

On Standing Up to the Russians in Africa

ROBERT MOSS

There is now a growing debate in both Britain and America in response to the perceived failures of the policies of both governments in Africa. (In the U.S. a recent *CBS-New York Times* poll revealed that only 22 percent of the people are happy with President Carter's foreign policy). In this article, I should like to add to this debate by first placing what has been happening in historical perspective and then by analyzing three major arguments used by those who oppose standing up to the Russians in Africa. Finally, I propose to put forward four policy initiatives which may reverse the tide for NATO on that continent.

History may have to repeat itself before our political masters absorb it. In the Spring of 1977, General Mbumba's ragtag army of Katangese exiles, trained by the Cubans and backed by the Marxist-Leninist MPLA regime in Angola, made their first attempt to invade Zaire's mineral-rich Shaba province. This did not set off the chain-reaction in Washington and other Western capitals that was triggered by the second attempt last May.¹

When Mbumba and his Communist backers tried again, President Carter was already reconsidering whether the claim that the United States had lost its "inordinate fear of Communism" was truly a cause for boasting. The second invasion of Shaba contributed hugely to the education of the fledgling Administration in Washington.

This was indicated by the warnings to the Soviet leadership that came from Dr. Brzezinski, from the President himself, and by America's willingness to back up the resolute initiative of President Giscard d'Estaing by loaning transport planes to the Franco-Belgian force.

1. It is true that, thanks to prompt intervention by the Moroccans, airlifted by the French, the first invasion did not get far, and so the world was not treated to the spectacle of the horrors inflicted on the residents (both black and white) of Kolwezi the second time around. It is also true that the second invasion followed the brutal demonstration of Soviet hardware and Cuban manpower in Ethiopia. This was on a scale that State Department spokesmen were initially instructed to play down but which swept the Somalis out of the Ogaden desert, in tatters.

Yet, the debate both inside the Carter Administration and on the outside clearly showed that the Administration as well as the public was divided on the future course of U.S. policy toward Africa.

So it was not all that surprising to witness a determined campaign to demonstrate that the Cubans, the Soviets and even the Angolans could not have been involved in the Shaba invasion. It was, however, astonishing to find newspaper editorialists and Congressmen earnestly debating whether they should believe Fidel Castro or the President of the United States on the matter. Castro was actually given prime time on all three major American television networks to contradict the Administration's account of Cuban involvement and to meddle in Washington politics by singling out individual members of the Carter team for praise or blame.

The credulity with which statements from Castro and other Cuban spokesmen were received in some quarters was all the more startling since eye-witness accounts of Cuban involvement had already been published by a number of highly-respected reporters. *Newsweek's* Arnaud de Borchgrave for instance, interviewed wounded rebels in Kolwezi hospital on how they had been led on the march into Shaba by Cuban officers and Portuguese Communist political commissars.

It is known that the Katangese rebels were recruited to fight for the MPLA during the Angolan civil war, thanks to the efforts of the Portuguese "Red Admiral," Rosa Coutinho. It is unlikely that their attack could be mounted from Angola without the collusion of the commanders of the Cuban garrison, which keeps the MPLA in power and which trains guerrillas for operations in neighboring African states.

"Where is the evidence?" Congressional critics of the Administration's hardening line demanded nonetheless. They were quick to take advantage of the obvious and understandable embarrassment of White House spokesmen about opening the files.

The primary source of the Carter Administration's dossiers on Cuban involvement in Shaba, as I understand it, was France's external intelligence service, the Service de Documentation Exterieur et du Contre-Espionnage (SDECE). The SDECE maintains first-rate sources inside Angola. Understandably, it wants to protect them. The reason that the Administration could not get all the facts it needed from the CIA's independent resources hardly needs spelling out. The Agency has been bound hand-and-foot in its intelligence-gathering activities as a result of the witch-hunts that will be

viewed by future (or not-so-future) historians as a critical phase in America's strategic decline. Equally obviously, the SDECE would not have filled in the American intelligence gap without exacting some strong private assurances that, for once, an American Administration would be able to keep its sources secret.

A Gendarme for Africa?

Despite Castro, Shaba was saved for a second time, mostly because the French did not have to be taught the lesson that, in the face of Communist aggression, Africa needs a gendarme. King Hassan's readiness to fly in Moroccan troops for a second time to replace the departing French and Belgian *paras* (and at the risk of displeasing the Russians, with whom he had recently concluded a spectacular contract to develop his country's enormous phosphate reserves), combined with a residual French presence and the creation of a multinational francophone African force, will help to secure a holding position for Mobutu in the immediate future. But the economic damage inflicted on Zaire by the flight of white technicians from the copper and cobalt mines, added to the traditional hostility of many Katangese towards the corrupt and savagely repressive regime in Kinshasa, can be calculated to produce the conditions for a Shaba invasion, Mark III—when and if the Soviet and Cuban planners decide that pro-Western forces will not intervene or that those forces would be inadequate.

