamessines, a former chief of C.I.A. covert operations, are also expected to testify.

Their testimony could be helpful in explaining why the C.I.A. needed either to stockpile or experiment with poisons. There are defensive uses for the materials, such as suicide pills for agents, but authorita-

tive sources have said that the agency made extensive plans to use them aggressively.

The Lumumba case, in which poison allegedly was sent to Africa, appears to be at variance with press statements of Richard Bissell, who was chief of covert operations in 1961. He has said that the agency only stuid the "feasibility" of killing Mr. Lumumba, but he acknowledges that he cannot recall the details of what happened.

## Testimony on Poison

The testimony in the hands of the committee, according to sources familiar with it, make it appear that the plans went further than mere "feasibility." This testimony indicated that a poison was prepared in the biochemical section of the technical services division and transported to the United States intelligence officer in Africa. The plan to kill Mr. Lumumba was halted before

the poison could be turned over to those who would have administered it, the sources said.

The committee reportedly also has testimony that poison pills for Mr. Castro were prepared in C.I.A. laboratories. According to sources familiar with C.I.A. internal operations, such "operational" techniques were handled in the technical services division, which was a special laboratory section included as part of the covert operations division.

The C.I.A. has a separate science and technological division, which has handled such large scientific projects as electronic satellite spying.

The committee is expected to call Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, who was head of the technical services division for nearly a decade, on Sept. 23. Dr. Gottlieb was also involved in a series of tests of LSD conducted by the C.I.A. in the nineteen-fifties.