U.S. ATTENTION FOCUSES ON ANGOLA

The situation in Angola has now become a prominent focus in the media, and distortions and inaccuracies mount as public discussion increases. The most important area of misinformation concerns the nature of the war now taking place in Angola. It is not a civil war. The MPLA-led forces of the People's Republic of Angola are engaged in battle against groups composed primarily of outside interests: South Africans, Zaireans, right-wing Portuguese and former military officials. In contrast to the impression one would gain from reading U.S. press reports, actual Angolan participation in the enemy forces, MPLA has emphasized, is very limited.

The New York Times (December 16) reports that the Ford Administration made the decision last June to aid forces who would oppose the MPLA. They claim that only U.S. assistance stopped the MPLA from taking control of the entire country. U.S. intervention in Angola has temporarily denied the Angolan people the national independence for which they fought in armed struggle for 14 years. The furor in the media over Angola obscures this important fact.

Congress appears to be in at least a temporary state of turmoil over the question of U.S. involvement. Two bills which relate to Angola are under consideration: an International Security Assistance Bill and a Defense Department Appropriations act. Amendments are being introduced daily (so much so that at the time of this writing the particulars are almost impossible to sort out). Even the acknowledged extent of CIA financial involvement in Angola is an openly debated question. The latest Congressional figure is $60 million; yet CBS, on its national news program on Wednesday, December 17, reported $70 million, and Congressmen themselves are publicly acknowledging the figure is likely to be considerably higher than what the Administration has publicly stated. (New York Times, December 18)
The debate in Congress is as much concerned with defining the role of the Legislative branch as it is with considering the substance of the question of aid to Angola.

Both the heightened Congressional activity and the increased media interest reflect in part a residue of ill feeling over being left behind when the Executive branch got the U.S. into Vietnam, cleverly hiding the facts of involvement from both the press and the Congress. The secrecy of U.S. involvement in Angola has now been broken. But the true nature of U.S. penetration, the interests behind it, and the affect it has on the Angolan people continue to be hidden from the public.

NEW REVELATIONS ON U.S. INTERVENTION

The U.S. Navy's carrier Independence, the cruiser Boston and 3 DDLs (destroyer escorts) are now in the Azores on full alert for action in Angola, according to Sean Gervasi, a well-known commentator on African affairs, who cites highly placed Defense Department sources. Gervasi's Sources indicate that these ships have been given contingency orders that include flying tactical air support strikes over Angola.

The Independence carries 90 F-4 Phantom jets and has been armed with anti-personnel weaponry including napalm, Sidewinder missiles and anti-personnel fragmentation bombs. According to Gervasi's Defense Department sources, the ships have taken on all necessary supplies to sail including food and fuel, and all shore leave has been cancelled.

In what is seen as a related development, U.S. spotter planes are now known to be flying missions over Angola from Zaire, from the same airfields as South African bombers. The U.S. spotter planes are normally used to spot targets for artillery and air strikes.

Direct U.S. involvement is now increasing in other ways. United States cargo planes are air-dropping supplies directly to the South African columns operating on the central front, according to Gervasi's Defense Department sources. These plans are based in Zaire.

Also, according to Gervasi, mercenaries from the U.S. are arriving in Angola.
Gervasi says some of the U.S. mercenaries are coming from regular units of the U.S. armed forces. Officers have been approaching enlisted men asking if they are interested in volunteering. Those who become "mercenaries" write letters of resignation from the regular forces in order to formally dissociate themselves from the army.

**South Africa and Zaire**

At a press conference held December 17, Comrade Elisio de Figueiredo, Ambassador at Large of the People's Republic of Angola, said South Africa now has 4,000 regular troops in Namibia. In addition, according to Comrade de Figueiredo, Zaire now has 11,200 of its troops in Angola. These figures do not include the mercenaries.

Comrade de Figueiredo's information parallels that of Sean Gervasi's Defense Department sources who say South Africa has recently committed a second full regiment of mechanized cavalry. Gervasi thinks that some of this regiment is now fighting in the eastern central region of Angola around Luso along the key Benguela railway. It is in that area that most of the fighting is now taking place.

The first regiment of South African troops consists of two teams, according to Gervasi, one that entered Angola in the end of October, the other in the middle of November, with orders to support the mercenary column in combat. This second column of the first regiment was equipped with 100 French AMX 13 and U.S. M-41 Walker Bulldog tanks. From the beginning of their invasion, the South African troops have been accompanied by Allouette III helicopters, which have been mostly used for supply.

Gervasi's Defense Department sources say that South Africa is now using two-wings (subdivision of squadron) of fighter bombers to fly tactical support for the mercenaries and South African forces. South African fighter bombers are operating from a base in Zaire. It is estimated that between twelve and twenty South African aircraft are now operating in Angola.

