

# IN THE WORLD

## U.S. in Zaire: others do the dirty work



By Robert A. Manning

The internationalization of the conflict in Zaire seems to grow wider each day. Whether or not Coca-Cola turns out to be the secret weapon (President Mobutu has ordered 600,000 cans), the intervention by the U.S./NATO countries and a host of right-wing African states on Mobutu's behalf offers a sneak preview of the Carter administration's approach to global problem-solving and also reflects Africa's growing polarization.

Given the economic and strategic stakes involved (Zaire has 67 percent of the world's cobalt, 7 percent of its copper, one-third of its industrial diamonds plus zinc, manganese, tin, uranium, etc.—and about \$1 billion in American investment), the international rallying to Mobutu's defense hardly comes as a surprise. But the way in which it has developed is unique.

By virtually all press accounts, the rebellion underway in Zaire's Shaba province (where most of Zaire's mineral wealth is located) is an internal conflict. The rebels of the NFLC (National Front for the Liberation of the Congo) control about one-third of the former Katanga province and have begun to administer the area. They enjoy widespread popular support and have even been joined by many of Mobutu's troops.

President Carter says that there is "no hard evidence" of any direct Cuban or Angolan involvement in Zaire although the State department has accused Angola of providing "logistical support" for the offensive. Mobutu claims that the "invasion" of Shaba is part of a Soviet/Cuban offensive to dominate Africa. Although the administration responded in a swift but cautious way to Mobutu's aid requests, sending \$15 million in emergency "non-lethal" aid, Carter has so far turned down Mobutu's request for military hardware.

Considering that Zaire, which has received more than \$350 million in American economic and military aid since 1961, has been the linchpin of American strategy in Black Africa, Mobutu's statement that he is "bitterly disappointed" at the American response is understandable. Mobutu has correctly read a main current of Carter's emerging Africa policy, which has been undergoing review.

This policy has two main threads that disturb Mobutu and other rightist military dictatorships: 1) keeping an arms length from unpopular regimes and 2) rejecting the Kissinger mechanical invocation of a "Soviet threat" when the status quo is threatened. This posture is reflected in Andy Young's recent comment that "if [Mobutu] can't stop a couple of thousand Katangese, we shouldn't send the marines to help him."

But there is a third element in Carter's foreign policy upon which the first two are based: proceeding on a *multilateral* rather than unilateral basis in confronting global problems.



Mobutu

This is a key principle of the Trilateral Commission, the international think-tank of the U.S., West Europe and Japan, whose members occupy the top offices in the White House and the Defense department, the State department and the Treasury.

One of a dozen Trilateral papers on foreign policy highlights the logic evident in Carter's handling of Zaire: "U.S. domestic policies...and the unwillingness of other countries to follow its lead, rule out the same degree of American dominance that existed in the recent past. No country or group of countries now seems equipped to play a major leadership role alone. The only alternative is collective leadership."

### ►Trilateral crisis management.

The first thing that must be said about Carter's response to the Zaire conflict is that the aid he has sent was already budgeted, part of \$30.5 million for Zaire for this fiscal year. Thus, Carter has avoided a possible clash with Congress similar to that of the Ford administration over aid to CIA-backed groups in Angola last year.

While Carter has claimed that American aid to Zaire was not sent "in consultation with others as part of a coordinated plan," a growing body of evidence suggests that the limited American response cannot be separated from the total sum of intervention on Mobutu's behalf. It should be added that the American definition of Moroccan (and possibly Egyptian and Sudanese) involvement as not outside intervention but African solutions to African problems" smacks of Nixon's "Vietnamization" of the war in Indochina.

All told, the multilateral intervention in Zaire has been an amazingly sophisticated operation—particularly considering that it has occurred *outside* the framework of global institutions (i.e., the U.N. and OAU). A few bits of the circumstantial evidence pointing to a concerted effort are:

- Carter confirmed that on Anwar

Sadat's recent visit they discussed "the entire situation in Zaire." Shortly thereafter Egypt sent a military mission to discuss sending troops.

- Morocco is closely aligned to France and the U.S., as the U.S. is a key weapons supplier (\$30 million in military aid for fiscal '77), and Morocco is required by law to obtain advance permission before using American weaponry outside Morocco.

- French President Giscard d'Estaing discussed Zaire with Cyrus Vance on his way home from the March SALT talks in Moscow—perhaps indicating the American position.

- U.S. undersecretary of State Philip Habib (No. 3 man in State) met with Giscard d'Estaing's top Africa advisor Rene Journiac, according to *Newsweek*, after Journiac returned from Zaire. The U.S. and France are also sharing intelligence information.

While it is true that these nations have their own reasons for bolstering Mobutu

—France to tighten its ties to Francophone Africa and Morocco to gain support for its losing war in the Sahara against POLISARIO guerillas—the sum total reflects a confluence of interests and appears to be the first taste of "Trilateral Crisis management."