It is a pattern of Communist intervention that will certainly be repeated. The French are currently helping to defend Chad—and its uranium reserves—against Libyan-sponsored rebels in the north. The Moroccans are battling with the Algerian-backed Polisario guerrillas in the Western Sahara. Zambia's President Kaunda has threatened to provide a base for a Cuban attempt to overthrow the internal settlement in Rhodesia and install a dictatorship under the guerrilla leaders of the self-styled Patriotic Front. There are reports of preparations for an ambitious Angolan-based invasion of South West Africa involving top-level Soviet officers recently transferred to Angola. Vassily Solodovnikov, the Soviet ambassador in Lusaka, responsible for coordinating Soviet tactics throughout east Africa, is giving covert support to Marxist dissidents in Kenya, Malawi and Botswana, where the death or incapacitation of the present moderate, but elderly, leaders could provide the conditions for coup attempts.

A Pax Sovietica?

The Russians have no shortage of African bases as they seek to expand their sphere of influence in the continent, with the overall objective of depriving the West of automatic access to raw materials on which its economies and armaments industries depend. This is a strategy of denial that Soviet planners have sketched out repeatedly in their published writings. Cuban ground forces are stationed in Angola, Mozambique, Congo-Brazzaville and, of course, Ethiopia; Cuban military advisers and security policemen are stationed in Sierra Leone, Equatorial Guinea, Sekou Toure's Guinea and Tanzania—a total of some 45,000 military personnel in the continent as a whole.²

There is a deepening involvement by the East Germans (who specialize in running the security services of Third World states) and other Soviet satellites.³ Mounting Soviet confidence, as well as mounting Soviet ambition, is reflected by the assignment of increasing numbers of Red Army officers to take detailed control of ground operations in Angola.

2. As many have pointed out, 45,000 troops for a small country such as Cuba is the equivalent of approximately 800,000 troops for the U.S. This is substantially more than were in Vietnam at the height of that war.

Mr. Peter C. J. Vale of the staff of the International Institute for Strategic Studies reviewed (in their journal, *Survival*, July-August 1977) a book on Africa to which I contributed and which was published in 1976. Writing a year ago, Mr. Vale apparently wrote me off as an alarmist, noting that "Frankly the *Zeitgeist* of this book is more relevant for the 1950's than the 1970's. (Witness this gem from one British contributor on the Cuban involvement in the Angolan war: 'We have seen this down-at-heel little sugar-growing republic sending its troops all over Africa . . .')" The IISS's *Strategic Survey* for 1977 (just published) notes that "For such a small country with so few resources, Cuba's contribution was staggering." (p. 14). Perhaps events have changed Mr. Vale's mind? They often do.

For other informed articles on the growing Soviet power in Africa, see Julian Amery, "The Crisis in Southern Africa," *Policy Review*, Fall 1977, Kenneth Adelman, "The Black Man's Burden," *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1977, Kenneth Adelman, "The Runner Stumbles: Carter's Foreign Policy in the Year One," *Policy Review*, Winter 1978, Bayard Rustin and Carl Gershman, "Africa, Soviet Imperialism and the Retreat of American Power," *Commentary*, October 1977 and Peter Vanneman and Martin James, "Soviet Intervention in the Horn of Africa," *Policy Review*, Summer 1978.

3. See, for instance, Elizabeth Pond, "East Germans Look to Africa," *The Washington Post*, July 8, 1978.

The rapidity of Soviet strategic penetration of Africa is even more remarkable than its scope. Prior to 1974, the Russians could count on only one reliable ally in black Africa—Guinea—and, even there, they had had a stormy relationship with Sekou Toure in the early 1960s. This was despite the considerable investment they had made in backing revolutionary movements throughout the 1960s and early 1970s and in meddling in the Congo. The great sea-change in Soviet fortunes came with the Communist-backed “captains’ coup” in Lisbon in 1974, which (according to French and Spanish intelligence sources) was the key element in a long-range operational plan, code-named the “Oran Plan,” that had been drawn up some years before and which I have described elsewhere.⁴ The Russians failed to take control of Portugal, although the Communist-dominated government of Vasco Goncalves nearly achieved that for them.

Control of Portugal, however, was never a primary Soviet objective. What the Russians were after was Portuguese Africa, without which Portugal itself would be condemned to subsist as a slum suburb of Europe. Control of Angola and Mozambique would provide (a) superb natural harbors as naval bases; (b) control of the most convenient routes to the sea for landlocked states such as Zambia (and thus the ability to apply political leverage by threatening their communications); (c) control of Angola’s oil and mineral wealth; and (d) the launching-pad for an assault on the white-ruled states of southern Africa. By early 1976, these objectives had been securely achieved.

In the wake of Western abdication in Angola and later in the Horn of Africa, the Russians had reason to believe that the United States and Western Europe no longer had the stomach to oppose their designs. Angola, after all, had been almost the ideal place for the West to draw the line against Soviet expansion in Africa, since the conflict there did not involve the race issue, but pitted pro-Soviet black forces against pro-Western black forces that enjoyed majority support throughout large areas of the country. Yet, having encouraged the South Africans to take up the slack in Angola—which the South Africans did so successfully that, pushing the Cubans aside, they came within a day’s drive of Luanda—the Americans were unable to deliver on their own promises. This was mostly

4. See my article, “The Rocky Road to Democracy,” *National Review*, June 10, 1977.

due to Congressional hostility to Dr. Kissinger and the activities of "whistleblowers" who leaked news of secret operations in order to sabotage them.

