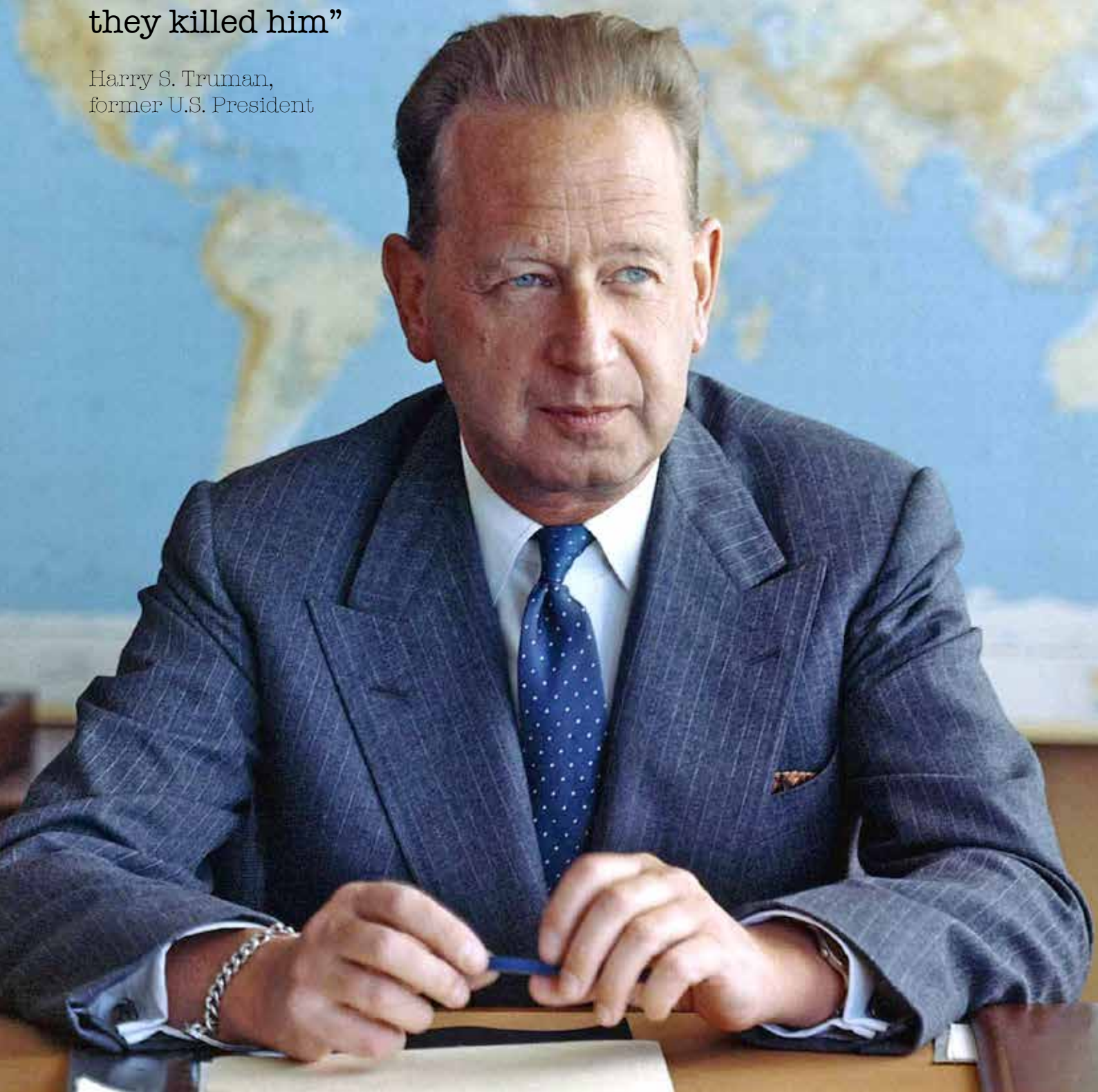


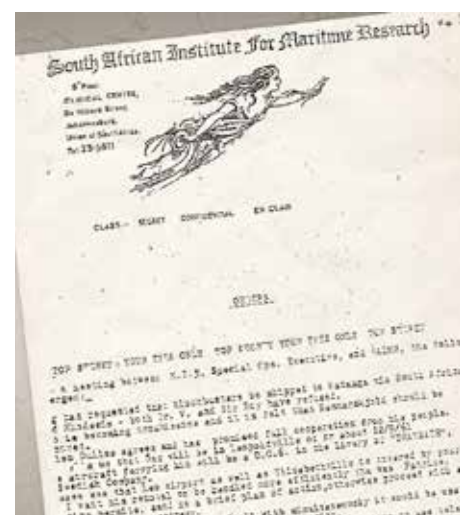
“Dag Hammarskjöld was on the point of getting something done when they killed him. Notice that I said, when they killed him”

Harry S. Truman,
former U.S. President



Cold Case Hammarskjöld

directed by Mads Brügger





The circumstances of the plane crash were always unclear, but now the UN is reopening the case on the suspicion that it was an assassination...

In 1961, Secretary General of the UN, Dag Hammarskjöld, died in a plane crash in Northern Rhodesia. He was en route to ceasefire negotiations between what were meant to be non-combatant UN forces and troops from the breakaway state of Katanga. Hammarskjöld was both popular and controversial, because he believed he could make peace in Africa by giving the continent back to the Africans.

