

[start, 00:00]

SPEAKER 3: It's all right for everyone. Kevin, clap. Ok, that's fine. Action.

SPEAKER 2: Ok, so we have to go back to the question again. So, actually tell us about the village where you were born, who your parents were, how many brothers and sisters, you have, your youth, and so on?

SPEAKER 1: My name is Kadiebwe Wa Kasangu, I was born in the village Bena-Kasase(ph), sector of Chibote, community of (inaudible), territory of Ndemba, district of Lulua, Kasai Central province. I spent my entire childhood in my village. I did elementary school in my mother's village, and the school... I continued at the Catholic mission of Ndemba, about fifteen kilometers from my village. I had lost my father at the age of one and a half. I was raised by my mother, we were my older sister, my big sister, followed by my big brother Chaba, and I am the last. After my primary education in Ndemba, I went in 1954 because I was born in 1938. In 1954, I finished my primary school, six years in primary school. I went to Mikalayi, 60 km from Luluabourg, currently Kananga, to the instructors' school where I stayed for a year and a half.

I left the Mikalayi mission because I didn't like it, at the thought of finishing my studies, to later become an instructor. I can do something other than that because in 1953, or 1954, we had just founded Lovanium University in Léopoldville at the time. I told myself, I have to study, my studies at this university. As the instructor courses did not give access to university, I left in 1955-56. I was admitted after competition to the International Athenaeum in Luabo. In 1962, I finished my studies, I had my degree in humanities, plus the certificate of approval. That same year I got married in 1963. I resumed my studies in Brussels, where I did political and diplomatic science at the Free University of Brussels. During my studies, I had the opportunity to participate in a seminar in Mons, another seminar in Strasbourg, another in Paris. I received a travel scholarship to the United States in 1967, where I did six weeks.

[00:05:05]

We were a couple, about fifteen African students. So, of course, we visited New York, we went to Atlanta, then to Cleveland, Ohio and Las Vegas. So, in 1969, I returned home. I was a political and diplomatic adviser at the MPR political office where I did just a few months, about seven months. Afterwards, I entered a private company, International Maritime Agency of Congo. In seventy-four (1974), I was the representative in Bumba where I was responsible for creating an agency for this company. I must admit that in Bumba, life for me was not easy, it was too hot. Then the population was not ready to be kind to foreigners such as the Baluba, the Bakongo. They were considered, we were considered colonialists. But I was surprised, surprised to find that people were kind to the Greeks, the Portuguese, and we as Kinshasa people, I was a foreigner.

Finally, I spent eleven months in Bumba, then I was sent as, still as a representative, to Kisangani. I had another eleven months there, and after fifteen months there, the situation was pleasant. People were very nice. So, in any case, there I had a pleasant stay, of course with my wife, with my children. At that time, there was... I was a father of five children. When I was in Kinshasa, where I was appointed director of the headquarters of the Zaire Maritime Agency, I spent three years. I went back to Kisangani to create a fourth direction for the East, Boma, Bukavu and Kisangani, of course. After a year, in 1977, I had to leave for health reasons. I returned to something (filler), in Kinshasa where I was hired by Petro-Zaire. I was sent to Matadi to create a Petro-Zaire agency, and again I went back to Kinshasa.

[00:10:00]

And everything that... until today... I left the agency. Petro-Zaire had become Petro-Congo, then, Cohydro(ph) I have been retired since 2008, and I am here.

SPEAKER 2: So you said you left school because you didn't want to become an instructor. Was it the missionaries who made this choice?

SPEAKER 1: It was... the choice was up to me. But the sending, yes. The sending?

SPEAKER 2: No, no, excuse me. So, can you say, then, in relation to, actually, the career of instructor, that it was your choice and then continue?

SPEAKER 1: No! Of course, when you're a kid, there's a lot of... you don't know a lot. Initially, I wanted to be a priest.

SPEAKER 2: [*phone ring*] You have to turn off.

SPEAKER 1: Yes, I will...

SPEAKER 2: Can we repeat, please?

s3

Start with, Regarding the choice of my studies, and then you elaborate.

SPEAKER 1: As a child, we go through several stages. Given the circumstances of the environment and above all, people want to be something, to play a certain role, to be well regarded, well considered, first of all in our own environment. For me where I was, I wanted to be a teacher because the teacher, at the time, with a lot of politics, I would say, when there was a conflict, some arguments, when he sees a teacher, Ah, be careful, to avoid facing the consequences. Since then, when I saw the missionaries, Father Gautier, who spent three months in the village, you would do two or three days, I saw that if I could be a priest like him, it would be good. And later, I considered that no, being a priest is not a teacher.

