

Angola Weekly News Summary

November 20, 1975

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Dear Friends:

The struggle in Angola will have extremely important consequences for southern Africa, for Africa as a whole, and for the rest of the world. Yet, because of limited and distorted press coverage, the people of the United States are not able to gain a real understanding of events there.

The MPLA Solidarity Committee was formed to provide additional information on the Angolan situation to interested individuals, organizations, and media publications. The committee is composed of individuals with a long history of involvement with the struggle against Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde, and Angola. We support the People's Republic of Angola led by the MPLA, the only revolutionary movement in Angola, and we deplore the role of the U.S., South Africa, and Zaire in providing assistance to the enemies of the MPLA.

We plan to produce a regular information packet containing up-to-date news on Angola with an analysis of these events. Enclosed is the first issue of this "Angola Weekly News Summary" as well as a sheet explaining the formation of the MPLA Solidarity Committee.

This first news packet has cost us over \$200 to produce and mail out. We desperately need your financial support if we are to continue to provide essential information on the Angola struggle.

A Luta Continua
(the struggle continues)

The MPLA Solidarity Committee

November 20, 1975

ON THE ANGOLAN FRONT:

Since November 11, the war in Angola has intensified considerably. More clearly now we can see that two forces have emerged on the front - MPLA and the People's Republic of Angola on the one hand, and on the other /those that have in common the defeat of MPLA. These include UNITA, FNLA, South Africa, Zaire, helped by thousands of mercenaries. These include South Africans, white Portuguese settlers, Portuguese from right wing groups based in Spain, the United States, France, Belgium and others who fought in the Congo and Biafra.

Given South Africa's intensive military build-up over the past decade, it is capable of giving to UNITA and FNLA the advantages of its advance technology in this area. The attack against MPLA is being extremely efficiently organized and executed on a technological level and it is reasonable to assume that South Africa is playing a decisive role in directing this new phase of the war. It is critically in the interests of South Africa, now that there is a revolutionary government on the other side of its long border with Mozambique, that the future government of Angola be compatible with its interests.

INVASION FROM NAMIBIA:

News correspondents have spoken to white soldiers with heavy South African accents who are leading the mechanized column which has moved northwards from Namibia. This invasion is linked with other military activities in Namibia and the Vorster regime's construction of a massive military complex at Grootfontein, which is strategically

situated in the northern-most white settled area of Namibia. The installations include air facilities, communications equipment and transportation and supply capability.

South Africa has also built a fortified base at Katima in the North East part of Namibia. Regular army units have been stationed there for several years and an airfield capable of handling heavy troops and material transport planes was completed some time ago. This base is also strategically placed to allow incursion and attack into Angola.

RECENT EVENTS:

In the past few days, since the Observer, London report (attached), the enemy has captured some strategic territory from MPLA. Quisangando, a town about 25 miles from Luanda, and a source of power and water for the capital was taken, earlier two other important towns were taken - Malanje, a major town about 350 miles east of Luanda and Gabela, a small town north east of Novo Redondo, which was reported taken over a week ago.

David Martin, BBC reporter, said in a recent report that despite these defeats there is a feeling of optimism in Luanda. The BBC reported today that MPLA is ready to launch a counter offensive to the south. They have successfully halted an FNLA advance from Zaire, which entailed blowing up six bridges.

SAVIMBI'S LOYALITIES MADE CLEAR:

In an interview reported by Reuters with western journalists in Nova Lisboa (renamed Huambo by UNITA), Jonas Savimbi, leader of UNITA made explicit his allegiance with western interests. Questions focusing on the extent of military involvement by South Africa and the essential role its military equipment and manpower are playing in the drive against MPLA were clearly upsetting to Savimbi, according to this report. He accused the press of aiding the communist side if they reported on South African involvement: "You are weakening your democracy and giving a chance to the East to come up.... Let the west get united and the world will fear us. We have a common cause." (our italics)

A Portuguese working closely with UNITA also told the reporter from Reuters: "The South Africans are doing a good job. They are professionals. This is their war. If they don't fight the war here now, they will have to fight it on their side."

The same reporter heard Savimbi speak at a large rally last week in Lobito. Savimbi spoke in Ovimbundu, the local language of the ethnic group which has been the only base of support for UNITA inside Angola. The fact that an important address by UNITA's leader in a major Angolan center is given in a local language points up how narrow UNITA's support is within Angola. It also demonstrates that no real effort is being made by UNITA to include non-Ovimbundu Angolans in their organization.

U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA:

The US government has recently admitted it is supplying arms and other forms of financial and military assistance to UNITA and FNLA, two groups fighting against the MPLA government in the People's Republic of Angola. The purpose behind US involvement in Angola is to strengthen these groups in order to force the establishment of a coalition government dominated by forces which would allow western economic penetration.

CIA director William Colby has argued before a Senate Committee that US assistance to the pro west forces is necessary to prevent Soviet penetration in Southern Africa. The same kind of argument was heard more than a decade ago when both Kennedy and Johnson governments defended aid to South Vietnam on the same grounds.

US military support to Zaire, the conduit through which much of the aid is being funneled, has increased from \$3.8 million last year to \$42 million today. In the current Congressional session an aid package of more than \$62 million has already been approved for Zaire with an additional \$19 million in military credit sales still under consideration. Given the history of US penetration in the third world to ensure "friendly" governments it is highly likely that the involvement of the United States in Angola is considerably more extensive than what has been publicly acknowledged.

The \$19 million military aid which will go to Zaire under a military aid bill now before Congress includes funds for armored personnel cars, trucks, jeeps, and radios, all of which could be easily used in Angola. At least two amendments will be introduced into Congress by Congressmen Harrington and Bonker, both Democrats from Mass. and Wash. The first calls for no aid to Angola and no covert assistance either directly or indirectly. The second states that no further aid can go to Zaire until President Ford reports to Congress that US aid to Zaire is no longer being used to assist the war effort in Angola.

Efforts to influence this vote by publicizing this very important issue or organizing letter writing campaigns to members of Congress must take place right away because this bill may be voted on in the House as early as the first week in December. After the House vote the Bill moves on to the Senate.