

## THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER OF ANGOLA

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The struggle for political supremacy in Angola, following the Portuguese decision to grant the former overseas province total independence, began in earnest following the breakdown of the "Alvor Accords" negotiated between all parties in early 1975. These Accords called for a joint sharing of political power between the three contending nationalist forces — MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), FNLA (Angolan National Liberation Front), and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) — until the matter could be resolved through the elections process. Angola was to be granted independence in November 1975 by Portugal.

The MPLA, led by a pro-Soviet Marxist-Leninist core, took a decision to come to power through violent means rather than to leave matters to chance in the ballot box. With massive Soviet Bloc support, including the dramatic Cuban expeditionary force, the MPLA was enabled to seize power in Luanda (the capital) and to declare unilaterally their accession to political rule over all of Angola.

The FNLA and UNITA, on the other hand, contested this "illegitimate" seizure of power and have for the last five years waged a civil war in order to advance their political aspirations. Roughly speaking, the southern third of Angola has been under some form of UNITA influence, and UNITA has been able to successfully interrupt rail communications on the strategic Benguela line throughout the course of the last five years. FNLA, a smaller nationalist force, has been able to maintain a level of activity in the northeast sufficient to deny the Luanda based MPLA regime control in that section of the country.

The level of Soviet Bloc commitment to the MPLA was not initially well understood in the West. Nor, it may be added, was the dramatic Cuban expeditionary force anticipated. Today, however, in light of later Soviet Bloc activity in South Yemen, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan, for example, the pattern of Soviet Bloc action has become clearer.

That Angola holds a key strategic position bearing not only on the southern portion of the African continent, but also with direct implications for the security of the Southern Atlantic

and the associated sea lines of communication, has been recognized for centuries. Indeed, it was the competition for the lucrative Indian trade that brought the area into prominence during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. Today, the PRA has provided bases and support for the Katangan guerillas for the Shaba I and II insurrections, substantial assistance to Joshua Nkomo's ZIPRA guerillas operating in Zimbabwe, and support for Sam Nujoma's SWAPO operating against Southwest Africa (Namibia). Eventually it could become a key factor in Soviet Bloc designs for the entire South Atlantic, including Brazil and Southern America.

As an application of Soviet African strategy, the Angolan case provides an opportunity to better understand the extension of Soviet influence in Africa and the Third World generally. The Western attitude towards developments in Angola during the pre-independence phase of the civil war in 1975 was ambiguous. West European opinion, the Democratic-controlled Congress in the U.S., as well as influential U.S. media, maintained a neutral or, in some cases, a positive attitude towards the MPLA. Careful analysis of MPLA ideology and outside support was lacking despite warnings from moderate and conservative Western circles. The probability that Angola, under the MPLA, would constitute a domain for Soviet Bloc influence was generally downplayed even in the face of the unprecedented Cuban intervention on behalf of the MPLA.

Assertions were made to the effect that the MPLA were simply "African nationalists," not Marxist-Leninists, and that the threat of Soviet Bloc expansion should therefore be discounted. Another assertion was made to the effect that the Cuban intervention was strictly a unilateral decision by Havana, unconnected to broader Soviet strategic designs in spite of the fact that without Soviet logistical support the transit of Cuban troops to Angola would have been impossible. Linked to this assertion was the notion that the Cuban expeditionary force would return home relatively quickly. To the contrary, however, the Cuban expeditionary force remains in Angola six years later and during this time it has steadily increased in size.

New rationalizations have been circulated in the West for the Cuban presence by those friendly to Moscow's cause. The main justification offered for the presence of nearly 20,000 Cuban troops today is their role to "protect" Angola from South Africa. Two points can place this argument in perspective. First,

South Africa sent a column to within 40 km. of Luanda in 1975 but, assurances notwithstanding, the West provided no diplomatic support for the move to prevent Angola from falling into the Soviet sphere. With this experience in mind, it would be unlikely that South African decisionmakers would plan another such operation.

Second, as the South African column easily cut through the Cuban forces present in 1975, who distinguished themselves by attempting to avoid contact, their effectiveness as a "protector" of the MPLA is subject to question. Since the South African column consisted of under 2,000 young troops and offensive airpower was not employed, the Cuban factor in "defending" the MPLA was negligible.

The significance of the Angolan takeover by the Soviet-backed MPLA since 1975 has been better appreciated in light of the entry of Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Afghanistan into the Soviet orbit. Concern in the West for secure supplies of and access to the oil resources of the Middle East and the mineral resources of Africa increased considerably during 1979 and 1980, as a result of the continued decline in political stability throughout Western Europe, Africa and Asia, regional wars, and the growing Soviet naval and military challenge.