The second invasion of Shaba set a new test for the Western powers. They passed. The French initiative, followed, with increasing degrees of reluctance, by Belgium, the United States and Britain, may suggest that a new mood of resistance has been generated at last. Or does it? The Russians must have drawn comfort from the public disagreement between the French and the Belgians and between Brzezinski and Vance, and also from the blandly defeatist counsel proffered by Britain's Prime Minister, Mr. Callaghan, in his press conference during the NATO summit in Washington. Affecting to speak with the worldly wisdom of a tribal elder raised among the *kraals*, he sniped at the green striplings in Washington (read: Brzezinski) who set off like some "new Columbus" to discover Africa, to which Brzezinski might have replied, "It's better to have to discover a place for the first time than to have known it forever without having ever worked out what to do about it."

The Anti-globalists

Shaba was an easier test than the new ones that the Russians have in store for Jimmy Carter. Whenever American counter-measures of any kind are suggested, siren voices are raised to defend a policy of *passivism* in the face of Soviet encroachments in Africa. Leaving aside such mystical flashes of inspiration such as Andy Young's recent discovery that the role of the Cubans in Angola is like that of the French in the American Revolution, it is worth examining briefly some of the stock arguments that are used by those who contend that the United States has no business standing up to the Russians in Africa:

(1) "*U.S. globalism brings in the Russians.*"

Dr. Gerald J. Bender, writing in the summer issue of *Foreign Policy*, contends that "under Gerald R. Ford, Henry A. Kissinger's globalist approach actually contributed to an increase in the number of Cuban troops in southern Africa; Zbigniew Brzezinski's similar influence on President Carter's policy would have the same effect." The best that can be said for this statement is that the professor is meticulous about middle initials.

Dr. Bender leaves me puzzled by the use he makes of the ugly

neologism “globalist,” especially since later on in his article he inveighs against “narrow globalist perspectives”—which makes as much sense as writing about dry water. I would hazard a guess that what he is trying to say is that Dr. Kissinger was at fault because he tried to stop the takeover of Angola by the MPLA and its foreign backers, thereby obliging the Cubans to go to the trouble of sending in more troops; and that Dr. Brzezinski, too, is a dangerous man, since he wants to put obstacles in the path of Soviet expansion that would compel the Russians to use bigger forces to get their way. The value of this argument is best assessed by applying it to another historical situation. Dr. Bender might equally well have written that the Allied powers, by their “globalist” decision to defend Poland against Hitler in 1939, “contributed to an increase in the number” of Nazi troops outside Germany. But didn’t the—presumably—non-globalist decision by Britain and France to allow Germany to swallow up the Rhineland, Austria and Czechoslovakia without opposition encourage Hitler to escalate his demands, and so set Europe on the road to war?

Subscribers to the Bender thesis will draw ammunition from a book by the latest of the CIA’s “ideological defectors,” John Stockwell, although I should warn them that his shells are faulty and likely to backfire. Stockwell’s argument, in a nutshell, is that the Cubans were sucked into Angola because the CIA got there first, eager to find a new playground in the aftermath of the Vietnam disaster, and because Kissinger helped to pull the South Africans in too.⁵

5. An innocent reader would be bound to assume that Stockwell knows what he is talking about, since he was formerly the chief of the CIA’s Angola task force in Washington. But the reader will be forewarned if he studies Stockwell’s acknowledgements, in which he offers profuse thanks to such personages as Ralph Stavins, one of the luminaries of the left-wing think-tank, the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) which has been in the forefront of the campaign against the American intelligence agencies. There is strong circumstantial evidence to suggest that Stockwell acted as a “Deep Throat” source for groups that were trying to sabotage the American involvement in Angola while he was supposed to be running the CIA task force. For example, the closing sentences of his book almost exactly coincide with a quotation from an anonymous inside source cited at length in a remarkably well-informed pamphlet on the CIA’s secret war in Angola that was published by Morton Halperin’s Center for National Security Studies (CNSS) when the war was still raging. Many of the major disclosures in Stockwell’s book were already contained in this pamphlet. Moreover,

Stockwell may be an insider, but, as someone who has joined the radical campaign to close down the CIA, he has his own axe to grind. The Russians did not arrive in Angola late in the day, as Stockwell implies. They were involved as early as 1956, when the ultra-loyalist pro-Moscow Portuguese Communist Party helped to found the MPLA, in which Agostinho Neto—who had set up a clandestine Communist group during his student days in Oporto—emerged as the dominant figure. In the early 1960s, the MPLA established its first links with the Cubans, who were then running a training camp for African guerrillas at Dolisie in Congo-Brazzaville.

Similarly, South African intervention in Angola, far from providing the pretext for Cuban involvement, actually came as a response to the accelerating inflow of Cuban troops and Soviet weaponry in 1975. Carlos Rafael Rodriguez publicly admitted (in a speech in December, 1975) that there were 230 Cuban military “instructors” inside Angola as early as the spring of that year. There is evidence that Cuban troops went into battle in Angola two months before the South Africans. I described this in detail in a series of articles in *The Sunday Telegraph* of London last year.⁶ I will not revive the ongoing disputes over the chronology of the Angolan war—over who did what first—in this article. I mention them only to point out that we need to be very wary of claims that Soviet/Cuban intervention in a situation like Angola is the response to a prior Western engagement.

