

**Re-examining Uganda's 1966 Crisis:
The Uganda People's Congress
and the Congo Rebellion**

by

Cory James Peter Scott

B.A., University of Victoria, 2006

Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

in the

Department of History

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© Cory James Peter Scott 2013

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Summer 2013

All rights reserved.

However, in accordance with the *Copyright Act of Canada*, this work may be reproduced, without authorization, under the conditions for "Fair Dealing." Therefore, limited reproduction of this work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review and news reporting is likely to be in accordance with the law, particularly if cited appropriately.

Approval

Name: Cory James Peter Scott
Degree: Master of Arts (History)
Title of Thesis: *Re-examing Uganda's 1966 Crisis:
The Uganda People's Congress
and the Congo Rebellion*
Examining Committee: **Chair:** Roxanne Panchasi
Associate Professor

Thomas Kuehn
Senior Supervisor
Associate Professor

Ilya Vinkovetsky
Supervisor
Associate Professor

Aaron Windel
External Examiner
Limited Term Instructor,
Department of History
Simon Fraser University

Date Defended/Approved: May 10, 2013

Partial Copyright Licence



The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection (currently available to the public at the "Institutional Repository" link of the SFU Library website (www.lib.sfu.ca) at <http://summit/sfu.ca> and, without changing the content, to translate the thesis/project or extended essays, if technically possible, to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation of the digital work.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author's written permission.

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

While licensing SFU to permit the above uses, the author retains copyright in the thesis, project or extended essays, including the right to change the work for subsequent purposes, including editing and publishing the work in whole or in part, and licensing other parties, as the author may desire.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

revised Fall 2011

Abstract

Historians of Uganda have generally viewed the 1966 Crisis in Uganda as an inevitable clash between two opposing forces, the Uganda People's Congress national government and the government of the Kingdom of Buganda, trying to settle colonial-era rivalries in the post-independence era. As such, these authors focus solely on internal causes for the 1966 Crisis and fail to consider the impact of Uganda's regional and international relations on politics within the country.

This thesis argues that the 1966 Crisis can only be understood in the context of Uganda's new and complex international relations after independence, particularly the consequences of the UPC's intervention in the Congo Rebellion from 1964 to 1965. It will consider how the government of Uganda's participation in the Congo Rebellion was aided by Uganda's new relations with the outside world, and how this intervention in turn destabilized politics within Uganda and prompted Obote's coup d'état on 15 April 1966.

Keywords: 1966 Crisis; Congo Rebellion; Uganda People's Congress; Milton Obote; Idi Amin; Uganda Army Mutiny

*To Connie, for all your love, support, and
limitless patience throughout this process, and
to my parents, for always being there when I
needed you most.*

Acknowledgements

Much gratitude is owed to Professor Thomas Kuehn for all his guidance, to Professor Felicitas Becker for all her patience, and to the faculty and staff at Simon Fraser University for all their support. Without their tireless assistance, encouragement, and guidance, this project would not have been possible.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Approval..... | ii |
| Partial Copyright Licence | iii |
| Abstract..... | iv |
| Dedication..... | v |
| Acknowledgements | vi |
| Table of Contents..... | vii |
| List of Acronyms..... | viii |
| Glossary..... | ix |
| | |
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1. Historical Context | 2 |
| 1.2. Literature Review | 9 |
| 1.3. The Congo Rebellion..... | 10 |
| 1.4. Sources..... | 15 |
| 1.5. Plan of Study..... | 17 |
| | |
| 2. The Obote Doctrine | 19 |
| 2.1. Crafting the Obote Doctrine | 20 |
| 2.2. The Obote Consensus: 1962 to 1964 | 23 |
| | |
| 3. Fractures in the Obote Consensus: 1964 | 29 |
| 3.1. One-Party Debate | 30 |
| 3.2. The Uganda Army Mutiny | 35 |
| 3.3. Ideological Cleavages in the UPC | 41 |
| 3.4. Ugandan Intervention in the Congo Rebellion..... | 44 |
| 3.5. UPC Leadership Crisis and Fears of Foreign Influence in Uganda | 55 |
| | |
| 4. The 1966 Crisis | 66 |
| 4.1. Ocheng's Third Motion | 66 |
| 4.2. Obote Responds | 74 |
| | |
| 5. Conclusion..... | 84 |
| 5.1. Further Study..... | 87 |
| | |
| References..... | 90 |

List of Acronyms

| | |
|--------|--|
| AU | African Union |
| CNL | National Council of Liberation |
| DP | Democratic Party |
| GSU | General Service Unit |
| KY | Kabaka Yekka |
| MP | Member of Parliament |
| MOSSAD | National intelligence agency of Israel |
| NUYO | National Union of Youth Organizations |
| PRC | People's Republic of China |
| USSR | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics |
| UPC | Uganda People's Congress |
| UPCYL | Uganda People's Congress Youth League |

Glossary

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Buganda | One of Uganda's five constituent kingdoms, led by Kabaka Edward Mutesa II. |
| Hansard | Government of Uganda parliamentary reports. |
| Kabaka | Bugandan term meaning "King". |
| Kabaka Yekka | Political party in Buganda whose name means "King Only," in reference to their desire to see Edward Mutesa II rule Uganda after independence. |
| Katikiro | Chief Minister and highest executive authority of the government of Buganda. |
| Kyabazinga | King of Busoga. |
| Lubiri | Kabaka's residence in Kampala |
| Lukiiko | Buganda's parliament. |

1. Introduction

Ugandan politics were extremely turbulent in the first decade after independence was obtained from Britain on 9 October 1962. From 1962 to 1971, Prime Minister Milton Obote's Uganda People's Congress (UPC) governed the country under three constitutions and introduced fundamental political changes to its governing institutions.¹ After Obote's overthrow in January 1971, Uganda was engulfed in turmoil for eight years under the military dictatorship of Idi Amin before Obote again came to power in 1980, only to be ousted a second time in 1985. During this 23-year period, the country's politics were reduced to a struggle for power, the economy declined precipitously, and the optimism of independence was reduced to the basic desire for political stability.

Most scholars trace the start of Uganda's decline over this period to the 1966 Crisis, which they usually consider a watershed moment in the country's modern history. The crisis began on 4 February 1966 when MP Daudi Ocheng alleged that the Uganda Army had been actively fighting in the Congo Rebellion, a conflict which formed part of the greater Congo Crisis (1960-1965) and saw active military intervention from several foreign nations, including the United States of America, Belgium, the People's Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in the internal affairs of neighbouring Congo.² Ocheng also accused Obote, two of his colleagues, and the Deputy Commander of the Uganda Army, Idi Amin, of corruption, alleging that they had derived significant financial benefits from their involvement.³ Over the next three months, Obote and his allies in the UPC and the army responded to Ocheng's allegations by arresting their strongest political opponents, assuming all executive powers over the

¹ Milton Obote and the Uganda People's Congress were elected to office in April 1962 and led Uganda from independence, on 9 October 1962, until they were overthrown by the Commander of the Uganda Army, Idi Amin, in a coup on 25 January 1971.

² For a good account of the Congo Crisis see: Roger Anstey, "The Congo Rebellion," *The World Today* 21, no. 4 (April 1965): 169-176; and M. Crawford Young, "Post-Independence Politics in the Congo," *Transition* 26 (1966): 34-41.

³ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, February 4, 1966, 996-1002 (Daudi Ocheng).

Ugandan government, rewriting Uganda's constitution, and deploying military forces against Uganda's strongest constituent kingdom, Buganda.⁴ Yet, despite evidence that the crisis was precipitated by Uganda's intervention in the Congo Rebellion and its resulting impact upon Uganda's internal politics, Obote defended his actions at the height of crisis in the National Assembly in strongly nationalist terms. Accordingly, the Prime Minister did not explain his participation in the Congo Rebellion at all in his speech to the National Assembly and instead claimed that his faction had seized power to preserve Uganda's sovereignty and the freedom of its people from the personal ambitions of the *Kabaka* of Buganda, Edward Mutesa II, who allegedly sought foreign support to forcibly install himself as the "feudal lord of Uganda."⁵

Despite the discrepancy between Ocheng's allegations in February and Obote's justification for seizing power at the height of the crisis in April 1966, historians of Uganda have almost entirely ignored the impact of Uganda's foreign relations on the making of the 1966 Crisis. Instead, in an attempt to explain the causes of the crisis they have focused on internal ethnic, economic, and political rivalries in Uganda dating back to the colonial period. It is the intention of this thesis to re-examine the 1966 Crisis and explore how the government of Uganda's external relations, particularly the rise of foreign influence in Ugandan politics owing to the UPC's covert intervention in the Congo Rebellion, directly contributed to the outbreak of the 1966 Crisis in Uganda.

1.1. Historical Context

In order to understand why past scholars, including Peter Gukiina, Ali Mazrui, James Mittelman, Nelson Kasfir, Holger Bernt Hansen, A.G.G. Gingyera-Pinycwa, Jan Jelmert Jorgensen, Samwiri Karugire, and Dan Mudoola have focused their examinations of the 1966 Crisis on ethnic, economic and political tensions in Uganda,

⁴ For a good account of the crisis see: T.V. Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda, 1900-1986* (Aldershot, England: Gower Publishing, 1986), 429-449.

⁵ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 10 (Prime Minister Milton Obote). Obote claimed after the crisis that his actions were necessary in order to prevent the *Kabaka* from staging his own coup d'état with the help of *Kabaka Yekka* MP Daudi Ocheng, the five ministers arrested on Obote's orders on 22 February 1966, and the former Commander of the Uganda Army, Shaban Opolot.

one must understand the particularities of Uganda's colonial history. Enmity between Buganda and the rest of Uganda can be traced at least as far back as the signing of the Buganda Agreement in 1900 between Britain and Buganda. Taking advantage of an infant *Kabaka* on Buganda's throne, the Protestant Baganda chiefs who signed the agreement, the *bakungu*, used their alliance with Britain to secure their dominance of Buganda's government by stripping the *Kabaka* of his powers and vesting executive power in Buganda's *Lukiiko*, or parliament.⁶ Although the agreement maintained the *Kabakaship* as a ceremonial office, it also endowed the *bakungu* with large *mailo* estates, which they used to establish large cotton and coffee plantations, and provided the *bakungu* with British-style education and favoured administrative posts in the kingdom.⁷

Similar agreements were signed between the British and the neighbouring kingdoms of Toro later in 1900, Ankole in 1901, and Bunyoro in 1933. Also during this time, eleven separate administrative districts based on perceived ethnic boundaries were established to form the boundaries of the Protectorate of Uganda and later, of independent Uganda.⁸ In each of these agreements, however, the Buganda model of administration as enshrined in the 1900 Buganda Agreement replaced the existing systems of government of these kingdoms and districts, and Baganda *bakungu* chiefs were employed as tax collectors, magistrates, and police officials across the entire protectorate.⁹ According to A.D. Roberts, the result of this arrangement was a Baganda "sub-imperial system" that created lasting resentment among the various peoples of Uganda against the Buganda kingdom.¹⁰ Due to their close alliance with the British and the "sub-imperial system," the Baganda became the wealthiest, most educated, and most politically influential of all the peoples of Uganda as a result of their commercial farming of cotton and coffee, access to British-style education, and employment in the

⁶ A. D. Roberts, "The Sub-Imperialism of the Baganda," *Journal of African History* 3, no. 3 (1962), 438.

⁷ Cherry Gertzel, *Party and Locality in Northern Uganda, 1945-1962* (London: Athlone Press, 1974), 16-17.

⁸ Amii Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda, 1890-1985* (London: MacMillan Press, 1987), 27.

⁹ Kenneth Ingham, *Politics in Modern Africa: The Uneven Tribal Dimension* (London: Routledge, 1990), 14-15.

¹⁰ Roberts, "The Sub-Imperialism of the Baganda," 435-450.

colonial bureaucracy. By contrast, people in Uganda's other kingdoms largely remained engaged in subsistence agriculture and cattle rearing, received fewer educational opportunities, and were generally excluded from positions of political influence.¹¹

In the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, as a new wave of decolonization swept across the British Empire and significant threats emerged to Britain's imperial hegemony in Iran, Egypt, Kenya, and Malaya, successive British governments began to realize the logistical difficulties and popular resentment caused by suppressing nationalist movements within the empire by force. As a result, the governments of Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, and Harold Macmillan increasingly began to endow indigenous colonial governments with greater powers in order to prepare them for a peaceful transition to independence. In Uganda, Britain increased indigenous participation in the national Legislative Council, as well as in Uganda's kingdom and district governments, and encouraged the formation of national political parties in order to ease popular resentment against Buganda caused by Buganda's "sub-imperial system" of the protectorate era.¹² However, early attempts to diminish the rest of Uganda's resentment against Buganda in preparation for independence were severely undermined when the *Kabaka* of Buganda, Edward Mutesa II, was exiled from 1953 to 1955 for publicly criticizing the British. In the resulting wave of popular anger across Buganda, Baganda nationalism flourished and was channelled into a Buganda-based populist movement turned political party, *Kabaka Yekka* (KY), that staunchly demanded

¹¹ For example, such arguments are put forth by Peter M. Gukiina, *Uganda: A Case Study in African Political Development* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), 75; and Holger Bernt Hanson, *Ethnicity and Military Rule in Uganda: A Case Study of Ethnicity as a Political factor in Uganda Based on a Discussion of Political Anthropology and the Application of its Results* (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1977), 63.

¹² Gertzel, *Party and Locality in Northern Uganda*, 3-4; D.A. Low, *Political Parties in Uganda, 1949-1962* (London: Athlone Press, 1962), 19-24.

that Buganda retain its privileged position in any future political settlement with the rest of Uganda.¹³

And yet, during the final years of British colonial rule two prominent political parties did emerge in Uganda that sought to challenge Buganda's hegemony, and succeeded in establishing nationalist followings across the country. The Democratic Party (DP), originally founded by Bugandan Catholics in 1955 in opposition to the Protestant-dominated Buganda government, soon evolved into a Uganda-wide organization with a nationalist political program particularly committed to democratizing Buganda's system of government and integrating the kingdom fully with the rest of Uganda.¹⁴ Similarly, Protestants outside Buganda created the Uganda People's Congress in 1960 with a nationalist political platform as an alternative to their religious rivals in the DP.¹⁵ The UPC capitalized on the anti-Buganda sentiments across Uganda that arose when Buganda nationalism gained momentum and threatened an equitable constitutional settlement between Uganda's kingdoms and districts leading up to independence.¹⁶ Notably, both the DP and the UPC were committed to addressing the social, economic, and political imbalances between Buganda and the rest of Uganda, imbalances that were manifested by Buganda's higher levels of education than the rest of Uganda, its highly successful commercial cotton and coffee farms, and its greater degree of political autonomy.¹⁷

¹³ Low, *Political Parties in Uganda*, 24-42. *Kabaka Yekka* translates to "King Only," and originally advocated independence for Buganda separate from the rest of Uganda, warning the British Colonial Secretary in October 1960 that Buganda risked becoming another "Katanga" if forced into independence with the rest of Uganda. The reference to Katanga, a province in southern Congo that seceded from the Congo just months after Congolese independence and resulted in the Congo Crisis (1960-1965), demonstrates just how influential events in neighbouring Congo were to politicians in Uganda. In the end, KY's demands for Bugandan independence were reduced to a demand that Buganda should only enter independence with the rest of Uganda if the *Kabaka* were made head of state and Buganda's many privileges were retained in post-independence Uganda. See: Grace Stuart Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980) 25.

¹⁴ Low, *Political Parties in Uganda*, 22-24; Ingham, *Politics in Modern Africa*, 17.

¹⁵ T.V. Sathyamurthy, "The Social Base of the Uganda People's Congress, 1958-70," *African Affairs* 74, no. 297 (1975): 448-449. Ingham, *Politics in Modern Africa*, 17.

¹⁶ Ingham, *Politics in Modern Africa*, 17.

¹⁷ Low, *Political Parties in Uganda*, 22-39; Ingham, *Politics in Modern Africa*, 17.

The 1962 constitution was the product of negotiations between delegates from KY, DP, and the UPC on one side and the British colonial authorities on the other, and gave Uganda a constitutional government under which Uganda gained independence on 9 October 1962. Uganda had an elected National Assembly composed of 91 Members of Parliament, most of whom faced re-election every five years.¹⁸ The Prime Minister was the leader of the party that won the most seats in Uganda's national elections and exercised executive authority in the country. The Prime Minister was assisted by personally appointed members of his cabinet, and all of them were responsible to the decisions of the National Assembly. Government legislation was to be carried out by a professional and impartial bureaucracy and mediated by an independent judiciary. All Ugandans were subject to the rule of law and were protected by fundamental rights and freedoms, including freedom of speech, press, and public assembly.¹⁹

To balance the competing agendas of Uganda's kingdoms and districts, constitutional negotiations left Uganda with a federal system of government that retained the governments of the kingdoms of Buganda, Toro, Ankole, Bunyoro, and Busoga.²⁰ Although the responsibilities of these kingdoms were generally reduced, the kingdoms did retain limited powers of taxation, autonomous local public service commissions, and semi-autonomous police forces.²¹ Importantly, to appease Baganda nationalism and the demands of KY delegates, Buganda won the right to have its *Lukiiko*, then dominated by

¹⁸ Uganda's first parliament had 82 elected members and nine specially-elected members, the latter of whom were chosen by the winner of the 1962 elections and thus never faced the electorate.

¹⁹ A.G.G. Ginyera-Pinyawa, *Apolo Milton Obote and His Times* (New York: NOK Publishers, 1978), 78-80.

²⁰ Busoga had previously been a district but was created into a kingdom as part of the independence negotiations with Britain. William W. Nadiope, a UPC MP and future vice-president of Uganda, was elected as its first *Kyabazinga*, or king.

²¹ Government of Uganda, *Uganda Constitutional Instruments: The Uganda (Independence) Order in Council, 1962, and the Constitution of Uganda (excluding schedules 1 to 6)* (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1964). Uganda's ten districts also retained their governments, although their powers were fewer.

KY, act as an electoral college and appoint its MPs to the National Assembly.²² The situation left Uganda's two national political parties, the UPC and the DP, needing to ally with the Buganda-based KY in order to gain an outright majority in the National Assembly.²³

Anxious to unseat the DP, who won Uganda's 1961 internal self-government election, the UPC and KY formed an alliance in order to contest the 1962 elections together. As a result, the UPC won 43 seats in the 1962 pre-independence elections, KY won 24 seats, and the DP won 24.²⁴ According to the terms of the KY-UPC alliance, UPC leader Milton Obote became Uganda's first post-independence Prime Minister in a coalition government with KY, while the *Kabaka* of Buganda, Mutesa II, was named Uganda's ceremonial president by constitutional amendment in 1963.²⁵ From independence in October 1962 to June 1966, however, the UPC-KY alliance disintegrated as the UPC expanded and aggressively centralized the powers of the federal government, showing little sympathy for Baganda nationalism or the rights of Uganda's kingdom governments. Indeed, the UPC repeatedly attacked KY as a "tribal" party that was unable to meet the nation-building challenges that Uganda faced after independence.²⁶

²² The *Lukiiko* was an elected body that served as Buganda's parliament and was largely at the mercy of the *Kabaka* of Buganda, Edward Mutesa II, who strongly influenced the first KY members chosen to represent Buganda in the National Assembly. This concession to Buganda was the cause of much political grief during the 1961 constitutional conferences in London and was the result of a compromise between those in Buganda who sought independence separate from the rest of Uganda, and those Ugandan politicians who believed that Buganda was an integral part of Uganda and crucial to its future success. For more information see: Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 32.

²³ *Kabaka Yekka* dominated politics in Buganda and won all 21 elected seats in the kingdom in the 1962 elections. KY was also appointed three specially-elected seats in Uganda's first independence parliament to raise their legislative strength to 24 MPs.

²⁴ Dieter Nohlen, Michael Krennerich, Bernhard Thibaut, *Elections in Africa: A Handbook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 934.

²⁵ Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 115.

²⁶ For examples, see: Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 68, 87, 115; Milton Obote, "The Footsteps of Uganda's Revolution." *East Africa Journal* 5, no. 10 (October 1968): 13; "No Split' Says UPC," *Uganda Argus*, January 24, 1963; "These Political Parties Should Be Banned – Toro MP," *Uganda Argus*, June 11, 1964; "KY Moves Could Be 'Insulting'," *Uganda Argus*, January 1, 1964; "UPC-KY Alliance Move," *Uganda Argus*, August 8, 1964.

By the end of 1964, the UPC had enticed several former DP and KY MPs into the party through a combination of patronage and coercion and thus gained a large governing majority in the National Assembly, allowing its governing alliance with KY to end.²⁷ Seeking to maintain Buganda's influence on Uganda's government, the *Kabaka* asked several remaining KY MPs to join the UPC in order to steer the party's policy from within and protect Buganda's interests.²⁸ As a result, two factions emerged in the UPC that began openly competing with each other by the summer of 1965. The first faction was led by the Prime Minister and included several government ministers, including Felix Onama, Adoko Nekyon, and Sam Odaka, as well as the Deputy Commander of the Uganda Army, Idi Amin. This faction, largely composed of men from Uganda's northern "Nilotic" districts, pursued an ambitious nationalist program that sought to eliminate the rights of Uganda's kingdoms and wipe out the educational, economic, and political disparities of the colonial era.²⁹ The second faction was led by Minister of State Grace Ibingira and included vice-president William Nadiope and several ex-KY turned UPC MPs, including E.B.S. Lumu and B.K. Kirya, and was rumoured to have links to the *Kabaka* of Buganda and the Commander of the Uganda Army, Shaban Opolot. This faction, composed largely of men from Uganda's southern "Bantu" kingdoms, was more sympathetic to the rights of Uganda's kingdoms and was concerned by the ambitious pace of Obote's political reforms, feeling that Obote's nationalist program would dangerously alienate large swathes of Ugandan society.³⁰

As tensions escalated between the central government, particularly the Obote faction of the UPC, and the interests of the Buganda government, now represented by the Ibingira faction of the UPC, it seemed to many that a final and violent showdown between them was inevitable. Certainly, this was the gist of Obote's speech at the height of the 1966 Crisis in which the Prime Minister contrasted the UPC's ostensible devotion to Ugandan nationalism and the economic benefits the UPC could provide to the "common man" of Uganda with the *Kabaka* of Buganda's alleged desire to rule as an

²⁷ This subject will be dealt with in greater detail in the following chapter.

²⁸ "Hundreds Go Over to UPC, Mayanja, Kisekka Are Welcomed," *Uganda Argus*, July 10, 1965; "Kabaka Advised Us to Join the UPC," *Uganda Argus*, July 19, 1965.

²⁹ Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 127.

³⁰ Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 127.

autocrat, enforce Baganda hegemony over Uganda, and eliminate the political freedoms gained by all Ugandans at independence.³¹

1.2. Literature Review

Against this background of internal political rivalries that began in the colonial period and continued after independence, almost every scholar to examine the 1966 Crisis has done so within a nation-state framework, searching only inside Uganda's borders for the causes of the 1966 Crisis. Accordingly, Gukiina and Mazrui both explain the crisis as a confrontation between Uganda's central government and the Buganda government and blame the crisis on Uganda's "immovable ethnic group loyalties" that pitted Buganda against the rest of the country.³² Similarly, Mittelman notes that Obote was beset by Uganda's "traditional rivalries" and felt the best way to "repair the divisions in his party... was to strike against the Baganda."³³ These accounts neglect any mention of Uganda's intervention in the Congo Rebellion or the impact of Uganda's foreign policy on its internal politics, while their ethnic interpretations of the 1966 Crisis ultimately blame Britain's policies during the colonial era for the turmoil in the country after independence.

Hansen, Karugire, and Mudoola, noting that the 1966 Crisis could not be explained entirely by the rivalry between Uganda and Buganda, explored the factionalization of the UPC and concluded that Uganda and the UPC were actually beset by a wider "Bantu-Nilotic divide"³⁴ that separated Uganda's southern kingdoms from its northern districts. Indeed, these scholars argue that the 1966 Crisis represented a

³¹ The "common man" was often referred to in speeches by Obote to symbolize his efforts to economically improve Uganda for the benefit of all Ugandans as he believed all modern governments should. Obote regularly compared his vision to the "feudal" government of Buganda that he believed worked only in the best interests of one man, *Kabaka* Edward Mutesa II. The full text of Obote's speech can be found in Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 1-21 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

³² Quote from: Gukiina, *Uganda*, 133. See also Ali Mazrui, *Soldiers and Kinsmen: The Making of a Military Ethnocracy* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975), 13-15.

³³ James Mittelman, *Ideology and Politics in Uganda: From Obote to Amin* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1975), 78-83.

³⁴ S.R. Karugire, *The Roots of Instability in Uganda* (Kampala: New Vision, 1988), 46.

struggle for power and control within the UPC between Obote's "Nilotic" faction, composed largely of UPC members from Uganda's northern districts, and Ibingira's "Bantu" faction, composed largely of UPC members from Uganda's constituent kingdoms.³⁵ However, like Gukiina, Mazrui, and Mittelman before them, these authors use ethnic labels to emphasize how perceived ethnic, economic, and political rivalries, rooted in Uganda's uneven development in the colonial era, continued to sabotage Ugandan politics of nation building after independence.