### Historical Background

Angola was discovered by the Portuguese explorer Diego Cam in 1484 and named Angola, after the Ngola people who were encountered there. The town of Luanda was established by Portuguese settlers as early as 1575, and international recognition of Portuguese control of the area was confirmed at the Berlin Conference of 1884. The colony was made an integral part of Portugal in 1951, when its legal status was changed from that of a colony to an "Overseas Province."<sup>(1)</sup>

Active rebellion against Portuguese rule was formally initiated in 1961, and three major political organizations vied for control.<sup>(2)</sup> Portugal was at this time also waging wars in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau against national liberation movements. The domestic strain in Portugal of the wars, owing in particular to their extremely large drain on the Treasury, influenced a rebellion in the conscript Portuguese Army, backed primarily by young university educated conscript officers of leftist persuasion, against the Caetano government, which

resulted in a *coup d'état* on April 25, 1974. This event had immediate political implications for the "Overseas Provinces" (colonies), and the national liberation movements increased their pressures.<sup>(3)</sup> While General Spínola, a leading member of the *coup*, had supposedly envisaged the formation of a Portuguese Commonwealth somewhat along the lines of the British Commonwealth, he was unable to implement this design as the political situation in Portugal shifted dramatically to the Left and he himself was forced to flee.<sup>(4)</sup>

The successes of the extreme Left members of the Armed Forces Movement in control of Portugal was accompanied by an accelerated shift to the Left in the "Overseas Provinces" which were to gain independence on a set schedule: Angola on November 11, 1975. The Soviet Union sent a member of their most highly trained and sophisticated new generation of diplomats to head a vastly expanded embassy in Lisbon, and this Embassy reportedly also became the center for liaison with the National Liberation Movements in the colonies.<sup>(5)</sup>

Further Moscow-backed interference came from the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, which in December 1974 declared the year 1975 to be one of "practical aid to the peoples of the former Portuguese colonies,"<sup>(6)</sup> and announced that it would send a delegation to Angola to discuss with MPLA leaders "questions about specific material aid, the training of cadres for Angola in African, socialist, and other countries."<sup>(7)</sup>

In January of 1975, the Portuguese High Commissioner in Angola, Admiral Rosa Coutinho, flew from Luanda to Lisbon at the head of a team of advisers and experts to take part in Portuguese government talks with the MPLA, FNLA, and the UNITA.<sup>(8)</sup> From their talks emerged the formula that Angola would be administered by a coalition of these three groups until achieving independence in November. Following this meeting, however, a struggle for dominance ensued between the three groups, the Soviet Union supporting the MPLA. While attempts were made to uphold the January agreement, called the "Alvor Accord," the rapidly deteriorating internal situation, prevented the continued cooperation of the three movements in a transitional coalition government.

On June 9, 1975, the MPLA forces drove the FNLA and UNITA out of Luanda, the colonial capital, and took over effective control of the city. While the MPLA was a minority movement both in terms of the size of its military forces and

also of the ethnic segment which it represented, the control of the capital city lent the MPLA a certain *de facto* legitimacy in international law. With massive Cuban and Soviet support, as well as support from a number of Communist states, the MPLA was able to maintain control of perhaps 30% of the national territory by the date of independence on November 11, 1975.(9) On this date, the MPLA unilaterally declared itself to be the legitimate government of the state, which it called the People's Republic of Angola (PRA)," and was accorded immediate recognition by the Soviet Union, Cuba, and many other Communist Bloc states. At its meeting at Addis Ababa in January of 1976, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), however, split 22-22 on the question of recognizing the MPLA regime as the legitimate government of Angola. The civil war inside Angola has continued since then, and it has only been through massive Soviet-Cuban assistance that the MPLA has been able to establish a one-party state and to maintain itself in power.

### Background of the MPLA

The MPLA (*Movimento Popular de Liberacao de Angola*) was established in 1956 as a result of the merger of the Communist Party of Angola (PCA) with various urban nationalist-revolutionary forces.(10) Its first leader Mario de Andrade, left for Morocco when Dr. Agostinho Neto was elected Chairman in December 1962.

Agostinho Neto was born in 1922 and was the son of a Methodist minister. He was admitted to medical school in Portugal in 1947, where he was arrested twice for political agitation before he completed his studies in 1958.(11) Neto became a member of both the Portuguese Communist Party (underground) and the French Communist Party. On returning to Angola he established a medical practice in Luanda but was again arrested for political agitation in 1960 and deported to the Cape Verde Islands.(12) Escaping to Leopoldville in 1962, he was there elected the Chairman of the MPLA.(13)

On February 4, 1961, the MPLA stormed the prison in Luanda, and this event formally signaled the initiation of its struggle for the "liberation" of Angola.(14) Riots organized after the prison attack were put down, but on March 15 an organized attack from the Congo (Zaire) resulted in the worst massacre of both whites and blacks "in the recorded history of

Africa," exceeding in extent the Soviet-backed Mau Mau atrocities in Kenya.(15)

The main basis of MPLA support within Angola came from urban *assimilados* (blacks "assimilated" into Portuguese society), *mestizos* (mixed bloods), and a few Communist whites.(16) Most of the black supporters were from the cities of Luanda, Malange, and Dondo, located in the traditional area of the Mbundu (Kimbundu-speaking) people. External support for the MPLA during the guerilla war came principally from the Soviet Union, East Europe, Cuba, the Mondlane Foundation (Netherlands), the Angola Committee (Netherlands), and Congo-Brazzaville. The MPLA headquarters was located in Brazzaville until the Portuguese *coup* in April 1974.

