

# Angola Weekly News Summary

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## THE U.S. AND ANGOLA

On January 27th, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 323-99 to ban all covert US aid to the UNITA-FNLA (and South African) forces in Angola, causing another major setback to the Ford Administration's Angola policy. The vote, which approved a defense appropriations bill amendment introduced in the Senate last month, came after less than an hour of discussion in contrast to four long days of Senate debate in December.

The rapid passage of the amendment reflected the belief among most Congresspeople that what the Administration was asking for in Angola was too little too late; that continued intervention in the Angolan war was a no-win proposition; and that the Administration had failed to adequately justify its military aid requests. In passing the amendment the House sharply rebuffed a last-minute appeal by President Ford who expressed "grave concern over the international consequences of the situation in Angola." Reflecting the prevailing mood in Congress, House Speaker Carl Albert called Ford's plea, "a typical Ford operation -- wave your hand, make a gesture, and that's the end of it... One thing about foreign aid, military aid, or war itself, you either do enough or you're better off not doing anything." (New York Times, Jan. 28)

Specifically, the amendment cuts funds in the Defense Appropriations Bill for Angola, except for CIA intelligence gathering, which could be a substantial loophole. As explained in the Angola Weekly News Summary of January 8, the passage of this amendment by no means ensures that more U.S. aid won't be given to the enemies of the MPLA. It allows for the following hidden means of continuing aid: Firstly, by dealing with aid authorized only by the Defense Appropriations Bill, it does not prevent such aid from being absorbed into other bills; secondly, it deals with only covert aid, leaving open the opportunity of the Administration to request such aid directly and overtly; thirdly, it does not prevent the CIA from using private contractors such as corporations for such operations as the recruiting, hiring, and training of mercenaries (see again AWNS, Jan. 8, article on mercenaries). Fourthly, and finally, this amendment skirts the issue of the US government's funnelling aid to other foreign countries.

In an apparent attempt to use the last of these loopholes for funnelling aid, the State Department is now considering a \$10 million "emergency loan" to Zaire. Officials of the State Department's Africa Bureau contend that the \$10 million in industrial credits is urgently needed to bolster Zaire's deteriorating economy, now at a crisis level. Congressional leaders, concerned that the

\$10 million aid package would allow Zaire to give a comparable amount in aid to the UNITA-FNLA forces in Angola (New York Times, Jan. 21), have strongly objected to the loan. Technically, the State Department is entitled to go ahead with the loan, but it seems to be making efforts to win Congressional approval so as not to breach a special two-year working arrangement with Congress.

Another tactic used to conceal the extent of U.S. involvement in Angola is the systematic "undervaluing" of military equipment supplied to MPLA's enemies. That the CIA has been understating the prices by as much as one half was revealed in the final report of the House Select Committee on Intelligence, portions of which were reported in the New York Times of January 20. The following excerpt from that report reveals the extent to which the CIA was concealing its involvement in the Angola war in terms of monetary value.

"The effect of the accounting procedure, valuing .45 caliber automatic pistols as low as \$5 and .30 caliber semi-automatic carbines at \$7.55, would be to understate the value of American aid. By way of comparison, the retail cost of a new .30 caliber carbine is \$76, and the inventory value of each of the 20,000 such weapons now stored by the CIA is \$15."

In spite of the House's rejection of the Administration's Angola policy, Ford and Kissinger will undoubtedly continue to press for military aid to the FNLA-UNITA alliance. The next bill to come before Congress will be the military aid bill, to which several amendments on Angola are already being considered. The strongest of these requires that Congress specifically authorize any overt or covert aid to Angola. Given the current mood in Congress, an amendment to this effect would seem to stand a good chance of passage. However, even with these strictures imposed by Congress, the Administration seems determined to go ahead with its intervention in Angola, and is likely to find covert ways of doing so.