Kasfir, Gingyera-Pinyewa, and Jorgensen expand the above "Bantu-Nilotic" argument by attributing to Uganda's Bantu kingdoms a "monarchist" and "capitalist" political culture that ostensibly clashed with the "republican" and "socialist" political culture of Uganda's northern districts and led to the Crisis of 1966.³⁶ Consequently, Uganda's "Nilotic" districts, championed by the Obote faction of the UPC, supposedly sought to use socialist ideals and the power Uganda's modern republic at the expense of Uganda's "Bantu" kingdoms, supported by the Ibingira faction of the UPC, to erase the economic, social and political inequalities of the colonial period.³⁷ Despite reference to foreign ideologies of capitalism and socialism and their application to Uganda's internal ethnic rivalries, these authors do not discuss whether such ideological disputes were related to the expansion of Uganda's international relations after independence or to the foreign policy pursued by the Obote government from 1962 to 1966.

1.3. The Congo Rebellion

From 1964 to 1965, the greatest foreign threat to Uganda came from events in the neighbouring Congo where the Congo Crisis (1960-1965), which encompassed the

³⁵ Hansen, *Ethnicity and Military Rule in Uganda*, 65; Karugire, *The Roots of Instability*, 46; Dan M. Mudoola, *Religion, Ethnicity and Politics in Uganda* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1993), 96-97.

³⁶ Nelson Kasfir, *The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation and Ethnicity in African Politics, with a Case Study of Uganda* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 286-288; Gingyera-Pinyewa, *Apolo Milton Obote*, 16-22; Jan Jelmert Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1981), 223-224.

³⁷ Kasfir, *The Shrinking Political Arena*, 286-288; Gingyera-Pinyewa, *Apolo Milton Obote*, 16-22; Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History*, 223-224.

Congo Rebellion (1964-1965), began almost immediately after the Republic of Congo gained independence from Belgium on 30 June 1960.³⁸ At this time, the Congo was wracked by a series of crises that included an army coup led by Joseph Mobutu in September of 1960, secession attempts by Katanaga and South Kasai, two of Congo's most resource-rich provinces, and the brutal murder of the country's first elected Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba, in January 1961.³⁹ As a result, Lumumba's political supporters regrouped in Stanleyville in central Congo, named themselves the Simbas, and set up a rival government called the National Council of Liberation (CNL) on 3 October 1963. The CNL was led by Antoine Gizenga who proclaimed Stanleyville the provisional capital of the Simbas' government and who sought to protect his government militarily with the help of deserters from the national army and local recruits.⁴⁰ Key figures in Gizenga's short-lived regime included political and military leaders such as Christophe Gbenye, Nicholas Olenga, Pierre Mulele, and Thomas Kanza, all of whom were united by their advocacy of both nationalism and socialism to use as a blueprint to rapidly modernize the nascent Congolese state.⁴¹

By January 1964, in what is now called the Congo Rebellion, the Simbas, covertly supported by Chinese political propaganda, military training and hardware, "struck a series of raids against government outposts" near Stanleyville.⁴² By October of that year, however, the Chinese-backed Simbas had lost control of the city to Mobutu's forces thanks to help from foreign mercenaries, American and Belgian air support, dissension within the Simbas themselves, and an "unending round of executions" in

³⁸ The country was renamed Zaire in 1971 under President Joseph Mobutu.

³⁹ Young, "Post-Independence Politics in the Congo," 35-36.

⁴⁰ Young, "Post-Independence Politics in the Congo," 36; Anstey, "The Congo Rebellion," 170-171.

⁴¹ Anstey, "The Congo Rebellion," 170. The Simbas controlled Stanleyville from January 1964 to October 1964.

⁴² Young, "Post-Independence Politics in the Congo," 39.

territories the Simbas controlled.⁴³ By early 1965, the Simbas had succumbed to internal feuding, and a conference called in Khartoum to end dissension within the Simbas in early 1965 was not sufficient to overcome these. By the fall of that year, the Simbas were thoroughly defeated militarily and entirely spent as a political force.⁴⁴

In neighbouring Uganda, a small group of politicians in the UPC, led by Prime Minister Obote, secretly sent the Third Battalion of the Uganda Army under the leadership of Idi Amin to provide the Simbas with military training and equipment and actively fight against the Congolese government forces of Moïse Tshombe, the Congolese Prime Minister.⁴⁵ Despite historical evidence that the intervention in the Congo Rebellion initiated by Obote and his faction within the UPC caused irreparable divides among the members of the party and led to rising foreign influence in Uganda's internal affairs, only Mutibwa, Sathyamurthy, Gingerya-Pinycwa, and Omara-Otunnu investigate these events. Even so, these authors paint an incomplete picture as to how the Congo Crisis, and later the Congo Rebellion, impacted Ugandan politics, and fail to either locate or explain the link between the Congo Crisis and Uganda's own political crisis of 1966.

For example, Mutibwa's account only notes that "wrangles over the Congo affair" – in reference to Ocheng's motion in the National Assembly regarding the Obote faction's involvement in the Congo Rebellion – contributed to emerging rivalries within the UPC and helped instigate the 1966 Crisis. But he provides no precise details as to

⁴³ Young, "Post-Independence Politics in the Congo," 40. China provided propaganda support to Gizenga following Lumumba's death in 1961 and trained Simba rebels in Congo-Brazzaville, Burundi and perhaps Tanzania. In 1965, China was sending arms through Tanzania and into Uganda where Idi Amin and his UPC supporters then transferred the equipment to the Simbas through West Nile District in north-western Uganda. Tareq Y. Ismael "The People's Republic of China and Africa," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 9, no. 4 (December 1971): 510; Anstey, "The Congo Rebellion," 173.

⁴⁴ Anstey, "The Congo Rebellion," 172.

⁴⁵ Phares Mutibwa, *Uganda since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes* (London: Hurst, 1992), 36; Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 429; Gingyera-Pinycwa, *Apolo Milton Obote*, 241-242. Moïse Tshombe had originally led the secession of Katanga from the Congo in 1960 but was subsequently forced to flee the country in 1963 following the secession's failure. By 1964, Tshombe had returned to the Congo as Prime Minister of a new coalition government, and used the Congolese government forces to suppress the remaining rebellions across the country. Tshombe was again deposed in 1965 by President Joseph Mobutu.

how or why this happened.⁴⁶ More explicitly, Sathyamurthy argues that the UPC cabinet was divided over how to respond to the Congo Rebellion as Ibingira's "pro-American" faction sought a political solution to it in accordance with a resolution passed by the Organisation for African Unity, while Obote's faction wanted to actively engage the Uganda Army in supporting the Simbas.⁴⁷ Yet Sathyamurthy's account treats the Uganda Army's engagement in the Congo Rebellion as just one of many issues which divided the Ibingira and Obote factions of the UPC, and does not consider whether the actual fighting in the Congo or the rise of foreign interference in Uganda's internal affairs directly contributed to the outbreak of the 1966 Crisis.

Conversely, Gingerya-Pinycwa and Omara-Otunnu investigate the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion in terms of how the Uganda Army's involvement politicized Uganda's armed forces and eventually led to Amin's military coup in 1971. Gingerya-Pinycwa argues that the increased size, improved weaponry, and rising prestige of the Uganda Army, all the result of its fighting in the Congo Rebellion, caused Ugandan politicians to realise:

What their last card would have to be if worse came to worst. This last card was the gun... to have Opolot or Amin, the two top-ranking army officers of the time, or other ranking officers behind one gave one reassurance in the quicksands of the politics of plots and counterplots.⁴⁸

However, Gingerya-Pinycwa does not consider whether this situation impacted the eruption or outcome of the 1966 Crisis.

Omara-Otunnu traces the impact of the Congo Crisis on Ugandan politics to as early as independence in 1962, when events in the Congo were already considered a threat to Uganda's territorial sovereignty.⁴⁹ Omara-Otunnu also notes that as a result of the Uganda Army Mutiny in January 1964, to be discussed in greater detail later, Uganda was able for the first time to pursue an independent defence policy and quickly

⁴⁶ Mutibwa, *Uganda since Independence*, 39.

⁴⁷ Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 430-432.

⁴⁸ Gingerya-Pinycwa, *Apolo Milton Obote*, 242.

⁴⁹ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda*, 51.

established military links with Israel, the People's Republic of China, and the USSR.⁵⁰ However, despite the fact that both the PRC and the USSR were actively engaged in the Congo Crisis, and evidence to suggest that the Uganda Army began fighting in the Congo in late 1964, Omara-Otunnu nonetheless believes that Uganda's intervention in the Congo Rebellion was largely reactionary and did not begin until sometime in 1965.⁵¹ Similar to Gingerya-Pinycwa, Omara-Otunnu makes no reference to how, if at all, the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion impacted Uganda's internal politics and the Crisis of 1966.

In contrast to the above historians, this thesis will re-examine the 1966 Crisis with a strong focus on Uganda's regional and international relations and the way they were affected by the UPC's covert intervention in the Congo Rebellion. It will thus move beyond the nation-state framework that has limited the ability of past historians of Uganda to accurately explain the causes of the 1966 Crisis. While this thesis does not intend to be an exhaustive review of Uganda's foreign relations in the post-independence period, it will consider the specific repercussions that the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion had on the unity of the UPC, on Obote's leadership of the party, and on the fear of rising foreign influence in Uganda's internal affairs that gripped the country from 1965 to 1966.

By adding a regional and international perspective to the scholarly debate surrounding the causes of the 1966 Crisis, this thesis will account for the individual actions of Ugandan politicians in a way that simple ethnic-based interpretations cannot. As such, this thesis will not merely blame Uganda's 1966 Crisis on colonial-era policies and ethnic rivalries, but will instead demonstrate how Ugandan politicians used and manipulated their relationships with foreign powers in order to both alter the balance of political power within Uganda and to influence events in neighbouring Congo.

⁵⁰ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda*, 66-67.

⁵¹ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda*, 71.

1.4. Sources

In order to explore the role that Obote and his closest associates in the UPC played in the Congo Rebellion from 1964 to 1965 and its impact on Uganda's internal politics, this thesis will rely primarily on two sets of primary sources. The first is the *Uganda Argus*, Uganda's only English-language daily newspaper that claimed a circulation of 100,000 in 1964 in a country of more than six million people.⁵² The *Uganda Argus* is important for capturing many of the public political debates that took place in Uganda from 1962 to 1966 and for providing important information on events pivotal to the 1966 crisis including Obote's One-Party Speech, ideological debates within the UPC, the government's attempts to build its security services, parts of the UPC's involvement in the Congo Rebellion, and the UPC leadership dispute. Although the *Uganda Argus* was the source of considerable debate between members of the UPC government who strongly influenced its content and opposition members who decried the paper as a "UPC mouthpiece," any inherent bias should not affect my project, which is largely concerned with debates within the UPC itself.⁵³ As a result, while the *Uganda Argus* may have reduced their coverage of Uganda's opposition parties to "four and five-line reports" by 1964,⁵⁴ their coverage of ideological divisions within the UPC and the party's leadership dispute in 1965 captures both sides of the debate with few, if any, restrictions.

⁵² Although Ugandans had access to numerous vernacular newspaper in the 1960s, this researcher was unable to either procure or translate them. Access – and much gratitude – to copies of the *Uganda Argus* are owed to the British Newspaper Library in Colindale, England.

⁵³ Accusations of government interference in the staff at the *Uganda Argus* began in December 1962 and continued throughout the 1960s. In 1964, William Buse, a director and manager of the *Argus*, told the Mengo District Magistrates Court that he was kidnapped by members of the UPC Youth League and publicly criticized by the Prime Minister for writing stories critical of the UPC. The editor of the *Argus*, Charles Harrison, admitted in an editorial in July 1964 that the paper's "previous support for the colonial government" and the fact that it was run by "non-Africans" meant that it could not exist if it "went against the aspirations of the people." As a result, by the end of 1964 the *Uganda Argus* was decried as a "UPC mouthpiece" by one member of the Democratic Party. Although no lasting censorship laws were ever passed in Uganda, Daniel Nelson, an editor of the UPC's own *The People* newspaper, wrote in 1967 that the "threat of action" by the government against any media outlet in Uganda "leads to what one could politely call self-restraint on the part of the editors." Indeed, Nelson admitted that "Government's word is becoming infallible, and that is disturbing." See: "Manager Tells of Alleged 'Kidnapping'," *Uganda Argus*, January 14, 1964; "Free Press... With Care," *Uganda Argus*, July 3, 1964; "Opposition Parties Not Necessary," *Uganda Argus*, December 19, 1964; Daniel Nelson, "Newspapers in Uganda," *Transition* 35 (February-March 1968): 30.

⁵⁴ "Free Press... With Care," *Uganda Argus*, July 3, 1964.

By contrast, it was much more difficult to deal with the paper's reluctance to report events that the UPC had less desire to publicize. As a result, because of its limited reporting on the Uganda Army Mutiny and the Congo Rebellion, I relied more heavily on transcripts of Uganda's parliamentary debates. Further, I did not have access to copies of the *Uganda Argus* during the height of the 1966 Crisis itself, from February to May 1966, as the only copies available were declared "unfit for use" by the British Newspaper Library.

The second set of primary sources upon which this thesis relies strongly are printed transcripts of parliamentary debates in Uganda's National Assembly from 1962 to 1966.⁵⁵ Like the *Uganda Argus*, Uganda's hansard transcripts captured political debates surrounding the events of greatest concern to my project, particularly the 1966 Crisis itself. For example, the transcripts allow me to identify the controversy that the UPC's involvement in the Congo Rebellion caused within the party and the competing factions that emerged in the UPC as a result. They also allow me to closely chart the climax of the 1966 Crisis, beginning with Daudi Ocheng's⁵⁶ motion in the National Assembly that provided the immediate trigger for the crisis and ending with Obote's justification for his seizure of power and the forced implementation of a new constitution. What makes it difficult to analyse these debates is the fact that many of the most important allegations made in the National Assembly are in the language of parliamentary niceties. In effect, because the debates were publicly available, Uganda's Members of Parliament were often hesitant to make allegations against specific people or foreign countries lest they undermine members of their own party or trigger diplomatic rows. However, specific details of what speakers were referring to can often be gleaned from the context of the allegations made in the National Assembly and cross-referenced against the texts of

⁵⁵ I was very fortunate to find the complete *Hansard* volumes of Uganda's National Assembly debates in the basement of the Simon Fraser University Library, without which this project would not have been possible.

⁵⁶ Daudi Ocheng was appointed to the Ugandan National Assembly by the *Kabaka* of Buganda in 1964. Although born in Acholi, Ocheng became a personal friend of the *Kabaka* and joined the National Assembly as a member of KY. In 1965 and 1966, Ocheng raised three motions in the National Assembly intended to criticize and publicize the UPC's intervention in the Congo Rebellion. Ocheng's third and final motion on 4 February 1966 called for the suspension of Idi Amin from active military service, the consequences of which ultimately triggered the 1966 Crisis.

other historians of Uganda, many of whom had access to important government and military records that were not available to me, and the *Uganda Argus*. It should also be mentioned that two of the biggest players in the crisis, the *Kabaka* of Buganda, Edward Mutesa II, and the Commander of the Army, Idi Amin, were not represented in the National Assembly and hence their testimonies to events from 1964 to 1966 are either limited or entirely absent.⁵⁷

1.5. Plan of Study

The first chapter of this thesis will briefly provide a background to Ugandan politics after independence, as well as examine the internal dynamics of the UPC itself, in order to contextualize the political situation that Obote faced as Prime Minister of Uganda from independence in October 1962 to the end of 1964. The next section will consider Obote's plan to overcome the obstacles he faced at independence by analyzing what I call the Obote Doctrine, as outlined in a speech that he delivered to the UPC Party Conference in August of 1962. Entitled "A Plan for Nationhood," this section will argue that Obote used the speech to construct the rhetorical blueprint he needed to consolidate his leadership over the UPC, unite his ideologically diverse party, and limit the activities of opposition parties. It will then briefly explore how Obote and the UPC successfully applied the Obote Doctrine to Ugandan politics from 1962 to 1964.

The second chapter, and the primary focus of this thesis, will examine major events in Uganda from 1964 to 1966 that began to fracture the political consensus that Obote had so successfully crafted from 1962 to 1964, including Obote's One-Party Speech, the Uganda Army Mutiny, and the emergence of ideological cleavages in the UPC. To gain a greater understanding of how and why Obote's political dominance was

⁵⁷ Although Mutesa was also the President of Uganda from October 1963 to February 1966, his role in the National Assembly was limited solely to providing the annual Speech to the Throne, written by Prime Minister Obote and his associates, and hence reflecting only the latter's views. Fortunately, Mutesa wrote his version of events regarding the 1966 Crisis soon after he fled into exile, portions of which will be discussed in this thesis. See: Mutesa II, King of Buganda, *Desecration of My Kingdom* (London: Constable, 1967). Unfortunately, personal accounts from Idi Amin regarding his role in the Uganda Army Mutiny, the Congo Rebellion, and the 1966 Crisis do not exist.

challenged and began to falter, however, this thesis will closely investigate the involvement of Obote and several of his closest political and military supporters in the Congo Rebellion in 1964 and 1965. It will discuss the many repercussions that this interference had on the unity of the UPC, on Obote's leadership of the party, and on the possible rise of foreign influence in Uganda's internal affairs. Ultimately, this thesis will argue that the 1966 Crisis cannot be properly understood by domestic factors alone, and that close examination of the Obote faction's foray into the Congo Rebellion, including its internal and international impact on Ugandan politics, is needed in order to fully understand the causes of the 1966 Crisis.

2. The Obote Doctrine

In order to understand how the intervention of the Obote faction in the Congo Rebellion caused a growing rift within the UPC from 1964 to 1966, and eventually led to the eruption of the 1966 Crisis, we must first closely examine the basis of Obote's leadership of the UPC from 1962 to 1964 and what it was that united the UPC as a party during this period.

Despite the UPC's numerical strength following Uganda's 1962 national elections, historians of Uganda agree that the party was "largely a national confederation of locally powerful political notables."⁵⁸ Indeed, many UPC MPs were members of the nobility of their respective kingdoms and districts and had been educated in British schools during the protectorate period. A significant number of them were business owners.⁵⁹ Thus, the party's most influential MPs from 1962 to 1966 were men who had already gained local political prominence prior to the formation of the UPC in 1960, and thus did not need the support of the party in order to get elected.⁶⁰ As a result, little effort was made to provide the party with a proper organizational structure, and there was no central body that could have imposed discipline on its members. It is therefore not surprising that Samwiri Karugire refers to Prime Minister Obote as the "leader of leaders

⁵⁸ Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History*, 221.

⁵⁹ Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History*, 218; Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda*, 190; Mittelman, *Ideology and Politics in Uganda*, 76; Sathyamurthy, "The Social Base of the Uganda People's Congress," 449. Sathyamurthy not only argues that many UPC (and DP) politicians were members of the nobility of their respective kingdom and district governments, and thus already enjoyed elevated social status in their respective polities, but also that these same members of Uganda's district and kingdom governments had gained British-style educations during the protectorate period. As a result, Sathyamurthy states they were separated from their constituents by both their noble birth and "by their education, outlook, and political ideology (nationalist, modern, development-oriented)." Once in office, these politicians were keen to rebuild the Ugandan economy to expand their business interests at the expense of British expatriate entrepreneurs and Indo-Ugandan businessmen.

⁶⁰ Samwiri Rubaraza Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda* (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1980), 190; Sathyamurthy, "The Social Base of the Uganda People's Congress," 450.

or the first among equals” and in constant need to assert his authority over other party members.⁶¹ And, while one party founder, Grace Ibingira, claimed that the UPC was formed “with an avowed socialist policy,” actions and comments by members of the UPC government from 1962 to 1966 suggest that many members of the party strongly disagreed on questions of ideology.⁶² However, members of the UPC were united and inspired politically by a burgeoning sense of Ugandan nationalism and sought to establish a strong central government that would allow them to expand their business interests on a vast scale and erase the economic disparities of the colonial era through a process called “Ugandanization.”⁶³

2.1. Crafting the Obote Doctrine

The goals of the UPC government at independence were as immense as the expectations facing it, and these aspirations were clearly outlined in a speech by Prime Minister Obote at the UPC Party Conference in August of 1962 entitled “A Plan for Nationhood.” In it, Obote linked his government’s ability to economically transform Uganda with strict devotion to national unity at all levels of Ugandan society. Conversely, Obote claimed that the absence of national unity would not only threaten the UPC government’s ability to indigenize and expand the economy, but could also pose a serious threat to Uganda’s national security and sovereignty.⁶⁴ Amounting to what I call the Obote Doctrine, I argue that the ideas promulgated by Obote in this speech marked an attempt to firmly establish his leadership over Uganda and limit political dissent in

⁶¹ Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda*, 190.

⁶² Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 127.

⁶³ Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History*, 221. Most commonly, successful Ugandan businessmen were the owners of large cotton, coffee, and tea plantations, yet many wished to create an industrial economy in the country that would lessen its reliance on primary resource production and the importation of manufactured goods. The idea behind “Ugandanization” was to reduce the number of foreign, particularly British, owned businesses and thereby encourage indigenous ownership of Uganda’s major economic concerns. The process of Ugandanization was also applied to the government bureaucracy and the Uganda Army by replacing foreign expatriates with trained and educated Ugandans. Combined, it was believed by many Ugandans that Ugandanization of the economy, bureaucracy, and military would allow the country to better protect its sovereignty and ultimately improve the standard of living for all Ugandans.

⁶⁴ A. Milton Obote, “A Plan for Nationhood,” *Transition*, no. 6/7 (October 1962): 15-18.

the country by appealing to a shared sense of nationalism amongst UPC MPs and their desire to establish a strong central government that could economically transform Uganda. From 1962 to 1964, Obote and the UPC successfully used the Obote Doctrine as a guideline in their efforts to weaken political opposition and strengthen the powers of the central government in order to enforce Ugandan nationalism at the highest echelon of politics. It was believed that such a strategy would lay the groundwork for Uganda's economic transformation that was deemed so necessary to ensure Uganda's future independence.

Reprinted in a popular East African journal in time for Uganda's independence, Obote ambitiously stated in "A Plan for Nationhood" that his party aimed to "rally the country in a massive revolt against poverty and to march with the people in all activities which would lessen hunger and disease, and wipe out illiteracy."⁶⁵ As such, his government would provide "basic services such as trunk roads, hospitals and schools" while also accepting "more responsibilities for the aged, the unemployed, the widows and orphans, the disabled and the sick."⁶⁶ However, the limitations faced by the UPC government at independence were great, and perhaps the greatest of all was uniting both Ugandan society, and the UPC itself, around a common ideology that could unify its disparate parts. As noted earlier, Uganda was consumed by ethnic, economic and political tensions fostered during the colonial era, and Obote himself faced difficult obstacles trying to unite the independent members of his party under his leadership. As a result, Obote's nation building program repeatedly appealed to the need for "national

⁶⁵ Obote, "A Plan for Nationhood," 15.

⁶⁶ Obote, "A Plan for Nationhood," 15-17. Such promises were common to all three political parties in Uganda in 1962, as pamphlets produced by both KY and the DP for the 1962 elections attest. A *Kabaka Yekka* pamphlet from the election campaign made ambitious material promises to the people of Buganda, promising that a KY government would expand education, health care and sanitation, public infrastructure, public amenities, and care for the "disabled, destitute, and aged." By comparison, the DP focused on the basic principles that they believed Uganda's post-independence government should embrace, including a "strong and stable central government," an impartial civil service, judiciary, and tax system, plus basic freedoms of speech, expression, and worship. See: Abu Mayanja, *You and Your Vote: A Guide to the Lukiko Election* (Kampala: KY Publication, 1962), 1-2; W. Senteza Kajubi, *National Assembly Elections 1962* (Kampala: unknown publisher, 1962), 1. Much gratitude is owed to the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, for access to fascinating press releases and political pamphlets from Uganda's three political parties from 1962 to 1971.

unity” to encourage the belief that his government would need to assume greater powers in order to alleviate Uganda’s poverty and Ugandanize the economy.

