ANGOLAN AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH NEW YORK GROUPS

On April 3 Comrade Ambassador Pascal Luvualu, a member of the Central Committee of the MPLA and Ambassador at large for the People's Republic of Angola, met in New York with representatives of various groups in the New York area which have given support to the MPLA. The gathering was organized by the MPLA Solidarity Committee. Luvualu was in New York for the UN Security Council meeting on the South African invasion of Angola. About 75 people, representing more than 20 organizations, crowded into a small meeting room in the UN Church Center for this first meeting with a representative from Angola since the MPLA military victory.

Luvualu spoke in French through a translator, but his wit and emphatic dedication to the people of Angola were so charismatic that he seemed to be communicating directly with everyone in the room. The guests responded with bursts of applause, calling out "c'est vrai" and "d'accord," most easily translatable as "right on!"

Luvualu began with a brief statement on the history of the Angolan liberation struggle and the problems facing the new government in Luanda. He thanked the representatives of the support groups for their help - material, moral and political - to the MPLA, saying "without the support of groups such as yourselves, we would never have been able to achieve our liberation."

He then described what he thought was Angola's special situation in Africa. It is a country rich in natural resources which are very attractive to transnational investors. It also has an important strategic position: "Our Atlantic ports are the gateway to Central Africa," he said. This situation is both Angola's strength and weakness. Angola is very susceptible to economic threats right now, and therefore Luvualu believes that economic sanctions will be the new direction of opposition to the MPLA-led government, with a possibility of blockades and boycotts being instigated by the multinationals in conjunction with Western governments.

The economic struggle will be crucial to the future of the country especially since the South African army and the troops of FNLA and UNITA destroyed important sectors of the economy. Describing the damages inflicted by the defected enemy troops, Luvualu said, "The 9th, 10th, and 11th of November were the most decisive days in our struggle. Forces from the north came within 15 miles of Luanda...It was here that the most important battle took place. After their defeat, as these forces fled back to the north, they destroyed the bridges over rivers, looted all the stores and houses, and took our cattle back to Zaire with them.

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"The same thing happened in the South. After the battles of Cela and Povo Redondo, the retreating South African armies destroyed bridges and looted their way back to the southern border. They destroyed buildings, took furniture from hotels, money from the banks. They sank fishing boats and destroyed small airplanes. And they shot our cattle. More important, they slaughtered our people - killing old men, women, and children, as well as executive members of the MPLA Central Committee, some of whom had been in prison in the south." (Ed. note: a correspondent from Luanda says the South Africans also sabotaged small industries, especially the meat packing plants, taking all the moveable machinery and spare parts, including even hammers and nails.)

Thus, the principle task in Angola now is reconstruction. The government is also concerned with reorganizing the administrative structure in the south, building political cadre in areas which were occupied by South African and UNITA forces. More than 100 bridges must be rebuilt and communication networks set up throughout the country.

The MPLA has called on all the Angolan people, including those who were "deceived and misled by the puppet forces of the FNLA and UNITA to join in the reconstruction of a new Angola."

Although reconstruction is the primary concern of the Angolans, Luvualu noted that "everyone seems more concerned with our politics. We are a non-aligned country. We are the first African country to introduce non-alignment as an article in our constitution. We want to carry on relations with all countries of the world on a basis of equality and non-interference in the sovereign affairs of each nation. Any agreements we make with other countries must be concluded on a basis of reciprocity - that is, mutual advantage for both sides.

"As to the countries surrounding us, we seek peaceful co-existence - a good neighbor policy which includes Zambia and Zaire. Also, we will carry out the same policy when the people of Namibia become independent. But for now, we don't recognize any of the South African claims to Namibia. We don't have a border with South Africa, we have a border with Namibia."

Luvualu went on to discuss rumors of "agreements" having been made with the South Africa government prior to their withdrawal from the border area of southern Angola.

"We haven't entered into any agreements or made any promises to Vorster's government. The dam at Cunene is on our soil and belongs to us. We are willing to enter into agreements on how to use the electricity - but not with the government of South Africa. It is not theirs to bargain for."

Later on, during the question and answer period, he reiterated this. When asked if the Angolan government hadn't agreed to protect Cunene, Luvualu said: "Protect it from whom? Why protect the dam from ourselves? It belongs to us. There was no trade-off with South Africa. They are distorting the facts. We guarantee that the dam won't be destroyed, because it has an economic importance for agriculture and electricity - for us and the people of Namibia."
Regarding the likelihood of economic sabotage by hostile governments and multinationals (such as Gulf Oil, DeBeers Diamonds and international coffee companies) Luvualu said that, "Right now all evidence indicates that economic threats against Angola won't succeed."

He added that Americans supporting Angola should be prepared to mobilize people here and to raise public consciousness to expose how an economic blockade would not be in US or Angolan interests.

In response to several questions about Gulf Oil, Luvualu clarified the situation by saying that Gulf had started royalty payments again and was in fact operating the oil wells in Cabinda without a new contract having been agreed upon. The government has told Gulf though, what these conditions will not last and that a new contract will have to be decided upon in the next few months - a contract that will be in the national interests and in the workers' interests.