The more important point is that discussions about who did what to whom first are in fact a time-wasting diversion. Dr. Bender tries to equate the American role in Saudi Arabia with the Cuban role in Angola. The United States, however, is not a neutral power in the great strategic and ideological conflicts of our time, and, even if it were, it would still have a duty to its own citizens to defend their interests abroad—for example, by protecting a regime that allowed access on favorable terms to a vital resource. Central and

some of Stockwell's former colleagues in the field have sour memories of his performance. A retired CIA paramilitary expert who played a key role in Angola told me that Stockwell handed in a report on the military capabilities of the anti-Soviet guerrilla movements, UNITA and the FNLA, that was outlandishly enthusiastic about their potential as soldiers, and was seen to be fiction as soon as the two movements were exposed to real combat.

6. *The Sunday Telegraph*, January 30, February 6, 13 and 20, 1977.

southern Africa is one of the world's richest mineral bins; both enlightened self-interest and collective security demand that the United States should play a leading role in keeping that mineral bin out of unfriendly hands, by whatever methods are required.

A Vietnam for the Russians?

(2) *"The Russians are digging their own Vietnam."*

It is certainly true that the Russians are not greatly loved, in human terms, anywhere in Africa, and that serious differences over policy have developed between Moscow and its regional allies, including Cuba—especially as a result of the debate over how to deal with the Eritrean secessionist rebels. But one is gravely mistaken to assert that, if the Western powers simply stand aside, the Russians are somehow bound to blunder their way into their own Vietnam quagmire, because (a) the Russians are playing as cautious, low-risk gamblers in Africa, betting with a junior relation's chips, and (b) the local forces that might conceivably be able to inflict military humiliation on Soviet proxy troops require outside backing on a scale that they are not currently receiving.

Those who argue that the United States can afford to stand aside while the Russians proceed to make a mess of things for themselves in Africa have drawn a certain amount of comfort from the confusion that now prevails in the Horn of Africa. The emergence of a Marxist military dictatorship in Addis Ababa prompted a reversal of traditional alliances along the southern shores of the Red Sea. Somalia, hitherto regarded as a staunch Soviet ally, and the home of the huge naval and missile base at Berbera, veered towards the West as the Russians threw their backing behind Ethiopia, which had been a long-time ally of the United States and Israel. This turn-around presented the American Administration with several options, including:

- a. to accept the reversal of alliances, and provide Siad Barre with the arms and third party assistance he needed to hold his own against the Soviet hardware and Cuban troops that were poured into the Ogaden to support the Ethiopians;
- b. to try to build on the independent nationalists inside Ethiopia's ruling Dergue, and actively seek to oust the pro-Soviet elements;
- c. to boycott or provide only limited arms supplies for both sides, and to stand aloof to await events.

After much wavering, the Carter Administration finally settled on option (c), and it was possible to argue, by mid-summer, that it had started to pay off. The Soviet/Cuban/Ethiopian armies were able to sweep the Somalis out of the Ogaden by dint of their overwhelming superiority in manpower and weapons (flown in in the biggest airlift the world had seen since the Yom Kippur war). But they did not push on across Somalia's frontiers. Meanwhile, Ethiopia's strongman, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, provoked major tensions within the Soviet camp by insisting that the Russians and the Cubans should back him to the hilt in a bid to crush the Eritrean rebels and guarantee Ethiopia's unobstructed access to the Red Sea ports. The Cubans had long-standing ties with the Marxists in the Eritrean camp. So did radical, Soviet-influenced Arab states such as Libya, Iraq and South Yemen. All of them were unwilling to lend their support to an Ethiopian drive against Eritrea.

So there were those who said by the middle of the year that the Russians had gained less than they had lost in the Horn of Africa, despite their considerable military investment. After all, the Russians had lost their bases in Somalia, without gaining control of the Red Sea ports of Eritrea in exchange. The debate over whether or not to throw full support behind Mengistu on his march into Eritrea had set them at loggerheads with the Cubans. All they could claim to have achieved was a degree of influence over the shadowy regime in Addis Ababa, whose armies were an undisciplined shambles.

This is becoming a popular assessment, but it is (to put it mildly) premature. The Russians calculated that the military humiliation of the Somalis, combined with Western refusal to give them significant backing when they turned against Moscow, would bring down Siad Barre's regime and provide a dramatic warning to other pro-Soviet governments of the penalties for biting the hand that feeds them. A coup attempt in the immediate aftermath of the Ogaden rout failed, but there could be another. Alternatively, there is the possibility that President Siad Barre, although bitter about the slaughter of his troops by his former allies, could himself lead the shift back towards Moscow; in mid-June, there were intelligence reports that he was meeting daily with the Soviet ambassador in Mogadishu, and that Libya's erratic Colonel Qaddafi was exerting himself mightily to mend the breach. In Ethiopia itself, the Russians were constructing a vast new air base outside Addis Ababa, destined to be entirely under Soviet control. It is one in a series of bases including those in Libya and South Yemen. There remained, it is

true, the intractable problem of how much weight to put behind Mengistu in Eritrea, and a great cloud of uncertainty hung over the old Soviet plan to set up a loose confederacy of the four nations of the Horn: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and little Djibouti. But it would obviously have been rash to draw the conclusion that the Russians were digging their own Vietnam. For one thing, the Soviet leaders are patient, cautious people who have been around for a long time; although they are quickening their step, they are still inclined—if the risks rise too high or the rewards appear too slight—to back away. But when the West fails to take up their challenge, what risks are there to deter them?