Obote thus rallied fellow members of the UPC based on their shared desire to Ugandanize the economy and increase the power of the central government in accordance with his own governing ideology. At the same time, Obote ignored ideological questions of capitalism and communism – as defined in Britain, the US, the USSR and China and deemed so important in the Cold War era – in order to simultaneously promote his nationalist agenda, limit political dissidence, and strengthen his leadership over the party. In this context, and perhaps owing to the political turmoil then raging in the Congo subsidized by foreign interests, Obote seemed concerned that some Ugandan politicians might use foreign sponsors and political violence in order to gain power. As a result, Obote hinted that his government would proactively persecute its political opposition in the interest of national unity and security when he stated that “people and their governments have the right to be immune from the efforts of others to undermine or subvert their chosen governmental forms and institutions, whether by propaganda, infiltration or direct interference.”⁶⁷ Obote further threatened his political opposition by stating that the UPC would “not hesitate to invoke the Laws to deal with all who may be found to undermine the security of the State.”⁶⁸ And, if the laws of the state were not enough, Obote hinted that his government would even be willing to work outside the law in order to strengthen the UPC’s nationalist development program:

[O]ur government [is] dedicated to the principle of the Rule of Law, to uphold Parliamentary democracy and to uphold and guard the Constitution of Uganda. This Party and our government cannot however tolerate direct or indirect attempts by anybody to undermine the oneness of the country.⁶⁹

According to Obote, political opposition was not just a threat to his government or its economic goals, but also a threat to national unity which could again lead Uganda to fall victim to foreign domination. Indeed, Obote reminded his audience of how Britain,

⁶⁷ Obote, “A Plan for Nationhood,” 18.

⁶⁸ Obote, “A Plan for Nationhood,” 15.

⁶⁹ Obote, “A Plan for Nationhood,” 15.

Portugal, the United States of America, the USSR, and Belgium continued to prey upon divided African societies and usurp their independence when he told his fellow UPC delegates:

We here and our neighbours nor the rest of African [sic] can ever again be a projection of Europe or any other part of the world... [There is] no reason for us in Uganda to think that the problems facing our immediate neighbours and the whole of Africa do not concern us... The situations in Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, the Republic of the Congo and the Central African Federation are not only the negation of our cherished ideal but also a positive danger to our dignity and independence... Whether inside Africa or outside it our relation with any country must never follow a course dictated to us.⁷⁰

Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique, apartheid in South Africa, the prospect of white minority rule in the Central African Federation, and American, Belgian and Russian interference leading to the Congo Crisis were all testaments to the consequences that both foreign domination and a lack of national unity fostered upon newly-independent African countries. Obote's speech was not mere political or rhetorical posturing as attested to by the actions of the UPC government under his leadership from the time he assumed office in 1962 until the Crisis of 1966. In particular, the period from independence in October 1962 to November 1964 witnessed Obote and the UPC government actively achieve the goals of the Obote Doctrine with little infighting. During this period, the powers of the central government were strengthened and the political opposition were harassed with intimidation and arbitrary arrests in the name of national unity, and Obote appeared at the height of his powers as leader of the UPC.

2.2. The Obote Consensus: 1962 to 1964

Following the basic tenets of the Obote Doctrine from 1962 to 1964, the UPC made several fundamental changes to some of the most important public institutions in Uganda during a period of time I call the Obote Consensus. This period was marked by

⁷⁰ Obote, "A Plan for Nationhood," 17.

the centralization of the powers of the central government, persecution of the opposition, and few fractures within the public façade of the UPC under Obote's leadership.

The UPC rigged kingdom and district council elections from 1962 to 1965 in the kingdoms of Bunyoro, Buganda, and Ankole and the districts of Lango, Acholi, Kigezi, and West Nile. To do so, the UPC used state patronage to stock the national and regional public service commissions with political supporters who then favourably redrew district boundaries, unfairly disqualified political opponents, and fraudulently altered election results.⁷¹ When the Democratic Party successfully challenged some of these nefarious activities in Uganda's courts, the Minister of Regional Administrations, C.J. Obwangor, and the Minister of Internal Affairs, Felix Onama, passed retroactive legislation favourable to the UPC. Such legislation allowed the party to overturn election results, appoint and dismiss key kingdom and district council members, redefine the power and duties of kingdom and district council chairmen, and control the agenda of council meetings in order to leave the kingdom and district councils subservient to the political goals of the central government.⁷²

The politicization of Uganda's federal and regional public service commissions was also justified by arguing that a lack of qualified indigenous personnel made it essential that these bodies were stocked with people who strongly supported the economic and political goals of the UPC. Important sections of both the police and military were politicized by offering promotions and other forms of patronage to loyal UPC supporters in order to ensure that members of Uganda's security forces complied with the goals of the Obote Doctrine, particularly in regards to their roles in limiting

⁷¹ Good accounts of these activities are provided in Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda*, 193-195; and Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 73-76.

⁷² For an excellent account on how the UPC government usurped the powers of the kingdom and central governments from 1962 to 1967 see: Dent Ocaya-Lakidi, "From Local Governments to Mere Local Administrations," in G.N. Uzoigwe, ed., *Uganda: The Dilemma of Nationhood* (New York: NOK Publishers, 1982), 305-311.

political dissent.⁷³ Uganda's national media was also politicized and made to support the UPC government, as the foreign owners and operators of the *Uganda Argus*, *Uganda Television*, and *Radio Uganda* were reminded of their "previous support for the colonial government" and threatened with violence at the hands of the UPC Youth League and with arrest and deportation from the central government.⁷⁴ Such intimidation led to "what one could politely call self-restraint on the part of the editors,"⁷⁵ lest they "went against the aspirations of the people" and did not write approvingly of UPC government policies, without the need for lasting press censorship laws.⁷⁶ In each instance, the politicization of important facets of the Ugandan government was encouraged by the reward of government patronage, while political opposition was discouraged by violence and intimidation. Combined, these actions were justified by the UPC as essential to national unity, stability, and the process of Ugandanization. The resources at the disposal of the UPC government and their willingness to pass retroactive legislation also ensured that the protestations and legal challenges of the opposition Democratic Party were unsuccessful.⁷⁷

Specifically in regards to Uganda's Official Opposition in the National Assembly, the Democratic Party, Obote and other UPC members strategically restricted their activities and enticed several MPs to cross to the UPC benches. In this respect, articles published in the *Uganda Argus* and debates in the National Assembly show that the UPC's campaign to undermine the strength and unity of the Democratic Party was

⁷³ While the politicization of the military is well-known in the history of Uganda and will be discussed later in this thesis, the politicization of the police is less often discussed. As neatly summarized by Ali A. Mazrui, "it had become clear that politicians were vying with each other for the friendship and support of the security forces [in 1965]. The problem was so acute that the commissioner of police had broadcast an appeal to the country to stop trying to divert the police from their normal duties." Mazrui, *Soldiers and Kinsmen in Uganda*, 17.

⁷⁴ "Free Press... With Care," *Uganda Argus*, July 3, 1964.

⁷⁵ Nelson, "Newspapers in Uganda," 30.

⁷⁶ Quote taken from "Free Press... With Care," *Uganda Argus*, July 3, 1964. Other *Uganda Argus* articles that refer to press intimidation include: "Manager Tells of Alleged 'Kidnapping'," *Uganda Argus*, January 14, 1964; "Opposition Parties Not Necessary," *Uganda Argus*, December 19, 1964. See also: Nelson, "Newspapers in Uganda," 29-33, for an excellent account of the UPC's relationship with Uganda's various media outlets; Mittelman, *Ideology and Politics in Uganda*, 141-142; and A.B.K. Kasozi, *The Social Origins of Violence in Uganda, 1964-1985* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 97.

⁷⁷ Karugire, *The Roots of Instability*, 58.

strongly abetted by a leadership dispute within the DP between the president of the party, Benedicto Kiwanuka, and the DP Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, Basil Bataringaya.⁷⁸ Also important to encouraging DP MPs to join the UPC was the frequent harassment of DP members by members of Uganda's security forces, promises of patronage for joining the government, and for some MPs a legitimate desire to contribute more directly to government policy.⁷⁹ By the end of 1965, the DP was reduced to just nine MPs in the National Assembly from the 24 seats it had won in the 1962 elections.⁸⁰ Despite the myriad reasons why these former DP members crossed the floor of the National Assembly, one of them remained constant: all publicly claimed to do so based on the overwhelming need for national unity in accordance with the goals of the Obote Doctrine.⁸¹

Similarly, despite the UPC's governing alliance with *Kabaka Yekka*, the UPC persistently encouraged KY MPs to formally join the UPC so that the party could

⁷⁸ "DP President 'Should Resign'," *Uganda Argus*, January 24, 1963; "Bataringaya Hits at 'DP Faults'," *Uganda Argus*, March 6, 1963; "Dispute over DP Leadership: 3 More Cross Over: Other MPs May Join Them Says Minister," *Uganda Argus*, June 6, 1964. Kiwanuka himself did not run in the 1962 pre-independence elections because his home constituency was in Buganda, where the powerful *Lukiiko* was able to appoint the kingdom's Members of Parliament. Given his extreme unpopularity among the ruling elites in Buganda for his desire to democratize the kingdom's government and for his open criticism of the *Kabaka* (he had actually twice been expelled from the *Lukiiko*), Kiwanuka hoped to be appointed to one of the National Assembly's specially-elected seats. However, this opportunity was lost when the DP lost the 1962 elections. As a result, some members of his party, including Bataringaya, felt that the DP would never attain power as long as Kiwanuka was its president. On 31 December 1964, Bataringaya gave up trying to gain the DP leadership and instead joined the UPC. For more information, see: Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 158; Phares N. Mutibwa, "Internal Self-Government, March 1961 – October 1962," in G.N. Uzoigwe, ed., *Uganda: The Dilemma of Nationhood* (New York: NOK Publishers International, 1982), 266; Low, *Political Parties in Uganda*, 24.

⁷⁹ Examples of harassment include: Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, November 6, 1963, 23; "Kiwanuka to Claim Damages," *Uganda Argus*, January 13, 1964; "Ben Kiwanuka Says He Was Arrested," *Uganda Argus*, December 11, 1964; "DP Chief's Arrest Was Legal, Says Binaisa," *Uganda Argus*, February 18, 1965. Examples of DP MPs crossing for patronage or political influence include: "Dispute Over DP Leadership: 3 More Cross Over: Other MPs May Join Them Says Minister," *Uganda Argus*, June 6, 1964; "These Political Parties Should be Banned – Toro MP," *Uganda Argus*, June 11, 1964.

⁸⁰ Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History*, 223.

⁸¹ Karugire, *The Roots of Instability in Uganda*, 43.

eventually govern with a majority of its own in the National Assembly.⁸² Sticking closely to the themes of the Obote Doctrine, members of the UPC castigated KY members as “tribal” due to their close affiliation with the Buganda government, and therefore unequal to the task of the Obote Doctrine’s nationalist goals.⁸³ Much like they had with the Democratic Party, the UPC also benefitted from a leadership dispute in KY related to the deep divisions within Baganda society and the politicians who represented the kingdom.⁸⁴ The election of Michael Kintu, the *katikiro*⁸⁵ of Buganda and staunch defender of the *Kabaka*’s personal rule over the kingdom, as chairman of KY in September 1962 sharply exposed these divisions and KY defections to the UPC began immediately.⁸⁶ The battle between members of KY came to a head when the UPC government announced it would hold the Lost Counties Referendum in November, 1964, causing the UPC-KY alliance to finally collapse.⁸⁷ By the time the referendum was over, the Buganda government was in shambles. As stated by Ian Hancock:

In 1964 there was a prolonged political crisis in the kingdom of Buganda. It began in January with a stormy budget session and ended in November

⁸² Michael Twaddle, “Order and Disorder in Uganda,” *The World Today* 29, no. 10 (October 1973): 451.

⁸³ For examples of prominent UPC MPs branding KY as tribal, see: “‘No Split’ Says UPC,” *Uganda Argus*, January 24, 1963; “We Don’t Need KY Support – Attorney General,” *Uganda Argus*, January 28, 1963; “KY Moves Could Be ‘Insulting,’” *Uganda Argus*, January 1, 1964; “These Political Parties Should Be Banned – Toro MP,” *Uganda Argus*, June 11, 1964.

⁸⁴ The best account of this can be found in: Ian Hancock, “The Buganda Crisis of 1964,” *African Affairs* 69, no. 275 (April 1970): 109-123. Because of the strength of Bugandan nationalism and the *Lukiiko*’s ability to appoint its MPs to the National Assembly, most politicians from Buganda who sought to enter the National Assembly ran for KY, leaving the party with an ideologically diverse membership. Its MPs were split largely between those who wanted to maintain the political privileges of both the *Kabaka* and the Buganda government, and those who sought to either democratize Buganda’s politics or move beyond kingdom politics entirely and focus solely on national affairs.

⁸⁵ The *Katikiro* was the chief minister and highest executive authority of the Buganda government, and directly responsible to the *Kabaka*.

⁸⁶ Gukiina, *Uganda*, 119-120.

⁸⁷ The Lost Counties issue arose after the original signing of the Buganda Agreement of 1900. Under the terms of the agreement, Buganda was rewarded with six counties taken directly from the neighbouring kingdom of Bunyoro in exchange for helping the British to subjugate Bunyoro. In the constitutional conferences in 1961 and 1962, delegations from Bunyoro continued to demand the counties back from Buganda, and in the end had a promise of a referendum within two years of independence written into Uganda’s 1962 constitution. Buganda tried both to block the referendum and to influence its outcome, but failed in each attempt.

with the collapse of a government. Throughout the year the *Kabaka's* ministers openly quarrelled and privately plotted, the *Lukiiko* (Parliament) was often reduced to bedlam and anarchy, public funds disappeared at a faster and more substantial rate than normal, essential services ran short of cash, the machinery of administration reached a new peak of inefficiency and popular discontent developed an intensity of a kind not felt since the 1940s.⁸⁸

In short, Buganda lost the referendum and its government was thoroughly discredited, sentiments which extended to the KY MPs sitting in the National Assembly that had been appointed by the same *Lukiiko* and supported its policies. Realising the futility of their opposition to the growing power of the UPC government, several KY MPs crossed to the UPC in the wake of the collapse of the UPC-KY alliance and the Lost Counties Referendum, giving Obote and the UPC a clear two-thirds majority in the National Assembly.⁸⁹ By the end of 1964, Obote's political dominance had reached its peak.

⁸⁸ Hancock, "The Buganda Crisis of 1964," 109.

⁸⁹ Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 428.

3. Fractures in the Obote Consensus: 1964

Despite the early success of the Obote Doctrine, a basic flaw in the Prime Minister's political strategy had already become evident in early 1964. In fact, Obote initiated the first cracks in the Obote Consensus when he gave a controversial speech in northern Uganda in January of that year, and pried these cracks wide open when he and several of his closest allies in the UPC covertly provided military aid to the Simbas in the Congo Rebellion from 1964 to 1965. Although Obote and the UPC were able to suppress opposition outside his party, it was mounting challenges from within his own party that began to unravel the Obote Consensus. In the culmination of these events, commonly referred to as the 1966 Crisis, Obote and his political and military allies staged a coup d'état against their own government in a bid to eliminate their political rivals in the UPC and keep power securely in their own hands.

Although the ramifications of the UPC's foray into the Congo Rebellion were largely confined to Uganda's internal politics, this chapter will show how the 1966 Crisis cannot be adequately analysed without considering the crisis from a regional and international standpoint. Unlike past authors who have pointed to Uganda's internal ethnic cleavages as the cause of the 1966 Crisis, this chapter will move beyond simple ethnic interpretations and explore how the UPC's foray into the Congo Rebellion reopened ideological divides within the UPC, challenged Obote's leadership of the party, and invited Ugandan politicians and foreign governments to court each other in order to influence politics in both Uganda and the Congo.

In order to do so, this chapter will examine the major events that occurred in Uganda from January 1964, when the first cracks in the Obote Doctrine began to show, to the climax of the 1966 Crisis. It will explore the relationship between Obote's One-Party Speech, the Uganda Army Mutiny, Uganda's new military relationships with Israel and the People's Republic of China, the Obote faction's covert involvement in the Congo Rebellion, and challenges to Obote's leadership of the UPC. While it is sometimes

difficult to state with certainty exactly how some of these events were linked, several conclusions can be drawn by piecing together newspaper accounts, speeches made in the National Assembly, and accounts later written by several protagonists during this period, including Obote, Ibingira, and the *Kabaka* of Buganda, Edward Mutesa II.

From this evidence, the following chapter argues that the Obote faction's covert involvement in the Congo Rebellion opened dangerous ideological divides in the UPC that dangerously undermined the Obote Doctrine. In particular, the Obote faction's secret aid to the Simbas called into question Obote's leadership of the UPC, brought to light the problems associated with the growing authority of the central government and the suppression of the opposition, and caused members of the UPC to question the direction of Uganda's foreign policy and the implications this had for Uganda's future political development. In the final analysis, the eruption and outcome of the 1966 Crisis cannot be fully understood by simple reference to colonial-era ethnic tensions and economic disparities, but rather by considering the impact of the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion after independence on Uganda's internal politics.

3.1. One-Party Debate

The One-Party Debate among Ugandan politicians was occasioned by a speech made by the Prime Minister during a tour of Uganda's northern districts in early January 1964. As noted earlier, Obote had largely refrained from discussing ideology due to the diversity of political opinion that existed in the party and instead used the Obote Doctrine to unite his party. While giving a speech in Lira, however, Obote appeared to break his ideological silence when he announced:

We have decided to follow a Socialist line of development. Consequently Socialist principles must inform, guide, and govern the basis, form and content of all the institutions of our society. Our lives, thoughts and actions must reflect the same trend. Discipline, order, control and planning are elements of the Socialist code of action, behaviour and approach. Organised opposition against the government is a typical capitalist notion and concept and under capitalism the laws are those of

the jungle, namely free for all, laissez faire and the survival of the fittest. We have rejected capitalism once and for all.⁹⁰

Of course, Obote offered few details on what he meant by “[s]ocialist principles,” and it could be argued that his speech in Lira simply called for a more militant version of the Obote Doctrine in order to both strengthen the UPC government and expand Uganda’s economy. In terms of maintaining the political consensus that Obote achieved when he first outlined the Obote Doctrine with great success in 1962, perhaps he believed it only a small step to equate the laws of the “jungle” and political opposition with capitalism and tribalism; or to equate his nation-building program with socialism and “[d]iscipline, order, control and planning.” Certainly, the Obote Doctrine always had a militant tone to it as is suggested by his aggressive desire to eliminate political opposition in the name of national security and his insistence that only disciplined adherence to national unity would allow the country to prosper. Yet Obote’s speech, which ultimately called for the implementation of a one-party state and socialism to speed the progress of Obote’s nation-building program for Uganda, caused an immediate row among leading politicians in the UPC. This suggests that many members of the party were not prepared to accept the latest addendum to the Obote Doctrine. Not only was ideology at issue, but so was the implicit suggestion that the advent of a one-party state would create an authoritarian regime which might fundamentally change the government’s relationship to the people and perhaps deprive others in the UPC of a chance to gain power for themselves.

Both *Kabaka Yekka* and the Democratic Party were quick to condemn Obote’s speech,⁹¹ but more important were the reactions within the UPC itself. It began when the UPC Administrative Secretary, Wakaka Musani, told the *Uganda Argus* that the Prime Minister was only speaking as president of the UPC, not as the Prime Minister of Uganda, and that Obote had “made no categorical statement about a one-party system of government” but instead only introduced “food for thought.” Musani then tried to reconcile past government statements with Obote’s controversial speech by claiming

⁹⁰ “Socialism Must Govern: Capitalism Rejected ‘Once and For All,’” *Uganda Argus*, January 8, 1964.

⁹¹ Ben. K.M. Kiwanuka, *Socialism and One-Party Rule* (Kampala: unknown publisher, 1964), 1; “And Now the Reaction: Produce an Alternative – DP Challenged,” *Uganda Argus*, January 9, 1964.

that the opposition was only concerned about gaining power while the UPC kept “the cherished goal of having Uganda as one country and one people with patriotic aspirations” which was necessary “to achieve rapid development of our country.”⁹² While Musani sought to reconcile Obote’s latest ideological pronouncement with the Obote Doctrine, the Prime Minister’s statements also raised the ire of two very prominent members of his cabinet, the Minister of Justice, Grace Ibingira, and the Attorney-General, Godfrey Binaisa.

Ibingira struggled to support the Prime Minister’s declaration by claiming that Obote only sought to give reasons as to why “a multiplicity of parties tends to retard, rather than promote, progress.” More strongly, Ibingira demonstrated his unease with the authoritarian implications of Obote’s speech by asserting that any move towards a one-party state would only be accomplished electorally and not through compulsion.⁹³ Binaisa took a similar stance, demonstrating that he too was concerned about the growing power of the Prime Minister and what an acceptance of Obote’s speech might mean for the country. Binaisa told the *Uganda Argus* that any legislation aimed at introducing a one-party system would reduce democracy to a “hollow mockery.” He then tried to reconcile Obote’s One-Party Speech with the Obote Doctrine by equating capitalism with the foreign exploitation of Africans and socialism with a form of economic nationalism:

As to socialism and capitalism, my only comment is that capitalism exists only among the foreigners in this country, and that the indigenous control of the means of production, distribution and exchange with the assistance of Government, as Government is trying to do now [is socialism]. We have no class war in Uganda, and it would be doing violence to the language if we were to equate our few landed gentry as capitalists.⁹⁴

Others in the UPC appeared to support Obote’s drive towards socialism and a one-party state, and like Binaisa they expressed this support by demanding a

⁹² “One Party Idea Was ‘Food for Thought’,” *Uganda Argus*, January 10, 1964.

⁹³ “UPC’s Claim to Lead ‘Based on Merit’,” *Uganda Argus*, January 11, 1964.

⁹⁴ “A ‘Hollow Mockery:’ Mr. Binaisa on Democracy and One-Party System,” *Uganda Argus*, January 13, 1964.

commitment to economic nationalism under the appellation of “African Socialism.”⁹⁵ Unlike Binaisa, however, these supporters embraced the authoritarian implications of Obote’s speech. Thus, UPC Member of Parliament I.K. Musazi dismissively referred to “the prevailing Western doctrine of parliamentary opposition” as a misuse of human resources owing to the “continuous and unproductive internal struggle for power” waged by opposition parties. Musazi then elaborated on his idea of African socialism:

[B]oth in Asia and Africa, an authoritarian form of government is being developed, therefore it seems the only one suited to achieve consistent progress... Traditionally our people are the bearers of an elder socialism based on our old heritage of communal living. It is from these nationalist African principles that African socialism has to emerge and be made dominant.⁹⁶

Adding to Musazi’s comments was veteran UPC MP Otema Allimadi, who was paraphrased in the *Uganda Argus* as stating that “critics of a one-party system in Uganda reject the African intellectual and cultural values in favour of the European values.”⁹⁷ Allimadi then dismissed KY opposition to a one-party state by noting that “the people of Buganda by electing predominantly KY members to the Lukiko [sic] on the understanding that KY was to join UPC have equally shown their desire for one-party rule.”⁹⁸ Finally, UPC Secretary-General John Kakonge offered his thoughts on the subject in an address to the East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs in Nairobi in a speech entitled “Contemporary African Socialism.” As paraphrased in the *Uganda Argus*, Kakonge claimed that scientific socialism could be modified to fit “traditional African societies” in order to allow them to become “economically, socially and culturally progressive.”⁹⁹

⁹⁵ See: “No Time for Power Struggles,” *Uganda Argus*, January 14, 1964; “One-Party Rule is Suitable,” *Uganda Argus*, January 15, 1964; “Views on Socialist Society,” *Uganda Argus*, February 4, 1964; and Benedicto Kiwanuka, “What Is Democracy?” (Lecture, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, August 2, 1967).

⁹⁶ “No Time for Power Struggles,” *Uganda Argus*, January 14, 1964.

⁹⁷ “One-Party Rule Is Suitable,” *Uganda Argus*, January 15, 1964.

⁹⁸ “One-Party Rule Is Suitable,” *Uganda Argus*, January 15, 1964.

⁹⁹ “Views on Socialist Society,” *Uganda Argus*, February 4, 1964.

At this point, Obote returned from his trip to the northern districts of Uganda and appears to have realized the implications of his speech for the unity of the UPC and perhaps for his own leadership of the party as well. Appearing in the National Assembly, Obote clarified his comments in response to a question asked by a KY MP about his one-party speech and returned to stress familiar themes that had united the UPC under his leadership in the past. In particular, Obote used the opportunity to re-emphasize the tenets of the Obote Doctrine by contrasting his espousal of national unity with the potentially dangerous beliefs that he said were supported by members of KY:

I consider the need for establishing national consciousness and a united effort on a national basis are so great that unless there are fundamental [sic] differences between the national Parties, there can be no valid reason for a multi-party system not only in Buganda but throughout the country. The apparent desire of the Leaders and members of K.Y. that one region should have a single party system while other regions have more than one party, so as to enable them to select after every election or during the life of any Parliament which party they should go with in forming a coalition Government, is a negation of national unity and a serious source of instability.¹⁰⁰

Obote stressed that “[t]he sources of multi-party system in this country come not from the [people] but from the leaders who disagree with one another not on fundamental policy but just because they do not like each other’s face” by pointing to the fact that, “since the national elections in 1962, my party has contested rural elections, district council elections, kingdom elections, municipal elections and has won most of them.”¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1964, 1.