The circumstances of the plane crash were always unclear, but now the UN is reopening the case on the suspicion that it was an assassination. The questions are: who wanted Hammarskjöld dead and can the truth be discovered today? Dag Hammarskjöld was killed on 18th September 1961, when his

DC-6 crashed near Ndola airport in the British colony of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) as he was flying in for peace talks to end the fighting in the mineral-rich Katanga province in neighbouring Congo.

The UN's own inquiry shortly after the crash blamed pilot error. But reports from witnesses and other diplomats have led to widespread accusations of a cover-up. Swedish aid worker, Göran Björkdahl, the protagonist in the film, has researched the event for years, and his conclusion, after adding new witness statements and the archive information to previously unpublished documents, is that Hammarskjöld's DC-6 was shot down. The motive was to maintain Western control of Katanga's minerals.

Director's note

In terms of style, the film is laden with the aesthetics of classical Cold War paranoia-conspiracy-thrillers, such as 'The Conversation' (1974), 'The Parallax View' (1974), and 'The Osterman Weekend' (1983). The film score buys into this universe, and so does the narration by director Mads Brügger, as well as the cinematography and the props employed (typewriters, reel-to-reel tape recorders, etc).

It's a film full of retired spy masters, secret agents, old mercenaries, and lost and found evidence – a true wilderness of mirrors, where everybody could be lying, while the real killer may be lurking round the next corner. At the same time, the film offers flashes of comic relief because Mads Brügger and Göran Björkdahl make a very odd couple, with subtle connotations of a comedy double act played with a straight face. Last, but not least, it is a very international film, which takes the audience on a fantastic tour to many countries and continents with a travel itinerary that makes James Bond seem like a lazy backpacker.



Up in the plane you see UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld and his entourage of fifteen persons, and in a few moments they will not exist anymore...

It's midnight. Rhodesia's jungle is dressed in a steaming, reeking black. A propeller is heard in the distance, bearing down upon us. Many years later, jungle drums will still tell about Belgian mercenaries who crept around down in the darkness that night.

The colour palette is blue and black, black and blue. White skin looks bluish at night in the jungle. There is a full moon, and such a night as this, in the heart of Central Africa in the moonlight, a white Albertina, the propeller-driven plane, which will fly directly over our heads in a moment, seems like a large fat, glistening albatross. It

feels possible to just grab it down from the firmament with a snap – if that is what you want. A little like 'shooting ducks in a barrel'.

Up in the plane you see UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld and his entourage of fifteen persons, and in a few moments they will not exist anymore. From this point, if you freeze the image, you can drag the dotted lines to the Congolese civil war, Mobutu's regime, the ongoing and accelerating exploitation of Africa, the total post-colonial nightmare as we know it today ... all this due to the single incident taking place now.



The film follows the elderly private Swedish investigator, Göran Björkdahl, as he travels around the world in the company of the film's director, Mads Brügger, tracking down new witnesses to Hammarskjöld's death and looking for evidence in dusty archives in Europe and the jungles of Congo. Gradually, they get on the trail of the killers, but they also suffer several serious setbacks on their way.

Director, Mads Brügger

Born in 1972. Danish journalist, TV presenter, author and filmmaker. The author of several books, he has also written for magazines and newspapers, produced award-winning radio programmes and hosted the critically acclaimed late night TV show 'The 11th Hour' as well as the daily news and discussion show 'Deadline'. He is the creator of the satirical docu-series 'Danes for Bush' (2004), the feature-length documentary 'The Red Chapel' (Sundance winner 2010) and 'The Ambassador' (2011). Station manager of Radio24syv.



Producer, Peter Engel

Danish producer and journalist. Develop, produce, co-produce and finance strong documentary film for the international market. Work with strong journalism and artistic visions, mainly with focus on political issues, human rights and global industry. Former: Zentropa, DR, The Danish Filminstitute, TV2 Denmark, Koncern Film & TV. Established Wingman Media in 2011.

Cold Case Hammar-skjöld is an unusual Cold War political thriller, whose creation and production was only possible thanks to the close collaboration of people from many different countries...

Producer's note

50 years after UN chief Dag Hammarskjöld died, there is a chorus of demands for a new probe into the tragedy that many claim was the work of mercenaries. Interest in the case has only increased since September 2013, when the privately funded Dag Hammarskjöld Commission published their ground-breaking report about a possible conspiracy to kill Dag Hammarskjöld.

Last year, the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon appointed a three-person independent panel, who were given three months to investigate the evidence which has emerged over the last decade. Their conclusion was that "a further inquiry or investigation would be necessary to finally establish the facts" of the death of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr Dag Hammarskjöld.

Soon a new UN Secretary General will be appointed to spearhead the United Nations, and the question is: Will he or she follow through on this important matter which continues to haunt the United Nations. So, if everything is a matter of the timing, the time could not be better for a film about the death of Dag Hammarskjöld.

Cold Case Hammar-skjöld is an unusual Cold War political thriller, whose creation and production was only possible thanks to the close collaboration of people from many different countries. The long period of comprehensive research has created a truly international co-production following in the slipstream of new classics like Citizenfour and A Good American.