### MPLA Relations with Cuba and the Soviet Union Prior to 1974

As noted above, the MPLA was established in 1956 on the initiative of the Angolan Communist Party (PAC).(17) The PCA, founded in 1955, had links with the Portuguese Communist Party whose leader, Alvaro Cunhal, is a well-known, old-line Stalinist whose submission to Moscow discipline has been complete. In 1964, Alvaro Cunhal arranged for Agostinho Neto to accompany him to the Soviet Union.(18) Since then Neto has acknowledged on many occasions that the Soviet Union supported the Angolan liberation struggle from its very inception.

During the period 1960-1963, the MPLA was restrained in its attempts to penetrate the Angolan frontier by the then non-Marxist governments in Brazzaville and Kinshasa.(19) The MPLA consequently sought international support from the Soviet Union, East European states, and the social democratic government in Scandinavia(20) to persuade the FNLA to agree to a "united front" approach which would facilitate MPLA penetration of Angola.

When the MPLA established its headquarters in Brazzaville(21) in 1963, there were three factions in the party: one centering on Agostinho Neto, another on Viriato da Cruz, and the third on Mario de Andrade.(22) Apparently, Cruz enjoyed a measure of Chinese support while the Soviet Union supported Neto.(23) From the Brazzaville base, the MPLA began operations in the enclave of Cabinda as a stepping stone to Angola proper. In November 1963, the MPLA Kinshasa office was closed by Congolese Prime Minister Adoula; in July

1964 the OAU recognized the FNLA, not the MPLA, as the "sole legitimate" Angolan liberation movement.(24) The MPLA was not greatly affected by these setbacks, though, and responded by intensifying the guerilla war in Cabinda.(25)

In 1965, Neto received Tanzanian and Zambian assistance in the opening of supply lines to eastern Angola, the MPLA's "eastern front." This signaled a decisive turning point, and operations were launched in Moxico (March 1966), in Luanda (May 1968), in Bie (June 1969), and in Malaje (1969). During this period the MPLA apparently broadened its support from a Kimbundu based organization to include elements of other ethnic groups in Angola.(26) As for Cuban support, according to the well-known Colombian Communist author, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, in his Cuban authorized history of the Angolan civil war,

Contacts between the Cuban revolution and the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) had been very intense since they first began in August of 1965, when Che Guevara fought alongside the guerrillas in the Congo. The following year Agostinho Neto himself went to Cuba, accompanied by Endo, the military commander of the MPLA...(27)

Because Neto had traveled with PCP leader Alvaro Cunhal under the auspices of the Portuguese Communist Party to Moscow in 1964, the Cuban connection that developed in 1965-66 is particularly interesting. In the light of the increase of Soviet material support to the MPLA beginning in 1964, and the clear statement by an official Cuban historian, it can be reasonably inferred that MPLA support was a joint Soviet-Cuban affair throughout this early period, i.e., 1964-66.(28)

After moving its headquarters to Lusaka in 1968, the MPLA attempted to drive into eastern Angola in earnest; but was essentially pushed back to the Zambian border in 1971. At this point, the MPLA began to systematically assassinate black tribal leaders sympathetic to UNITA, including those located in Zambia. In 1972 the MPLA expanded its guerilla operations into southern Angola — into Huila and Cuando Cubango provinces — at which point South African concern emerged owing to a variety of political, economic, and strategic considerations.(29) By early 1974, the MPLA was conducting operations in southeastern Angola in the Cuando River area.(30)

Through 1970, it has been estimated that the Soviets pro-



vided the MPLA with about 35-40% of its' weapons. After this, Soviet material support increased substantially, particularly after the overthrow of the Portuguese government in 1974.

### The MPLA 1974-1975

The Portuguese *coup* of April 25, 1974, permitted an acceleration of revolutionary activity in the "Overseas Provinces." (31) In Angola this increased activity by the MPLA coincided with another leadership crisis, this time with Daniel Chipenda, the MPLA military commander in Zambia, accusing Neto (32) of *mestico* racialism, complaining that seven out of the ten leaders were *mestico*. Sympathetic to Peking, he also criticized Neto's pro-Soviet position, as well as his "personality" cult. (33) The factions at this time comprised: the Neto group, the "*Revolta Activa*" (Pinto Andrade), and the "*Revolta do Leste*" (Chipenda). (34)

During this period, the Chinese sent several hundred tons of arms to the FNLA, as well as arms to the Chipenda faction, which was also receiving backing from Kaunda. (35) The Soviet Union also began to restrict aid to Neto in 1973, and to support Chipenda with material. (36) However, Soviet policy was again reversed after the Portuguese Communist Party, which had all along supported Neto, intervened in Neto's behalf. (37) The radical officers of the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement gave their full support to Neto, and Portuguese Communists who had infiltrated the Angolan bureaucracy also extended their support to Neto.