Reports from the battle front are not clear, but it appears that the FAPLA, the armed forces of the People's Republic of Angola, have made gains in the north and are moving toward Ambizu, 70 miles north of Luanda. Fierce fighting is now taking place near the city of Luso, and according to some reports Luso has fallen into control of the South African invasion forces.
SOUTH AFRICA AND ANGOLA

The past week has witnessed setbacks for the South African invading forces, increasingly bitter strains within the opportunistic FNLA-UNITA-South Africa alliance, and the escalation of U.S. intervention in support of the beleaguered alliance. The reverses suffered by the South Africans have been dramatised by the capture of South African combat regulars by FAPLA, the MPLA armed forces, who were produced in Luanda. In addition, Lopo Nascimento, member of the MPLA government, took South African soldiers with him on a recent visit to Lagos, Nigeria. Also the South African press is publishing an ever longer list of fatalities suffered by the South African units operating in Angola.

The contradictions within the anti-MPLA alliance have pinpointed by Savimbi’s appeal in Uganda for help from "African countries" to ease his exposed dependence on South Africa. Savimbi was reported as having claimed to be aiding SWAPO, the Namibian liberation movement, while characterizing the South Africans as white supremacists and racists whose skills and sophistication were indispensable to his effectiveness.

In the U.S. the political liability of being identified with South African racism has been recognized by more farsighted policymakers; however, the cruder CIA oriented officials appear to have prevailed. Thus, as disclosed by a highly placed Defence Department source opposed to present policy, the U.S. is not only spending large sums in trying to subvert the MPLA, but is also directly helping the South African forces with aircraft, supplies, and the standby alert of a formidable carrier task force equipped to engage in counter-insurgency warfare.

The U.S. intervention evidently has as one of its purposes the strengthening of the South Africans. The South African press has complained of U.S. aloofness in the fight against "communism" in Angola, particularly as more and more South African manpower and material are drawn into the Angolan conflict.

South Africa must also be very nervous about the impact of its Angola operations on the Black population in South Africa. Since South Africa is a police state, the reactions of local Blacks can hardly be articulated openly, but the lessons of Angola
will obviously be absorbed.

The implications of South African involvement in relation to its "detente" with African states is also significant. Thus Zambia, already heavily compromised by South Africa in relation to the Zimbabwe situation, has been characterized by Daniel Moynihan as a mere conduit for U.S. arms to UNITA.

"SOUTH AFRICA TO ENLARGE ANGOLA ROLE" (excerpted from the Wash. Post, Dec. 18) by Peter Mosley-Reuter

Pretoria, Dec. 17- South Africa announced today that it is sending reservist commandos into Angola and tacitly acknowledged that some of its forces are already fighting deep inside the war-divided former Portuguese colony. Defense Minister Piete Botha said in a statement that reservist units, many of them trained commandos, would serve three months at a time instead of the usual three week training period. He also said some servicemen's one year conscription will be extended by one month until Feb. 6. "This is not a panic measure but is intended to increase effectiveness," Botha said.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE PRA

Fourteen African nations have so far recognized the People's Republic of Angola (PRA). Two recent additions to this list, Nigeria and Tanzania, are especially significant. Oil rich Nigeria is the largest country in Africa, and it is militarily the strongest of the Black African countries. Given Nigeria's generally pro-Western stance, its recognition the early has come as somewhat of a surprise. The exposure of South Africa's overt involvement in the Angolan war has been an important forctor in the Nigerian decision.

Tanzania is one of the most progressive African countries and was a staunch supporter of FRELIMO throughout the armed struggle. Despite this, Tanzania did not immediately recognize the PRA. It was reported that Tanzania was pushing for a unity between the three groups, and did not want to jeopardize this by recognizing the MPLA government. Like Nigeria, the critical turning point for Tanzania was the South African intervention. Although a protracted war in Angola could have severe consequences for the already hard pressed economy of Tanzania, the Tanzanian government chose to take a progressive political position. Concurrent with its announcement
recognizing the PRA, the Tanzanian government closed the FNLA and UNITA offices in Dar-es-Salaam.

Other African countries, whether or not they have recognized the PRA, are very concerned about the war. So far, 32 members of the OAU (Organization of African Unity) have called for an emergency OAU meeting on Angola.

As would be expected, non-African countries which have recognized the PRA are other third-world nations and socialist countries in Europe. A striking exception is the recent recognition of the PRA by Sweden.

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A LUTA CONTINUA VENCEREMOS
WHERE MPLA IS IN FIRM CONTROL IT'S PEACEFUL
(reprint from Sunday Times of Zambia, by George Siemensma, December 7, 1975)

Life is slowly picking up in some parts of Angola that are controlled by MPLA.
The town of Malanje, 400 km (248 miles) east of Luanda, shows clearly that the situation in the MPLA-controlled "corridor" from Luanda via Malanje and Henrique de Carvalho up to the Zambian border is calm and more stable.