Meanwhile, the Administration itself is in a state of disarray, primarily because of the continuing failure of its Angola policy. The split between the higher echelon Administration officials, such as Secretary of State Kissinger, and the State Department Africa Desk over the advisability of continued Angolan intervention has been well publicized. Recently, U.N. Ambassador Daniel Moynihan has complained that he is not receiving proper recognition and support in the State Department for his tough-talking tactics designed to break up the anti-American voting bloc at the U.N. (New York Times, Jan. 28)

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In addition to using military means to counter the MPLA, the U.S. is continuing to employ actual and threatened economic sabotage to force its position in Angola. As reported in the AWNS of January 8, Gulf Oil suspended all Angola operations under State Department pressure, and the U.S. Department of Commerce revoked the export licenses for two Boeing 737-200c aircraft promised to the Angolan government in Luanda over a year ago.

A recent five-point memo which was read to an MPLA representative in Washington in December by a Boeing official and is said to represent the views of Ford and the State Department, reveals the arrogance of the U.S. Administration's attitude towards an independent Angola. The memo stated in part:

"The MPLA would do well to heed advice that no government can plan reconstruction in post-war Angola without American and Western help. No government can obtain the technological and financial resources to stimulate economic development without official American consent. As anyone should be aware, access to sophisticated technology is a privilege. The case of Boeing is just one, but a good example of the advantages of having access to American technology." (Washington Post, Jan. 27)

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#### AMERICAN MERCENARY RECRUITMENT TO FIGHT THE MPLA ON THE RISE

In recent days there have been several reports of an increase in the recruitment of mercenaries to fight with the UNITA-FNLA forces against the People's Republic of Angola led by the MPLA. Africa News reported on January 28 that soldiers "with special training" at the Fort Bragg base in North Carolina in the 82nd Airborne Division are being offered \$20,000 for a year of fighting in Angola. According to the soldiers, recruiters are soliciting openly on the base and some US military personnel have already taken up the offer and left for Angola. However, the "official" word from military officers is that such procedure is illegal. The details of the financing of this operation and the actual numbers of people involved remains undisclosed.

From Kinshasa, a Washington Post dispatch of January 28 reports that European and US mercenaries are being brought in by UNITA to replace withdrawing South African troops on the front lines. The numbers involved so far are said to be in the hundreds.

In Washington D.C., Vietnam war combat veterans are also being organized to fight with the U.S.-backed forces in Angola. (Washington Post, Jan. 27) One of the recruiters in this operation has said his operation has been able to expand in the last week after receiving a commitment from the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) to provide transportation to Angola. (Washington Post, Jan. 28)

CORE Chairman Roy Innis is reported to have left Lusaka, Zambia for the United States after having given UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi a promise that CORE would send men to fight with UNITA. (Africa News)

## THE ANGOLAN FRONT

As the armed forces of the People's Republic of Angola (PRA) continued their drive south, commanders of the UNITA-FNLA forces have evacuated their headquarters at Nova Lisboa (Huambo) to Silva Porto, 100 miles to the east and may have decided to abandon the conventional battlefield and fight a "never surrender" guerrilla war. A UPI Jan. 29 report said UNITA troops unable to halt the PRA drive south would have to change their tactics. "The change from conventional to guerrilla warfare marked what UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi called 'phase two' of the civil war, to be implemented as a last recourse."

Heavy fighting is reported to have occurred in Nova Lisboa between the FNLA and UNITA forces. FNLA forces, having already been accused of looting and robbing, refused orders back to go back to the front, causing UNITA forces to open fire on them.

PRA forces are now poised outside Alto Hama, about 100 miles south of Nova Lisboa, and are within striking distance of two critical enemy positions - the ports of Lobito and Bebuela and Nova Lisboa, capital of the UNITA-FNLA alliance. (NYT Jan. 29) It is rumored that from Alto Hama the PRA forces may divide with one group going towards Nova Lisboa, a second heading for Silva Porto, and a third branching off to the west to capture Benguela and Lobito, supply points on the strategic railroad.