For Africa, the conflict raises once again the limits of the OAU (which, by the way, Morocco has been boycotting) when the sticky question of resolving problems classed as "internal affairs" arises. This has been a cardinal principal of the OAU, and prevented it from acting on a host of controversial questions—Angola, the Sahara, Eritrea and now Zaire.

Many observers feel this question will be raised when the OAU meets in June in Gabon, but as Africa is increasingly polarized between the conservative states such as Zaire and friends, and the radicals such as Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania and Guinea, it is not likely to be resolved.

© 1977, Robert A. Manning

## CIA ANGOLA HEAD RESIGNS

John Stockwell, a CIA operative since 1964, recently sent a letter of resignation to the agency's new head, Admiral Stanfield Turner. Stockwell had grown up in Zaire, and after having graduated from the University of Texas and served in the U.S. Marine Corps, was recruited into CIA. Stockwell was then 27.

Stockwell spent from 1966 to 1977 in Africa, most recently as the chief of the

CIA's Angola Task Force. His disillusionment with CIA stemmed largely from his experiences there.

His letter indicts the CIA for incompetence and doubledealing, as well as for its role as an arm of American interests.

In the following excerpt from his letter, Stockwell describes to Turner his experiences in Angola and Zaire:

After Vietnam I received the assignment of chief, Angola task force. This was despite the fact that I and many other officers in the CIA and State department thought the intervention irresponsible and ill-conceived, both in terms of the advancement of United States interests, and the moral question of contributing substantially to the escalation of an already bloody civil war, when there was no possibility that we would make a full commitment and ensure the victory of our allies.

From a chess player's point of view the intervention was a blunder. In July 1975 the MPLA was clearly winning, already controlling 12 of the 15 provinces, and was thought by several responsible American officials and senators to be the best qualified to run Angola—nor was it hostile to the United States. The CIA committed \$31 million to opposing the MPLA victory, but six months later it had nevertheless decisively won, and 15,000 Cuban regular army troops were entrenched in Angola with the full sympathy of much of the Third World and the support of several influential African chiefs of state who previously had been critical of any extra-continental intervention in African affairs.

At the same time the United States was solidly discredited, having been exposed for covert military intervention in African affairs, having managed to ally itself with South Africa and having lost.

This is not Monday-morning quarterbacking. Various people foresaw all this and also predicted that the covert intervention would ultimately be exposed and curtailed by the United States Senate. I myself warned the interagency working group in October 1975 that the Zairian invasion of northern Angola would be answered by the introduction of large numbers of Cuban troops—10,000 to 15,000, I said—and would invite an eventual retaliatory invasion of Zaire from Angola.

Is anyone surprised that a year later the Angolan government has permitted freshly armed Zairian exiles to invade the Shaba

(Continued on next page.)



## AFRICA



Women (left) and youth (right) fighters of the EPLF.



# Ethiopians closing up shop in Eritrea

By Linda Heiden

Ethiopia's evacuation of the last foreign consulates from the Eritrean capital of Asmara last week signals what may be the final days of Ethiopian colonial rule over that East African nation. Recent Eritrean victories at Nacfa, Afabet and Tessenai, together with the growth and development of a new social system in the liberated areas, makes the possibility of continued Ethiopian control over Eritrea extremely unlikely, regardless of new last-minute Ethiopian/Soviet bloc arms agreements.

Eritrea's strategic location along the Red Sea has made the area a coveted

prize of major powers in the region for more than 400 years. Ethiopia is the latest in a succession of expansionist regimes, including the Ottoman Turks, Egyptians, Italians, and British, that have colonized the area. Resistance to these powers, together with the early development of a cash-based colonial economy, has resulted in the evolution of a common Eritrean nationality that distinguishes the colony's people today from their until-recently feudal neighbors.

Today, the liberated and semi-liberated areas, controlled by the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the marxist Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), comprise more than 90 percent

of Eritrea. No part of the countryside is safe territory for even the most heavily guarded Ethiopian supply caravan. Troops find themselves limited to a handful of towns and villages and even there snipers, saboteurs and liberation front raiders have kept tensions high and morale low.

Having consolidated their hold on the countryside, Eritrean forces have now launched an offensive against Ethiopian-held urban areas. The March 21 liberation of a provincial capital, Nacfa, opened the way toward an offensive against Keren, Eritrea's second largest city.

Observers speculate that the Eritrean military victories led to Ethiopia's decision to expel the diplomatic missions from Italy, Britain, Belgium, the U.S. and the Sudan April 23. Several American military-related facilities in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, were also asked to close, and reporters from three remaining Western news agencies were given 48 hours to leave the country. The American Embassy and A.I.D. mission in Addis Ababa were not affected by the shutdown, however, and commercial and military grants and sales agreements with the U.S. remain in effect.