During our four-day trip we found that the control at roadblocks was relaxed.
We were allowed to travel freely both north and south of the main route.

Everywhere MPLA cadres are making attempts to get the local population back into the fields. The once most agricultural productive province of Malanje faces at the moment a serious shortage of manpower.

Thousands of refugees have fled to this area from the battle zones and have to be fed. This might cause a serious problem in the near future.

The MPLA is therefore setting up cooperatives and organising the people to get the crops planted before the rainy season really starts.

In the town of Malanje itself life is slowly getting back to normal. Hundreds of shops, deserted by the more than 10,000 fleeing Portuguese in July are one by one being re-opened. Many were damaged during the heavy fighting at the end of July this year when the MPLA drove the mainly FNLA forces out of the town. Reports that Malanje had been retaken by the combined FNLA-UNITA forces -- who according to these reports would be in control of the town at this very moment -- are untrue.

Both the MPLA officials as well as all civilians we talked to strongly denied that the two rival movements had ever come closer to Malanje. The nearest they did was 60 km (37 1/2 miles) away.

The bridge across the Cuanza river is still standing disproving reports by the Western Press about its destruction and Russians, Cubans and even Mozambicans being captured near Malanje.

Various government departments in Malanje are being set up by MPLA. There is a provisional governor awaiting approval by Luanda.
One hotel has already been re-opened and postal services are functioning normally.
Three times a week a train runs between Luanda and Malanje and there is a twice-a-week air service between the two cities.

The local cotton factory still employs 150 workers of the previous 200-manpower.
It is waiting for the necessary spare parts and materials to arrive.

The province of Malanje has also always been known to supply large parts of the country with food. At the moment this has gone down to less than half because the manpower has been compared with only 1,750 tonnes of coffee and 900 tonnes of tobacco.
This factory, also left almost in ruins by the Portuguese, is the biggest in this province where cotton always has been an important product.

In 1971 there was a total production in Malanje alone of more than 60,000 tonnes, drained by the recruitment of young men into MPLA forces.

A visit to the hydro-electric power plant at Cambambe near Dondo, some 160 km (99+ miles) east of Luanda, revealed that the consumption of electricity at present amounts to only half of that before April this year.

Again here it is the same story: with the departure of Portuguese, most of the country's factories stopped operating partly due to lack of technicians and operators and partly unavailability of materials and spare parts. Transport is also a huge problem. Of the previous three engineers at the power plant only one is left, and instead of the former 75 technicians for the maintenance of the hydro-electric scheme only 23 are still working.

Apart from the fact that the electrical supply to cities like Luanda, Dondo & Malanje never has been interrupted, here too it became clear that reports from Salisbury (as quoted in the British Daily Telegraph of November 17) that the Cambambe dam had been bombed, were utterly false. According to the engineer, there has never been an attack on the installation since the dam was built in 1958.
But the power plant and its surroundings is heavily guarded. The dam and the underground hydro-electric plant plus the surface installations are flanked by mountains which form an effective natural fort. A strong military base is guarding furthermore a large area around it, aided by ultra-modern electronic equipment. The installations are of vital importance to Luanda in particular, since its water supply also is controlled by it.

But since the closest enemy forces are at the moment 520 km (322.4 miles) (this portion is not readable), ... is little real threat to the plant in the near future.

**ACCTIONS TO SUPPORT THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA**

Solidarity actions for the MPLA are growing across the country. In New York on December 12, over 300 people attended a forum commemorating the 19th anniversary of the founding of the MPLA. The forum was sponsored by the MPLA Solidarity Committee.

Messages of solidarity from governments and organizations were read. A statement of solidarity drafted by the Committee was signed by close to 20 organizations. The Committee is organizing a mass demonstration around Feb. 4, the day the MPLA launched the armed struggle for national liberation of Angola in 1961.

In Philadelphia, about 40 people met on Dec. 13 to form the Philadelphia Coalition for Justice in Angola, an MPLA support group. This meeting was chaired by Rev. Muhammed Kenyatta, head of the Black Economic Development Center, and Jack Hart, United Electrical Union official.

About 100 persons turned out for a rally in front of the White House in Washington on Dec. 13, protesting U.S. intervention in Angola. The demonstration was sponsored by the Anti-Apartheid Movement in the U.S.A. (AAM-USA). On the day before another group picketed the South African embassy in Washington in protest of South Africa's invasion of Angola.

WE NEED YOUR MONEY IF WE ARE TO CONTINUE TO PUT THIS OUT. PLEASE CONTRIBUTE IF YOU CAN.

There will be no news survey next week due to the Christmas holiday.