The PRA now controls most of northern Angola. Only the small town of Santo Antonio do Zaire in the extreme northwest corner and Sao Salvador, the historic capital of the Bakongo people, remain under FNLA control.

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### ACTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES TO SUPPORT THE PRA

A forum in support of the People's Republic of Angola was held in Providence Rhode Island on January 20. The Rhode Island Friends of Angola, sponsor of the event, has also raised money for the MPLA Solidarity Committee and organized a letter writing campaign to pressure Congressional officials to vote against U.S. aid to Angola. Recently the R.I. Friends of Angola formed a new organization - the New England Friends of the People's Republic of Angola.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

1. NEW YORK: Fri. Feb. 6, 8 P.M. a night of Cultural Solidarity with the PRA  
Columbia Law School Aud. A & B, 116th and Broadway  
Sat. Feb. 7 march past Gulf Oil Headquarters and South African Airways followed by a rally.
- CHICAGO Feb. 6, an educational evening on Angola. St. Mary's Center for Learning. Feb. 7. noon: rally beginning at the Civic Center  
For more information: (312) 348-3370 or Dean's office St. Marys
- PHILADELPHIA: Feb. 7, march on Gulf Oil. Contact (215) 386 3331 or Philadelphia Coalition for Justice in Angola, 117 N. 40th St.
- BOSTON: Feb. 7, 1 PM Rally and demonstration, Boston Commons.  
Contact (617) 647-2771

## SOUTH AFRICA AND ANGOLA

South African troops have retreated from Central Angola, but are still occupying territory north of the Angola-Namibia border. In Cape Town, South Africa Defense Minister Pieter Botha told the all-white Parliament that the "border force" might be expanded to retaliate attacks against it. South Africa is thus still trying to stave off total defeat of its armed Angolan invasion. It evidently hopes that the U.S., together with African countries subject to U.S. and South African pressures, will back the continued presence of South African forces in Angola and the intensified militarization of Namibia by the South African regime. The declaration of a "State of Emergency" in Zambia on January 28th must encourage South Africa in its efforts to cause disruption and strife in neighboring African countries.

In any event, South Africa still looks to the U.S. and other western powers for support and aid. The belligerent tone of its unexpected intervention into the Security Council (UN) debate on Namibia on January 27th, strongly suggests that it felt confident that the U.S. Administration would continue to give support to South African aggression in Angola, notwithstanding the Congressional rebuff of Ford's \$28 million request for covert aid to UNITA and the FNLA. This support is underlined in the following New York Times editorial of January 28 on the issue of Angola:

"At no time...has any Administration leader specifically condemned the intervention in the Angolan fighting of white soldiers from South Africa, an omission that has aroused suspicions of collusion between Washington and Pretoria throughout Black Africa."

The suspicions of the New York Times are of course the certainties of those who have understood the fundamental alliance between the U.S. and South Africa, and have seen the uncontroverted evidence of U.S. support to the South African forces in Angola in the form of material, arms, and the provisions of air bases in Zaire.

The combined military control of Namibia and occupation of territory inside Angola has serious implications for the MPLA and the PRA, for it gives the US/South Africa alliance the option of mounting a new offensive against the independence of Angola. In this light, Chile is a very significant example of the persistent quality of U.S. backed "destabilization" tactics.

In his report to Parliament, the South African Defense Minister said that the South African forces had suffered 29 deaths in Angola between June 1975 and January 23, 1976. Significantly, he did not mention the number of wounded or taken prisoner. Nor did he disclose losses in armor, aircraft, and supplies. It is clear however, that the South African regime is concerned about the impact of its reverses in Angola at the hands of independent and liberated black forces. This omission of details of South Africa's losses has been

accompanied by strident attacks on Soviet and Cuban forces in Angola, and statements suggesting that South Africa's casualties were due solely to these "outsiders".