¹⁰¹ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1964, 1-2. Of course, the fact that the UPC had been actively using government machinery to heavily tilt the country’s governing institutions in its favour, including widespread accusations of voting fraud and voter intimidation by the UPC Youth League (UPCYL), was omitted by the Prime Minister. Three weeks after this comment in the National Assembly, the DP won 11 of 14 municipal council seats in elections in Kampala and Jinja, Uganda’s two largest cities. However, the results “were disallowed by the minister responsible for local governments” who then appointed councillors and mayors for those cities instead. Presumably, this was done by either A.A. Ojera, the Minister of Community Development and Labour, or C.J. Obwangor, then Minister of Regional Administrations. See: Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda*, 193; and “DP Jubilant at Election Success,” *Uganda Argus*, February 24, 1964.

It is important to note that Obote defended his One-Party Speech in the National Assembly in moderate and familiar terms, by reproaching the opposition for their ostensible hostility to “national unity” and their tendency to create “instability.”¹⁰² At no time in his address to the National Assembly did Obote make reference to socialism or suggest that he would eliminate Uganda’s opposition parties by force. Regardless, the One-Party Speech was the first public indication that the Prime Minister was prepared to work ideologically outside the confines of the Obote Doctrine and engage in a more militant form of nation building with or without his party’s consent. The speech also marked the first serious sign of dissent within the UPC since independence, and the rift that Obote had suddenly created in the party would only widen in the subsequent months.

3.2. The Uganda Army Mutiny

The Prime Minister’s One-Party Speech in Lira was quickly followed on 23 January 1964 by the Uganda Army Mutiny, when several hundred members of the First Battalion of the Uganda Army, representing as much as one quarter of Uganda’s total soldiery, mutinied in their barracks at Jinja in Eastern Uganda.¹⁰³ When Obote sent his Minister of Internal Affairs, Felix Onama, to parley with the mutineers, Onama was kidnapped by the soldiers and forced to promise faster promotions and substantial pay raises for all officers and men to secure his own release.¹⁰⁴ In the end, British soldiers were flown in to restore order and ensure Uganda’s security at the request of Prime Minister Obote, and within days the mutiny had ended.

¹⁰² Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1964, 859 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

¹⁰³ The exact number of mutineers was contested at the time of the mutiny. According to a *Uganda Argus* article written the following day, as many as 350 men mutinied, although Obote claimed in the *Uganda Argus* after the imposition of censorship that only 20 men participated in the mutiny. Perhaps most tellingly, Timothy Parsons notes that 429 soldiers were dismissed from the Uganda Army for their alleged involvement. This is contrasted with the 1998 soldiers that Amii Omara-Otunnu claims were in the Uganda Army at an unspecified period in 1964. See: “British Troops Fly In: Move Follows Incidents at Jinja Barracks,” *Uganda Argus*, January 24, 1964; “Prime Minister on Jinja Arrests,” *Uganda Argus*, January 27, 1964; Timothy Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies and the Making of Modern East Africa* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003), 157; and Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military in Uganda*, 71.

¹⁰⁴ “Uganda Returns to Normal,” *Uganda Argus*, January 25, 1964.

Scholars studying the mutiny have relied entirely on the personal accounts of Obote and Onama, as reported in the *Uganda Argus* and as stated in the National Assembly, in order to understand how the mutiny itself unfolded. Even Timothy Parsons, the author of *1964 Army Mutinies and the Making of Modern East Africa*, admits that “the causes and actual details of these incidents are extremely hard to pin down” and himself was forced to rely on the version of events offered by Obote and Onama.¹⁰⁵ Certainly, the *Kabaka* of Buganda was suspicious about the sequence of events. In 1967 he wrote that Obote’s “reaction seemed out of proportion to the situation, but whether he really thought the incident so threatening or wished to create an atmosphere of crisis, he certainly turned it to good account.”¹⁰⁶

Despite the uncertainty behind the events leading up to and including the mutiny, the Uganda Army Mutiny had several concrete domestic and foreign policy implications in Uganda.¹⁰⁷ Domestically, Uganda Army headquarters was shifted from Jinja to Mbuya, a suburb of Kampala, in order to improve political control over the army.¹⁰⁸ This move was followed by a vigorous attempt by both Obote and Onama to court the “Ugandan soldiery through pay increases and rapid promotion.”¹⁰⁹ At the time of the mutiny, only 18 of the 95 officers in the Uganda Army were Ugandan, and the remainder were British. In the month after the mutiny, the number of Ugandan officers had jumped to 55, although the remaining 40 British officers still held the most senior positions.¹¹⁰ By June 1964, just five months after the mutiny, Colonel Shaban Opolot had assumed overall command of Uganda’s armed forces when he was named Commander of the Uganda Army, Lieutenant-Colonel Idi Amin was appointed Commander of Signals at the Army Headquarters, and the two battalions of the Uganda Army were led by Ugandan

¹⁰⁵ Parsons notes that because so many soldiers were killed in military purges during Amin’s reign, only “parliamentary debates [and], limited press reports” are available to historians to piece together the Uganda Army Mutiny. Parsons, *1964 Army Mutinies*, 114. Unfortunately, Omara-Otunnu’s detailed account of the mutiny provides no footnotes, while neither Opolot nor Amin ever publicly discussed or wrote about the mutiny.

¹⁰⁶ Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 179.

¹⁰⁷ See, for example, Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 114-134; Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military*, 65-77; Hugh Dinwiddy, “The Search for Unity in Uganda: Early Days to 1966,” *African Affairs* 80, no. 321 (October 1981): 516; Mazrui, *Soldiers and Kinsmen in Uganda*, 17.

¹⁰⁸ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military*, 65.

¹⁰⁹ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 176.

¹¹⁰ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military*, 60.

officers.¹¹¹ Despite Opolot's senior position, however, his relationship with Obote quickly soured when Opolot married a relative of Buganda's royal family. As noted by Parsons, Obote "hoped to use the Ugandan army as a base of political support in his struggles with rivals in the ruling Uganda People's Congress and the Kingdom of Buganda."¹¹² As a result, Obote and Onama deemed Opolot untrustworthy due to the latter's association with the Bugandan royal family and the former began to seek the personal support of Amin in order to ensure the future loyalty of the Uganda Army to the UPC.¹¹³

Omara-Otunnu also argues that the rapid promotion of Ugandan officers following the mutiny, combined with the dismissal of British officers in July 1964 from positions of direct command over the Uganda Army, finally allowed the UPC to establish a foreign policy independent of Great Britain.¹¹⁴ According to Parsons, at the same time that Ugandans were rapidly promoted to officers in the Uganda Army in the wake of the mutiny, Obote was also lobbying the British government to help Uganda vastly expand its armed forces. However, the absence of perceived internal and external threats to Uganda, and by extension British national interests, made such headlong expansion appear unnecessary from the British viewpoint and the request was denied.¹¹⁵ The denial of this request, combined with complaints from the remaining British officers still holding positions of command in the Uganda Army that the hefty pay raises and rapid promotions offered to Ugandan soldiers after the mutiny were "contrary to basic military discipline," caused Obote to declare that all seconded British personnel in the army would have to leave the country.¹¹⁶ In place of British military support, Uganda quickly established military ties with Israel, who replaced Britain as Uganda's main military supplier almost overnight. Military ties were established with China and the USSR as

¹¹¹ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military*, 60. "Colonel Opolot Becomes Brigadier," *Uganda Argus*, September 10, 1964.

¹¹² Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 175.

¹¹³ This according to Henry Kyemba, an Obote confidant and member of his staff for several years. Henry Kyemba, *A State of Blood: The Inside Story of Idi Amin* (New York: Ace Books, 1977), 25.

¹¹⁴ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military*, 66-67.

¹¹⁵ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 177.

¹¹⁶ At the time of the mutiny only 18 of the 95 officers in the Uganda Army were Ugandan and the rest were British. Immediately after the mutiny, the number of Ugandan officers had jumped to 55, although the remaining 40 British officers still held the most senior positions.

well, two countries seeking to expand their political influence in sub-Saharan Africa.¹¹⁷ In April 1964, members of Israel's secret service, MOSSAD, trained Uganda's new 800-man elite paramilitary force, the General Service Unit (GSU), headed by Obote's cousin, Akena Adoko.¹¹⁸ Israeli military advisors and equipment also helped Uganda quickly establish an air force, artillery, armoured corps, and paratrooper corps,¹¹⁹ and ultimately allowed the Uganda Army to more than double in size just a year after the mutiny.¹²⁰

Finally, Obote and his Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism, A.A. Nekyon, also used the mutiny to intimidate the press. Immediately following the mutiny, Nekyon instituted the Press Censorship and Correction Board "composed of young men from the party"¹²¹ that approved all newspaper articles concerning the military and security before they were released in Uganda.¹²² Opposition party members in the National Assembly quickly accused the board of zealously overstepping its mandate. Although press censorship was formally abolished just a month after the mutiny, opposition members thereafter claimed that staff at the *Argus* were "frightened, timid and docile because of threats" and unwilling to publish more than "four and five-line reports"

¹¹⁷ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military*, 66-67.

¹¹⁸ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military*, 65. According to Omara-Otunnu, the GSU was largely concentrated in Kampala, specialized in "counter-insurgency," and quickly gained a reputation for their "ruthless tactics" against the UPC's perceived political opposition.

¹¹⁹ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military*, 66-67. Before Israel, Britain was Uganda's main supplier of military aid. However, due to the perceived lack of geo-political strategic importance that Uganda had for Britain in East Africa, Britain kept its military aid to Uganda low as compared to Kenya.

¹²⁰ From a comparison of Omara-Otunnu's figures at pages 51 and 71 of *Politics and the Military*. See also Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 175. From 1962 to 1969, E.A. Brett notes that the Uganda Army grew tenfold as Obote increasingly relied upon the military throughout his reign. E.A. Brett, "Neutralising the Use of Force in Uganda: The Rôle of the Military in Politics," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 33, no. 1 (March 1995): 135.

¹²¹ Unfortunately, the only member of the Press Censorship and Correction Board that can be confirmed is its chairman, Otema Allimadi. The rest of the board members were likely composed of zealous members of the UPC Youth League, based on the Allimadi's comment that the board was "composed of young men from the party". See: "Premier's Statement on British Officers," *Uganda Argus*, February 7, 1964.

¹²² "Premier's Statement on British Officers," *Uganda Argus*, February 7, 1964.

about the opposition.¹²³ By the end of the 1964, the Minister of Animal Industry, Game and Fisheries, John Babiha, even admitted that the UPC's political opponents were disqualified from broadcasting on *Radio Uganda* and *Uganda Television* as well, lest the opposition use them to spread "destructive propaganda."¹²⁴

Despite the timing of Obote's One-Party Speech, the Uganda Army Mutiny, and the imposition of press censorship and intimidation, a dearth of available evidence leaves any notion of a preconceived plot between the three entirely speculative. However, these events appeared to have instigated two major developments in Ugandan politics. First, as access to the channels of power appeared to be declining for Obote's political opposition, both within the UPC and opposition parties alike, rumours spread that his political opponents now sought the personal support of Major Opolot in order to counter's Obote's growing influence in the Uganda Army.¹²⁵ This development led to the politicization of different sections of the army and the situation that historian A.G.G. Gingyera-Pinycwa describes below:

What connected these political intrigues with the image and status of the army was that all of these groups realized correctly what their last card would have to be if worse came to worst. This last card was the gun... to have Opolot or Amin, the two-top-ranking army officers of the time, or other ranking officers behind one gave one reassurance in the quicksands of the politics of plots and counterplots.¹²⁶

Second, Obote and Onama's alliance with Amin, combined with Obote's One-Party Speech, the intimidation of Uganda's media by Nekyon, and the rapid expansion of the

¹²³ "Premier's Statement on British Officers," *Uganda Argus*, February 7, 1964; "Free Press... With Care," *Uganda Argus*, July 3, 1964. The later assertion can also be personally substantiated by this researcher, who quickly noticed how articles about opposition parties in Uganda dwindled from lengthy, front page articles in the *Uganda Argus* in 1962 to mere stubs of articles buried in the paper less than two years later. The editor of the *Uganda Argus*, Charles Harrison, wrote an editorial after the resolution of the mutiny praising Obote's handling of it and defending Obote's institution of press censorship. Harrison wrote that, "it is generally accepted that any newspaper in a developing country has greater responsibilities in this respect than does the Press in more advanced countries where the term 'freedom of expression' may well have a different connotation." See: "Lifting of the Censorship," *Uganda Argus*, February 27, 1964.

¹²⁴ "Opposition Parties Not Necessary," *Uganda Argus*, December 19, 1964.

¹²⁵ Gingyera-Pinycwa, *Apolo Milton Obote*, 242.

¹²⁶ Gingyera-Pinycwa, *Apolo Milton Obote*, 242.

Uganda Army owing to Uganda's new military ties with Israel, China, and the USSR, provided the ideological and logistical support necessary to allow Obote and his most trusted allies in the UPC to begin covertly aiding the Simbas in the Congo Rebellion. Those UPC members most involved in supporting the Simbas quietly created a "Government Parliamentary Group" sometime in 1964 and held all the necessary ministerial portfolios that allowed them to isolate their activities from the rest of the UPC cabinet.¹²⁷ Members of the group included the Prime Minister, who also held the portfolios of Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Onama, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Nekyon, the Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism, Odaka, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and Amin himself, as Deputy Commander of the Army.¹²⁸ Collectively, this group formed the core of what became known as the Obote faction of the UPC.

As the Obote Doctrine faced its first challenges, the Prime Minister again showed that he was not prepared to allow opposition within his own party to stop him from achieving his political goals. By early 1964, a loyal cadre of UPC MPs – plus the Deputy Commander of the Army – had firmly allied themselves with the Prime Minister, owing both to similar ideological goals and the personal benefits that such a relationship provided them. As such, this group formulated the plan to aid the Simbas and thus to intervene in the Congo Rebellion. Unsurprisingly, the Obote faction's assistance to the Chinese-backed Simbas in the "ideological battlefield" of the Congo in 1964 coincided with rumours of increasing foreign influence in Uganda and increasing ideological divisions in the UPC.

¹²⁷ According to Ibingira, the group was ostensibly created to deal with the problem of Congolese refugees coming into Uganda. He writes that although "there were a few who supported an open recognition of the Stanleyville regime of Gbenye opposing the Congolese Central government, there was a consistent majority in all the UPC and parliamentary group meetings that opposed any physical intervention by Uganda, instead advocating a search for a way to resolve the civil war through a political (as opposed to a military) settlement under AU auspices." Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 136.

¹²⁸ Exactly how many members this committee was composed of cannot be verified, but Obote, Onama, Nekyon, and Odaka were considered the leading members. Amin, of course, never formally joined the UPC but for the sake of semantic convenience he is grouped together with the Obote faction. Evidence of the parliamentary group is also found in: Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1030-1039 (M.F. Aroma and Joe Kiwanuka).

3.3. Ideological Cleavages in the UPC

The political commotion created by the Prime Minister's One-Party Speech in Lira in January 1964 returned in April when the UPC held its Annual Delegates Conference in Gulu in northern Uganda, and again in May at a public debate between two prominent UPC members. In Gulu, A.A. Nekyon, a cousin and close associate of Obote, re-opened ideological debate in the party by suggesting that a small group within the UPC favoured communism but hid their true intentions under the guise of socialism. Nekyon insisted that the party's ideology be defined by the UPC delegates in attendance at the conference and attempted to pass a resolution in condemnation of communism before party members.¹²⁹ According to communist sympathizer and UPC Secretary-General John Kakonge, however, Nekyon was "forced to withdraw [the resolution] in the face of hostility from the delegates."¹³⁰ Nevertheless, Nekyon's allies at the conference, including Obote and Onama, did manage to engineer the removal of Kakonge as the Secretary-General in favour of their sponsored candidate, former Minister of Justice and current Minister of State Grace Ibingira, amid numerous charges of vote rigging.¹³¹

The claims of vote-rigging and the ideological debates that overshadowed the UPC's Annual Delegates Conference in 1964 kept alive the growing cleavage in the party that first opened with the Prime Minister's One-Party Speech in Lira. Tellingly, less than a month after the Annual Delegates Conference, Kakonge challenged Nekyon to a public debate on the merits of communism and capitalism at the clock tower in Kampala in front of over 600 members of the UPC Youth League (UPCYL). This largely pro-communist organization, once led by Kakonge himself, heckled Nekyon throughout his speech on the merits of capitalism and carried Kakonge to the stage on a chair above

¹²⁹ "UPC Will Never Favour It: Communism is Condemned by Mr. Nekyon," *Uganda Argus*, April 30, 1964.

¹³⁰ "Kakonge Tells of 'Plan'," *Uganda Argus*, May 6, 1964.

¹³¹ As a result of Kakonge's failed re-election bid, the *Uganda Argus* stated that over 300 delegates walked out of the conference and that at least one prominent UPC MP, Joe Kiwanuka, supported Kakonge's assertion. However, unlike the One-Party Debate controversy, few details of this dispute leaked out to the press, perhaps owing to Nekyon's stewardship of the *Uganda Argus* as Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism. "Apologise to Dr. Obote, Kakonge Urged," *Uganda Argus*, May 4, 1964; "He's Unhappy Over Polls," *Uganda Argus*, May 4, 1965; "Kakonge Tells of 'Plan'," *Uganda Argus*, May 6, 1964.

their heads when his turn came to reply.¹³² Rather than verbally reward his supportive crowd by defending the merits of communism however, Kakonge told members of the youth league in attendance that “[w]e must try to find ways of stopping these quarrels” within the UPC before walking off the stage.¹³³

Kakonge’s sudden change of heart immediately before the debate is interesting, and evidence suggests that Obote promised Kakonge a coveted government post and a seat in the National Assembly and in order to quell another ideological dispute from erupting in the UPC. According to Jorgensen, Kakonge sought as secretary general of the UPC to “create an ideologically committed mass party controlled by an extra-parliamentary national organisation using youth leaguers as cadres.” This idea, however, “posed a real threat to party notables,” including the more conservative-minded Nekyon and Ibingira, who then engineered Kakonge’s removal as secretary general of the UPC at the 1964 conference.¹³⁴ Clearly, there were strong ideological divisions between the two men, yet Obote sought to keep both men loyal to himself personally. Thus, Kakonge was rewarded for muting his conflict with Nekyon and Ibingira when he was named Director of Planning for the UPC government soon after, and was given a seat in the National Assembly as a specially elected member in 1965.¹³⁵

For the third time in 1964, Obote had succeeded in quelling ideological debates within his own party lest they undermine the unity of the UPC achieved under the Obote

¹³² The clock tower was a popular meeting place in Kampala for political rallies. “Nekyon Hits Communism at ‘Challenge’ Meeting: Kakonge Pledges Support for UPC,” *Uganda Argus*, June 1, 1964. From 1963 to 1964, Nekyon was instrumental in forming and funding the National Union of Youth Organizations (NUYO) for the specific purpose of cutting funding from the UPCYL whose radical left-wing policies conflicted with those of the UPC itself. Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History*, 225.

¹³³ “Nekyon Hits Communism at ‘Challenge’ Meeting: Kakonge Pledges Support for UPC,” *Uganda Argus*, June 1, 1964.

¹³⁴ Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History*, 225.

¹³⁵ When considered in light of Obote’s Move to the Left strategy near the end of the decade, it does not appear that Obote disagreed with Kakonge’s ideals, but only with his tendency to act outside of his leadership. According to Kenneth Ingham, although Obote “liked Kakonge, he was worried lest his decidedly radical political views might threaten to carry the UPC too far to the left.” Kenneth Ingham, *Obote: A Political Biography* (London: Routledge, 1994), 93. Nabudere claims that Obote believed he could control Ibingira better than Kakonge, hence the reason the vote was rigged against Kakonge. It is also worth noting that Obote ally Felix Onama was voted assistant secretary general. D. Wadada Nabudere, *Imperialism and Revolution in Uganda* (London: Onyx Press, 1980), 256-257.

Doctrine. As his government was preparing to wade into the Congo's "ideological battlefield" by assisting the Chinese-backed Simbas against Tshombe and his American-backed Congolese forces, Obote likely thought it prudent to stress the collective benefits of nationalism and minimise potentially divisive questions of ideology. However, two small articles in the *Uganda Argus* suggest that unnamed "foreign" influence in Uganda was growing and that members of the Obote faction in the UPC were becoming increasingly concerned by it.

The first article, published in July 1964, publicly announced that Onama was introducing legislation to create the General Service Unit to be trained by the Israeli military to "counter-spy" against increasing numbers of "foreign agents" operating in Uganda.¹³⁶ Unfortunately, Onama offered no details as to who these "foreign agents" were, but in the course of the debate in the National Assembly it became clear that Onama was concerned that members of Uganda's civil service were leaking important government information out of the country.¹³⁷ In the second article, published by the *Argus* on 18 August 1964, Obote warned that "foreigners" were "organising, financing and spreading" anti-government propaganda, and that all Ugandans must be careful that the government's ostensible commitment to freedom of expression and association did not degenerate into a licence to subvert the UPC government.¹³⁸ This threat was likely aimed at the British and South African-owned *Argus* itself to ensure it conformed to the UPC's governing ideology. Yet the timing of the threat is also interesting as by this time it appears that the Obote faction in the UPC was about to embark on its intervention in the Congo Rebellion and perhaps wanted to ensure that if anything was leaked to the press then outlets such as the *Uganda Argus* would refrain from publishing them without the party's consent.

¹³⁶ According to Omara-Otunnu, the GSU was already formed by April 1964. Given the Obote faction's willingness to work outside of Uganda's constitutional and legislative processes, it would not be surprising if the GSU had in fact been established before legislation was passed to allow it, although independent confirmation of this could not be attained.

¹³⁷ "Operation Counter-Spy: Organisation to Watch Foreign Agents 'Now in Uganda'," *Uganda Argus*, July 3, 1964; Abel Jacob, "Israel's Military Aid to Africa, 1960-66," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 9, no. 2 (August 1971): 178.

¹³⁸ "Premier Hits at Anti-Government Propagandists: Foreigners Warned," *Uganda Argus*, August 18, 1964.

Historians of Uganda have never established any satisfactory link between the events of 1964 and the 1966 Crisis, and yet the pattern of events that emerged is difficult to ignore. From January to August 1964 Obote strengthened his commitment to militant nationalism with his controversial One-Party Speech, gained a key ally in the army in the person of the Idi Amin, doubled the size of Uganda Army, signed a major military pact with Israel, created the General Service Unit specializing in domestic espionage, and welcomed Chinese and Soviet military advisors to Uganda. Militarily, Obote and his Minister of Internal Affairs, Onama, had never been stronger or more active. Ideologically, the Prime Minister gave the Obote Doctrine a more militant edge by stressing the need for Uganda to exercise “[d]iscipline, order, control and planning” and hinting that he would be prepared to crush Uganda’s opposition, both inside and outside the UPC, with increasing authority. Such an approach was particularly evident in Obote’s and Nekyon’s dealings with the press, as they both succeeded in turning all of Uganda’s major media outlets into pliable government pawns. With himself and his closest allies in the UPC holding the important ministerial portfolios of defence, foreign relations, internal affairs, and media, the Obote faction was ready to intervene in the Congo without the consent of the UPC itself.

3.4. Ugandan Intervention in the Congo Rebellion

In September 1964, soon after Obote had aimed his vague threat at the national media by accusing foreigners of “organising, financing and spreading” anti-government propaganda, the Obote faction of the UPC appeared ready to send the Uganda Army covertly into battle in the Congo.¹³⁹ In this section, I argue that the Obote faction of the

¹³⁹ No historian has yet been able to provide a precise date as to when the Uganda Army began to actively fight in the Congo, and in fact few even claim that the Uganda Army actively fought in the Congo at all. Parsons claims it was in January 1965, based on a report from Colonel Senior, the British High Commission’s military advisory in Uganda, back to his superiors in Britain. However, A.G.G. Gingyera-Pinyewa claims that a “favourite point in Obote’s speeches to members of the improved armed force that came into being after 1964 was to refer derisively to the poor quality of the army’s weaponry as it confronted Congo mercenaries in 1964.” Parsons, *1964 Army Mutinies*, 197; Gingyera-Pinyewa, *Apolo Milton Obote*, 241. Gingyera-Pinyewa’s account is supported by: Mutibwa, *Uganda since Independence*, 36. Subsequent evidence provided in this thesis will make clear the reasons for this approximate date.

UPC began its covert intervention in the Congo Rebellion as early as September 1964. Further, from December 1964 to March 1965 the Obote faction began an anti-American propaganda campaign designed to gain widespread popular support in order to justify their unauthorized actions in connection with the Congo Rebellion. The propaganda campaign itself, and the secrecy with which the Obote faction intervened in the Congo, suggests that the Obote faction was worried about the political ramifications their actions would cause both within and outside the UPC. Indeed, as details of the secret Congo operations were discovered by members of the opposition, a political controversy erupted that widened existing ideological cleavages within the UPC. The result was a leadership crisis in the party and increasing foreign influence in Uganda's internal affairs that was only solved when the Obote faction staged a coup d'état in the 1966 Crisis.

