AID TO UNITA IS AID TO SOUTH AFRICA

To: Key Contacts

From: Jennifer Davis

There are sinister moves afoot in Washington.

This summer President Reagan was forced by Congressional pressure to impose some very limited sanctions on apartheid South Africa. Before the ink was dry the Administration was back on its old policy track supporting South Africa in its war against Angola. The Reagan Administration is seriously considering providing covert military aid to the anti-government rebels in Angola known as UNITA.

Since the collapse of Portuguese colonialism and the establishment of an independent government in Angola in 1975, South Africa has been using UNITA in its war to undermine Angolan independence. The Angolan government has been a strong supporter of independence for Namibia and freedom for South Africa. As such it is a threat to South Africa's continued illegal occupation of Namibia.

South Africa's army first invaded Angola at the time of independence. It was only driven back from the capital by the combined efforts of the Angolan army and Cuban troops, who came to Angola in response to a plea by Angola's President Neto for international support.

In addition to its own repeated invasions the South Africans have found a useful surrogate in UNITA, headed by Jonas Savimbi. Despite UNITA's claims to the status of freedom fighters, its tactics are brutal. Mutilation and murder of innocent civilians, sabotage which has resulted in the death of hundreds of Angolans and kidnapping of foreign nationals. UNITA survives as a force because of South African support. It has been armed, trained and supplied by the South African Defense Force. Only the direct intervention of South African troops prevented Savimbi from losing his base in southeast Angola in September.

At the same time as the administration is preparing to provide covert aid to UNITA, similar moves are are being made by right wing forces in Congress. Two bills recently introduced into the House of Representatives would have the United States overtly provide $54 million in military and "nonlethal" aid to UNITA. The first, introduced by Representative Claude Pepper of Miami and Rep. Jack Kemp of Buffalo (HR 3472) would provide $27 million in non-military aid. Rep. Mark Siljander of Michigan has introduced a bill (HR 3609) for $27 million in military aid.

Where would the aid go? Savimbi has no bank in the bush. The answer is South Africa. Such funds would join the millions of rands the Pretoria government is spending to supply UNITA. Military aid would be a direct violation of the arms embargo that even the Reagan administration claims to support. Aid to UNITA is aid to South Africa.
We need to build a quick opposition to these dangerous measures. The chairman of the House subcommittee on Africa, Rep Howard Wolpe, and other Representatives knowledgeable about US-African relations, have already opposed this US intervention in Angola. They argue that such an alliance with South Africa will discredit us in independent Africa and increase Angola's need for Cuban military protection from South African troops. In addition, it will take all pressure off South Africa to implement an internationally acceptable settlement in Namibia.

It is inevitable that the US, once in the Angolan breach, will be drawn in deeper and deeper. South Africa's troops and police are more and more stretched trying to contain revolution at home and an expanding regional war. Aid to UNITA is aid to South African repression at home and aggression in Angola.

We urge you to immediately contact your Representative to oppose all bills and any actions of the administration to support UNITA.

November 12, 1985

Rep.
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
Marching for Pretoria

Washington

South Africa's white minority Government may have its American critics these days, but it has just pulled off a public-relations coup in this country. A leading Republican, a potential candidate for President, has endorsed one of Pretoria's main policy objectives.

Jack Kemp, the conservative Congressman from upstate New York, has introduced a bill to give $27 million in 'nonlethal aid' to the Unita guerrillas in Angola. South Africa supplies Unita and has been urgently trying to get the United States in as its partner in supporting the war against the Angolan Government.

For a shrewd politician like Jack Kemp, it is a surprising position. Does he foresee some shift in American opinion that will make it advantageous to come on as an ally of P.W. Botha? Is he planning to run with the Rev. Jerry Falwell on an all-apartheid ticket?

Of course Mr. Kemp would deny that he wants to give aid and comfort to white South Africa. He would say that his bill aims only at a new U.S. role in the Angolan conflict. But follow it through, and the result is plain. The big winner from that involvement would be the Botha Government in Pretoria and the big loser would be the United States.

Mr. Kemp is not alone in arguing intervention. Over the last few weeks, by amazing coincidence, a number of conservative columnists and politicians have come out for aid to Unita — a parade stretching all the way over to Jeane Kirkpatrick on the right.

Moreover, a parallel argument has been going on in secret inside the Reagan Administration. William Casey, the Director of Central Intelligence, and others have been pushing hard for support of Unita — covert support if necessary. Secretary of State Shultz has opposed the idea.

The argument for intervention is that it would be a way of resisting Communism in southern Africa. Cuba has 30,000 troops in Angola to help defend its Marxist Government. The Soviet Union has provided massive military aid.

Unita's leader, Jonas Savimbi, is also praised, in Mr. Kemp's words, as a believer in 'democratic government.' That description is likely to strike some as odd. He is a charismatic figure with a genuine following in Angola, but he has not held to any particular political theory except that he wants to give aid and comfort to white South Africa.
Covert Aid
For Angola
Is Pushed

By David B. Ottaway
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Defense Department and Central Intelligence Agency are urging the White House to approve—before the U.S.-Soviet summit—a large covert military operation to aid noncommunist rebels fighting the Marxist Angolan government, congressional and intelligence sources said yesterday.

One source said the money proposed is in the range of “two to three hundred million dollars,” a figure eight to 10 times higher than any proposed aid packages for Angolan rebels being considered by Congress.

Top Pentagon officials reportedly are particularly anxious to have the administration reach a decision before the Nov. 19-20 summit in order to strengthen President Reagan’s hand in any negotiations with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev about regional conflicts in which the two superpowers are engaged.

Whether the United States should become reinvolved in the Angolan conflict by providing assistance to the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), which the CIA aided during the 1975-76 civil war there, has created sharp internal divisions in various agencies and departments. Congress appears just as divided.

Meanwhile, the administration was reportedly anxious to have given “private assurances” to House Rules Committee Chairman Claude Pepper (D-Fla.) that it will not to back the bill he is co-sponsoring with Rep. Jack Kemp (R-N.Y.) to provide $27 million in covert aid to UNITA, led by Jonas Savimbi.

Pepper aides said administration officials who had said he was “timed” and urging him to support a proposal to provide U.S. ambulances to the Angolan rebels, a proposal to provide military aid to the African National Congress. UNITA would increase U.S. aid to Cuba and the Soviet Union.

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The sharp controversy emerged last week, when the HouseForeign Affairs Committee introduced with 41 co-sponsors a bill by House Majority Leader Robert H. Michel (R-Ill.) to provide $27 million in covert military aid to UNITA, led by Jonas Savimbi, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

UNITA is the leading rebel group fighting for Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos’s Marxist regime with some Pagoh effect.

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