The ‘So What’ School of Thought

(3) *“If the West loses Zaire (or Angola, the Horn, Rhodesia, South Africa, and so on), so what?”*

The “so what” school of thought maintains that the United States should not trouble itself overmuch about the loss of real estate in Africa, since “our guys” are either corrupt or racist, and therefore not worth backing in the first place. Also, the Soviets are unlikely to score well in the long run in an area where Ivan is loathed and ideology wilts in the heat of the sun. And, finally, even if black Africa goes Communist, it will still have to trade with the West. “So what” is a state of mind, not a reasoned approach. The struggle for Africa revolves around raw materials. The effect of a successful Soviet grab for the mineral resources of Shaba—let alone southern Africa as a whole—would be felt immediately with the formation of new cartels to jack up prices, and later on with attempts to copy the oil embargo of 1973 and use the denial (or threat of denial) of raw materials for political leverage.

Passivism is not a policy. Piecemeal reactions to Soviet initiatives do not add up to a policy either. On what basis can the NATO powers now seek to achieve what has long been lacking: a coherent strategy for resisting Soviet expansion in Africa?

A Forward Policy for Africa

The containment of Soviet expansion in Africa is a goal that has yet to be openly espoused by all of the major NATO powers. Yet, as a strategic objective, containment is not enough. A purely defensive posture is rarely an effective form of defense. Why should the

Western powers regard the Marxist dictatorships that provide a base for Soviet subversion and Shaba-style operations in Africa as untouchable? Are we really going to rest content with a situation in which the battles are being fought on territory that belongs to the Western sphere of influence? Are we determined to allow countries like Angola or Mozambique—whose bloodthirsty regimes, despite their powerful friends, are as precarious as any in Africa—to promote the overthrow of moderate black governments, as well as the destruction of the prospects for democratic majority rule in Rhodesia and Namibia?

Standing up to Soviet ambitions in Africa will require a forward policy. Four key elements of such a strategy are not difficult to identify, if we can detach ourselves from the emotional rhetoric of the current debate.

(1) Curbing the Cubans.

It deserves to be recalled that on October 3, 1962, the United States Congress passed an important resolution on Cuba which still stands in the statute books as Public Law 87-733. The most relevant passage in this law states that “the United States is determined: (a) to prevent by whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms, the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending, by force or the threat of force, its aggressive or subversive activities to any part of this hemisphere; (b) to prevent in Cuba the creation or use of an externally supported military capability endangering the security of the United States.”

The deployment of a Cuban foreign legion, financed and equipped by the Russians, is surely a contingency covered by clause (b) of the legislation—although I am sure that the authors of the 1962 law could not have conceived, even in their wildest fantasies, that something like this would come to pass. In other words, the United States is committed, under a law that has never been repealed, to resist Soviet attempts to use the Cubans as proxy forces in a way that could be held to endanger American security. There are people in Washington, of course, who deny that what the Cubans are doing in Africa poses a threat to American security; the Administration is divided on this issue.

Still, there are some realistic options that should be considered.

First, it is not beyond the resources of the American Air Force to stop Cuban transport planes from departing for Africa. Second, there is now enormous scope for psychological warfare designed

to undermine the morale of Castro's expeditionary forces and to encourage defections. Why, as a matter of fact, have there been no field-rank defectors from Castro's legions in Africa and the Middle East? It may be that his officers had concluded that they were on the winning side. My hunch is that, with the CIA in its crippled condition, few people were trying hard enough to coax defectors to come across.

(2) *Backing pro-Western resistance groups in Marxist states.*

Resistance to the MPLA regime in Angola and the FRELIMO regime in Mozambique continues and in both countries the ruling movements are bitterly divided. This provides a singular opportunity for the West to provide low-cost (and low-risk) support for anti-Soviet resistance groups.

The case is particularly pressing in Angola, because (a) the MPLA regime and its Cuban and East German guardians are providing the base for guerrilla attacks against Zaire and South West Africa, while (b) at least one of the anti-Soviet movements—UNITA—commands genuine popular support throughout more than half of the country and is led by one of the most attractive and intelligent leaders in black Africa, Jonas Savimbi. Even the revisionist John Stockwell falters in his wholesale assault on everything that Kissinger tried to achieve in Angola when it comes to Savimbi—Stockwell can't quite bring himself to run down a man who towered above his rivals in his intellectual and political qualities.

UNITA and the FNLA are, of course, not entirely friendless. They are receiving discreet backing from the French, and there are reports that French "mercenaries" will be attached to UNITA units following Savimbi's secret visit to Paris on the eve of the Franco-African summit at the end of May. The FNLA can count on its base in Zaire, not least because its leader, Holden Roberto, is Mobutu's brother-in-law. The South Africans, while keeping their heads down, maintain close ties. But there is an urgent need for more weapons, more money, for military advisers and a leavening of disciplined troops—"mercenaries" at a pinch, if they are seasoned professionals.

