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Hammarskjold Bjt 400
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LONDON (AP) Two men close to Kag Hammarskjold suggested
Monday night a bungled kidnap bid by white mercenaries may
have caused the death of the former United Nations

secretary general.

Hammarskjold and 15 companions died Sept. 17, 1961, when their airplane mysteriously crashed in the African bush. The Swedish statesman was heading for a peace parley with Moise Tshombe, then trying to lead the province of Katanga out of the Congolese union.

which the theory of a bungled kidnap attempt was mentioned by Hammarskjold's nephew, Knut, who now heads the Hammarskjold family, and by George Ivan Smith, director of the British U.N. office. Both were speaking in recorded interviews with the British Broadcasting Corp. program "24 hours' in a feature marking the 10th anniversary of the crash. Knut Hammarskjold left interviewer James Hogg in no doubt that he is well aware of the theory of a bungled kidnap bid by white mercenaries. The crash itself, he said, was an accident, but what kind of accident? remains open. He was asked if he ruled out foul play.

I don't rule out anything, 'he replied. 'Much speculation could have been avoided if, at the time of the inquiries, the whereabouts of certain yery active people could have been defined in a very precise way.'

Kout Hammarskjold was asked what sort of people he meant.

Adventurers for money, 'he replied. Some of them might not be completely strange to that sort of operation' (meaning kidnaping).

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The younger Hammarskjold, who is secretary general of the International Air Transport Association, and Smith both suggested the aim of the would be kidnapers may have been to prevent the United Nations and Tshombe from coming to terms.

Smith put it thus: "It was felt by the mercenaries that we were moving toward a reconciliation with Tshombe and that meant they were going to lose their bread and butter... If the united Nations and Tshombe got together and brought about unification of the Congo there was no reason for their presence any longer." The U.N. official himself was the target of a kidnap bid by Katangan troops led by white mercenaries six weeks after Hammarskjold crashed.

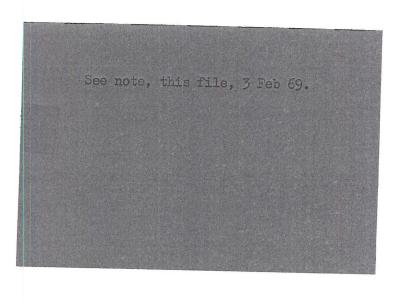
Hammarskjold crashed.

As Smith described the theory, the would be kidnapers may have got to know the radio frequency used by Hammarskjold's

plane.

Then, equipped with the proper transmitting gear, they could have made contact with the pilot and, in the name of the regular aviation control authorities, talked or lured it down and away from its true destination. This was to have been Ndola, then managed by the Rhodesian federal government of Sir Roy Welensky. Mola is now in Zambia.

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Tshombe died of failure, 29 Jun 69.