No, there is a better option because we just created Lovanium University, and there, I would be someone well considered. Indeed, because at that time as a scale of value, in the scale of value, people wanted to be State clerks. They wanted to be a priest, peace(ph) because, at that time, only Black people, abbots could participate and be invited to a meeting with White people, priests, with the agents of the administration. Besides, we had abbots who used to walk (inaudible) with the priests, who would eat with them. But later, I found that no, it was not (inaudible) when it came to religion. My parents were Protestant. I became a Catholic because I had noticed at the time that among Protestants the teaching was not developed enough and it did not lead anywhere in the offices, everywhere.

[00:15:00]

The employees we saw were those who had gotten their training from the Catholics. So that's how I did all this in school. I started reading, writing at home thanks to one of my cousins who was going to... he was already in second elementary. And then I showed up, followed on normally, finished the three years. Two years in my village, a year later in my mother's village (inaudible). The rest at ten years, I interrupted my studies. I went for a year and a half to Kakenge, there was a forestry factory. I stayed with my sister who was there with her husband for a year and a half. I returned home in 1951. I resumed my studies at the mission in 1954, I am in Mikalayi for the instructor course. After a year and a half, I left. I resumed my studies in 1956 at the Athénée Internationale in Luluabourg. In 1960, independence arrived. So, from time to time, there would be some Chinese teachers, Haitians.

And then, in 1962, I finished my studies in humanities. I was married, I was already the father of a boy. He is now 61 years old, he is in Dallas, USA. And I worked for a few months, six months at the Central Bank branch in Luluabourg and then I left the bank. I was secretary of the Council of Ministers of the provincial government of Luluabourg. In 1963, in September, I had a scholarship in Belgium. I enrolled at the Free University of Brussels, Faculty of Political, Social and Economic Sciences, and I did political and diplomatic sciences. In 1967 I finished my studies at the university, and during my studies, I had the opportunity to participate in seminars, a seminar in Mons, a seminar, a seminar in Brussels, a seminar in Strasbourg and another in Paris. In Mons, the seminar was organized by the Belgian government for Africans. In Paris, not in Strasbourg, it was within the framework of the Common Market, in the United States, it was the American embassy. In 1967... seventy-seven (1977) sorry... [*speaks to someone off-camera*] (Help me pick up the papers, my papers that are on the floor.)

[00:20:00]

SPEAKER 3: We will wait for him to come back.

SPEAKER 1: [*speaks to someone off-camera*] (Dittè(ph), come, take one of the books, a book to put on.) (inaudible) So, in the United States, I had a shock because the situation we encountered was different compared to what we were used to in Belgium. In Belgium, I can say that I have not been discriminated against except once with a friend. We were supposed to have a drink, and the friend was Mixed Race. The waiter came with a drink. He addressed my friend, he said: "Sir, I am not serving you". The other said: "Why?" we stood up and left. But otherwise, apart from this incident, I have not encountered any individual for this kind of racial

discrimination. I regularly went to Antwerp. After the session, I could stay with a friend for a week, sometimes ten days. We went everywhere in the neighborhood, in the restaurants, we danced without problem. But in the United States, it was first (inaudible) hot summer. The anxiety disorder was all over the United States, so much so that when we arrived, we were advised not to go in any way to a public place. We had to make sure that in this public place, they admit Black people.

I had read many books or newspapers, many articles about racial discrimination in the United States. We saw that there was also the war in Vietnam. So, that meant that in our tour, we went to Washington. We were received at the State Department, that of Africa. The person who received us pulled me aside. He told me that if you want to do your doctorate at Harvard, you have a scholarship, we have awarded a scholarship. When you are here, we will also give a scholarship to your wife. Because my contact with the US embassy was due to the fact that one day I saw that there was a statement inviting African students who wanted to visit America, to show up at the US embassy. I introduced myself like everyone else. I had just finished my studies, I was preparing the end-of-study dissertation over a period of seven months, one year, for the presentation.

[00:25:10]

So I can do what... I introduced myself. I was kept on. There were about fifteen of us, but divided into three groups of five. But in our group, there were four of us. As if by chance in this group, there were Malabar, Cabinda(ph), Kendibué(ph), Luamba, so three Kasaïans and a Mukongo. The Mukongo was studying in Antwerp, at the Higher School of Commerce. So at the American embassy, actually in Washington, at the State Department, he pulled me aside, the one who pulled me aside (inaudible), he gave me a business card telling me as soon as you arrive in Brussels, if you want to prepare your doctorate, do your doctorate at Harvard, you just have to present that card. You have... so when you're here, we'll have a scholarship for your wife. But after I got back to Brussels after a six-week trip, I thought, It seems like I'm going to get in everywhere, without wondering, would I be hunted, admitted or what. But going to the United States for four years, two years of English studies, two years of PhD, I have a problem. I cannot agree to lead that life there, ambivalent. I could not. So, when I finished my studies, I had a degree in political science and diplomacy. A few months of preparation already undertaken.