In September 1964, with the country's attention firmly focused on the dissolution of the UPC-KY alliance and the looming Lost Counties Referendum, Idi Amin was promoted to the post of Deputy Commander of the Uganda Army.¹⁴⁰ In this capacity, "Amin conducted a special recruiting safari to reenlist the formerly disgraced members" of the military who had participated in the mutiny in January, with the objective to form the Third Battalion of the Uganda Army.¹⁴¹ Although the Commander of the Army, Shaban Opolot, argued against the decision to rehire the mutineers, Obote defended the soldiers' reenlistment. Obote claimed Uganda needed experienced soldiers immediately to defend their borders with the Congo and Sudan, yet did not elaborate on the extent of the threat either of these countries may have posed.¹⁴² The Third Battalion was then quickly and quietly stationed in Uganda's West Nile District while the district was proclaimed "out of bounds" to all non-residents of the area.¹⁴³ With Uganda's press

¹⁴⁰ Omara-Otunnu, *Politics and the Military*, 62.

¹⁴¹ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 179.

¹⁴² Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 179; Gingyera-Pinyicwa, *Apolo Milton Obote*, 241. Referring back to Gingyera-Pinyicwa's comment that a "favourite point in Obote's speeches to members of the improved armed forces that came into being after 1964 was to refer derisively to the poor quality of the army's weaponry as it confronted Congo mercenaries in 1964," it is likely that the military hardware from Israel had either yet to reach the Uganda Army by the end of 1964, or that the third battalion of the Uganda Army was already fighting the Congolese army before their military deal with Israel was reached in June 1964.

¹⁴³ This according to Abu Mayanja, who made the claim while a member of the UPC during Ocheng's parliamentary motion to suspend Amin on 4 February 1966. Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1014 (Abu Mayanja).

intimidated, Amin owing his recent promotion to Obote, the mutineers now entirely dependent on both men, and the West Nile District “out of bounds” to most Ugandans, Obote and his allies in the UPC likely felt their foray into the Congo Rebellion could be hidden from public view. It is at this time that the Obote faction’s direct support of the Simbas most likely began, although preparation for the Uganda Army’s intervention in the Congo Rebellion must have taken months of prior organizing in order to gather the men and equipment necessary to carry out the operations.

The Obote faction’s propaganda campaign to gain political and ideological support for the army’s deployment in the Congo began with three articles published in the *Uganda Argus* in late 1964 and early 1965. In December 1964, Obote publicly condemned unspecified “foreign powers” for killing “thousands of Africans” in a fight over the Congo’s wealth. The Prime Minister then intimated that foreign mercenaries were being employed by “privileged people” to suppress the “nationalist government” of the Congo – an apparent reference to the Simbas – and their attempts to lift the “common man” in the Congo out of poverty.¹⁴⁴ More dramatically, a second article published on 22 February 1965 reported that six Ugandan soldiers were kidnapped and taken to the Congo while on a border patrol inside Uganda’s West Nile District.¹⁴⁵ The incident caused Congolese Prime Minister Moïse Tshombe to declare for the first time that Ugandan troops were operating in the Congo. Obote promptly denied Tshombe’s charge and claimed it to be politically motivated because the UPC did not recognize Tshombe’s government, but rather the Simbas, as the legitimate government of the Congo.¹⁴⁶ Just three days later, however, Obote gave wide publicity to the bombing of two Ugandan

¹⁴⁴ Given the UPC’s level of control over the *Uganda Argus*, it seems likely that Nekyon, as the Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism, purposely chose to publicize this. “It’s a Struggle for Congo’s Wealth – Premier,” *Uganda Argus*, December 8, 1964.

¹⁴⁵ “Our Troops Have Not Operated in the Congo, Says Premier: Ugandans Ambushed,” *Uganda Argus*, February 22, 1965.

¹⁴⁶ “Why Uganda Is Attacked: Solution Must Be Political,” *Uganda Argus*, February 24, 1965.

villages, Goli and Paidha, by American and Congolese forces on the Ugandan border by encouraging a group of foreign journalists to survey the damage for themselves.¹⁴⁷

Rather than using the bombing of Goli and Paidha to admit to the UPC's covert support of the Simbas, the Prime Minister and his allies in the UPC instead used the kidnappings and bombings in order to stir up anti-American sentiment and unite Obote's political colleagues under his leadership, perhaps with the goal to eventually make the army's secret operations in the Congo public. To this effect, several unnamed members of the UPC cabinet organized a sizeable demonstration outside the American embassy in Kampala in late February 1965, attended by MPs from all parties and several prominent cabinet ministers from the UPC itself. Three unnamed ministers in attendance presented a petition to embassy staff which, according to the *Uganda Argus*, accused the US of wanting to "exploit Africa's wealth for the financial adventurers and speculators of Wall Street who thrive on war, murder, and human suffering."¹⁴⁸

The articles in the *Uganda Argus* were soon followed by a debate entitled "Peace in Africa" in the National Assembly. Comments during the debate support the notion that the Prime Minister and his allies used the Congo issue to stir up nationalist sentiments in order to eventually justify the Obote faction's covert use of the Uganda army in the neighboring country when this knowledge became public. The motion was originally moved in the National Assembly by MP Basil Bataringaya, when he was still a member of the Democratic Party in December 1964, and according to Bataringaya the motion was intended to stimulate non-partisan debate of a general nature regarding foreign

¹⁴⁷ "Troops Tell of Attack in West Nile: Press See Bombed Areas," *Uganda Argus*, February 27, 1965. The fact that the Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Tourism at this time, A.A. Ojera, and the Prime Minister only allowed foreign journalists to enter West Nile District to survey the damage is interesting. The district was "closed" to all Ugandans, and the *Uganda Argus* was only able to report on the damage by referring to foreign press reports, suggesting that Obote wanted to give the incident widespread international press while simultaneously preventing Ugandans themselves from inquiring too closely.

¹⁴⁸ "U.S. Flag Is Hauled Down," *Uganda Argus*, February 17, 1965. The date of the article is provided by James Mittelman but, considering the sequence of events, it is clear that Mittelman is mistaken. Mittelman, *Ideology and Politics in Uganda*, 104.

intrusions in Africa.¹⁴⁹ With the National Assembly adjourned, however, Bataringaya's motion was not debated until 1 March 1965, and as a result it focused on the recent events in Uganda surrounding the Congo Rebellion.

Leading the debate, Bataringaya roundly condemned "the Russians, the Chinese, [and] the Americans" for their interventionist foreign policies towards the Congo and noted that "if we allow the cold war in politics to dominate our political scene we shall lose our independence."¹⁵⁰ A similar viewpoint was expressed by J.S.M. Ochola (UPC), who noted that Uganda was "faced with internal problems, problems arising from external influence." To remedy this, Ochola echoed past themes of the Obote Doctrine by calling for Uganda to support "socialism based on the African way of life without accepting socialism as practised in Russia or China, without accepting wholly capitalism, as practised in America or Britain."¹⁵¹ The nationalist framework for Uganda's intervention in the Congo is clearly reflected in Bataringaya's and Ochola's comments, and thus both men appear squarely inside the Obote faction of the UPC.¹⁵²

However, despite Bataringaya's and Ochola's best attempts to unify the house, other MPs from the UPC and KY quickly steered the debate into a partisan and politically charged series of accusations and counter accusations that completely divided it. It began when prominent KY MP E.M.K. Mulira revealed:

When, Sir, the Government announced that we should show solidarity by common demonstration at the Clock Tower, when we were attacked [by American and Congolese forces], we on this side willingly joined in and went to show this solidarity which was necessary for the country. What happened, Sir, when we got there? What did we find? UPC people came

¹⁴⁹ Knowing this, one wonders whether Bataringaya had already agreed to join the UPC when the motion was first conceived in December 1964. Such a position may have given Obote the illusion of having non-partisan support for his position on the Congo and lending further credence to my claim that the Uganda Army was already fighting in the Congo at this time. Bataringaya joined the UPC, along with five other DP MPs, on 31 December 1964.

¹⁵⁰ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, March 1, 1965, 1028, 1035 (Basil Bataringaya). 23 days later Bataringaya was named Uganda's new Minister of Internal Affairs, as post which he held until Obote's overthrow on 25 January 1971. Ochola was later named the Deputy Minister of Tourism and the Minister of Public Service.

¹⁵¹ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, March 1, 1965, 1060-1062 (J.S.M. Ochola).

¹⁵² Just two months later, Bataringaya was named Obote's new Minister of Internal Affairs, and Onama took over from Obote as Minister of Defence.

wearing placards saying 'Ibingira is worse than Tshombe' and this caused a riot in the meeting... In the end the meeting which was meant for showing solidarity ended by showing the division in the UPC.¹⁵³

Remarkably, Mulira then went on to accuse both ministers and backbenchers in the UPC of receiving "personal money" from the US and China in order to further their own personal political agendas. Unexpectedly, F.X.B. Mugeni (UPC) agreed to this proposition and added that the UPCYL was also receiving significant funding from "outside the country."¹⁵⁴ From here, the accusations and allegations only increased in pitch. The Minister of Animal Industry, Game and Fisheries, John K. Babiha, accused unnamed members of KY of being "subversive agents" who were in contact with Tshombe, hinting that they were somehow seeking to destabilize Uganda for Tshombe's benefit with American support.¹⁵⁵ Rather than deny the accusations, P. Kiggundu (KY) tersely replied that "oppressive laws" passed by African governments often led to foreign states settling internal disputes and that a similar process was occurring in Uganda.¹⁵⁶ As several politicians from all three parties continued their verbal jousting, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Felix Onama, then made a statement that foreshadowed the 1966 Crisis a year before it happened:

[I]f worst came to the worst, I do not think that there is anybody sensible who is going to honour the Constitution for the destruction of Uganda: we shall just ban the Constitution and act to the best interest of ourselves, to defend Uganda, and deal with the traitors to the best interest of themselves.¹⁵⁷

Intended as a non-partisan debate to unite Ugandan MPs around nationalist sentiments that would justify the Obote faction's secret involvement in the Congo Rebellion, the "Peace in Africa" motion instead degenerated into an emotional argument that left the National Assembly strongly divided. The debate also revealed the internal

¹⁵³ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, March 1, 1965, 1071 (E.M.K. Mulira).

¹⁵⁴ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, March 1, 1965, 1043 (F.X.B. Mugeni).

¹⁵⁵ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, March 1, 1965, 1076 (Minister of Animal Industry, Game and Fisheries, John K. Babiha).

¹⁵⁶ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, March 1, 1965, 1066 (P. Kiggundu).

¹⁵⁷ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, March 1, 1965, 1103 (Minister of Internal Affairs, Felix Onama).

divisions of the UPC, based on competing ideological beliefs and rumours of foreign influence, and just how fractured the Obote Consensus had become. On one side, Bataringaya, Ochola, Babiha and Onama all demonstrated that they favoured Uganda's current policy of positive non-alignment, a foreign policy that stressed political neutrality in the Cold War to protect the country's sovereignty. Along with non-alignment, these men advocated a nation-building program they called "African socialism" which stressed national unity and economic nationalism, similar to what Obote himself suggested in both his 1962 "A Plan for Nationhood" speech and in his 1964 One-Party Speech. Such sentiments were also expressed in Obote's statements in the *Uganda Argus* to defend the Simbas in their fight against the American-backed Tshombe government.

Another faction of the UPC, along with members of KY, were accused of receiving foreign aid from the United States. During the course of the debate, Obote's loyal followers in the UPC implied that this faction was led by Grace Ibingira, and as was clear from Mulira's comments relating to the US Embassy protest, members of the UPCYL certainly believed as much as well.¹⁵⁸ Also linked to Ibingira's faction were several KY members and even the president of the Democratic Party himself, Benedicto Kiwanuka. Whether or not this was the case is hard to verify, and it is certainly suspicious that all of Obote's opponents both inside and outside the UPC were lumped together as American stooges. Although Ibingira began to create his own faction within the UPC and began to challenge Obote's leadership of the party in the coming months, there is no direct evidence to suggest that he and his allies were actually funded by the US.¹⁵⁹ Ibingira was present at the US Embassy protest and, as mentioned earlier, he had already earned the enmity of the pro-communist UPCYL when he was elected under dubious circumstances as the UPC Secretary-General in April 1964 over the UPCYL's favoured candidate, John Kakonge. As a result, the UPCYL's anti-Ibingira placards at the rally could have owed to past rivalries and not specifically to events in the Congo or to potential American backing.

¹⁵⁸ At this point it was still unclear who exactly comprised the Ibingira faction, but this subject will be examined again later in more detail.

¹⁵⁹ Only Ingham has suggested this to be the case. Ingham claims that in December 1965 "Ibingira... paid a secret visit to the USA. There he was able to raise funds... to help check the spread of socialist ideas in Uganda." However, Ingham offers no evidence to substantiate his claim. Ingham, *Obote*, 100.

Better circumstantial evidence, however, suggests that the UPCYL may have received funding from agents of the Chinese government. Despite sitting for different parties, both Mulira (KY) and Mugeni (UPC) alleged this was the case, and in the coming months such claims would be repeated by KY member Daudi Ocheng, Minister of State and Obote rival Grace Ibingira, and by UPC Secretary of Youth Affairs, O. Nassau.¹⁶⁰ Certainly, the People's Republic of China did have a growing presence in Uganda. The PRC had opened a foreign embassy in Kampala and brought in military advisors to train units of the Ugandan army.¹⁶¹ In fact, Sathyamurthy claims that China was training a political officer class in the army composed of "youth wing enthusiasts," suggesting that the break between the UPCYL and the parent party may not have been as concrete as publicly claimed. Within two months of the "Peace in Africa" debate, it also became public knowledge that Obote and his allies were importing weapons from China through Tanzania and selling them to the Simbas. Certainly, there was no shortage of opportunities for China to wield some influence in the country's politics.

Of all these accusations, however, only one can be definitively proven: namely that Obote's faction of the UPC was receiving military aid from Israel as publicly revealed by Onama when he concluded a military pact with Israel as early as April 1964. Interestingly, Abel Jacob argues that Israel's military aid meant that, "from the point of view of the Baganda politicians, Israel was directly intervening in the internal affairs of Uganda" by strengthening Obote's faction of the UPC "against domestic contenders."¹⁶² If this was the case then perhaps it is not unlikely that members of the emerging Ibingira faction, KY, and the UPCYL, sought domestic and foreign military support as well. In light of the fact that the central government was aggressively asserting control over Uganda's political institutions and harshly dealing with their political opponents, the military support that the UPC received from Israel may have been viewed just as contentiously as any American or Chinese support possibly received by others. The

¹⁶⁰ See: "Daudi Ocheng Alleges Plot by Communists," *Uganda Argus*, September 18, 1965; "Rally Warning on Communism: Attack on Mengo and KY Leaders," *Uganda Argus*, September 28, 1965.

¹⁶¹ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 179; Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 430-431.

¹⁶² Jacob, "Israel's Military Aid to Africa," 187. This sentiment is also echoed by Parsons. Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 175.

“Peace in Africa” debate also showed that the Obote faction had continued to successfully hide their covert intervention in the Congo despite the first pieces of evidence that suggested direct Ugandan involvement. Comments from the debate also support the thesis that the Obote faction sought to gain non-partisan nationalist support in Uganda for their actions in the Congo by trying to rally the country around the threat that they perceived American imperialism caused to both Ugandan and the Congolese sovereignty.

As more details of the Obote faction’s intervention in the Congo Rebellion were revealed in the following three months the unity of the UPC completely dissolved, and open threats between political opponents became increasingly public and commonplace. To begin, just two weeks after the “Peace in Africa” debate, Obote loyalist Vincent Rwamwaro turned to outright intimidation in the National Assembly by insisting that “unscrupulous Asians” and “KY leaders” had contacted unnamed foreign embassies to assassinate Obote. Rwamwaro then echoed the threats made by Onama two weeks earlier in the house by forecasting that the UPC would “pass laws in this House to serve the best interests of the majority of the people of this country.” Further, Rwamwaro contended that Uganda’s constitution needed to be amended so that it “matched the times and matched with development in the country” but without providing specific details.¹⁶³

As with the accusations levelled in the National Assembly on 1 March – that leaders from both the UPC and KY were seeking foreign support in order to challenge Obote’s leadership of the UPC – Rwamwaro’s accusations cannot be verified. However, a clear progression in Obote’s strategy to centralize the government, eliminate opposition, and solidify his leadership of the UPC was beginning to materialize. By politicizing the civil service, the police, and the military, and by harassing the political opposition and taking control of Uganda’s national media, the UPC had already shown that they were prepared to “invoke the Laws to deal with all who may be found to undermine the security of the State” as interpreted by Obote and his allies.¹⁶⁴ The Obote

¹⁶³ “Security in Buganda: Plot Against Premier Alleged in Debate,” *Uganda Argus*, March 13, 1965.

¹⁶⁴ Obote, “A Plan for Nationhood,” 15.

faction's involvement in the Congo and their threats to rewrite Uganda's constitution suggested that in order to eliminate the political opposition in KY and the DP they were willing to go beyond bending and reinterpreting Uganda's laws by working completely outside the framework of the UPC, and even the 1962 constitution itself.

As members of the National Assembly uncovered more details of the government's intervention in the Congo, the ideological divides in the UPC worsened and the Obote Consensus crumbled. Of particular importance were the allegations made by KY MP Daudi Ocheng on 16 March 1965, who produced a photocopy of Colonel Idi Amin's bank account and alleged that Amin had deposited 340,000 Ugandan Shillings in gold from the Congo into his personal account. Ocheng also alleged that Amin had travelled to West Nile District several times in January and February of 1965 in order to meet Nicholas Olenga and Christophe Gbenye of the Simbas, and that Gbenye's wife and son were staying at Amin's house in Entebbe. Finally, Ocheng claimed that upon being informed that the matter would be brought up in the National Assembly, Amin personally telephoned and threatened to kill both Ocheng and the unofficial Leader of the Opposition, Alex Latim, who supported the motion.¹⁶⁵

While most of Ocheng's motion was based on unsubstantiated allegations surrounding the Obote faction's involvement in the Congo, his photocopy of Amin's bank account forced Obote to admit for the first time that gold came into Uganda from the Congo. This admission alone jarred several UPC MPs to demand an investigation into any involvement their government had in the Congo Rebellion and Amin's role within it.¹⁶⁶ According to Sathyamurthy, all politicians in the UPC openly denounced western intervention in the Congo, yet "differences in ideological preferences" meant that only Obote's faction in the UPC actively wanted to fight there.¹⁶⁷ These ideological preferences were further stoked two months later when an arms convoy destined for Uganda was intercepted by Kenyan police on the border between the two East African neighbors, causing a diplomatic row between Uganda and Kenya that took the Prime Minister over a week to settle. As with the photocopy of Amin's bank account, the

¹⁶⁵ "Buganda Security," *Uganda Argus*, March 17, 1965.

¹⁶⁶ Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 143.

¹⁶⁷ Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 432.

Kenyan arms incident forced Obote to admit for the first time that the weapons had come from China, and across Tanzania into Uganda, because “Britain had been unable to provide them quickly enough.”¹⁶⁸ More truthfully, Britain’s military relationship with Uganda was increasingly unimportant as Israel’s and China’s influence grew, and there could be little doubt that the Obote faction would want to hide its intervention in the Congo from Britain, a staunch anti-communist Cold War ally of the USA who was openly supporting the Tshombe government against the Simbas.

Having now proven that Uganda was taking gold from the Congo and importing weapons from China, the remaining opposition Members of Parliament began to piece together the government’s secretive involvement in the Congo Rebellion. G.O.B. Oda (DP) explicitly alleged in parliament that the government had supported the Simbas with training, weapons from China, and by fighting directly with Tshombe’s troops in exchange for gold, ivory, and coffee.¹⁶⁹ One week later, MP M. Okelo (DP), from West Nile District where the fighting was taking place, alleged that neither the villages of Goli nor Paidha had ever been bombed as previously stated in the *Uganda Argus* and that locals were surprised to hear the Prime Minister state on the radio that they had been.¹⁷⁰ What Okelo did find when he toured his home district was some 1,500 Simba fighters being trained by the Uganda Army and Simba leader Christophe Gbenye staying at nearby Arua Rest Camp at the government’s expense.¹⁷¹ Not only was the Obote faction’s covert war in the Congo no longer a secret, but their efforts to build national unity based on a shared common threat – the bombing of Goli and Paidha and American imperialism – were exposed as mere political posturing.

Although Obote’s 1964 One-Party Speech may have caused the first fractures in the Obote Consensus, the events from December 1964 to June 1965 would later show

¹⁶⁸ “Minister Clears Up Mystery of Arms Convoy Intercepted by Kenya Police: Mr. Onama Explains,” *Uganda Argus*, May 18, 1965; “Arms: Dr. Obote to Meet Kenyatta,” *Uganda Argus*, May 25, 1965.

¹⁶⁹ “Congo War Prevented,” *Uganda Argus*, May 29, 1965.

¹⁷⁰ If true, this allegation would likely explain why members of the Uganda media were not allowed to investigate the bombings for themselves, but members of the foreign press were. See: “Troops Tell of Attack in West Nile: Press See Bombed Areas,” *Uganda Argus*, February 27, 1965.

¹⁷¹ “Opposition Challenged to Bring Censure Motion,” *Uganda Argus*, June 4, 1965.

that the Obote faction's covert intervention in the Congo Rebellion completely destroyed it. Despite trying to justify the UPC's support of the Simbas in the Congo Rebellion in nationalist terms, the ideological divides that Obote had opened in the UPC by this involvement were too strong to survive the Obote Consensus, as the next section will demonstrate. Suggestions by Onama and Rwamwaro that the Obote faction was prepared to amend Uganda's constitution would only heighten ideological fervour in the UPC by linking Obote's support for "African socialism" with government authoritarianism and the Obote faction's willingness to act without the consent of the rest of the party. These threats also caused UPC nationalists who opposed the Obote faction to increasingly rally around Obote's Minister of State, Grace Ibingira. Building on the ideological divisions in the UPC heightened and reinforced by the Congo affair, Ibingira subsequently used the threat of foreign involvement in Uganda to strengthen his base of support in the UPC amid fears that Uganda teetered on the brink of becoming another "ideological battlefield" in the Cold War.

3.5. UPC Leadership Crisis and Fears of Foreign Influence in Uganda

Before opposition politicians in the National Assembly made public the last details of the Congo affair, Obote had already left for a world tour, with stops in the People's Republic of China and the USSR, from May to August 1965. I argue that three consequences of the Obote faction's unauthorized intervention in the Congo Crisis became apparent during the period from May to November 1965. First, Ibingira raised the spectre of a communist takeover of Uganda in order to exploit the ideological rifts that the Obote faction's relationship with China and the Simbas had caused. This allowed him to recruit several KY MPs into the UPC and to increase his existing support base in the UPC itself. Second and parallel to this were the efforts of Daudi Ocheng, the secretary general of KY, to keep the emerging Congo Gold Scandal, as it was now being called, alive in the National Assembly in order to undermine the legitimacy of the Obote faction of the UPC. And third, despite the Obote faction's efforts to re-assert their commitment to Ugandan nationalism and a non-aligned foreign policy, fears of rising foreign influence in Uganda's internal affairs created a political hysteria in Uganda that completely eroded the Obote faction's ability to control the UPC.

On the heels of the mounting allegations made in the National Assembly regarding the government's covert involvement in the Congo Rebellion, Obote left for a political tour to the PRC and the USSR from May to August of 1965 that further fanned the ideological flames in the UPC.¹⁷² The trip prompted Onama, now the Minister of State for Defence, to try to douse them by reasserting that "[t]his Government will not be bought to be a puppet by gifts in the form of aid, or be threatened to be a satellite state... our Government decided that Uganda will remain non-aligned" in the Cold War.¹⁷³ However, Onama also went on to state that "we cannot remain silent when, as the result of this struggle, world peace is in danger" in apparent defence of the Obote faction's involvement in the Congo Rebellion.¹⁷⁴ In response, Grace Ibingira, the Minister of State and the man around whom opposition to Obote was forming inside the UPC, pointed to the negative ideological implications of Obote's trip, stating that the introduction of foreign ideologies such as communism and capitalism would only "confuse and divide" Uganda.¹⁷⁵ With Obote awash in ideological turmoil, it was now Ibingira who sought to unite the UPC's ideologically diverse membership using the language of national unity.

Ibingira used Obote's absence to recruit six prominent KY MPs into the UPC, namely A. Mayanja, A. Kisekka, I. Ssebunya, S.K. Masembe-Kabali, E.M.K. Mulira and F.G. Sembeguya.¹⁷⁶ Interestingly, these men all openly claimed that they had joined the UPC on orders from *Kabaka* Mutesa himself in order to "give effect to the word of the *Kabaka*" and so that Buganda MPs could "play a bigger role in nation-building."¹⁷⁷ Although the *Kabaka* publicly denied that he had asked KY MPs to join the UPC, an interview in the *Uganda Argus* with his brother, Prince Alfred Joseph Kigala – who

¹⁷² Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 550. It should be noted that Obote's tour was not limited to the PRC and the USSR, but the fact that he was visiting these countries brought a lot of publicity to Obote's trip in Uganda, particularly given the timing of his departure.