There was another question about the international implications of the resolution just passed by the UN Security Council. This resolution condemned the South African aggression against Angola and called on South Africa to pay compensation for damaged inflicted by their invading forces. "This was very important from a political point of view," Luvualu noted. "At first everyone at the UN said that it was only a civil war, but now they have condemned South African aggression. Even if the South African can't 'cough up' the money, it's an important political victory. This is the first time since its inception that the UN has even discussed the question of compensation for aggression. A precedent has been set. This is our contribution to the people of the world and to the victims of imperialism."

 Asked to explain the nature of the UNITA forces, Luvualu responded, "UNITA was a Portuguese creation. The Chinese were following a red herring. They had helped us throughout our liberation struggle and then changed their position. We hope they will change their position again. China has no economic interests in Angola - not even one coffee bean." Luvualu also called for friendship between the Angolan and Chinese peoples.

Another question concerned the "poder popular", the people's power commissions and whether they were now operating in the south as they were around Luanda. Luvualu said, "We will use the people's power commissions in the south as well as everywhere else. There will be several planes of involvement with access to all. People's power means the involvement of all the people in all levels of national tasks.

Luvualu ended by saying that he hoped everyone in the room would work towards US recognition of Angola and asked for continued material support during the period of reconstruction.
UNITED STATES POLICY, ANGOLA, AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

The US is still refusing to recognize the People's Republic of Angola despite the total military victory of the MPLA-led forces and the recognition of the FRA by almost all African countries, the European Economic Community and numerous other countries. Assistant Secretary of State William Schaufele testified to Congress that while the FRA appeared to satisfy the legal requirements of control over most of the territory, the US would not recognize the Angolan government as long as Cuban troops remained.

During the Angolan war, the main preoccupation of the Ford White House and the Kissinger State Department was the significant support given to the MPLA by the Soviet Union and Cuba. The Administration sounded this theme from the moment the MPLA regained the initiative in the war after the October South African/UNITA offensive. On November 25, Kissinger said that "the United States cannot remain indifferent" to Soviet and Cuban "military intervention" in Angola. When Congress prohibited further CIA intervention and the MPLA continued to advance, the Administration strengthened its warnings to the Soviets and Cubans, hoping thus to weaken their support for the MPLA. By February 12, Kissinger warned that Soviet involvement in Angola "will have serious consequences for any possibility of easing of relations with the Soviet Union, and if continued, and if it becomes a pattern, must affect other relationships."

At the same February 12th press conference, Kissinger indicated that the US concern about the Soviets and Cubans extended beyond Angola's borders. He said the US would "do its best ... to prevent the pattern of Angola from setting a precedent for the rest of Africa." Referring to possible Cuban support for the Zimbabwean peoples' struggle, Kissinger has also warned the Cubans not to become involved in directly supporting other liberation movements in southern Africa. Testifying before Congress Kissinger said Cuba should "act with great circumspection" and in a major speech in Dallas he said that "the United States will not accept further Cuban military intervention abroad," even against white minority regimes. Just what the US would do in such a case is unclear, since the US has also said it will not interfere military on the side of white minority regimes. However, Kissinger seems to be seriously considering military action against Cuba.

At this point, Kissinger probably doesn't expect to deliver on his threat. The Zimbabwean nationalists maintain their right to request help from the Cubans, but the type of military operations now being carried out do not require it, and there are no indications that the request has been made.

Kissinger's threats of a confrontation also serve his larger game plan with the Soviets. Counterbalancing the Soviet Union strategically and preventing expansion of its influence has been Kissinger's main preoccupation throughout his tenure. He is clearly viewing southern Africa in this context. In his Dallas speech, Kissinger said that "world power is more likely to be threatened by shifts in local regional balances ... than by strategic nuclear attack ... It does no good to preach strategic superiority while
practicing regional retreat." During the Angola crisis, Kissinger threatened to pull back from detente (i.e. grain shipments, SALT, etc.) but wasn't willing to sacrifice detente entirely for Angola. Now he has switched his target to Cuba, which concerns him not only in relation to southern Africa, but also in the Caribbean. One additional consideration is political. The Administration has to take a hard line "against the Communists" to satisfy the right-wing Republicans and Democrats whose support Ford needs in order to get re-elected.

In spite of its denial of recognition, the US is apparently prepared to cooperate with certain kinds of international relief efforts for Angola -- more to enhance US interests then to provide aid. The Agency for International Development (AID) is apparently willing to spend some $7 million as contributions to aid efforts for Angola, sponsored by the Red Cross and other international relief organizations. AID has provided funding through the African American Institute (AAI) for educational training of 45 Angolans, 15 from each "faction". However this formulation does not fit the current political realities and is being modified. AAI is proposing that all aid go to the People's Republic of Angola (PRA), but this would involve recognition of the PRA. As one AID official testified to Congress, "I'll be frank with you. We will have to come to a policy decision."