The Soviet Union consequently continued its support of the MPLA, regardless of faction, and when the situation in Portugal after the April *coup* led to the announcement that Lisbon would grant independence to the Overseas Provinces, the Soviet Union stepped up aid to the MPLA yet again. In August 1974, the Soviets began delivering the first part of a \$6 million shipment to African liberation movements via Dar es Salaam. (38) The great bulk of this material apparently made its way to the MPLA, since the Rhodesian and South African "national liberation movements" appeared to have received very little, if any, of the shipment. By October and November the MPLA was receiving Soviet supplies through Cabinda and Congo-Brazzaville. During December, some 250 MPLA troops were sent to the Soviet Union for training and other cadres were reported



to be receiving training from East Germany, Algeria, and North Vietnam.(39)

Throughout the ensuing civil war, Soviet-Cuban assistance has been the decisive factor in the continued predominance of the MPLA. Following the establishment of the MPLA-declared People's Republic of Angola (PRA) on November 11, 1975, Soviet, Cuban, and East European support has allowed the regime to retain power despite large-scale guerilla resistance by FNLA and UNITA.(40)

### Early Soviet Influence at the State-to-State Level

Without Soviet support, the MPLA would not have been able to unilaterally declare the formation of the People's Republic of Angola on November 11, 1975, and would not have been able to gain power or retain it to this day, in spite of the fact that the combined FNLA-UNITA opposition possessed a larger military force and represented a considerably broader ethno-linguistic population base than did the MPLA.

Once in power, even if on an uncertain basis, the MPLA regime has maintained and, indeed, depended upon constant and extremely close relations with the Soviet Union and her ally, Cuba. Important early events in this relationship included Soviet political-military support for the MPLA regime and three high-level official PRA missions to Moscow. Relations have been confirmed through an elaborate complex of treaties and agreements, and cooperation in all spheres has been systematically intensified over the last five years, with Soviet, East European, and Cuban technical advice being provided at every level.

#### *1. PRA Foreign Minister Visit to Moscow, January 1976*

Jose Eduardo dos Santos, then PRA Foreign Minister, traveled to Moscow on January 22, 1976, en route from Helsinki where he had been involved in work with the Presidium of the World Peace Congress.(41) While in Moscow, dos Santos met with high ranking Soviet state and party officials as did other members of his delegation. Significantly, the delegations were received by, among others, Boris Ponomarev.

At the initial reception, dos Santos expressed his

...profound gratitude for all-round and disinterested assistance which the Soviet Union is giving to the People's

Republic of Angola in the just struggle for freedom and independence.(42)

The TASS report of the initial meeting stated that:

The two sides noted with satisfaction the successful development of cooperation between the CPSU and MPLA, reaffirmed the readiness to continue expanding the friendly relations, to strengthen solidarity and friendship between the peoples...(43)

Dos Santos met with the leaders of the Soviet Peace Committee, and the Soviet representatives said that the Soviet people are "taking an active part in the world campaign of solidarity with Angolan patriots.(44) This campaign, it should be noted, was mounted to gain legitimacy for the MPLA regime and thereby increase the number of states recognizing it, as well as to increase economic assistance from Western sources.

At a Soviet press interview, dos Santos stated unequivocally that:

The USSR has been supporting from the very outset the national liberation movement in Angola represented by the MPLA. It is due to the moral, political and material support of the Soviet people that the Angolan people could score successes in the struggle against the forces of imperialism, for freedom and independence.(45)

In short, dos Santos acknowledged the fact that without Soviet assistance, the MPLA would not have been able to gain power in Angola. In terms of state-to-state relations, he said that these relations "will be further improving, strengthening solidarity and friendship between our peoples."(46)

## *2. The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization Extraordinary Meeting, Luanda, February 2-4, 1976*

As noted earlier, it is generally recognized that the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization is a Moscow-influenced grouping. And it should be noted that it called an important "Extraordinary Meeting" in Luanda on the 15th Anniversary of the beginning of the MPLA "liberation struggle" which was formally initiated, as has been mentioned, on February 4, 1961. The basic objective of this meeting was to broaden the international basis of support — "international solidarity" — for the MPLA regime in terms of diplomatic, political, and material assistance.(47)

Some 200 representatives of various countries attended the conference, which was headed by the Deputy Secretary-General of the organization, General Fasine Bangura of Guinea.(48) The Soviet delegation was headed by the Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with Asian and African Countries, Dzasokhov. CPSU Central Committee General Secretary, Leonid Brezhnev, stated in his letter of greeting:

...the Soviet Union welcomed the birth of the new Angola, whose people had gained independence after a courageous and long struggle under the leadership of their vanguard, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola.

The Soviet Union expresses solidarity with the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, the legitimate government of that country...(49)

General Bangura described the objectives of the conference as follows:

The aim of this forum is by no means abstract support for the just struggle of the Angolan people. We intend to pronounce ourselves in favor of the strict implementation of the decisions of our organization which were adopted last September...The issue now on the agenda is the consolidation of the results achieved in the persistent struggle...