Botha also spoke of South Africa's operations in Angola as being under "our own leadership". This is an obvious effort being made to minimize to Black South Africans the impact of White South African defeats in their first direct conflict with Black forces. Also, the reference to "our own leadership" seems an attempt to disassociate South African Whites from the disarray of their FNLA and UNITA allies.

South African Whites cannot however escape the testimony of the facts themselves, and the Black population will draw its own conclusions from the realities. It is significant that there has been criticism of South Africa's actions in Angola by many voices within South Africa's Black community, reflecting the deepening awareness among the Black masses.

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#### THE ZAIREAN CONNECTION

The major Zairean port, Matadi, at the mouth of the Congo River, is practically on the Angolan border. Now that the People's Republic of Angola forces have reached the northern Angolan border, continued open Zairean assistance to the FNLA could force the closing of that port. The railroad through Angola used by Zaire to export copper, its most important product, has been closed for several months. Thus the potential exists for further disruption to an already weakened Zaire economy.

It is important, however, not to equate the cause of Zaire's present economic problems with the situation in Angola. The Zaire economy has been organized to achieve "growth" through mineral extraction. The price of these minerals is dependent on the world market which is dominated by the interests of western capital and when the price of copper falls as it recently has, dependent economies such as that of Zaire are severely hurt. Multinational corporations have managed the mineral extraction in Zaire ensuring profits for themselves and also providing a high standard of living for a small Zairean elite who work for or are alligned with the corporations. The ordinary citizen in Zaire has benefitted little. For example, in the last 15 years the United States has invested approximately \$800 million in Zaire, but the purchasing power of Zairean workers has decreased by one third during this period. Also, Zaire is now forced to import much of its food not because the land is unsuitable for cultivation but because there has been little effort made to organize agricultural production. In fact, much of Zaire's food has been coming from Northern Angola.

With the recent crumbling of the FNLA forces in northern Angola, it was reported that the Zairean government may be considering withdrawing its support for the FNLA. (New York Times, Jan. 27) In a recent interview in a Zairean government newspaper, Mobutu is quoted as saying "sentimentally we support the FNLA of Holden Roberto, but...things having turned out the way they have, no more sentimentality on our part."

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### STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED IN ZAMBIA

A "state of emergency" was declared in Zambia on Wednesday, January 28. Zambian President Kaunda explained that the "deteriorating" situation in Angola and internal version within Zambia prompted this action. (Africa News)

Zambia appears to be deeply divided over the questions of policy towards Angola and Southern Africa in general. On the one hand, students at the university are protesting against the Zambian government's failure to recognize the People's Republic of Angola under the leadership of the MPLA. On the other hand, two members of Parliament recently called for a reopening of ties with Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South Africa as a means of alleviating Zambia's economic crisis.

Copper is the primary export and source of foreign exchange for Zambia. The closing of the railroad through Angola which has prevented much of the copper from getting out and the falling price of copper on the world market have resulted in a substantial weakening of Zambia's economy. A reopening of the Zimbabwe border would allow Zambian copper to be exported through Mozambican ports.

During the 1960's Zambia gave strong support to the liberation movements in Southern Africa: FRELIMO in Mozambique, the MPLA in Angola and SWAPO in Namibia. For a long time UNITA was not allowed to have a base inside Zambia.

However since last summer Zambia has become a major conduit through which foreign military assistance has been passed to UNITA.

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### ANNOUNCEMENTS

BUTTONS ARE AGAIN AVAILABLE FROM THE MPLA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE They read "Solidarity with the Angolan People:" on the top and MPLA on the bottom and are in red, yellow and black. Prices are 50¢ each, 35¢ each for 10 or more and 25¢ each for 100

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Next week, with all the actions planned around Feb. 4th, the opening of the armed struggle for Angola under the MPLA back in 1961, is a good time to start a petitioning effort for people's recognition of the PRA.