ANGOLAN UN MEMBERSHIP TO BE DISCUSSED SOON

The recognition of the People's Republic of Angola by the United States government is not likely to happen before the election in November. More immediately is the question of United Nations membership, which is expected to come up within a couple of weeks. The US, as one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council has the power to veto Angolan membership. But whether it will do so is unclear. The US didn't oppose the participation of the Angolan government in the recent Security Council debate, but under the Security Council rules this does not imply recognition. As for the other permanent members, France, Britain and the Soviet Union all recognize the People's Republic of Angola, and China is unlikely to veto membership. Thus should the US decide to veto Angolan membership, it would be totally isolated. Most likely, the US will simply abstain, thus not blocking while not officially sanctioning it.*

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF EAST TIMOR EARLY RECOGNIZER OF THE PRA

The Democratic Republic of East Timor, Ioc by PRTILIK, recognized the People's Republic of Angola last November 11. We apologize for not listing this recognition sooner. East Timor is a former Portuguese colony and is currently being invaded by the US supported Indonesian troops. Large numbers of East Timorese have been massacred by the Indonesian forces in their attempt to annex the territory.

*We wish to thank the Washington Office on Africa (110 Maryland Ave. Washington D.C. 20002) for providing the information that went into this article.
The fifteen-member United Nations Security Council met the last week in March, 1976 to discuss South African aggression against the People's Republic of Angola. The fact that the Security Council agreed to meet exclusively on the issue of South Africa's aggression showed the extent to which the MPLA Government had gained in international support.

Ambassador Pascal Luvualu, speaking on behalf of the Angolan people, the Central Committee of the MPLA, and the Government of the PRA, told the council of the criminal acts that the South African Government committed against Angola: "Aside from the barbaric massacres they committed against the civilian population, South Africans carried off with them goods essential to our economy... Money was taken from banks; roads were destroyed and damaged, as were bridges, airports, industrial factories and radio-broadcasting stations. They also took with them to the Namibian border thousands of individuals."

Representatives of other African countries pointed out that South Africa had been soundly defeated in Angola but that it was now massing its forces in the international territory of Namibia, claiming its right not only to "defend" Namibia but also to intervene anywhere in Africa to protect its interests. By presenting itself as moderate and accommodating, South Africa was actually trying to obtain legitimation for its presence in Namibia -- a game supported by the Western countries on the Council. The Western European countries on the Council, while praising South Africa for having withdrawn from Angola and complaining that the Council meeting had been made obsolete by events, said nothing of South Africa's continued aggression and military expansion in Namibia.

China and the US, the only two permanent members of the Security Council who have not recognized the PRA, took the position of equating South African aggression in Angola with the assistance provided by the USSR and Cuba upon the request of the Angolan Government. The United States' new ambassador William Scranton treated South Africa's withdrawal as the end of the problem and devoted most of his speech to an attack on Cuba's support for the MPLA. The Chinese representative -- to the dismay and regret of many African countries who have links of friendship with China -- went even further than the United States in denouncing Cuban and Soviet help for the Angolan struggle.

China's attempt to establish a third position opposed to both Western imperialism and Soviet "social-imperialism," however, failed, as its stand came to be inevitably associated with covert support for South Africa and the West. The bitter debate between China on the one hand, and the Soviet Union and Cuba on the other, at times overshadowed the actual issues under discussion, and at one point prompted a highly unusual intervention by the Ambassador of Tanzania, Salim Salim, rejecting any attempt to "hijack the debate from the consideration of the real problem and to divert it to other problems...." The African members of the Council had a particular responsibility to defend Africa's interests, he stated, and the Chinese contention that South Africa's intervention had somehow been justified by Cuban and Soviet aid to the MPLA was totally unacceptable to Africans. Others remarked that Africa now knew who were its friends and who its enemies. For his
part, Luvualu stated:

"My country, which has lived through a long colonial night, holds its independence dear. The help from friendly socialist countries, and more particularly from Cuba, was supplied at our request so that we could face the aggression of which my country was a victim. That request therefore was made by my country in full sovereignty. The people of Angola know the extent of this aid and the time when it can bring it to an end."

Despite rumors that the draft resolution proposed by a number of Third World and Socialist countries would be vetoed by either the United States or China, the veto did not materialize, and the resolution was passed. The resolution, which meets the wishes expressed by the Angolan representative at the beginning of the debate, condemns South Africa's aggression against the FRA; demands that South Africa "scrupulously respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the FRA; demands that South Africa "desist from the utilization of the international territory of Namibia to mount provocative or aggressive acts against the FRA or any other neighboring African State"; and calls upon the South African Government to "meet the just claims of the FRA for a full compensation for the damage and destruction inflicted on its State and for the restoration of the equipment and materials which its invading forces seized." The resolution also requests the UN Secretary General "to follow the implementation of this resolution." (UN documents S/RES/387; S/PV/1900-1906; S/12030.)

The resolution was adopted with nine in favor (Benin, Guyana, Libyan Arab Republic, Pakistan, Panama, Rumania, Sweden, USSR, United Republic of Tanzania), zero against, six abstaining (France, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom of Great Britain, Northern Ireland, and United States of America), and one (China) not participating in the vote. The People's Republic of China has never participated in votes on African questions.

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