"Americans should be clear about what we are doing in Angola. It is a conscious policy of Unita to target civilians, to lay waste to the countryside..."

—Mrs. Ethel Kennedy

**WHY IS THE U.S. PROLONGING WAR IN ANGOLA?**

Visiting Angola several weeks ago, a medical delegation sponsored by the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice was awakened at midnight by nearby mortar fire. After the shelling stopped, we were escorted to the rubble of a cement home. There we saw the bodies of Jose and Luisa Castilho, killed by a Unita attack in the central Angolan city of Huambo. Felisina, their six-year-old daughter, survived, but her legs were horribly mangled in the attack.

"If the American people could have been there to see that little girl's crippled body and hear her tortured whimpers, our policy of giving guns, rockets and land mines to Unita would be instantly ended," Mrs. Ethel Kennedy wrote in a letter to *The Washington Post* after visiting Felisina in her hospital bed.

The U.S. government is paying for the mortars that made Felisina an orphan. The Bush Administration has taken over South Africa's role as the main supplier of Jonas Savimbi's Unita.

The United Church of Christ has had over a century of service to the people of Angola, helping to build schools and hospitals and training teachers. Therefore, we are particularly disturbed that our government is financing this senseless death and destruction. We are joined by hundreds of other American church leaders from many denominations who oppose this immoral and unproductive policy.

Our on-site investigations into Unita's human rights atrocities have been confirmed by many other American observers who have visited Angola.

"The majority of the refugees from eastern Angola interviewed by Africa Watch indicated that Unita's strategy was designed to starve them out," testified Human Rights Watch executive director Aryeh Neier in urging Congress to end aid to Unita. "In addition to planting land mines in the fields and at the sources of water, Unita has captured and killed peasants tending their fields."

Dr. Adewale Troutman, medical director of the city of Newark, reported on his recent visit with our delegation: "In every hospital we visited, we found children, women and men who had been shot by Unita or lost legs from Unita land mines just in the last two months."

During the past 14 years of war, 200,000 Angolans have been killed, more than 20,000 children orphaned, and 50,000 Angolans left amputated—giving Angola the highest per-capita amputee rate in the world.

Statistics give only a glimpse of the human suffering Unita has caused. In the hospital our delegation visited in Huambo, we spoke with Juliana Alcina, a government health worker who was accompanying six nurses on a polio vaccination campaign in the countryside. As they drove along a road, a road they had traveled without incident three times the previous week, they struck a land mine planted by Unita. All six nurses died. The land mine was made in the United States.

This suffering could be ended if Jonas Savimbi respected the Gbadolite peace initiative and ceasefire brokered by 18 African heads of state this summer. But Mr. Savimbi has reneged on his agreement and allowed his troops to continue ambushing Angola's civilians.

The United States has replaced South Africa as the main supplier of Unita's weaponry. Just this summer—while the peace process was underway—Congress reportedly increased its covert aid to Unita, to $40-$80 million annually.

Instead of helping to end the war, as the African governments are doing, the United States is pouring more gasoline on the fire, arming Unita to plant land mines and attack homes and health clinics.

When President Bush meets with Mr. Savimbi in the White House today, they are sure to discuss more covert aid for Unita. There is no rationale—moral or strategic—for the Administration to support more war in Angola.

We are certain that if the American people knew that their tax dollars were paying for these atrocities, they would join us in pleading, "Mr. President, in the name of God, stop all U.S. aid to Unita."

If you would like to contribute to medical aid for the victims of the war, we have established the Angolan War Victims Fund. For educational materials on the situation in Angola, please contact: The Angola Foundation offices in Washington, D.C. and New York.

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