

## Jean Schramme – Script 2

We claimed we were coming to Africa to civilize, but what we left behind was a legacy of division and sorrow.

In truth, we were there to exploit—to take the riches of the land and the labor of its people. It was all about greed, but we masked it as duty.

Look at the wars in my Congo. So much blood has been shed over the precious stones which lay in her soil. In Katanga there is copper, cobalt, uranium, cadmium. There are diamonds in Kasai, and plenty of gold and silver too.

That's what the war in Katanga was really all about. In 1960 Union Minière transferred 1.25 billion Belgian francs into Moïse Tshombe's bank account to pay the white mercenaries fighting against the national unity of the newly independent Congo.

Union Minière had been the main mining company in Congo during Belgian rule. It was mostly owned by Société Générale de Belgique, a holding company with close ties to the Belgian government.

And it wasn't only Belgium who were interested in Katanga. The British mining company Tanganyika Concessions was a founding partner of Union Minière. The French and Dutch owned Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas (Paribas) had big financial interests in the mining operations in Katanga too.

The United States were supporting the Congolese government, they were playing the long game. They wanted Europe, China, and Russia out of the picture so they could milk Congo dry without any competition. The Americans went on to support Mobutu's dictatorship for decades, while he was taking millions from the state owned mining company.

I was just a pawn for their geopolitical games in Congo. With my soldiers I even fought against the United Nations - the defender of human rights!

Human Rights... that was something I regretfully disrespected in my own life. Even after Congo I advised various far-right paramilitary groups in South America. What a shame.

At one point the United Nation arrested me and expelled me from Congo as a troublemaker. I rushed back to fight against them even harder.

Despite all of that, I was never charged for all the people who died because of me. Civilians, Congolese soldiers, UN blue-helmets... We killed with impunity.

An impunity that lingers on, 60 years later. The assassination of UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld is still unresolved.

In 1961 Hammarskjöld was on his way to negotiate a cease-fire in Katanga when his plane crashed, killing everyone aboard. The cause of the crash is still under investigation today.

The assassination of a UN secretary general represents a crime that can't be erased by history. It's time to unveil the truth about who shot the UN aircraft down and killed Hammarskjöld.

And what about me? What have I built with my ambition?  
Ruin, not only upon the lands I walked, but upon my own soul.  
If only I could reclaim those years, I would choose a path less stained by blood.

I am guilty—guilty of perpetuating war, of using force to impose my will, of spilling blood that was not mine to claim. I look back and see a trail of devastation, a legacy marked by the horrors I've inflicted.

For this, I can offer nothing but my remorse, too late and too meager to mend what I've broken.