

Statement of Lieutenant-Colonel R.H.W. Bunworth, Officer
Commanding, 33rd. Infantry Battalion, Albertville, Katanga
in the Congo.

I am Officer Commanding the 33rd. Infantry Battalion. My Unit is part of the Irish Contingent U.N. Forces in the Congo. In late August 1960 I was ordered into North East Katanga with my Battalion to occupy Albertville, Piana Mwanga, Bendera Baudouinville. On the 12th. October, 1960, I set up an additional post in the village of Niemba. That post was manned by a Platoon from "A" Company, 33rd. Infantry Battalion, and I appointed Lieutenant Kevin Gleeson to Command it.

Part of the mission assigned to U.N. troops in North East Katanga is peacefully to assist the civil administration in the preservation of law and order. A further task is the protection also by peaceful means of road, rail and river communications. In the area around Niemba during this period parties of Balubas were engaged from time to time in seeking to impede the free passage of transport by cratering roads. Niemba and its adjoining territory is a prohibited zone to Katangese Gendarmarie and Police by the terms of U.N. Defence Agreement of the 17th; October, 1960. It was consequently an important part of the Niemba Garrison's duty to endeavour within the limits of its assigned mission to keep open the roads in its area. The execution of this duty required patrolling out from Niemba. Commandant P.D. Hogan commanded a patrol for this purpose on the Niemba-Kiambi-Manono road on the day of the 7th. November. Lieutenant Gleeson on the day following was instructed to patrol the same route.