All progressive mankind is awaiting the 25th CPSU Congress with tremendous interest. We are sure that the Soviet people, loyal to their internationalist duty, will lift up their voices again and again in defense of the just struggle of the Angolan people. It is precisely on this struggle that the destiny of Africa now largely depends.(50)

### *3. PRA State and Party Mission to Moscow, May 1976*

During the last week of May 1976 a PRA delegation composed of Lopo do Nascimento, Prime Minister; Enrique (Iko) Carreira, Minister of Defense; Joao Felipe Martins, Deputy Chief of General Staff of the "People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola" (FAPLA — under MPLA control); and Lopes, head of the Information and Security Directorate (DISA — similar in function to Cuban DGI or Soviet KGB), met with a Soviet contingent consisting of Aleksei Kosygin, Andrei Gromyko, USSR Defense Minister Ustinov, Foreign Trade Minister Patolichev, and others.(51)

At the reception dinner, Lopo do Nascimento stated expressly his appreciation for the role of the Soviet Union in supporting the MPLA

The government of the Soviet Union...showed militant solidarity expressed in disinterested political, diplomatic, financial, and economic aid in the struggle for national independence.

It should be particularly noted that the successful fight of the Angolan people was made possible by the demonstration of militant solidarity by the other socialist countries...(52)

In line with Nascimento's comments, President Neto stated in an interview for Soviet television that

...throughout the armed struggle the Angolan people received aid from the Soviet Union, without which victory over Portuguese colonialism would have been impossible.(53)

President Neto stated two days before the mission to Moscow that "We intend to continue to rely on the solidarity of our peoples of the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other socialist countries..."(54) The context of this mission then was one of very close bilateral ties.

The cooperation agreements signed during the mission were:

- Declaration on the Foundation of Friendly Relations and Cooperation between the USSR and the PRA
- Consular Convention
- Agreement of Trade
- Agreement on Cultural and Scientific Cooperation
- Agreement on Economic and Technological Cooperation
- Agreement on Cooperation on Fisheries
- Agreement on Merchant Shipping

*Pravda* noted that Lopo do Nascimento "has repeatedly expressed himself in favor of developing friendly relations and all-round cooperation between the PRA and the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community."(55) *Pravda* printed a *Tass* report from Luanda of May 19th in which President Neto stated

The PRA has evolved good relations with certain countries in Western Europe and Latin America which understand the PRA's position and approve its policy. However, Angola devotes special attention to developing relations

of friendship and cooperation with the socialist countries. We cannot and must not conceal our constantly strengthening relations with the Soviet Union, Cuba, and the other socialist countries. (56)

#### 4. *PRA State and Party Mission to Moscow, October 1976*

The PRA state and party mission to Moscow in October 1976 coincided with the Soviet celebrations of the "Great October Revolution" and preceded the Angolan national Independence celebrations in November. The President of the PRA, Agostinho Neto, led the delegation, which included Jose Eduardo dos Santos, Foreign Minister; Carlos Rocha (Dilolwa), Minister of Planning and Economic Coordination; Commandants Joao Luis Neto (Xieto), Chief of FAPLA General Staff; Armando Campos (Major Chico Ta), member, MPLA Central Committee and Directive Commission of the Province of Guanza-norte; Herminio Joao Escorcio, member of MPLA Central Committee and Chief of Protocol for the President; Aristides van Dunem, member, MPLA Central Committee and General Secretary of the National Union of Angolan Workers (UNITA); and Enrique de Carvalho Santos (Onambua), Director of the Board of Information and Security (DISA). (57)

At the welcoming dinner, CPSU General Secretary Brezhnev gave a long and elaborate speech which indicated the importance the Soviet Union attached to Angola, the MPLA, and the PRA.

Angola's victory is...a victory of internationalism, for the international solidarity of the forces of progress...From the outset your struggle was actively assisted by the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other socialist countries. The communists and all the true democrats of Portugal...were on your side.

At the Berlin Conference, 29 European communist and workers parties unanimously supported the government and people of Angola...

It is important that your people...support the program of profound socioeconomic transformation leading to the final liquidation of all exploitation, including that by capitalism, which the MPLA has put forward. (58)

The import of the remarks was clear enough: the Soviet Union welcomed the emergence of a Communist Angola. In this line,

PRA President Neto stated on October 4th in Luanda to Soviet press representatives, three days before his visit:

I would like to express tremendous satisfaction at the possibility to visit the Soviet Union, a country with which we have already long established the closest and deepest relations of friendship and solidarity.

It must be noted that our celebrations (Angolan Independence, November 11) will be preceded by the anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, which ushered in a new era in mankind's history. The Great October has become a turning point for the peoples...in their struggle for freedom and independence. It introduced new elements into our national life, into the destinies of all oppressed peoples.(59)

Neto's interview was a clear expression of his ideologically conditioned view of history and of his view of the role of Soviet-line Marxist-Leninism. At the dinner, Secretary Brezhnev referred to President Neto as "Comrade Neto" and pointed out that, "You, Comrade Neto, have been in the Soviet Union before."

PRA President Neto, in his dinner speech, directed a good deal of attention to the People's Republic of China, and his statements further revealed the nature of his ideological orientation.

Imperialism is trying to manoeuvre in order to break the will of the African peoples and prevent their attainment of the social stages that accord with the epoch in which they live...