¹⁷³ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, June 28, 1965, 2425 (Minister of State for Defence, Felix Onama).

¹⁷⁴ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, June 28, 1965, 2426 (Minister of State for Defence, Felix Onama).

¹⁷⁵ "Uganda Is No Puppet: We Won't Be Bought or Threatened," *Uganda Argus*, June 29, 1965; "Confusion, That's What Foreign Ideas Would Bring," *Uganda Argus*, June 30, 1965.

¹⁷⁶ "Hundreds Go Over to UPC, Mayanja, Kisekka are Welcomed," *Uganda Argus*, July 10, 1965; "Now a Prince Joins UPC," *Uganda Argus*, July 16, 1965.

¹⁷⁷ "Hundreds Go Over to UPC, Mayanja, Kisekka are Welcomed," *Uganda Argus*, July 10, 1965.

himself joined the UPC – provides some insight into the intentions of the latest KY floor-crossers:

I am convinced beyond any doubt that Uganda People's Congress – the champion of national unity in Uganda – is the only party which is for the good and unity of the country, the protection of the *Kabaka*, and maintenance of freedom and fostering of prosperity in Uganda.¹⁷⁸

Prince Kigala's comments appear to confirm what other KY MPs repeatedly claimed when they had crossed the floor to the UPC; namely that in order to protect the *Kabaka* and the Kingdom of Buganda as a whole following its decisive defeat in the Lost Counties Referendum, KY MPs joined the UPC in order to tilt the UPC's policy making in Buganda's favour.¹⁷⁹ Such a position is strengthened when one considers that only six weeks previously one of the floor-crossers, Abu Mayanja, was quite vociferous in the National Assembly in his denunciation of Obote's government for soiling Uganda's international reputation and hurting the morale of Uganda's army by participating in the Congo Rebellion.¹⁸⁰ Certainly, there is no evidence to suggest that the UPC sought to protect the *Kabaka* or maintain personal freedoms, while any semblance of national unity was all but gone. The crossings further suggest that many former politicians had joined the Ibingira faction in order to undermine Obote's political supremacy and maintain Buganda's voice in national politics. While former KY politicians may have harboured their own agendas for joining the UPC, it is clear, however, that their acceptance into the party was made possible by the creation of the Ibingira faction in the UPC. In turn, the Ibingira faction emerged as the result of ideological cleavages in the UPC amid fears of government authoritarianism and increasing foreign influence in Uganda's affairs, each of which were ignited by the Obote faction's intervention Congo Rebellion.

In turn, Ibingira's contentious acceptance of several KY MPs into the UPC kept the ideological cleavages within the party in the public spotlight. Earlier that year, the

¹⁷⁸ "Now a Prince Joins UPC," *Uganda Argus*, July 16, 1965.

¹⁷⁹ "Mengo Denies Claim by Kisekka," *Uganda Argus*, July 12, 1965; "*Kabaka* Advised Us to Join UPC," *Uganda Argus*, July 19, 1965.

¹⁸⁰ "Congo War Prevented," *Uganda Argus*, May 29, 1965.

National Assembly had passed the Police Ordinance (Amendment) Bill that prevented public meetings of more than 25 persons without the express consent of the Inspector General of Police.¹⁸¹ Now, in late July 1965, an unknown person within the UPC hierarchy used the bill to stop a UPC rally in Buganda.¹⁸² The rally was to be hosted by Ibingira and intended to celebrate the acceptance of the aforementioned KY members into the UPC.¹⁸³ As this action prompted more rumours regarding cleavages in the UPC hierarchy, Ibingira decided to call a press conference on 2 August 1965 to deny that there was a split in the party or a plot to oust Obote as the UPC leader. However, a closer look at his comments during the press conference suggests that he was purposely trying to keep these rumours alive despite denying their validity. For example, he suggested that opportunists in the party were behind the rumours in order to “gain support for themselves,” hardly an indication of a party that was united under Obote’s leadership. At another point, Ibingira stated that some communist countries had agents in Uganda “who lived very expensively” and hinted that their influential presence in Uganda posed a threat to the country’s sovereignty. Finally, Ibingira provided his most stunning public comment yet, insisting that the UPC was prepared to preserve Uganda’s independence “by force of arms against external forces with the consent and by the will of the people. It is high time that the confusing agents in our party realised this and accepted it as an inevitable fact.”¹⁸⁴ With Obote visiting the PRC and the USSR and the UPCYL rumoured to be receiving financial support from the PRC, it is not difficult to determine at whom his tirade was aimed. By raising the fear of a communist takeover owing to the actions and ideas of the Obote faction and the UPCYL, Ibingira sought to assert himself as the only leader in the UPC capable of retaining the party’s unity for Uganda’s national benefit.

¹⁸¹ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 18, 1965, 717-750. This was most likely orchestrated by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Felix Onama, who was also known to have close relations with the Uganda Police. As noted earlier, Professor Ali A. Mazrui claims the problem of political interference in the duties of the Uganda Police were so intense that by 1965 “the commissioner of police had broadcast an appeal to the country to stop trying to divert the police from their normal duties.” Mazrui, *Soldiers and Kinsmen in Uganda*, 17.

¹⁸² Of course, one can only guess that this was done by someone in the Obote faction, most likely the new Minister of Internal Affairs, Basil Bataringaya.

¹⁸³ “UPC Rally Banned,” *Uganda Argus*, July 31, 1965.

¹⁸⁴ “No Split and Plot within UPC,” *Uganda Argus*, August 3, 1965.

Ibingira's press conference was followed by a tumultuous three months in Uganda, from September to November 1965, in which rumours of looming coups d'état were rife, leading to a series of allegations and counter allegations which showed how far any semblance of national unity, or even unity within the UPC, had deteriorated. The rumours began in earnest after KY MP Daudi Ocheng asked Prime Minister Obote, upon Obote's return to the National Assembly in September 1965, "whether or not the Government is prepared to grant the requests contained in [a] Cable... from General Olenga Nicolas in Khartoum, Sudan?" According to Ocheng, the telegram in question asked the Uganda Government to block the withdrawal of large sums of money belonging to the National Council of Liberation and deposited in Uganda Banks under the names Christophe Gbenye, Thomas Kanza, and Idi Amin.¹⁸⁵ Obote categorically denied any knowledge of the telegram and cast doubt upon its very authenticity in the National Assembly, but Ocheng's point was clear: he wanted to keep the public spotlight on the relationship between the Obote faction, their foreign backers, Amin, and the Congolese rebels in order to erode the government's legitimacy.

Much more alarming were claims made by Ocheng two weeks later in the *Uganda Argus* that there was a communist plot to overthrow the government by 26 Ugandans who had been secretly trained in communist countries and were currently organizing in a forest outside the town of Mbale to carry out their task.¹⁸⁶ On the same day, another article in the *Argus* probed allegations by the UPC Secretary of Youth Affairs, O. Nassau, who claimed that "foreign embassy officials hang around with youths to hand out cheques" and that ideological schools had been established by foreign agents in Uganda in order to gain support for the country's "imminent revolution."¹⁸⁷ Possibly, Nassau was referring to a secret program initiated by Obote to "train a hand-picked selection of UPC Youth Wing enthusiasts outside Uganda with the intention of giving them commissions in the army."¹⁸⁸ If this is true, then the UPC's public claim that it had cut all funding to the UPCYL for promoting radical left-wing policies that conflicted

¹⁸⁵ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, September 6, 1965, 3117 (Daudi Ocheng). Ocheng's speech demonstrates how the Simbas' leadership had completely fractured by this time, as Olenga was apparently trying to secure funds before other CNL leaders did so first.

¹⁸⁶ "Daudi Ocheng Alleges Plot by Communists," *Uganda Argus*, September 18, 1965.

¹⁸⁷ "UPC Official Accuses Embassy," *Uganda Argus*, September 18, 1965.

¹⁸⁸ Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 430-431.

with government policy were false.¹⁸⁹ Instead, the UPC was quietly training the most militant members of their youth league to create a political caste of military cadres in the army in an attempt to ensure that it remained loyal to the UPC. Whether those being trained in Mbale were working in alliance with the Obote faction of the UPC or separately with foreign support, reference to these rumours would arise in the National Assembly on two much more prominent occasions: when Ocheng raised his fateful motion to suspend Amin from active duty on 4 February 1966, and when Obote defended his coup two months later.

In the meantime, the allegations by Ocheng and Nassau were followed by several unnamed “Central Government Ministers and UPC leaders” holding a mass rally attacking communism and the foreign policies of the USSR and China on 27 September 1965.¹⁹⁰ While the names of the UPC leaders who were in attendance were never revealed, the mass rally was prompted by the UPC opening a new branch office in Buganda and fits squarely into Ibingira’s strategy of recruiting KY members into the UPC and using the spectre of communism to gain personal support.¹⁹¹ Motivated either by a sense of genuine concern or perhaps to add legitimacy to Ibingira’s claims, the Buganda *Lukiiko* passed a resolution on 29 September 1965, which called on the *Kabaka*’s government to meet with the Prime Minister to discuss the alleged communist threats “aimed at overthrowing the Central, Federal and District Governments and the assassination of leaders.”¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History*, 225.

¹⁹⁰ “Rally Warning on Communism: Attack on Mengo and KY Leaders,” *Uganda Argus*, September 28, 1965.

¹⁹¹ “Rally Warning on Communism: Attack on Mengo and KY Leaders,” *Uganda Argus*, September 28, 1965. Ibingira claimed that he was worried that Obote was building a dictatorship and feared that the popular support of both KY and the DP was too strong to crush by force. As a result, he sought to take over the leadership of the UPC in order to gain power “without alienating the majority of the diverse nationals” in Uganda, working under the assumption that national elections set for 1967 would proceed as planned and the UPC would be punished electorally for their oppressive policies. Ibingira further stated that Obote had a “tendency to grab all power and promote militarism,” thus positioning himself as a political moderate who could save Uganda from the scourges of dictatorship. Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 123-124.

¹⁹² “Communism: Lukiko Urges Talk with Premier,” *Uganda Argus*, September 30, 1965.

Ibingira's rally and the *Lukiiko's* resolution prompted interesting reactions from two UPC members who were clearly allied with the Prime Minister. First, the inflammatory and pro-communist John Kakonge, now a Member of Parliament, bluntly told the *Uganda Argus* that the anti-communist campaign in Uganda was part of a "grand plan" to cover "a vicious, heartless and intensive power struggle" to oust Obote as Prime Minister.¹⁹³ Second and more conciliatory, the Minister of Planning and Community Development, A.A. Nekyon, issued a statement in the *Uganda Argus* in which he blamed divisions in the UPC on "foreign influence" and suggested that the party should host an Annual Delegates Conference in order to confirm Obote's leadership to end the rumours and divisions within the party.¹⁹⁴

Nekyon's comments were illustrative of his conciliatory political style and his strong nationalist beliefs. As the Minister of Information, Broadcasting, and Tourism from May 1962 to April 1964, Nekyon was responsible for ensuring that Uganda's national media promoted the Obote Doctrine, ostensibly in the interest of Uganda's national unity. When Kakonge tried to push a communist agenda on the UPC at the UPC Annual Delegates Conference in Gulu in April 1964, Nekyon was largely responsible for ousting him as Secretary General of the UPC in order to preserve the party's ideological unity. Nekyon was also a part of the "Government Parliamentary Group" that planned the Obote faction's incursion into the Congo Rebellion in what appeared to be a genuine effort to help the nationalist-minded Simbas fight against Tshombe's American-backed army. Nekyon's commitment to African and Ugandan nationalism was, therefore, beyond question, and his comments on Uganda's recent turmoil only proved this again:

This communist bogey has become a source of revenue to some citizens of Uganda, because it appears that the more one shouts the more dollars one expects from his foreign masters. To organise anti-communist demonstrations before anybody has organised pro-communist demonstrations is the quickest way to introduce communism in this country.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ "Communists Grand Plan," *Uganda Argus*, October 9, 1965.

¹⁹⁴ "UPC Talks are Needed Now, Says Mr. Nekyon," *Uganda Argus*, October 9, 1965.

¹⁹⁵ "UPC Talks are Needed Now, Says Mr. Nekyon," *Uganda Argus*, October 9, 1965.

Nekyon's comments are interesting for other reasons as well. First, he admits that the UPC was being rent apart by ideological cleavages owing directly to unnamed foreign influence in Uganda, and that such cleavages were causing a leadership dispute within the UPC. Second, Nekyon carefully distances himself from both the communist East and the capitalist West, again demonstrating his support for Uganda's official foreign policy of non-alignment and his credentials as a Ugandan nationalist. In the absence of any prominent statements from Obote during the period from July 1965 until the 1966 Crisis, Nekyon's comments – along with those of Onama in June 1965 – most likely reflect the views of the Obote faction of the UPC. Third, Nekyon's comments appear to confirm that three factions had developed in the UPC: the communist left, ostensibly led by Kakonge and his supporters in the UPCYL; the nationalist center, composed most prominently of Obote, Onama, and Nekyon; and the capitalist right, composed by Ibingira's own admission of himself, vice-president W. Nadiope, Minister of Justice C.J. Obwangor, Minister of Mineral and Water Resources, B.K. Kirya, and likely several new UPC members that had joined from KY.¹⁹⁶

Unfortunately, not only were Nekyon's calls not heeded, but a series of reported "troop movements"¹⁹⁷ in October and November of 1965 show how pitched the political hysteria in Uganda had become and how difficult it was to establish the legitimacy of the many rumours circulating throughout the country. Writing in 1968, Obote claimed that:

[T]he forces of feudalism [the Buganda government]... decided to resort to force and the first step to this was an attempt to subvert the army which they tried to do in October, 1965 without success. A further attempt to use force was made in November of that year.¹⁹⁸

According to *Kabaka Mutesa*, the occasion in October to which Obote referred was the third anniversary of Uganda's independence on 9 October 1965. At the celebrations, the Prime Minister was surprised by the strong presence of the military and decided to use the moment to address the troops "with slightly venomous stuff, moving from equality and freedom to a view of the glorious future when there would be no chiefs and no

¹⁹⁶ Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 124.

¹⁹⁷ Dinwiddy, "The Search for Unity in Uganda," 516.

¹⁹⁸ Obote, "The Footsteps of Uganda's Revolution," 12.

throne.”¹⁹⁹ It is also possible that Obote was referring to the actions of Major Katabarwa, Ibingira’s brother in the Uganda Army who commanded a training wing at Jinja. According to Parsons, on an unknown date in October 1965 Katabarwa occupied the Uganda Army headquarters in Mbuya, claiming to be there to protect Opolot from an assassination attempt plotted by “communist-backed northerners in the army.”²⁰⁰ In the end, Katabarwa was court-martialled for conspiracy for his apparently unauthorized actions but had the charges dropped by his mentor, Opolot, the Commander of the Uganda Army and the man deemed to be allied with the *Kabaka* of Buganda.²⁰¹

In regards to Obote’s claim that a “further attempt to use force was made in November of that year,” Obote appears to be referring to *Kabaka* Mutesa’s request that the Uganda Army Band play at his birthday celebrations on 19 November 1965. As Obote stated himself in a speech to the National Assembly on 15 April 1966,²⁰² he was of the opinion that by writing directly to Opolot, the Commander of the Uganda Army and a powerful suspected ally of the *Kabaka*, Mutesa had acted unconstitutionally and was attempting to “merge the Office of the *Kabaka* into the Office of President, and *vice versa*” in order to “turn the whole of this country into the domain of one man.”²⁰³ Significantly, Obote possessed written evidence that Mutesa, in his presidential capacity as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, had ignored presidential protocol and personally sought to enlist a section of the army’s support, the precise importance of which will be discussed later.

Ultimately, one can see the difficulty in trying to determine the legitimacy of these competing claims and, judging from the tumultuous climax of the political hysteria in Uganda from February to April of 1966, neither could many of Uganda’s leading politicians. Was Mutesa really attempting to “subvert” the army, or was he merely

¹⁹⁹ Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 184. Given that Obote should have known about the presence of the army, and quickly ordered Minister of Defence Felix Onama to remove the soldiers from the celebrations, it is certainly possible that Mutesa decided to turn the celebrations into a personal show of force to intimidate Obote.

²⁰⁰ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 196.

²⁰¹ Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 196.

²⁰² This was the same speech in which Obote justified his seizure of power and the abrogation of the 1962 constitution before passing a new constitution of his own choosing.

²⁰³ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 7 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

demonstrating his lack of political savvy in national politics by believing that his position as President and Commander in Chief of the Army gave him the authority to give personal orders to the Uganda Army without consulting the Prime Minister or the Minister of Defence? Did any link exist between Ibingira's faction of the UPC and members of KY, or between Ibingira, Opolot and the *Kabaka*? Was Ibingira receiving outside American support to topple Obote? Was there any truth to the rumours of a communist country, presumably China, training members of the pro-communist UPCYL in eastern Uganda with a view to overthrowing the country's elected government?

Unfortunately, none of the above questions can be answered with any certainty today, and it is unlikely that even Uganda's leading politicians were able to answer them with any confidence in 1965. However, what was certain in 1965 is that the basis of unity that the Obote Doctrine provided had vanished as a result of the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion and the rise of foreign influence, either real or imagined, in Uganda's internal politics. As stated earlier, the Obote Doctrine used the appeal of national unity as the linchpin both for economic development and for ensuring Uganda's future sovereignty, goals which united the independent and ideologically diverse political notables of the UPC who filled the National Assembly after the 1962 elections. The Obote faction's secret involvement in the Congo Rebellion, however, undermined the Obote Doctrine for two reasons. First, the secrecy with which the Obote faction began operations in the Congo made many of Obote's supporters question for the first time the growing authority of the central government and of the Prime Minister himself. In essence, Obote had emerged from a "leader of leaders or the first among equals"²⁰⁴ to a man now capable and willing to act without the support of his own party owing to foreign and domestic military support. Second and owing to the former, the nebulous relationship between the Obote faction and the Simbas, and between the UPCYL and China, erased the fragile ideological unity of the UPC and linked growing government authoritarianism with communism. This development thus united those in Uganda who sought to curb the power of the central government, especially politicians from Buganda who championed the autonomous rights of their kingdom, with those who feared communism, including Ibingira and several members of the UPC, against Obote's

²⁰⁴ Karugire, *A Political History of Uganda*, 190.

leadership. Although Obote, Onama, and Nekyon all tried to assert that their actions in the Congo did not violate the Obote Doctrine, fears of rising American and Chinese intervention in Uganda as a result of their Congo intervention made many anxious that Uganda's sovereignty was truly imperilled. As such, problems arising from ideological disputes, growing government authoritarianism, and fears that foreign intervention in Uganda was jeopardizing the country's sovereignty both caused, and allowed, the Obote faction to justify their coup on 22 February 1966.

4. The 1966 Crisis

The 1966 Crisis refers to the accumulation of several dramatic events in Uganda that occurred from 4 February 1966 to 24 May 1966. These events include Ocheng's motion in the National Assembly on 4 February 1966, the illegal arrest of five UPC cabinet ministers on 22 February, Obote's assumption of dictatorial powers on 24 February, the passing of a new constitution on 15 April, and the Battle of Mengo on 24 May. In the course of these three-and-a-half months the Obote faction eliminated all their remaining political opposition and dramatically altered Uganda's political landscape. Further, Obote's speech in the National Assembly during the height of the crisis ensured that the writing of Ugandan history focused on the competition for power between the central government and the Buganda government, and not on the importance of the Congo Rebellion, to the commencement and outcome of the 1966 Crisis. As a result, writers of Ugandan history have reduced Uganda history from 1962 to 1966 to a simple contest for power between domestic contenders that necessarily but erroneously blames ethnic tensions or past economic and political inequalities for Uganda's decline. This approach ignores the international pressures that dominated Uganda's political landscape in the first years of its political independence and pushed the country to the brink of political ruin in 1966.

4.1. Ocheng's Third Motion

On 4 February 1966, KY MP Daudi Ocheng once again raised the issue of Amin's inflated bank account in the National Assembly, as he had twice before in March and September of 1965. But this time he was able to use ideological cleavages and the leadership crisis within the UPC in order to gain government support for the following parliamentary motion:

This House do urge Government to suspend from duty Col. Idi Amin of the Uganda Army, forthwith, pending the conclusion of Police

investigations into the allegations regarding his bank account, which should then be passed on to the appropriate authority whose final decision on the matter shall be made public.²⁰⁵

Ocheng, of course, was referring to Amin's alleged involvement in the Congo Rebellion, and more specifically to the "loot" Amin is said to have accumulated while delivering weapons to the Simbas.²⁰⁶ Perhaps more importantly, although outside of the terms of the motion itself, Ocheng then proceeded to accuse Prime Minister Milton Obote, Minister of Defence Felix Onama, and Minister of Planning and Community Development A.A. Nekyon, of financially benefitting from the smuggling of arms to the Simbas. Finally and most spectacularly, Ocheng claimed that the government had rejected his previous two motions "because Idi Amin is the man around whom a few individuals in this Government are planning a coup to overthrow the Constitution."²⁰⁷ In particular, Ocheng named Dan Nabudere as an associate of Amin's and the leader of seventy youths who were training in a forest outside Mbale in order to stage a communist coup in Uganda with the political support of Obote, Onama, and Nekyon.²⁰⁸

I argue that Ocheng's successful motion against Amin demonstrates that at least two groups emerged in the UPC in opposition to the Obote faction owing to the various consequences that the Obote faction's involvement in the Congo Rebellion had on Uganda's internal politics. The first group was the Ibingira faction who feared the consequences that the growing authoritarianism of Obote's leadership had on Uganda's internal politics and thus lent credence to Ocheng's allegation that Obote, Onama, Nekyon, and Amin were planning to stage a coup d'état against the government. The

²⁰⁵ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 996 (Daudi Ocheng).

²⁰⁶ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 999 (Daudi Ocheng).

²⁰⁷ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1000-1002 (Daudi Ocheng).

²⁰⁸ In Ocheng's exact words: "Nabudere said that in a short period of time the revolutionary force of Uganda would take over and line up capitalists like Ocheng and shoot them. This is recorded on tape." Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1002-1003 (Daudi Ocheng). Nabudere was a former pro-communist member of the UPCYL who had been expelled from the UPC by Ibingira following Kakonge's failed re-election as general-secretary in April of 1964. In 1980, Nabudere published his own account of the Crisis of 1966 and addressed Ocheng's accusation against him in the National Assembly on 4 February 1966. Nabudere states that Ocheng's claim stemmed from "a university extra-mural seminar in Mbale" at which both he and Ocheng were present, and flatly denied making any such comment. Nabudere, *Imperialism and Revolution in Uganda*, 260.

second group, as described by Akiiki Mujaju, had not coalesced around a leader and were more neutral in their deliberations, but were united by their opposition to the Obote faction's involvement in the Congo Rebellion and the implications this had on Uganda's foreign policy.²⁰⁹ After months of unsubstantiated rumours, the complete dissolution of party discipline in the UPC confirms that the Obote faction's involvement in the Congo Rebellion, and the tensions it created, were a major instigator of the 1966 Crisis.

At the time Ocheng's motion was raised, Obote was absent from Kampala while taking a tour of Uganda's northern districts and had left instructions for Ocheng's motion to be rejected by the UPC in the National Assembly. In Obote's absence, Ibingira, as Minister of State, led the UPC in the National Assembly and used his power to call an emergency cabinet meeting immediately before Ocheng's motion was raised to reverse the Prime Minister's instructions.²¹⁰ Never before had Ibingira and his allies challenged the Obote faction so openly, and judging from the comments of several UPC MPs in the National Assembly, the decision created plenty of confusion within the party. As a result, UPC party discipline dissolved during the debate and two groups in the UPC emerged in open opposition to the Obote faction: those who directly supported Ibingira and the notion that some members of the UPC were planning a coup d'état against the government, and those who remained neutral in terms of leadership support but who were clearly perturbed by the implications of the Obote faction's involvement in the Congo Rebellion from 1964 to 1965.

Ibingira was supported most strongly by the Minister of Mineral and Water Resources, B.K. Kirya, and the Minister of Health, E.B.S. Lumu. Kirya lent credence to the notion that Obote, Onama, Nekyon, Kakonge, Amin, and Nabudere were planning a

²⁰⁹ Mujaju argues that "many MPs voted for the motion for different reasons, including one of protecting the Prime Minister." Certainly, Mujaju is correct to suggest that many UPC members voted for the motion in order to allow the Prime Minister to defend his actions, with the confidence that the Obote faction would be legally cleared of any wrongdoing. Akiiki B. Mujaju, "The Gold Allegations Motion and Political Development in Uganda," *African Affairs* 86, no. 345 (October 1987): 479-504.

