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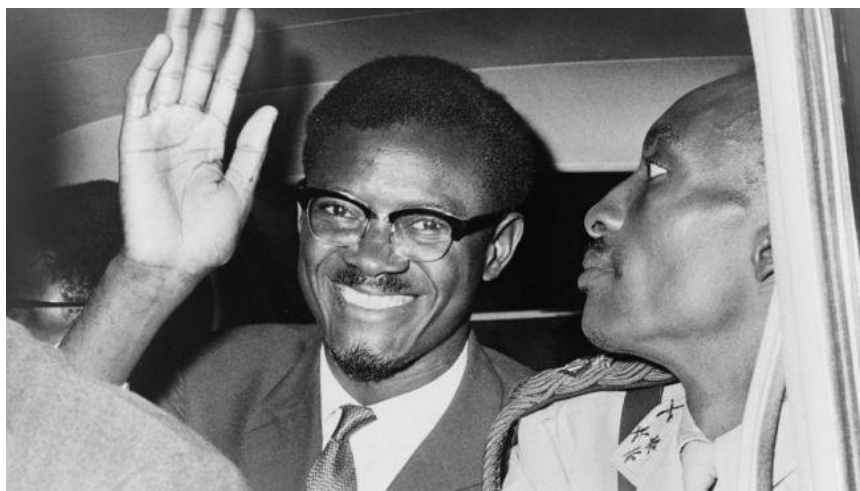
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MI6 killed late Congolese PM Patrice Lumumba: UK peer

April 1, 2013



A British peer has, in explosive revelations, said that London's spy agency MI6 murdered the first democratically-elected Prime Minister of Congo, once described as "the most important assassination of the 20th century".

Lord David Edward Lea made the disclosure in a letter to the editor in the March 21 edition of the London Review of Books (LRB) in response to a question made in a new book published in January.

The question is made by Calder Walton in his book *Empire of Secrets: British Intelligence, the Cold War and the Twilight of Empire* .

Walton writes: “The question remains whether British plots to assassinate Lumumba ... ever amounted to anything. At present, we do not know”.

Sir Lea wrote in his letter that “actually, in this particular case, I can report that we do” know that Britain plotted to kill Lumumba.

“It so happens that I was having a cup of tea with Daphne Park... She had been consul and first secretary in Leopoldville, now [capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo] Kinshasa, from 1959 to 1961, which in practice (this was subsequently acknowledged) meant head of MI6 there,” Sir Lea said.

“I mentioned the uproar surrounding Lumumba’s abduction and murder, and recalled the theory that MI6 might have had something to do with it. ‘We did,’ she replied, ‘I organised it’,” he added.

Lea also said that Park had told him the reason behind the assassination was that Lumumba was a leftist and ready to hand over rich Congolese resources to the Russians.

“We went on to discuss her contention that Lumumba would have handed over the whole lot to the Russians: the high-value Katangese uranium deposits as well as the diamonds and other important minerals largely located in the secessionist eastern state of Katanga,” he said.

Park served in Kinshasa (then Leopoldville) between 1959 and 1961, while also serving as an intelligence officer in Hanoi, Moscow and Zambia.

She was made a peer in 1990 after retirement from MI6 and served as the Special Forces semi-official spokesperson until she died in 2010.

Lumumba was the central figure in the Congolese fight for independence from Belgium in 1960 and was assassinated by gun shots on January 17, 1961.

He only served two months in office before being ousted in a US-backed military coup.