We cannot but mention here the actions of China, a country that passes itself for a socialist one and whose actions in respect of Angola manifested themselves in an alignment with the forces of imperialism...China's behavior in Africa is nothing but a manifestation of naked anti-sovietism...(60)

The bilateral talks which began on October 7 were said to have "passed in a heartfelt friendly atmosphere and in a spirit of mutual understanding."(61) The documents which were signed during the mission's visit were:

- Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between the USSR and the PRA
- Agreement on Cooperation between the CPSU and the MPLA
- Soviet-Angolan Statement

- Agreement on Economic and Technological Cooperation

PRA President Neto gave a long speech at the October 7th Dinner. In it he again explicitly revealed his ideological orientation and his view of PRA-USSR relations. He began the speech as follows: "Comrade General Secretary, Comrade Chairman of the Soviet Union's Supreme Soviet Presidium, Comrade members of the Soviet government, Comrades." The following extracts are significant:

Geographically our countries are widely separated but this has not prevented the creation of a revolutionary alliance between them for the continuation of the liberation struggle, the revolutionary incarnation of our peoples' ideals and the establishment of a genuine solidarity in the cause of building socialism and consolidating peace on our planet.

I must also convey to the CPSU Central Committee the revolutionary greetings of the MPLA Central Committee. *For many years now we have seen the fraternal relations between our parties strengthening and becoming increasingly close.*

Soviet aid has played a most important role in our historical development and in achieving independence and the country's reconstruction. And it would not have been otherwise, *for the Soviet Union, which is rightly in the vanguard of the historical development of the peoples, is building communism*, traveling the revolutionary path which excites admiration and which has led from the exploiter society to socialism and the birth of proletarian internationalism. The peoples who have only now gained the opportunity to embark on the path of building socialism cannot fail to recognize the great role of Vladimir Illich Lenin, whose teaching inspires all those today who want to implement the ideas of Marx and Engels with respect to their respective social and geographical area. (62) [Emphasis added.]

On October 10th, PRA President Neto gave an address on Moscow central television in which he again underscored his ideological commitment:

We are going to establish the development of *proletarian internationalism* as our country's fundamental principle. We believe that now we have signed the long-



term agreements in Moscow, we have thereby laid the foundation for further cooperation between the peoples of Angola and the Soviet Union and their unity in the intransigent struggle against imperialism. We believe that the significance of the agreements that we have signed goes beyond the framework of bilateral relations between the Soviet Union and Angola. The agreements play an important role and will have an influence on the development of events in other countries of Europe and Africa.(63) [Emphasis added.]

Given the late PRA President Neto's own statements, one can only conclude that the early Mr. Neto was a committed marxist-leninist who chose the Moscow line. Further confirmation of this and the long-standing Soviet-MPLA cooperation are revealed in the statement by PRA Minister Carlos Rocha in remarks after the signing of the Agreement on Economic and Technological Cooperation. He stated that, "*Our governmental relations were established in the 'fifties'* and since then they have been developing well." [Emphasis added.](64)

The Soviet-PRA statement revealed harmony on all issues:

The leaders of the Soviet Union and PRA note with satisfaction the broad coincidence of the positions of the USSR and PRA on major international problems.

The MPLA Politiburo and PRA government note the special significance of the 25th CPSU Congress' new program of further struggle for peace and international cooperation...(65)

An assessment of this early PRA mission to Moscow points to the clearly expressed ideological position of the MPLA and the PRA which has taken its lead from Moscow and the CPSU. In terms of state-to-state relations, the mission clearly, through its signing of agreements and statements, displayed a desire for the closest possible cooperation with the Soviet Union. Indeed, Article 2 of the Treaty of Friendship called for close and comprehensive cooperation to "preserve and further develop the socioeconomic gains of their peoples."(66) This Article apparently extended the Brezhnev Doctrine" to Angola.

### CPSU-MPLA Relations

As mentioned above, the MPLA, through its former Chairman PRA President Neto, operated from a marxist-leninist

Moscow line basis. The MPLA, however, was not a party in the strict sense of the word, but rather a "movement"; therefore, it undertook to transform itself into an orthodox party. To accomplish this transformation, assistance from the Soviet Union was formally agreed upon in the "Agreement on Cooperation Between the CPSU and the MPLA" signed during the October 1976 mission to Moscow.(67)

The document states that, "Guided by...comradely equality..." the two parties will develop cooperation in several ways. The first point committed the signatories

To consistently broaden inter-party contacts at all levels and assist in every way the mutual exchange of experience in party work.(68)

The third point specifically committed the signatories

To cooperate in the training of party cadres and conduct joint research into urgent problems of contemporary social development.(69)

The intention was quite clear at an early date, therefore, that the CPSU itself would guide the transformation of the MPLA into an orthodox marxist-leninist party along Moscow's lines.

In December 1977, the MPLA was officially restructured into an orthodox marxist-leninist party. The official name became MPLA-PT (Popular Liberation Movement of Angola — Party of Labor). In October 1978, the youth section of the MPLA reconstituted itself as the official youth section of the MPLA-PT. Subsequent examples of this type of agreement to effect the transformation of a national liberation movement to an orthodox party along Soviet lines can be found, for example, in the People's Republic of Mozambique and more recently in Nicaragua.