²¹⁰ Ingham, *Obote*, 106. Ibingira later wrote that UPC MPs were originally instructed to reject Ocheng's motion, but this decision "only infuriated a large section of the UPC even more." Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 143.

coup by calling their involvement in such planning “regrettable.”²¹¹ Kirya also commented that “it is stupid of anybody to be a rubber stamp in this House,” implying that he was unhappy with the growing authority of the Obote faction in the UPC and their willingness to take action without the consent of the cabinet. Finally, Kirya supported the suggestion that the motion be amended so that an impartial commission of inquiry, rather than a police investigation, would look into the allegations against Amin, Obote, Onama, and Nekyon because, as Kirya himself facetiously asked, “what do you expect from the police investigation?”²¹² Likewise, Lumu supported the creation of a commission of inquiry, rather than a police investigation, into the Congo Gold Scandal in order to publicize the full extent of the Obote faction’s exploits. He then noted that the government’s involvement in the Congo had “strained relations with our neighbours” and that “some people really want to use some foreign antics in order to get an easy way to power.”²¹³ Unfortunately, Lumu did not elaborate on precisely what he meant by the last comment, but the gist of his remarks is clear.

For his part, Ibingira’s comments in the House were relatively brief, but like Kirya he too focused on the allegations that there was a “deliberate design to oust a Constitutional Government or to overthrow the Constitution” and supported the call for an independent commission of inquiry to investigate the Obote faction’s involvement in the Congo Rebellion.²¹⁴ Perhaps most tellingly in regards to his feelings about Obote’s leadership of the UPC, Ibingira was adamant that “nobody in this land shall be above the law,” even though he cushioned his support of the motion by noting that “this is not necessarily an admission of guilt on the part of Government.”²¹⁵ Such remarks suggest that Ibingira wanted to preserve the strength and integrity of the UPC itself but to discredit the Obote faction within it. Certainly, this course of action supports the notion that Ibingira was seeking to replace Obote as leader of the UPC as a result of growing

²¹¹ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1017 (Minister of Mineral and Water Resources B.K. Kirya).

²¹² Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1017 (Minister of Mineral and Water Resources B.K. Kirya).

²¹³ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1024-1026 (Minister of Health, E.B.S. Lumu).

²¹⁴ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1021 (Minister of State G.S.K. Ibingira).

²¹⁵ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1021 (Minister of State G.S.K. Ibingira).

government authoritarianism and concern over Uganda's relationship with the Simbas and its implications for Uganda's sovereignty.

The other group that emerged during the course of the debate in opposition to the Prime Minister's faction in the UPC was composed of those MPs who were unhappy with the government's involvement in the Congo yet showed no particular affinity for Ibingira's faction. Although there is evidence to suggest that Ibingira recruited him into the UPC in the summer of 1965, Abu Mayanja never openly supported Ibingira during the debate and remained in the UPC following the crisis.²¹⁶ Despite supporting Ocheng's motion, Mayanja claimed that all allegations against the government were false. However, Mayanja also conceded that:

We were never satisfied with the explanation given at the time as to why we were being bombed [in Goli and Paidha], if bombed we were... we were never satisfied with the reasons given why one District of Uganda was kept out of bounds to the citizens of this country.²¹⁷

Mayanja showed concern about the length of time it took for the government to support Ocheng's motion²¹⁸ and rhetorically asked why a court martial for Colonel Idi Amin had not be arranged earlier despite the evidence against the colonel's misdeeds. To this question Mayanja had a ready answer: "a court martial can only be appointed or set up by the Defence Council. Who are the members of the Defence Council? These are the

²¹⁶ Mayanja remained a steadfast critic of the UPC government despite remaining in the party for two more years. During this time, Mayanja strongly opposed the UPC's plan to pass the Preventative Detention Act and criticized the powers that Obote conferred upon himself in Uganda's new 1967 constitution, stating that, "[w]e are not going to justify autocracy and the granting of dangerous powers on the grounds that Uganda is backward and cannot have a civilized government." In 1968, Obote had enough of Mayanja's opposition and imprisoned him for writing an article in *Transition* magazine in which Mayanja criticized the slow pace of the Ugandanization of the country's judiciary. Mayanja remained in prison until he was freed by Amin following Amin's coup in 1971. See: Henry Bienen, "When Does Dissent Become Sedition?" *Africa Report* 14, nos. 3 and 4 (March - April 1969): 13; Nelson Kasfir, "The 1967 Uganda Constituent Assembly Debate," *Transition*, no. 33 (October - November 1967): 52; Karugire, *The Roots of Instability*, 49.

²¹⁷ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1014 (A.K. Mayanja).

²¹⁸ Mayanja was referring to the fact that Ocheng had tried to pass a similar motion twice before in the National Assembly, in March and September 1965, and was prevented from doing so each time by Obote. Indeed, the Prime Minister claimed the matter was already under police investigation and had to be kept private in the interests of national security. Ingham, *Obote*, 105.

people who have refused to set up the court martial” including Obote, Onama, and Nekyon.²¹⁹

Similarly, C.J.M. Magara did not express any outward support for Ibingira but did cynically note that “some of us had an idea that there was a bit of truth in these [gold] allegations.” Magara also revealed that Obote told members of the UPC that the money to buy arms for the Simbas came not from China but from the government of Algeria, a nation which had recently won its war of liberation against France by manipulating Cold War rivalries to promote its own nationalist cause, testimony that was supported by UPC MP J.W. Kiwanuka later in the debate.²²⁰ Such a revelation is significant because it suggests that the Obote faction was concerned about the ideological ramifications that buying arms from China would have on the Ugandan government as a whole, and on the ideological cleavages within the UPC that might be piqued. Certainly, Mayanja and Magara’s contributions to the debate demonstrate the distrust that Obote had earned from members of his own party owing to his faction’s covert interference in the Congo Rebellion and make clear that the Obote faction had tried to insulate the rest of the UPC from the events on Uganda’s north-western border with the Congo, knowing that their actions were unpopular at best.

No one, however, voiced the frustration of unaligned UPC members over the government’s involvement in the Congo Rebellion more strongly than UPC MP J.W. Kiwanuka. Known for his socialist leanings,²²¹ Kiwanuka claimed to know nothing of the alleged coups but nonetheless berated the government for its involvement in the Congo. He stated that many MPs were “ashamed” of the government’s actions and that “[m]embers on this side of the House were not very happy” when they were told that the money for the Simbas came not from Algeria, but from China.²²² Kiwanuka then provided

²¹⁹ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1015 (A.K. Mayanja).

²²⁰ Matthew Connelly, “Rethinking the Cold War and Decolonization: The Grand Strategy of the Algerian War for Independence,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33, no. 2 (May 2001), 238-239. Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1038-1039 (C.J.M. Magara and J.W. Kiwanuka).

²²¹ Kiwanuka did not hide his admiration for either socialism or communism as demonstrated, for example, by his comments in the National Assembly on 1 March 1965. Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, March 1, 1965, 1097-1102 (J.W. Kiwanuka).

²²² Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1038-1039 (J.W. Kiwanuka).

insight into the importance which some Ugandan politicians attached to the political rumours that had spun around Kampala from the fall of 1965 to early 1966, and the manner in which politicians dealt with them. He noted that:

Col. Idi Amin is one of the richest men in this country... he must be suspended and he must face this charge and there is no need even to enquire... we know this man looted... he should face the charge without wasting money, the country's money over enquiries.²²³

Kiwanuka's willingness to work outside formal legal structures seems to capture the impatience of many MPs with the inability of anyone in Uganda to substantiate the numerous rumours that had been consuming Ugandan politics since at least the summer of 1965, and is indicative of the manner in which Obote responded to the challenge to his leadership when he returned to the National Assembly on 15 April 1966.

Not surprisingly, Felix Onama, the only minister present in the National Assembly on 4 February 1966 who was named in Ocheng's allegations, defended the Prime Minister and claimed there was "no plot at all in the knowledge of this Government to overthrow the Constitutional Government of Uganda."²²⁴ Nonetheless, Onama supported Ocheng's motion, ostensibly either to contain the divisions in the UPC or out of the confidence that a commission of inquiry could either be influenced in his favour or would clear his name of any involvement in the Gold Scandal altogether.²²⁵ Onama also downplayed comments made by John Kakonge, who was the only MP in the National Assembly to oppose Ocheng's motion. Kakonge insisted that "there is a group of Ministers [led by Ibingira] which is supporting the Commander of the Army [Opolot]; I have heard that they are supporting to overthrow the Government" and that "they would like Col. Amin to be removed so that Brig. Opolot can conduct his coup, and establish a pro-American Government."²²⁶ Rather than lend credence to Kakonge's claims, Onama

²²³ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1041 (J.W. Kiwanuka).

²²⁴ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1007 (Minister of State for Defence Felix Onama).

²²⁵ For more information, see: Ingham, *Obote*, 108; Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 156-161; Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 190-191.

²²⁶ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1034 (J.B.T. Kakonge). A similar allegation is made by Mujaju but, like Kakonge, Mujaju offered no evidence to support his assertion. Mujaju, "The Gold Allegations Motion and Political Development in Uganda," 480.

responded by telling Kakonge that he “must not seriously believe what he hears... the hon. Member should be aware of these latrine talks.”²²⁷ Did Onama really not believe that Ibingira’s faction, with the help of Brigadier Shaban Opolot, was planning to overthrow the government, or was he seeking to keep the nation’s knowledge of this plot private in order to not jeopardize the coup that he, Obote, Nekyon, and Amin ostensibly intended to carry out? Unfortunately, neither question can be answered conclusively, although Obote’s later defence of his actions in the National Assembly proved more revealing, as will be discussed later.

Other MPs to voice their support for the Obote faction in government, despite voting to support Ocheng’s motion, included the new Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sam Odaka, and the Minister of Agriculture and Co-operatives, M.M. Ngobi. Odaka called talks of a coup on either side “strange.” When the unofficial Leader of the Opposition, Alex Latim (DP), informed Odaka that he personally held a copy of the “so-called constitution of [Obote’s] group” that would be imposed on Uganda once the Obote faction staged their coup, signed by the Prime Minister himself, Odaka claimed to have no knowledge of it whatsoever.²²⁸ Latim’s comment also provoked an unnamed MP to ask Odaka about Israel’s supposed role in the alleged pro-government coup that was to take place, but again Odaka denied any knowledge.²²⁹ For his part, Ngobi defended both Amin and Obote, and reiterated the point that the government’s acceptance of the motion did not amount to an admission of guilt.²³⁰

²²⁷ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1034 (Minister of State for Defence Felix Onama).

²²⁸ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1037 (Minister of State for Foreign Affairs S. N. Odaka).

²²⁹ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1038 (Minister of State for Foreign Affairs S. N. Odaka). The parliamentary transcripts do not record the name of the MP who named Israel as complicit in the alleged coup against the Ugandan government, but Odaka’s response to the unnamed MP makes clear that such an allegation was made.

²³⁰ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, February 4, 1966, 1042-1043 (Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, M.M. Ngobi).

4.2. Obote Responds

Historical scholarship has revealed surprisingly few details from the period in which Ocheng introduced his motion in the National Assembly on 4 February 1966 to the time that Obote defended his actions in the National Assembly, abrogated the 1962 constitution, and had a new one of his own making passed on 15 April 1966.²³¹ Only Obote himself has offered a full timeline of the events that occurred in the two weeks immediately following Ocheng's motion, two of which can be verified by comparing them to accounts provided later by Ibingira and Mutesa. First, after Obote was informed by Onama of Ocheng's motion and the stormy session of the National Assembly on 4 February, the Prime Minister claimed that the National Assembly did not have the authority to pass a parliamentary motion to suspend Amin and thus sent Amin on a fourteen-day leave of absence to weather the political storm.²³² The second event, that likely occurred in response to the first, was a cabinet meeting held on 15 February 1966 that saw the UPC cabinet insist "with surprising force" that an impartial commission of inquiry should be established to investigate the Obote faction's involvement in the Congo Rebellion.²³³ With most of his cabinet strongly against him, Obote and his faction engaged in an action that would define Uganda's future, and Ugandan historiography, for years to come.

On the afternoon of 22 February 1966, several members of the military police burst into a UPC cabinet meeting and illegally arrested five government ministers at Obote's request, namely Ibingira, Kirya, Lumu, Magezi, and Ngobi.²³⁴ Based on comments in the National Assembly, the targeting of Ibingira, Kirya, and Lumu is not

²³¹ Unfortunately, issues of the *Uganda Argus* from this time at the British Newspaper Library were declared unfit for use and thus inaccessible to this researcher. The National Assembly did not meet again after 4 February 1966 until 15 April 1966, when Obote dictated Uganda's new constitution.

²³² Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 145; Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 11 (Prime Minister Milton Obote); Ingham, *Obote*, 107.

²³³ Ingham, *Obote*, 108; Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 187-188.

²³⁴ Gukiina, *Uganda*, 129.

surprising, although the motivation for arresting of Magezi and Ngobi is less clear.²³⁵ The following day, Brigadier Opolot was promoted to the newly created position of Chief of Uganda's Defence Staff in order to deprive him of real power in the military. Amin, rather than being suspended, was given Opolot's old post as Commander in Chief of the Army by Obote in order to secure Amin's military support.²³⁶ On 24 February 1966, Obote then suspended the constitution with the written support of the remaining twelve ministers in his government, summarily dismissed Sir Edward Mutesa II as the President of Uganda, and personally assumed all executive powers of government.²³⁷

Obote justified his dramatic moves to the National Assembly on 15 April 1966. Despite the plethora of evidence that Obote's actions were conditioned by the ideological cleavages in the UPC amid fears of growing foreign influence in Uganda owing to the Obote faction's covert support of the Simbas, the Prime Minister effectively blamed *Kabaka* Mutesa II for instigating the crisis. A month later, the *Lukiiko* voted on 20 May 1966 to expel the Ugandan government from Bugandan soil, causing Obote to order Amin to attack the *Kabaka's* palace in Mengo and send Mutesa into exile in retaliation.²³⁸ Together, Obote's speech and the attack on Mengo Palace combined to obfuscate the real causes behind the 1966 Crisis by placing blame for it squarely on

²³⁵ Magezi offered only limited support to Ibingira during the debate on Ocheng's motion by refuting the claims of MP M. Aroma (yet another of Obote's cousins) that Congolese refugees might have carried the disputed gold into Uganda as part of their personal possessions when fleeing the country. As previously stated, Ngobi offered unflinching support to Obote's faction during the debate and the reasons for his arrest are unclear, however, Michael L. Lofchie notes that each of the arrested ministers were leaders of UPC branches in Uganda's five constituent kingdoms. Lofchie thus believes that the arrests were intended by the Prime Minister to deprive each kingdom of its ability to resist the constitutional changes that Obote instituted on 15 April 1966, changes which eliminated the federal powers of the country's five kingdoms. For more information, please see: Michael F. Lofchie, "Political Origins of the Uganda Coup," *Journal of African Studies* 1, no. 4 (Winter 1974): 476.

²³⁶ Lawrence Fellows, "Ugandans Arrest Leading General: Opolot's Seizure Ordered by Obote in Power Move," *New York Times*, October 8, 1966, 5. According to Parsons, Opolot was accused of a plot to blow up the National Assembly as a diversion for a coup, yet another allegation made without any evidence to support it. Parsons, *The 1964 Army Mutinies*, 198.

²³⁷ Jorgensen, *Uganda: A Modern History*, 230.

²³⁸ Mengo is a suburb of Kampala and the center of the Buganda kingdom. Archie Mafeje, "The Legitimacy of the Uganda Government in Buganda," in L. Cliffe et al., eds., *Government and Rural Development in East Africa: Essays on Political Penetration* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977), 105; Gukiina, *Uganda*, 131; Ingham, *Obote*, 110; Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 437.

Buganda. Indeed, Obote was so successful in this endeavour that, as stated earlier, historians of the crisis have generally ignored the events of the Congo Rebellion and instead focused solely on the relationship between Uganda and Buganda and the “immovable ethnic group loyalties” that ostensibly dominated Ugandan society and politics.

Obote finally explained his dramatic conduct on 15 April 1966 in the first session of the National Assembly after the passing of Ocheng’s motion in February. Here, Obote once again demonstrated his political savvy and his willingness to assert his authority over the UPC to enforce his vision of national unity and security upon the whole of Uganda. Having already agreed to appoint a commission of inquiry into the personal conduct of Amin during the Congo Rebellion, Obote explicitly told the National Assembly that he would ignore the Congo Affair during his speech, the controversial arrest of the five ministers, and other accusations made in parliament by Ocheng on 4 February.²³⁹ Instead, Obote focused his entire statement on a “precautionary request” for foreign military assistance that President Mutesa admitted to making in the midst of the crisis following Ocheng’s motion.²⁴⁰ Indeed, according to Mutesa’s version of events published in 1967, the *Kabaka* admits:

In my capacity as president, I talked with the Chief Justice and with the Brigadier [Opolot] about the growing danger of the situation, and it was at this stage that I sounded out the British Commissioner and some African ambassadors as to whether it would be possible to fly in troops if the situation got out of hand. I did not invite a foreign force to invade Uganda. I had in mind something similar to the successful intervention by the British which Obote had authorised two years before [during the Uganda Army Mutiny]. It seemed to me likely that a coup was imminent.²⁴¹

Importantly, at a time when numerous allegations of coup plots by one faction of government or another were rife in the country, Mutesa’s account provided the only concrete piece of evidence on which UPC MPs could truly rely. Obote was quick to seize

²³⁹ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 1 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

²⁴⁰ Both Obote and Mutesa later revealed that Mutesa had approached Great Britain and unnamed African nations for military assistance. Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 186; Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 1 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

²⁴¹ Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 186.

upon this fact in order to justify his own egregious actions and unite his party against the *Kabaka*. He claimed that Ocheng's motion was designed to "deliver Uganda on a silver plate" to *Kabaka* Mutesa so that Ocheng could "turn the whole of this country into the domain of one man."²⁴² Refuting Mutesa's claim that he was concerned over the arrest of some army officers and the allegations that seventy youths were training outside Mbale to overthrow the government by force, Obote stated:

The total number of our security forces – the army, the police and even the prison services, is far more than seventy wretched youths.... And on the statement of one man; just one man... this fear of seventy youths drove the President to run to a foreign Government for troops, he never requested any of the Ministers to let him know the position; he never sent a word to me; he kept quiet... Apparently the President lost all confidence in the Uganda Police before making the precautional [sic] requests. He lost all confidence in the Uganda Army... the idea probably was to promote a hot war between our forces and foreign troops.²⁴³

Obote's allegations of treason against the *Kabaka* not only worked to unite his party against a common enemy, but it also served two other purposes as well. First, having already arrested the five ministers he believed responsible for the attempt to undermine his leadership of the UPC, Obote was able to completely ignore all talk of a leadership crisis and ideological cleavages in the UPC that had been brewing since early 1965 owing to the government's involvement in the Congo Rebellion. Instead, Obote's speech focused on the factors that would unite the UPC behind him, namely common resentment against the "tribal" policies of KY and the fear that Buganda's "feudal" system of government was a threat to Uganda's national unity, stability, and economic growth in accordance with the Obote Doctrine. Second, Obote's suggestion that Mutesa's invitation of foreign troops to the country could lead to a "hot war" in Uganda played on the fear that Mutesa and his allies, and not Obote's faction of the UPC, posed the real threat of increasing foreign interference in Uganda's internal affairs and a potential loss of national sovereignty. In fact, Obote explicitly noted later in the same speech that Uganda "would have been saddled with a military mission from a foreign state coming probably with the express purpose that happened in Stanleyville in the

²⁴² Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 1 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

²⁴³ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 5 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

Congo” as a result of Mutesa’s treasonous behaviour.²⁴⁴ As such, Obote’s defence of his actions referred to the same formula that he had consistently used to his advantage from 1962 to 1964, whereby only national unity and stability could prevent Uganda from again falling victim to foreign domination and that any opposition to him or his government would pose a direct challenge to Uganda’s future prosperity. With the arrest of his strongest political adversaries in the UPC and the willing help of Amin, the only substantial difference between 1962 and 1966 was that the Obote Doctrine was now supported by force.

A.G.G. Gingyera-Pinyicwa characterizes Obote’s actions in the 1966 Crisis and afterwards as an exercise in “democratic formalism,” whereby Obote acted illegally yet claimed to do so within the democratic structures of the Ugandan government.²⁴⁵ This argument is supported when one considers how Obote denounced Mutesa’s request for military assistance. Obote scolded Mutesa for thinking that Uganda’s own security forces were unable to handle “seventy wretched youths” despite the fact that Uganda’s army had become extremely politicized and despite the rise of foreign influence in the country owing to the government’s involvement in the Congo Rebellion which likely made the threat more ominous than it later appeared. Regardless, by stating that the president had no confidence in either the Uganda Army or the police, and by stressing how Mutesa acted outside the legal process of government, Obote was able to justify his own illegal actions, which appear ultimately rooted in a desire to save his own leadership of the UPC. Obote’s savvy in regards to democratic formalism, however, was best demonstrated when, following his attack on Mutesa and “the forces of feudalism,” he then proposed a new constitution for Uganda. In Obote’s own words:

We cannot afford to go on deciding things from day to day, we must have a broad basis that is understood in all corners of Uganda. None of us who participated in doing this is interested in ruling this country by decrees. We must, therefore, offer to the country some kind of document... I want therefore, to tell hon. Members that as from this moment the Constitution we had from October 9th, 1962, is hereby abrogated... I myself, would like

²⁴⁴ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 12 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

²⁴⁵ Gingyera-Pinyicwa, *Apolo Milton Obote*, 70. Indeed, Gingyera-Pinyicwa claims that this term well describes the entirety of Obote’s rule in Uganda from 1962 to 1971.

to say that I want a Constitution... and I want to make my proposals in the following terms.²⁴⁶

The irony of Obote suggesting a return to constitutional government, while personally abrogating the 1962 constitution, is obvious enough and plainly demonstrates his adept use of democratic formalism to his coup. Indeed, the hollowness of Obote's words were well captured when he then proceeded to dictate Uganda's new constitution to the members of the National Assembly:

"NOW THEREFORE we, the people of Uganda here assembled in the name of all the people of Uganda, do resolve and it is hereby resolved that the Constitution which came into being on the 9th day of October, 1962, be abolished and it is hereby abolished accordingly, (*laughter*) and the Constitution now laid before us be adopted and it is hereby adopted (*Hear, hear!*) this 15th day of April, 1966... This is the document and fairly soon you will find copies in your pigeon holes... it is a document proposed to treat Uganda as one... [o]ne country, one Parliament, one Government, one people (*laughter*).²⁴⁷

Even according to his most ardent academic supporter, Kenneth Ingham, the new 1966 "pigeon hole" constitution was written only by Attorney General Godfrey Binaisa "on the basis of principles agreed by the cabinet," who at that time numbered no more than thirteen, including Obote.²⁴⁸ Further, the fact that Military Police were standing inside the National Assembly during Obote's speech, and that Uganda's new fighter jets – flown by Israeli pilots – flew low over Kampala during the debate served to only make a "mockery of parliament," as did the fact that members of the National Assembly were expected to vote on the constitution's acceptance without having so much as read it first.²⁴⁹ When the unofficial Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, Alex Latim, asked if he could ask any questions before voting on the constitution that no one from the opposition, and most UPC members themselves, had ever seen, he received a simple one-word reply from the Speaker that was indicative of the terms of the new

²⁴⁶ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 15-16 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

²⁴⁷ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 16-17 (Prime Minister Milton Obote).

²⁴⁸ Ingham, *Obote*, 109.

²⁴⁹ Alex A. Latim and Paul K. Ssemogerere, *The DP and Obote's Constitution* (Kampala: unknown publisher, 1966), 1.

Obote Consensus, “No.”²⁵⁰ With strong military support, no longer would the Obote Doctrine be compromised so that Obote might satiate his political colleagues. Obote’s leadership of the UPC and Uganda, at least for the moment, was secure.

Despite Obote’s new power, opposition to his government both inside and outside the UPC remained strong. On the day Uganda’s new constitution was passed, only fifty-five Members of Parliament out of a total of ninety-one in the National Assembly voted in favour of the new constitution. Minus the five arrested ministers and the seventeen remaining DP and KY MPs in the National Assembly who abstained from voting, fourteen UPC members actually did not vote in favour of the new constitution.²⁵¹ Of those, four voted against the Obote’s constitution and at least five abstained.²⁵² In light of the militaristic atmosphere that had descended upon Uganda since February, including the arrest of the five ministers by the military police in February and the strong military presence in the National Assembly on the day the new constitution was passed, dissidence in the UPC to Obote’s coup was noteworthy. However, of greater importance to Uganda’s subsequent historiography was the final event in the 1966 Crisis that seemed to cement Obote’s version of events that he offered in the National Assembly on 15 April 1966 to justify his coup, the Battle of Mengo.

According to Mutesa, once he had been removed as the President of Uganda the *Kabaka* “felt free to appear as a rallying point for opposition to this dictator.”²⁵³ Accordingly, a resolution on 20 May 1966 in the Buganda *Lukiiko* voted to expel the Uganda government from the soil of Buganda within ten days in protest of Obote’s coup d’état. As a result, Obote publicly proclaimed that the *Lubiri*²⁵⁴ in Kampala was stocked

²⁵⁰ Uganda, *Parliamentary Debates*, April 15, 1966, 19 (Alex A. Latim and Prime Minister Milton Obote).