SPEAKER 2: And so, did you say, apart from this isolated incident, you never had problems?

SPEAKER 3: I have a little concern, the reflection of Diana on the end of the glass pane.

SPEAKER 2: Otherwise, you can sit down here too. There's still a chair here, you can set up here in front. Ok, we can continue?

s23

Yes.

SPEAKER 2: So you talked about the incident in Belgium, but do you see any similarities between the situation in the United States and the Belgian Congo with racial segregation?

SPEAKER 1: By the time we went to the United States, Congo was no longer a colony. It had just become an independent country, but compared to the old regime, therefore the colony, the Belgian colony. Yes, there were quite a few similarities between the United States and Congo as to the place of Black people, descended from the natives as they were called, they were not entitled to be called Sir or Ma'am.

[00:30:00]

So they didn't have the right to be respectfully addressed, it was sad. I saw, I saw the chief of my village being whipped. What was he being blamed for? There was this municipal road work, there was the roadman who maintained the road, who ensured that the road was clean, no water was stagnating on the road. And it was the municipal road work, but the chief was obliged to monitor it, to watch. Children are prohibited from playing on the road. So, each time, the territory being about 20 km, each time it rained, after the rain, during the long-awaited day. Two hours later, a territory guard came alone, a military leader to watch. When he saw a puddle, he called for the roadman, but the roadman was far away, 3 or 4 km from the village, between two villages. And then, it was the village chief who was responsible. But, because they had noted some damage to the roadway, he was whipped, it was himself who was whipped.

I was maybe five or six years old. We were there, watching our chief being whipped. But, we were frightened, of course, as (inaudible). At that time, I don't remember taking sides against the White man or against..., because when we were born, it was the regime that we lived under, we were used to it. It was normal to see the White man standing, the Black man on the ground, sitting on the ground. In 1955, I went to visit my aunt in Luebo(ph), I had just left the instructors' school in Mikalay. I went to visit my aunt in Luebo(ph), 200 km from my home. To get there, I took my train from Luebo(ph) to Mueka(ph), my paternal uncle was there. I took the bike, I went to Luluabourg, 70 km from Mueka(ph).

At 5 a.m., we were awakened with the help of the neighborhoods, from the Protestants' home, they were surrounded by the military. At 6:00 a.m., 6:30 a.m. when we went out, my big brother was picked up. So, around 10:00 a.m., we were brought across the Ledoa(ph) River, surrounded, surrounded by the military. I don't remember if they were armed, but they weren't police, they were military. But, they had their belts. First, we went to the Kasenda(ph) mission, it had rained that night, we were sitting on the floor. They had picked up... no, no, it was the brother, a Belgian priest.

[00:35:00]

We saw... they had just picked up someone who was old, who was in the ranks of schoolchildren getting ready to enter our class. With great contempt, the priest brought us over to the territorial agent. We were there, on the wet ground. And there we went, there was a wall with a row of

soldiers, we were in the middle up to the stream, then they called the ferry. We crossed, I think, we went one km to the south of the territory. Around 10 a.m. or 11 a.m., the first was called. It was... the operation had two objectives. Pick up people who had not paid tax. The other objective? Those who were (inaudible) in Luluabourg, they can be sent back to the village.

I had just left school. As ID, we had an ID booklet with, I believe, six or eight pages. We had it when I was at school in Mikalayi, there was, I was already sixteen years old I think. At that age, I can pay taxes, but given the fact that I was a student, this wasn't for everyone. We were given a stamp until... I presented my ID, he looked. When we got there, I was called, I was the third to be called. Fortunately I liked French, I really liked the French language and I was speaking quite well. I explained myself on my situation, but I happened to cheat, that saved me. I used a story of something that happened in Kamponde Cadulac(ph).

Two classes that didn't get along, the students would fight each other every time they met, it was a big fight. To appease the spirits, the director had decided to send all the children to their villages, to their homes and to bring them back a few weeks later. I had learned this story when I was at home in Dema. On this occasion in Luluabourg, I stated that I had already found the objection. And now, a class name, it's time to go back to school. What are we doing here? I am here because I am waiting. This is the time when the administrator of the territory was supposed to stay within the territorial field. To say: "Why were you arrested?" He said: "Why aren't you in France? You see that he is still, that he is a kid," he gave me my identity booklet.

[00:40:00]

Dayuta(ph), he shook my hand, it had a terrible effect. Because I spoke in front of a White man, I wasn't shaking. For the adults sitting there, some of them were trembling like leaves.

SPEAKER 3: There is a problem with sound. The microphone, when there is any item of clothing that rubs on the microphone, all this goes into the recording and we can't hear any more of what you are saying, it goes *croosh, croosh, croosh*, we need to arrange it in this direction. Don't make too many movements as well.

[end, 41:25]