### Prospects

Soviet support of the MPLA over the last twenty years, combined with an ideological coincidence, naturally provides the Soviet Union with a degree of influence which no other country can approximate. As the Soviet Union helped decisively to install the MPLA in power in Angola and as the MPLA has had to, in its own words, "rely" on Soviet support in the face of the on-going civil war, a high degree of influence by the Soviet Union over the MPLA and the PRA is obvious. Whether this influence will continue far into the future depends on many

factors; however, the large Soviet-Cuban military presence is an indication of an intention to exercise continuing control over the country's future.

Soviet influence on a state-to-state level has been pronounced in terms of the general orientation of the PRA foreign policy political alignment. While the PRA pretends to have what it calls a "non-aligned" position, it openly supports the global "National Liberation Struggle" and to the discipline of "Proletarian Internationalism" and the principles of "scientific socialism," clearly under the Soviet sphere of influence. This influence is assured by Soviet Bloc advisory personnel at various levels of the Angolan state and party apparatus. Angola is without doubt a part of the Soviet-led "Socialist World System," sometimes also denoted as the "Socialist Commonwealth."

There has been no hard evidence of any ideological independence evolving in Angola over the last six years. Increasing explicitness in PRA official statements as to its ideological position was noticeable prior to the October 1976 mission to Moscow, though it is likely that the MPLA may have held back on total identification for tactical reasons until power was actually gained and consolidated. The formation of a "vanguard party" from the MPLA under Soviet guidance has consolidated homogeneity of the MPLA itself and strengthened its overall pro-Soviet orientation.

Regarding the Angolan body politic, the MPLA-PT has engaged in the work of collectivization (Sovietization) of life in Angola. State and social organization reflects the marxist-leninist basis for the reorganization of socio-economic life quite in line with classic COMINTERN guidance. The Soviet Union has exercised an influence over the body politic by its role in introducing collectivist practices into Angola, and social attitudes and behavior have reflected this reorganization of society.

As for the question of the scope of Soviet influence, the Soviet Union continues to exercise an influence over the PRA in ideology, foreign policy, socio-economic organization, and in the military-security realm. Soviet influence extends from the President down through the various layers of the state bureaucracy. The MPLA has been transformed into an orthodox Communist Party, and as the ideological conformity of the bureaucracy has been enforced, the Party power monopoly has come to resemble more and more the pattern of total control as it exists under other regimes of the "Socialist Commonwealth."

The basic party structure of the MPLA and the state structure reflect Soviet institutions and practices. With the close cooperation embodied in the network of Treaties and Agreements, it can be assumed that the Soviet Union will continue to provide guidance for the long-term institutional development of Angola. The PRA dos Santos regime is actively seeking Soviet guidance, and the Soviet Union will be more than likely supplying this guidance for as long as it can derive strategic and power political benefits from its Angolan client.

## FOOTNOTES

(1) For a critical view of the role of the United Nations in the 'de-colonialization' process see, Franco Nogueira, *The United Nations and Portugal*, London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1963. A negative paper on Brazil's position by Samuel Y. Bondi-Siaw, "The Liberation Movement in Portuguese Africa as a Problem in Brazil-African Relations, 1961-1973," was presented to the African Studies Center, University of California at Los Angeles, in February, 1976. The author is a Professor in the Department of History, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana.

(2) See, John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, Vol. I, Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1969; Ronald Chilcote, *Emerging Nationalism in Portuguese Africa*, Stanford: Hoover Institute, 1972; and, for further reference, D.M. Abshire and M.A. Samuels, eds. *Portuguese Africa: A Bibliography of Documentary Ephemera Through 1965*, Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1970.

(3) See, *Comment les Communistes ont Essage de S'Emparer du Pouvoir au Portugal*, supplement to *East & Ovest* (Paris), No. 560, 1-15 November 1975.

(4) See, General Antonio de Spínola, *Portugal e o Future*, Lisbon, 1974 in which he argues against "imperial unity" and for a "federation of autonomous states."

(5) A.K. Kalien, former Charge d'affaires in Cuba. Three months before the April 24, 1974 Lisbon coup, there were 135 functionaries including 80 with diplomatic status. See, *Comment les Communistes...*, *op. cit.*

(6) Foreign Broadcast Information Service (hereinafter, FBIS), Angola, No. 80, 24 April 1975, p. E1.

(7) *Ibid.*

(8) FBIS/Angola, No. 8, 13 January 1975, p. AA1.

(9) See table in following section, "Soviet Political and Military Support for the MPLA Regime."

(10) See, Marcu, *op. cit.*

(11) *Bulletin of the Africa Institute of South Africa*, No. 6, 1974, p. 265.

(12) *Ibid.*

(13) *Ibid.*

(14) See, George Martelli, "The Future in Angola," *African Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 245, October, 1962, pp. 303-304.

(15) *Ibid.*

(16) See, Marcum, *op. cit.*, for background.

(17) Note 1. See also, *Africa Today*, Moscow, 1962 for details.

(18) *Comment les Communistes...*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

(19) The following discussion based upon, in part, Charles K. Ebinger, "External War," *ORBIS*, Vol. 20, No. 3, Fall 1976. See also, "Decolonization, Angola," in *Strategic Survey*, London: IISS, 1976, pp. 27-58; and Anthony R. Wilkinson,

"Angola and Mozambique, the Impact of Local Power," *Survival*, September-October 1974.