In this case, the West has the opportunity to support a "people's liberation army" against a repressive regime that, according to one account (by Norman Kirkham in *The Sunday Telegraph*), has taken the lives of 70,000 of its own citizens. Above all, the West has an opportunity to inflict a stinging humiliation on Castro's army of

occupation that would make him think hard and long before venturing beyond his island.

(3) *Having a "fire brigade" on call.*

The lesson of the recent conflicts in Zaire and Angola is that small bodies of disciplined troops can do almost anything in black Africa. This can be exploited by Soviet proxies for aggressive purposes. But equally, it can be exploited by the Western powers to mount effective, low-risk holding operations. The ideal *force d'intervention* for Africa would be similar to what the French have tried to do in setting up the francophone African force; it would be an essentially *African* force, supervised by European "advisers," with guaranteed financial backing, supplies and equipment and the ability to call on mobile reserves from NATO. But the French have gone as far with this concept as anyone is likely to be able to go. In English-speaking black Africa, major states like Nigeria appear to be less concerned about Soviet intervention than with meddling in southern Africa.

A standard theme of Soviet propaganda during the second Shaba invasion was that NATO, as an organization, had returned to executing its "imperialist designs." There is a clue here as to how the Western powers should proceed. NATO should formally extend its geographical brief, since the security of Western Europe is bound up with secure access to the minerals and sea-routes of Africa; the fall of Zaire would arguably be a bigger blow to Western Europe than the fall of West Berlin, shocking as the suggestion may sound. Second, the major NATO powers should ensure that they have the airborne forces—and the means to airlift them—instantly on call to play a fire brigade role, as required, in Africa. French military involvement in many brush-fires around black Africa currently occupies an estimated 15,000 military personnel and has sorely stretched the country's military reserves. Still, France is in a strong position, compared with Britain, where Labor Government policy has cut back the Parachute Regiment to a single battalion, making it exceedingly difficult for the British to contemplate a Shaba-style operation.

Fortunately, while Britain and America waver and doubt, there are a number of smaller powers that have demonstrated the will to play an active role in containing Communist aggression in Africa and could play a bigger role in the future. Morocco has been the most active among them—apart from South Africa, to which I will

come in a moment. The Saudis have helped to finance Moroccan operations and more backing could be forthcoming from them—and from the Shah of Iran.

Southern Africa—a Vital Link?

(4) Coming to terms with southern Africa.

The confusion of Anglo-American policy is at its most complete in relation to the three nations of white-ruled southern Africa: South West Africa, Rhodesia and South Africa. I am reliably informed that on his last visit to Cape Town, Cyrus Vance asked R. F. ("Pik") Botha for an assurance that, if the Cubans invaded Rhodesia, South Africa would not intervene. The South African Foreign Minister gave him a dusty reply—which is what he deserved.⁷ After all, it is one thing to refuse to defend a threatened country against Soviet bloc intervention yourself. It is another thing to go about the world trying to deter other countries from responding.⁸

What are the basic problems now facing the West in dealing with each of southern Africa's three nations? In South West Africa, the South Africans have agreed to the proposals put forward by five Western governments for independence under majority rule based on free elections. The leaders of the territory's major terrorist organization, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) have yet to agree to enter into serious discussions on this basis. South Africa's Prime Minister, Mr. B. J. Vorster, put it to me during our last meeting that the independence scheme for South

7. I am also informed that when Mr. Smith asked Mr. Vance if there was *anything* the Rhodesian multi-racial Executive Council could do to make itself acceptable to the U.S., Mr. Vance replied, without hesitation, "No."

8. In relation to South Africa, some elements in the Carter Administration have even descended to making puerile gestures like denying General Hendrik Van Den Bergh, the head of the Bureau for State Security (BOSS), a visa to visit the United States for a meeting with Dr. Brzezinski. This happened just after Van Den Bergh had performed a special favor for the CIA. I suppose it is not all that surprising in view of the fact that white Rhodesian spokesmen, and some moderate blacks, are systematically excluded from the United States, while the leaders of the Patriotic Front—whose terrorist gangs are slaughtering innocent civilians, both black and white—are given royal receptions.

West Africa is “the creature of the West. We will now have to wait to see whether the West will allow it to survive.”

It is urgently necessary to press ahead with preparations for the elections—and to set a definite date—because of the real threat that the territory’s democratic political leaders will be demoralized, or physically liquidated, in SWAPO’s continuing terror campaign, which appears designed to eliminate the alternative leadership in South West Africa. The much-criticized South African raid on SWAPO’s guerrilla base at Cassinga, deep inside Angola (a place code-named “Moscow” in internal SWAPO documents), bought a little time. It came in response to evidence of plans to launch a major new terrorist offensive following the assassination of the country’s probable first black president, Chief Clemens Kapuuo, and other moderate leaders. But now there are signs of a new build-up inside Angola, in which Soviet as well as Cuban military personnel are preparing for an invasion of Namibia.