American State Department officials speculate that the closure and deportation orders may clear the way for closer Ethiopian relations with the U.S.S.R. and Cuba, as well as an escalation of the colonial war. The Soviet Union signed a secret arms agreement with Ethiopia's military rulers last December and unconfirmed reports tell of a recent agreement with Cuba concerning military training and advisors for the Dergue's troops.

#### ►All liberties null and void.

The Armed Forces Coordinating Committee, properly called "the Dergue," came to power in September, 1974, after eight months of social upheavals that left the archaic feudal Selassie regime in a shambles. Its claim to being a revolutionary socialist government rests primarily on the nationalization of selected profit-making enterprises and an agrarian reform.

The Dergue has declared all democratic liberties null and void. Non-government demonstrations, strikes and rallies have been banned, and a strict curfew is in effect in the capital. Unions have been abolished, replaced by a state-controlled workers' association. Hundreds of student and labor leaders, and suspected members or sympathizers of the underground Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party have been rounded up and held without trial or summarily executed.

In Eritrea, the Dergue has committed atrocities against the civilian population: My Lai-type massacres, gang rapes, poisoned water wells, crops and villages napalmed, the establishment of free-fire zones and the use of Vietnam-style

"strategic hamlets." The Ethiopian onslaught resulted in thousands of new recruits for the liberation fronts, and a new militancy on the part of Eritrean civilians. Eritrean victories soared as the Dergue's position deteriorated, undermined by humiliating defeats in its colony and by escalating labor militancy and peasant revolts throughout Ethiopia.

Informed sources indicate that, short of foreign troop intervention, there is little chance that the Dergue can maintain its positions in Eritrea. Its position within Ethiopia appears to be only slightly less precarious.

#### ►Differences narrow between ELF and EPLF

As the armed struggle against Ethiopian colonialism approaches final victory, a resolution of the split between the two Eritrean liberation fronts assumes a renewed urgency.

Political differences between the ELF and the marxist EPLF have narrowed considerably since a cease-fire in November 1974 ended a two and a half year war between them. Today the groups carry out frequent joint military missions, and there is an active debate concerning how best to move toward unity.

The remaining differences between the two groups emerge most clearly in their organization and administration of the liberated areas and in their approaches to building a unified liberation movement.

In ELF-controlled liberated areas, political education, land redistribution, moves toward the full participation of women and a restructuring of commercial activities have been sporadic at best. Local merchants and chiefs tend to be the elected village leaders in these areas, where little attempt has been made to change traditional social values.

The EPLF has instituted comprehensive political education programs in the villages under its control. Cooperative farming is being introduced in areas formerly controlled by foreign commercial and local feudal interests. Community elections are held, opening community decision-making processes to the peasant majority for the first time.

The ELF leadership maintains that, despite past differences, the two groups share a common ideological perspective today, and should therefore forget the past. They propose a unifying national congress, to be preceded by a one-year coordination period in which both organizations would "concentrate their efforts to create a suitable atmosphere for unity."

Rather than a hasty reunification, the EPLF calls for the formation of a united front that would allow fighters and followers of the two groups to begin working together, to exchange ideas, and develop a common outlook toward the building of a new society.

(Continued from page 9.)

province of Zaire? Is the CIA a good friend? Having encouraged Mobutu to tease the Angolan lion, will it help him repel its retaliatory charge? Can one not argue that our Angolan program provoked the present invasion of Zaire, which may well lead to its loss of the Shaba's rich copper mines?

Yes, I know you are attempting to generate token support to help Zaire meet its crisis—that you are seeking out the same French mercenaries the CIA sent into Angola in early 1976. These are the men who took the CIA money but fled the first time they encountered heavy shelling.

Some of us in the Angolan program were continuously frustrated and disappointed with headquarters' weak leadership of the field, especially its inability to control the Kinshasa station as it purchased ice plants and ships for local friends, and on one occasion tried to get the CIA to pay Mobutu \$2 million for an airplane which was worth only \$600,000. All of this, and much more, is documented in the cable traffic, if it hasn't been destroyed...

A major point was made to me when I was recruited in 1964—that the CIA was high-minded and scrupulously kept itself clean of truly dirty skulduggery such as killing and coups, etc. At that exact time the CIA was making preparations for the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, who had grown up a few miles east of my own home in the Kasai.

Eventually he was killed, not by our poisons, but beaten to death, apparently by men who were loyal to men who had agency cryptonyms and received agency salaries. In death he became an eternal martyr, and by installing Mobutu in the Zairian presidency we committed ourselves to the "other side," the losing side in central and southern Africa.

We cast ourselves as the dull-witted Goliath in a world of eager young Davids. I for one have applauded as Ambassador (Andrew) Young thrashed about trying to break us loose from this role and I keenly hope President Carter will continue to support him in some new thinking about Africa.

But, one asks, has the CIA learned its lesson and mended its ways since the revelations of Watergate and the subsequent investigations? Is it now, with the help of oversight committees, policed and self-policed?