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Eisenhower ‘ordered Congo assassination’

By HUGH DAVIES in New York

PRESIDENT Eisenhower personally ordered the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the pro-Soviet Congolese leader, who vanished in 1961, according to evidence about to be published in the United States.

Lumumba’s mysterious disappearance and presumed death has never been satisfactorily explained.

He was last seen stumbling from a plane in Elisabethville, Belgian Congo, now Zaire, with his eyes blindedfolded and his hands tied behind his back.

The area, Katanga, now Shaba, was the domain of his arch-enemy, Moise Tshombe, and a United Nation’s investigation concluded that Tshombe had ordered his murder.

It was presumed that he had been killed by Katangese soldiers and Belgian mercenaries, possibly even with Tshombe’s personal participation.

The Central Intelligence Agency stated at the time that it had no hand in his death. But evidence is given in the “Congo Cables,” a book written by Madeleine Gelb, suggesting that the murder may have been ordered from the White House.

Details are given of the arrival in the Congo of “Joe from Paris,” a code-name for Sidney Gottlieb, the CIA’s top scientist at the time.

He came equipped with a kit containing an exotic poison designed to produce a fatal disease indigenous to central Africa.

Poison toothpaste?

The scientist told the CIA’s station chief in Leopoldville, then capital of the Congo, that the substance was somehow to be slipped into Lumumba’s food, or perhaps into his toothpaste.

Asked by the CIA agent who had authorised the assignment, the scientist indicated, the book said, that the order came from “the highest authority” — President Eisenhower.

While Gottlieb eventually dropped the poison in the Congo river because it was becoming “unstable,” an alter-