(20) Ebinger, *op. cit.*, p. 678. See also Marcum, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-46 for data on early Communist support.

(21) Ebinger, *op. cit.*, p. 678.

(22) *Ibid.*, pp. 678-682.

(23) *Ibid.*

(24) Ebinger, *op. cit.*, p. 678.

(25) For a view of the effectiveness of the Portuguese response to using guerrilla warfare see, Thomas H. Henriksen, "Lessons from Portugal's Counterinsurgency Operations in Africa," Royal United Services Institute (*RUSI*) Journal, Vol. 122, No. 2, June, 1978, pp. 31-35.

(26) MPLA fortunes are discussed in a sympathetic article by Brasil Davidson, "Angola in the Tenth Year, A Report and an Analysis, May-July 1970," *African Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 298, January 1971, pp. 37-49. Parallel revolutionary developments in another part of the revolutionary problem in Portuguese Africa are discussed in John Briggs-Davidson, MP, "The Current Situation in Portuguese Guinea," *African Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 281, October 1971, pp. 385-394.

(27) *Washington Post*, January 12, 1977.

(28) Some details on Soviet support appear in the testimony of William E. Schauffele, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in United States Senate, Subcommittee on African Affairs, 94th Congress, *Hearings on U.S. Involvement in the Civil War in Angola*, (January 29, February 2, 4, and 6, 1976), Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1976).

(29) Ebinger, *op. cit.*, p. 684-685. South Africa had a major stake in the Cunene River development project responsible for thirteen dams and related projects. Ebinger reports that, "South Africa agreed to finance most of the cost of the major portion of the project: namely, the construction of the Gove and Calueque dams. The purpose of the Calueque complex, forty miles from the Ruacana Falls on the Angolan-Nambian border, is to supply water and power to Ovamboland, Grootfontein, the Tsumeb iron-ore facility, Windhoek, Walvis Bay, and Rio Jinto Zinc's mines at Ros-sing, which holds one of the world's largest deposits of uranium," p. 685.

(30) See, Rene Pelissier, "La Guerre en Angola Oriental, *Revue Francaise d'etudes Politiques Africaines*, No. 103, July 1974, pp. 87-108.

(31) For an overview see, Joseph C. Miller, "The Politics of Decolonization in Portuguese Africa," *African Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 294, January 1975.

(32) Ebinger, *op. cit.*, p. 687.

(33) *Ibid.*

(34) *Ibid.*

(35) *Ibid.*, p. 688.

(36) *Ibid.*

(37) *Ibid.*

(38) Schauffele, *Hearings, op. cit.*, p. 184.

(39) *Ibid.*, see also, Peter Vanneman and Martin James, "The Soviet Intervention in Angola: Intentions and Implications," *Strategic Review*, Vol. IV, No. 3, Summer 1976, pp. 92-103.

(40) For a sympathetic overview of the Angolan MPLA victory see, John A. Marcum, "The Anguish of Angola," *Issue*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Winter, 1975, pp. 3-11 and his "Lessons of Angola," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1976; also Rene Pelissier, "Portuguese African Resounds to MPLA Victory in Angola," *International Perspectives*, July-August, 1976.

(41) FBIS/Angola, No. 17, 26 January 1976, p. H5.

(42) *Ibid.*

(43) *Ibid.*

(44) *Ibid.*, p. H6.

- (45) *Ibid.*
- (46) FBIS/Angola, No. 21, 30 January 1976, p. H4.
- (47) FBIS/USSR, No. 25, 5 February 1976, p. H1.
- (48) *Ibid.*, p. H2.
- (49) *Ibid.*, p. H3.
- (50) *Ibid.*, p. H1.
- (51) FBIS/USSR, No. 102, 25 May 1976, pp. H1-H2.
- (52) *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- (53) FBIS/USSR, No. 102, 25 May 1976, p. H3.
- (54) *Ibid.*, p. H5.
- (55) FBIS/USSR, No. 103, 25 May 1976, p. H3.
- (56) *Ibid.*, p. H4.
- (57) FBIS/USSR, No. 197, 8 October 1976, p. H1.
- (58) *Ibid.*, p. H2.
- (59) FBIS/USSR, No. 194, 5 October 1976, p. H4.
- (60) FBIS/USSR, No. 197, *op. cit.*, pp. H4-H5.
- (61) *Ibid.*, p. H5.
- (62) FBIS/USSR, No. 198, 12 October 1976, pp. H11-14.
- (63) *Ibid.*
- (64) FBIS/USSR, No. 199, 13 October 1976, p. H1.
- (65) FBIS/USSR, No. 201, 15 October 1976, pp. H1-5.
- (66) FBIS/USSR, No. 198, *op. cit.*, p. H2. For an intensive analysis of the "Brezhnev Doctrine," see, Boris, Meissner, *The Brezhnev Doctrine*, Kansas City, Mo.: Park College, 1970.
- (67) FBIS/USSR, No. 200, 14 October 1976, pp. H2-3.
- (68) *Ibid.*, p. H3.
- (69) *Ibid.*

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