²⁵¹ All members of both KY and DP abstained from voting on the new constitution.

²⁵² The abstention of the five is indicated by the fact that they did not vote either for or against the new constitution, but were present in the National Assembly in order to swear an oath to the new constitution immediately after it was passed. There is no evidence to indicate whether the remaining five UPC MPs were present in the National Assembly on 15 April 1966, but if they were then those five would also have abstained and refused to swear an oath under the new constitution.

²⁵³ Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 190.

²⁵⁴ The *Lubiri* was the *Kabaka*’s palace on Mengo Hill in Kampala, and the *Kabaka*’s primary residence.

with ex-soldiers and arms and, in order to eliminate the strongest remaining opposition to his rule, on 24 May launched an assault on the *Kabaka's* palace even “though the Central Government knew that at the time Buganda was no military threat.”²⁵⁵ Within a matter of hours, the *Kabaka* was forced to flee into exile and a state of emergency was declared in Buganda, which lasted for nearly five years. With opposition to Obote inside the UPC already eliminated, the armed confrontation between the central government troops and Mutesa's small contingent of bodyguards²⁵⁶ successfully shifted the focus of the 1966 Crisis from the impact of the UPC's intervention in the Congo Rebellion to the supposed intransigence of the Buganda government.

Ocheng's controversial motion on 4 February 1966 demonstrated that the Obote faction's covert involvement in the Congo Rebellion had completely fractured the unity achieved under the Obote Doctrine and, in so doing, triggered the 1966 Crisis. Although the strict terms of the motion merely called for the suspension of Idi Amin from active duty while inquiries were made into his conduct in the Congo, the other allegations of corruption made by Ocheng against Obote, Onama, and Nekyon, combined with the supportive comments made by several UPC MPs in the National Assembly, reveal the different ways in which opposition to Obote had formed as a direct result of his faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion. Members of the Ibingira faction were clearly concerned about growing government authoritarianism, and the Obote faction's willingness to work without the consent of the rest of the party, as exemplified by the Obote faction's Congo exploits and their new foreign and domestic military allies. By contrast, politically independent members of the UPC were worried about the ideological implications of the Obote faction's interference in the Congo Rebellion and the threat this

²⁵⁵ Mafeje, “The Legitimacy of the Uganda government in Buganda,” 105. This view is also held by Henry Kyemba, one of Obote's assistants at the time who later wrote about his experiences in both the Obote and Amin governments. Kyemba notes that Amin was in a “jolly mood” during the attack on the *Lubiri* and was “obviously enjoying the fight.” Kyemba also claimed that the looting of the *Lubiri* that occurred after the brief Battle of Mengo lasted “for several days.” This incident was later termed the Battle of Mengo. Kyemba, *A State of Blood*, 26-27.

²⁵⁶ According to Mutesa, Uganda's constitution allowed him a private bodyguard of 300 men, although he had only 120 in the *Lubiri* on the day Mengo Palace was attacked by Amin and Uganda's special forces. Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 10-11.

posed to Uganda's national sovereignty as fears mounted that foreign influence in Uganda was growing.

Despite the centrality of the Congo Rebellion to both groups in the UPC that opposed Obote, however, the Prime Minister's defence of his actions at the height of the 1966 Crisis successfully shifted blame for the country's turmoil to the *Kabaka* and the kingdom of Buganda. Having already demonstrated his willingness to use his military allies to enforce the Obote Doctrine by arresting five ministers, suspending the president, and personally assuming all executive powers of government in February, Obote's speech on 15 April reunited most UPC MPs by shifting blame for the crisis to the *Kabaka* of Buganda. In this endeavour, Obote was strongly aided by the *Kabaka's* public admission of having invited foreign troops to Uganda and the *Lukiiko's* motion of 20 May that sought to expel the central government from Bugandan soil.

As a final act of reconciliation with his party, the commission of inquiry that Obote had promised his cabinet in February in regards to the Congo Affair was dutifully appointed later in 1966, although the commission's findings were not published until 1971 after Amin had staged his own coup d'état.²⁵⁷ Despite the impressive group of impartial commissioners to lead the investigation,²⁵⁸ the results of the commission were already a foregone conclusion: most witnesses denied "knowledge of gold movements from the Congo or of Colonel Amin's connection with the training of troops in the forest of Elgon,"²⁵⁹ despite the fact that Obote himself admitted that he had provided the Simbas with training and supplies.²⁶⁰ It was also alleged that others were prevented from testifying by threats and intimidation, including the principal witness of the inquiry, General Nicholas Olenga of the Simbas, who had all his relevant papers stolen, was severely beaten by Uganda's Special Forces, and was sent with his family to Moroto

²⁵⁷ Despite his cabinet's insistence that the results of the inquiry be publicly published, Obote refused to do so by claiming it was a matter of national security. Mazrui, *Soldiers and Kinsmen*, 14-15. Unfortunately, no author provides a precise date as to when the commission of inquiry was launched, but state only that it was sometime after May in 1966.

²⁵⁸ The commissioners were Sir Clement de Lestang of the Court of Appeal of Eastern Africa, Justice E. Miller from the High Court of Kenya, and Justice Augustine Saidi of the High Court of Tanzania. Mazrui, *Soldiers and Kinsmen*, 14-15.

²⁵⁹ Sathyamurthy, *The Political Development of Uganda*, 434.

²⁶⁰ Mittelman, *Ideology and Politics in Uganda*, 105.

Prison for “indefinite detention.”²⁶¹ In subsequent years, as Obote’s government enforced a continuous State of Emergency in Buganda and maintained a strong military presence there in order to “cow” its populace into obedience,²⁶² memories of the Obote faction’s intervention in the Congo Rebellion slowly ebbed from the public, and indeed, the academic spotlight.

²⁶¹ Ibingira, *African Upheavals since Independence*, 157-160; Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 190-191. Unfortunately, this researcher could not find evidence as to when Olenga and his family were released from Moroto Prison, although it is likely they were released at least by 1971 when Amin provided general amnesty to hundreds of political prisoners in Uganda after his coup.

²⁶² Kyemba, *A State of Blood*, 27.

5. Conclusion

This thesis has sought to build upon the scholarship of past historians of Uganda by examining the impact that the Obote faction's covert intervention in the Congo Rebellion had on Uganda's internal politics, particularly the eruption and outcome of the 1966 Crisis. It has argued that the first Prime Minister of independent Uganda, Milton Obote, initially secured his leadership of the Uganda People's Congress – an ideologically diverse group of independent political notables – by uniting the party around a common political agenda aimed at eliminating political opposition and increasing the authority of the central government. As outlined in Chapter 2, the Prime Minister's "A Plan for Nationhood" speech in August 1962 established the Obote Doctrine that firmly tied national unity to Uganda's future prosperity and the maintenance of the country's newfound sovereignty. As such, the years 1962 to 1964 in Uganda witnessed the triumph of the Obote consensus: district council and kingdom elections were rigged and the powers of these governments were usurped; the civil service, military and police were politicized; Uganda's national media were bullied into supporting and praising the many fundamental changes occurring to Uganda's government; and political opposition were both recruited and harassed using the full force of government resources.

Chapter 3, however, argues that the Obote Consensus did not last long as demonstrated by events in 1964. While Obote had secured his leadership of the UPC by advancing a nation-building framework for Uganda that united his ideologically diverse party, his unexpected acclamation in January 1964 that Uganda would follow a "socialist line of development" exposed cracks in the UPC's united public façade. For the first time, some members of the UPC considered how the forced elimination of opposition political parties and a strict adherence to national unity might reduce Ugandan democracy to a "hollow mockery," while other UPC members openly embraced the authoritarian implications of one-party rule as the indigenous emergence of "African Socialism." Interestingly, fissures in the UPC continued to expand upon these fault lines,

particularly following the exposure of the Obote faction's covert involvement in the Congo Rebellion in 1965.

Until further documentation on the Congo Crisis is released to scholars,²⁶³ details on exactly how and when the Obote faction's aid to the Simbas began will remain somewhat speculative. However, primary sources currently available, including excerpts from the *Uganda Argus* newspaper and debates in the National Assembly, demonstrate that Obote and his closest allies in the UPC had the means to intervene in the Congo as early as September 1964. To support this assertion, this thesis notes that the emerging Obote faction of the UPC held ministerial portfolios that allowed them to dictate Uganda's national policy concerning defence and security, foreign and internal affairs, and the national media, all of which insulated the rest of the UPC cabinet from the Obote faction's covert involvement in the Congo Rebellion. Intervention in the Congo Rebellion was further facilitated by the emergence of an alliance between Obote, Onama, and Nekyon with the Deputy Commander of the Army, Idi Amin, following the Uganda Army Mutiny in January 1964. Combined with the government's military pact with Israel and the rapid expansion of the army in the northwest of the country owing to security concerns in neighbouring Congo and Sudan, the Obote faction was able to provide training, weapons, supplies, and personnel to the Simbas without the rest of Uganda, including high-ranking members of the UPC, knowing.

Chapter 3 also explored the consequences of the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion, beginning with the first rumours of unnamed foreign agents actively working in Uganda in June 1964 and continuing until the advent of the Crisis of 1966. I argue that by late 1964 and early 1965 the Obote faction launched an anti-American campaign to rally nationalist sentiment in the country in support of the Simbas, including a rally outside the American embassy in Kampala and the "Peace in Africa" debate in the National Assembly, likely as a prelude to publicly admitting their aid to the Congolese National Council of Liberation. Instead of uniting the country, however, the embassy rally and "Peace in Africa" debate demonstrated how divided the UPC had

²⁶³ The official policy of the government of Uganda, and of the National Archives in Entebbe, is to release classified documents after 50 years. As such, the first material relating to the post-independence period should soon be released for public access.

become owing to the implications that the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo had on Uganda's internal politics. As more details of the Obote faction's involvement became public, the divides in the UPC led to the emergence of organized opposition in the UPC led by Obote's Minister of State, Grace Ibingira. Notably, Ibingira stressed the political consequences of the Obote faction's ambiguous relationship with communist China in order to raise the spectre of a communist takeover of Uganda that would threaten the nation's sovereignty.

The first part of Chapter 4 examines comments in the National Assembly by UPC MPs during the debate on Daudi Ocheng's Gold Allegations Motion in February 1966. These comments support the thesis that opposition to the Obote faction was the direct result of their intervention in the Congo Rebellion and generally fell into one of two categories. Some UPC members feared the growing authoritarian tendencies of the Obote faction, including its close relationship with Amin and its willingness to work without the consent of the rest of the party. Other UPC members feared for Uganda's national sovereignty owing to the ideological implications that support of the Simbas had caused, including an increasingly close yet ambiguous relationship with the People's Republic of China. Essentially, the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion violated the Obote Doctrine by undermining Uganda's national unity, creating destructive political opposition that threatened the country's sovereignty, and ultimately challenged Obote's leadership of the UPC.

The second part of Chapter 4 argues that Obote pursued three strategies to re-establish his authority over the UPC and downplay his faction's divisive intervention in the Congo Rebellion. First, Obote arrested his political opposition in the UPC and gave himself dictatorial powers in a show of political and military might. Second, Obote wisely ignored all mention of his covert involvement in the Congo Rebellion in the National Assembly and instead blamed the *Kabaka* of Buganda, Edward Mutesa II, for the Crisis of 1966, owing to the latter's admission that he made a "precautionary request" for foreign military assistance at the height of the crisis. The *Kabaka's* supposed guilt was only enhanced in the eyes of historians when the *Lukiiko's* motion was passed on 20 May and the Battle of Mengo elevated the rather defenceless Buganda kingdom to a potential military threat. Finally and more conciliatory, Obote appointed an impartial commission of inquiry into that allegations that Ocheng made in the National Assembly

on 4 February 1966, yet nonetheless ensured that the commission's findings were favourable to his interests. Combined, Obote's efforts shifted the blame for the 1966 Crisis from his faction's covert intervention into the Congo Rebellion to the intransigence of the *Kabaka* and the kingdom of Buganda.

As a result of the nation state approach favoured by past historians of Uganda, who have looked back to the colonial era to diagnose Uganda's decline after independence and point to the country's "immovable ethnic group loyalties" as the root cause of the 1966 Crisis, evidence of the link between the Congo Rebellion and the 1966 Crisis has almost been entirely ignored. Indeed, the explanation offered by Obote to the National Assembly on 15 April 1966, and the ensuing Battle of Mengo on 24 May 1966, have been the focus of much historical research, while the substance of Ocheng's motion in the National Assembly on 4 February 1966 has been generally disregarded. Yet as this thesis has shown, the 1966 Crisis in Uganda cannot be understood without the context of the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion and the resulting rise of foreign influence into Uganda's internal affairs. Whether rumours of a coup d'état in 1965 and 1966 were real or imagined, there is no doubt that fears of foreign intervention in Uganda's internal affairs as a result of the Obote faction's intervention in the Congo Rebellion created a political hysteria that precipitated the 1966 Crisis. Only by looking outside of Uganda's borders, and considering the impact of Uganda's regional and international relations on the country's domestic politics, can one fully understand the root causes of the 1966 Crisis in Uganda.

5.1. Further Study

Viewing the Crisis of 1966 through the lens of the Obote faction's covert intervention in the Congo Rebellion and Uganda's foreign relations raises a host of further questions that demand greater scholarly attention. In regards to the political development of Uganda from 1964 to 1965, the Uganda Army Mutiny is clearly of great importance due to the way in which it brought together Idi Amin and the Obote faction of the UPC, yet the details of how the mutiny itself actually unfolded remain largely a mystery. Of the three East African mutinies that occurred in January of 1964, Uganda's was the least serious and occurred only after mutinies first erupted in Tanzania then

Kenya. Uganda also dealt with its mutineers least harshly by merely suspending those involved, until they were rehired to fight in the Congo Rebellion in September 1964, while all levels of military personnel received substantial pay raises.²⁶⁴ Considering that the mutiny came on the heels of Obote's One-Party speech, and was followed soon after by Uganda's military pact with Israel, the expansion of the Uganda Army, and the Obote faction's covert aid to the Simbas, one must seriously consider whether Obote, Onama and Nekyon merely turned the mutiny into an advantageous political event or actually planned the mutiny in advance. Whatever the truth behind the mutiny is, it is difficult not to agree with Mutesa's assertion that Obote's "reaction seemed out of proportion to the situation, but whether he really thought the incident so threatening or wished to create an atmosphere of crisis, he certainly turned it to good account."²⁶⁵ There is also no denying the importance that the mutiny had on Uganda's immediate political development, particularly in regards to the Congo Rebellion and the 1966 Crisis, yet greater historical inquiry is needed to draw more precise conclusions.

Examining the Obote faction's involvement in the Congo Rebellion also raises greater ideological questions regarding the Prime Minister's first term in office in Uganda from 1962 to 1971 and his government's relationship with the People's Republic of China. Although the Obote Doctrine was established to unite the disparate members of the UPC under Obote's leadership, ample evidence indicates that Obote was ideologically intrigued and influenced by political currents in China throughout the 1960s. The *UPC Independence Souvenir* of 1962, written largely by then UPC Secretary General John Kakonge, refers to Uganda's "Militant and Revolutionary President, Comrade Milton Obote" and is notable for its use of communist jargon and its militant nationalist tone.²⁶⁶ In 1964, Obote surprised members of his own party by announcing his government's intention to follow a "Socialist line of development," and later received Chinese military advisors and weapons in order to aid the Chinese-backed Simbas in the Congo Rebellion and to train a cadre of political officers for the Uganda Army in the forests of Mount Elgon. Unfortunately, events and scholarship stemming from the 1966

²⁶⁴ F.J. Ravenhill, "The Military and Politics in Uganda," *Africa Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (July - September 1979): 127.

²⁶⁵ Mutesa, *Desecration of My Kingdom*, 179.

²⁶⁶ *UPC Independence Souvenir* (Kampala: Uganda Bookshop Printing Department, 1962).

Crisis do not make clear how much influence the PRC had on Uganda's internal affairs, including whether China actually funded the pro-communist UPCYL or bankrolled Kakonge and Nabudere to stage a communist coup in Uganda.

By 1969, Obote announced his Move to the Left, which included the widespread release and propagation of the Common Man's Charter. The charter was a pocket-sized red and black booklet seemingly modelled after Chairman Mao's Little Red Book that called for greater economic equality in Uganda and the nationalization of key industries.²⁶⁷ In the same year, Obote announced his National Service Proposals that called for "all able-bodied Ugandans to spend from one to two years in various kinds of camps where they would be instructed in the new political consciousness of socialism."²⁶⁸ If the Move to the Left was an attempt by Obote to gain "support from mass mobilization" when challenges to his leadership of the UPC resurfaced in the late 1960s, as argued by Peter Willetts, then one is certainly left wondering just how politically influenced Obote was, and how close his government's connections were, to Mao and the Chinese government.²⁶⁹ Further inquiry into Uganda's political and military connections to China, particularly in the period from 1964 to 1969, may prove extremely fruitful towards elucidating Obote's political goals and ideology during the first term of his rule and its impact on Uganda's political development.

²⁶⁷ A. Milton Obote, *The Common Man's Charter* (Entebbe: Government Printer, 1969).

²⁶⁸ Irving Gershenberg, "Slouching towards Socialism: Obote's Uganda," *African Studies Review* 15, no. 1 (April 1972): 83.

²⁶⁹ Peter Willetts, "The Politics of Uganda as a One-Party State 1969-1970," *African Affairs* 74, no. 296 (July 1975): 298.

References

- Anstey, Roger. "The Congo Rebellion." *The World Today* 21, no. 4 (April 1965): 169-176.
- Bienen, Henry. "Kenya and Uganda: When Does Dissent Become Sedition?" *Africa Report* 14, nos. 3 and 4 (March - April 1969): 10-14.
- Brett, E.A. "Neutralising the Use of Force in Uganda: The Rôle of the Military in Politics." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 33, no. 1 (March 1995): 129-153.
- Connelly, Matthew. "Rethinking the Cold War and Decolonization: The Grand Strategy of the Algerian War for Independence." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33, no. 2 (May 2001): 221-245.
- Dinwiddy, Hugh. "The Search for Unity in Uganda: Early Days to 1966." *African Affairs* 80, no. 321 (October 1981): 501-518.
- Fellows, Lawrence. "Ugandans Arrest Leading General: Opolot's Seizure Ordered by Obote in Power Move." *New York Times*, October 8, 1966, 5.
- Gershenberg, Irving. "Slouching towards Socialism: Obote's Uganda." *African Studies Review* 15, no. 1 (April 1972): 79-95.
- Gertzel, Cherry. *Party and Locality in Northern Uganda, 1945-1962*. London: Athlone Press, 1974.
- Gingyera-Pinywa, A.G.G. *Apolo Milton Obote and His Times*. New York: NOK Publishers, 1978.
- Government of Uganda. *Uganda Constitutional Instruments: The Uganda (Independence) Order in Council, 1962, and the Constitution of Uganda (excluding schedules 1 to 6)*. Entebbe: Government Printer, 1964.
- Gukiina, Peter M. *Uganda: A Case Study in African Political Development*. Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972.
- Hancock, Ian. "The Buganda Crisis of 1964." *African Affairs* 69, no. 275 (April 1970): 109-123.
- Hansen, Holger Bernt. *Ethnicity and Military Rule in Uganda: A Case Study of Ethnicity as a Political factor in Uganda Based on a Discussion of Political Anthropology and the Application of its Results* (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1977).

- Ibingira, Grace Stuart. *African Upheavals since Independence*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980.
- Ingham, Kenneth. *Obote: A Political Biography*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Ingham, Kenneth. *Politics in Modern Africa: The Uneven Tribal Dimension*. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Ismael, Tariq Y. "The People's Republic of China and Africa." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 9, no. 4 (December 1971): 507-529.
- Jacob, Abel. "Israel's Military Aid to Africa, 1960-1966." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 9, no. 2 (August 1971): 165-187.
- Jorgensen, Jan Jelmert. *Uganda: A Modern History*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981.
- Kajubi, W. Senteza. *National Assembly Elections 1962*. Kampala: unknown publisher, 1962.
- Karugire, Samwiri Rubaraza. *A Political History of Uganda*. Nairobi: Heinemann, 1980.
- Karugire, S.R. *The Roots of Instability in Uganda*. Kampala: New Vision, 1988.
- Kasfir, Nelson. "The 1967 Uganda Constituent Assembly Debate." *Transition* 33 (October - November 1967): 52-56.
- Kasfir, Nelson. *The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation and Ethnicity in African Politics, with a Case Study of Uganda*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.
- Kasozi, A.B.K. *The Social Origins of Violence in Uganda, 1964-1985*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995.
- Kiwanuka, Ben. K.M. *Socialism and One-Party Rule*. Kampala: unknown publisher, 1964.
- Kiwanuka, Benedicto. "What is Democracy?" Lecture: Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, August 2, 1967.
- Kyemba, Henry. *A State of Blood: The Inside Story of Idi Amin*. New York: Ace Books, 1977.
- Latim, Alex A. and Paul K. Ssemogerere. *The DP and Obote's Constitution*. Kampala: unknown publisher, 1966.
- Lofchie, Michael F. "The Political Origins of the Uganda Coup." *Journal of African Studies* 1, no. 4 (Winter 1974): 464-496.
- Low, D.A. *Political Parties in Uganda, 1949-62*. London: Athlone Press, 1962.

- Mafeje, Archie. "The Legitimacy of the Uganda government in Buganda." In L. Cliffe et al, ed. *Government and Rural Development in East Africa: Essays on Political Penetration*. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977.
- Mayanja, Abu. *You and Your Vote: A Guide to the Lukiiko Election*. Kampala: KY Publication, 1962.
- Mazrui, Ali A. *Soldiers and Kinsmen: The Making of a Military Ethnocracy*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975.
- Mittelman, James H. *Ideology and Politics in Uganda: From Obote to Amin*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1975.
- Mudoola, Dan M. *Religion, Ethnicity and Politics in Uganda*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1993.
- Mujaju, Akiiki B. "The Gold Allegations Motion and Political Development in Uganda." *African Affairs* 86, no. 345 (October 1987): 479-504.
- Mutesa II, King of Buganda. *Desecration of My Kingdom*. London: Constable, 1967.
- Mutibwa, Phares N. "Internal Self-Government, March 1961 – October 1962." In G.N. Uzoigwe, ed. *Uganda: The Dilemma of Nationhood*, 259-266. New York: NOK Publishers International, 1982.
- Mutibwa, Phares. *Uganda Since Independence: A Story of Unfulfilled Hopes*. London: Hurst, 1992.
- Nabudere, D. Wadada. *Imperialism and Revolution in Uganda*. London: Onyx Press, 1980.
- Nelson, Daniel. "Newspapers in Uganda." *Transition* 35 (February - March 1968): 29-33.
- Nohlen, Dieter, Michael Krennerich, and Bernhard Thibaut. *Elections in Africa: A Handbook*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Obote, A. Milton. "A Plan for Nationhood." *Transition* no. 6/7 (October 1962): 15-18.
- Obote, A. Milton. *The Common Man's Charter*. Entebbe: Government Printer, 1969.
- Obote, Milton. "The Footsteps of Uganda's Revolution." *East Africa Journal* 5, no. 10 (October 1968): 7-13.
- Ocaya-Lakidi, Dent. "From Local Governments to Mere Local Administrations." In G.N. Uzoigwe, ed. *Uganda: The Dilemma of Nationhood*, 305-311. New York: NOK Publishers, 1982.
- Omara-Otunnu, Amii. *Politics and the Military in Uganda, 1890-1985*. London: MacMillan Press, 1987.

- Parsons, Timothy. *The 1964 Army Mutinies and the Making of Modern East Africa*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2003.
- Ravenhill, F.J. "The Military and Politics in Uganda." *Africa Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (July – September 1979): 122-147.
- Roberts, A.D. "The Sub-Imperialism of the Baganda." *The Journal of African History* 3, no. 3 (1962): 435-450.
- Sathyamurthy, T.V. *The Political Development of Uganda 1900-1986*. Aldershot, England: Gower Publishing, 1986.
- Sathyamurthy, T.V. "The Social Base of the Uganda People's Congress, 1958-70." *African Affairs* 74, no. 297 (1975): 442-460.
- Twaddle, Michael. "Order and Disorder in Uganda." *The World Today* 29, no. 10 (October 1973): 449-454.
- Uganda. *National Assembly Debates (Hansard)*. Second Series. 1962-1966.
- Uganda Argus*. Select Editions, 1962 - 1966. Kampala, Uganda.
- UPC Independence Souvenir*. Kampala: Uganda Bookshop Printing Department, 1962.
- Willetts, Peter. "The Politics of Uganda as a One-Party State 1969-1970." *African Affairs* 74, no. 296 (July 1975): 278-299.
- Young, Crawford M. "Post-Independence Politics in the Congo." *Transition* 26 (1966): 34-41.