At stake in Namibia is the freedom and physical security of about a million people, divided into a dozen ethnic groups, and control of rich reserves of uranium, diamonds and other minerals. It is the moral obligation of the Western powers to stand by their own proposals if the South Africans proceed to implement them—regardless of what the SWAPO terrorists and their foreign masters choose to do.⁹

Of course, a democratically-elected government in Namibia representing the majority of the population who do not support SWAPO would still need to be defended against terror attacks mounted from bases outside its borders. A United Nations presence could not provide the necessary guarantee, given the problems of language and environment and the physical difficulties of defending an immense border. So, a government of the moderate, multi-racial grouping, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), would probably ask the South African troops to stay on. Whether that happened or not, the South Africans would still be entitled—under the Western proposals—to maintain a reserve force at the Walvis Bay enclave, which contains not only a superb natural harbor but

9. By the way, SWAPO leaders have been acquiring the predictable allies; during a visit to Iraq in April, Sam Nujoma, the organization’s high-living president, declared that “we fully support the Palestinian struggle for the total liberation of all occupied Palestine.”

the facilities for basing up to 50,000 troops—an insurance policy against a Soviet-backed invasion.

In Rhodesia, the internal settlement between Mr. Smith, Chief Chirau, Bishop Muzorewa, and Rev. Sithole represents the best and very likely the *only* hope of bringing about what the British and American governments have claimed to be seeking to achieve: democratic majority rule. Yet, the British and American governments have seemed determined to sabotage the settlement by maintaining economic sanctions and by advancing the cause of the Patriotic Front, an organization that is neither nationally representative nor a united front.

A book entitled the *Scandal of Sanctions* that was due to be published this summer in Lisbon, written by Jorge Jardim—the confidant and special emissary of Salazar who played a key role in ensuring that Rhodesia was able to import its oil via Mozambique in the decade after UDI—recounts in embarrassing detail how the British Labor Government and the partly state-controlled company, British Petroleum, turned a blind eye to the most effective sanctions-busting operations. Jardim's contention is that even the people who were primarily responsible for imposing sanctions against Rhodesia (on the highly dubious legal grounds that its self-proclaimed independence constituted a "threat to world peace") were hypocrites who failed to stand by their own policy. Against this historical backdrop, the maintenance of sanctions against Rhodesia now that it has a multiracial government and is on the road to black majority rule is morally indefensible.

Rhodesia is the pivot around which the destinies of southern Africa as a whole are likely to turn. For a start, control of Rhodesia's fertile food-producing areas would allow Mozambique to become the base for a direct assault on South Africa. The biggest single restraint on Samora Machel's freedom of maneuver at this stage is his country's dependence on imported food, most of which comes from South Africa, although some is brought in covertly from Rhodesia. Rhodesia also lies athwart Zambia's and Zaire's lines of communications to Beira and the Mozambique ports. Its chromium is vital to Western defense industries. Most important of all perhaps, its defense forces—of which 80 percent consists of black volunteers—are probably the best in the entire African continent and, therefore, a serious obstacle to the achievement of Soviet strategic designs so long as they remain intact.

Anyone who has toured the gutted homesteads of Rhodesia and

studied the slow forms of death that the “freedom fighters” of the Patriotic Front take relish in inflicting on innocent victims cannot fail to grasp that, behind the cloud of political rhetoric, the basic issue in Rhodesia today is whether the majority of the population, black and white, will be permitted to live in freedom from fear. While the murder campaign by terrorists operating across the Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana borders goes on, the maintenance of sanctions puts the Western powers in the unedifying position of a man who tries to hold down his neighbor while a gang of muggers approach to cut his throat. To insist that Robert Mugabe and his ZANU supporters must be included in a settlement is the same as demanding that the Red Brigade killers of Aldo Moro should join the Italian cabinet.

There are signs that some of these points are at last beginning to be taken in London, although the swing in official opinion in Washington is slower in coming about—and Britain’s Labor Government will not go against American wishes on Rhodesia. It may be that many Western countries will be persuaded to drop sanctions when a “free and fair” test of the wishes of the Rhodesian people (to use Dr. Owen’s phrase) is conducted. But why wait for elections or a referendum? Applying sanctions now that Rhodesia has accepted the principles of majority rule is serving to demoralize the moderates in that country and encourage the terrorists. Under the British government’s White Paper in September 1976, sanctions were supposed to be dropped when an interim government was set up, rather than after elections. This formula was also part of the Kissinger proposals that were accepted by Ian Smith—under South African pressure—in 1976, as well as by Britain and neighboring black African states, but sabotaged by Tanzanian backsliding and Soviet pressure. The time to drop sanctions is now, and there are signs of a mounting campaign in both the U.S. Congress and the British Parliament to bring this about.¹⁰

10. A straw in the wind (regarded as hopeful by some and as ominous by others) was the vote in the U.S. Senate on June 28, 1978. The Senators voted 48-42 against repealing sanctions against Rhodesia for a trial period (in order to give the interim multi-racial government a chance to work). Interestingly enough, the close vote on this key foreign policy issue was not considered newsworthy by either *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*, even though *both* party leaders voted to suspend sanctions.

South Africa—the Ultimate Prize

The Republic of South Africa, now the focus for an intensive campaign aimed at bringing about its economic and diplomatic isolation, is the ultimate Soviet target in Africa and has become an intractable problem for the West.

How should we deal with South Africa? I can offer a few rules of thumb. *First*, since South Africa is less repressive than many countries that belong to the United Nations, we should have some reserves about the moralistic arguments that are used to justify the present arms embargo and proposed economic sanctions or disinvestment by Western corporations. I personally find the concept of enforced racial segregation both viscerally and morally abhorrent, but South Africa is not unique even in its racism.

It is true that South Africa puts racial discrimination openly on the statute books, while many other nations practice it without advertising the fact. There is no doubt that if Mr. Vorster could get up tomorrow and announce that the laws enforcing racial discrimination were to be repealed, South Africa could be brought back into close alliance with the U.S. and the other NATO powers far more easily.

Meanwhile, there are plenty of racists in Africa (and on other continents). Idi Amin of Uganda praised Hitler for his treatment of the Jews. The expulsion of the Asians from East Africa was a racist act. Why is “racism” held to be worse than “tribalism”—which is prevalent throughout black Africa and has resulted, in some cases, in government by tribal genocide? The conclusion, which seems obvious to me, is that South Africa is not being harried because it is racist, but because its rulers are white and (still worse) anti-Communist.

Second, there is abundant evidence that Western business involvement is a powerful engine of social reform in South Africa. Peaceful change is far more likely to come down this road than as a result of the bullying tactics that Third World dictators and the boycott lobby in Western countries wish to apply.

Third, South Africa, in economic and military terms, is the most powerful country in Africa. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that if the immense natural resources and the crucial strategic position that South Africa occupies on the world’s map were to pass under Soviet control, the economic and strategic position of Western Europe would become untenable. So, the West has a clear, indeed

vital, interest in maintaining a friendly government in Pretoria, however embarrassing its domestic policies may be.

Finally, the South Africans demonstrated, through their intervention in Angola in 1975-76 and their measures to protect the Cape route, that they were prepared to fight some battles for the NATO powers that they were not willing to handle for themselves. There is a residual bitterness in South African political and military circles, stemming from the belief that the Americans did not keep their promises in Angola—the promises that helped to persuade Mr. Vorster's government to send its troops across the border. It is the South Africans who can provide the most persuasive deterrent to a direct Soviet bloc invasion of Rhodesia or independent Namibia. So, the effort to disarm them must be read, with a cold eye, as an attempt to soften up the area prior to a new Soviet land-grab which the NATO powers—in the view of the Soviet planners—would be unlikely to resist by military intervention. Despite the selective hysteria directed against South Africa, the fact remains that the West needs South Africa and so do the moderate black states of central and southern Africa that begged the South Africans to intervene in Angola.

As a first step in implementing this needed policy change, the arms embargo should be dropped and serious consideration should be given to the formation of a South Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Can we expect a return to realism in Washington and London? In the United States, there are heartening indicators of a sea-change in public opinion, reflected, at one level, by the successful tax revolt in California that is beginning to sweep the country. The question that arises in any democracy is: How does public opinion become transformed into official policy, if the Administration and the "big media," which Lewis Lapham of *Harper's* has called "an occupying army," are determined to ignore it? The answer may lie more in Congress than in Dr. Brzezinski's office.

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Taking Capitalism Seriously

TWO CHEERS FOR CAPITALISM. *By Irving Kristol.* (Basic Books, N.Y., 1978.)

DOES FREEDOM WORK? LIBERTY & JUSTICE IN AMERICA. *By Donald J. Devine.* (Green Hill Publishers, Ottawa, Illinois, 1978.)

For a decade now the message from Soviet dissidents to citizens of Western liberal democracies has been clear enough: provide a cogent argument for your system! Show that it is just, prove that it works, and don't stand still in the face of the pretentious attacks upon it from such morally bankrupt "righteous" sources as the Marxist ideologues or the wishful dreamers who fancy themselves lovers of unspoiled nature. This message, however, was not at first heeded carefully enough.

In the mid-nineteen sixties there may have been a few writers who put in a good word for capitalism. They included nonacademicians such as novelist Ayn Rand, or academic economists such as Milton Friedman and F. A. Hayek. But the overwhelming majority of Western intellectuals wouldn't hear of praising this system in any of its actual or theoretical variations. Occasional anti-ideological and pragmatic support for the mixed economy did manage to be voiced by some, but no principled argument for the free society could be found in prominent circles. Everyone who counted was some kind of a socialist or an anti-communist conservative without much respect for reason. Magazines of some intellectual caliber mostly published tracts on how to bestow greater and greater powers upon government so that it would achieve for society all of our goals. The public sector was held to be supreme by John Kenneth Galbraith and his allies. The state's proper role of trying to secure for citizens everything from education and an adequate standard of economic, psychological and spiritual welfare, to industrial safety, old age security or a rich artistic and scientific environment was thought to be established beyond a shadow of doubt.

But just as capitalism's few defenders had argued all along, nothing remarkably praiseworthy happened when the practical implications of such economic (and spiritual) state welfarism were examined. No one was, nor is now, really satisfied with the welfare state. The Marxists, in the face of the recurrent and wide-ranging failures of the U.S.S.R. and Mao's China, had to dig up the rather undistinguished early Marx who was just as utopian as those whom