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The Foreign Policy of Angola  
Under Agostinho Neto

by

Gregory M. Saunders  
Captain, United States Army  
B.S., United States Military Academy, 1976

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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December 1983

Author:

*Gregory M. Saunders*

Approved by:

*Michael W. Clark*

Thesis Advisor

*AW Blandin/56*  
*FOR EDWARD J. LAURANCE*

Second Reader

*Sherman W. Blandin*

Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs

*K.T. Marshall*

Dean of Information and Policy Sciences

## ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes the foreign policy of Angola under its first President, Agostinho Neto. Part one examines the evolution of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola's (MPLA) relations with Angola's northern neighbor Zaire from the movement's inception in 1956, through the liberation struggle, post-independant conflicts in Zaire's Shaba Province and finally rapprochement. The author traces the effect of changes in Zairian policy on the MPLA's perceptions of and responses to its regional and international environment before and after independence. Part two outlines the evolution of MPLA policies toward the problems in southern Angola growing out of the complex forces generated by the interplay between ethnic and political conflicts in the region and Namibia involving the MPLA, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), and South Africa. A central focus of this thesis is the impact of factional divisions within the MPLA on Angolan foreign policy.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

On November 10, 1975, the High Commissioner Almirante Leonel Cardoso folded the Portuguese flag for the final time in Angola and sailed out of Luanda harbor. It was an historic day. Three centuries of Portuguese colonialism in Africa had ended. By the time Almirante Cardoso set sail a fragile coalition of three competing regionally and ethnically based liberation fronts negotiated earlier in the year had already collapsed touching off a bitter, complex civil war. It was the African equivalent of the Spanish Civil War. On independence day, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), which controlled Luanda, seized control. Within three months, the MPLA aided by Soviet arms and Cuban troops defeated its rivals, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and the National Union for the Independence Angola (UNITA), and began to consolidate political control.

The effects of the Angolan civil war were far-reaching. It delivered a series of blows to efforts to expand the fragile detente that had developed between the United States and the Soviet Union. The massive Soviet and Cuban intervention on behalf of the MPLA signalled a qualitative change in the nature of the superpower rivalry in Africa. The continued Cuban presence in Angola became a major sore point for some American policy-makers who saw the Cuban troops as a significant destabilizing factor in southern Africa. Eight years later, their presence continues to block American recognition of the Angolan government. For the U.S.S.R., the victory by the MPLA was a major African success and indicated that Moscow was both able and willing to commit resources and defend socialist movements and Marxist-Leninist regimes in Africa.

Since its independence, Angola has remained a focal point of international attention. In 1977 and again in 1978, conflicts in Zaire's Shaba Province revived the rivalries that emerged during the Congo Civil War of 1960-1964 and the more recent Angolan conflict. In addition, the MPLA became inextricably involved in diplomatic efforts authored by the United Nations to achieve a transition to independence for the last remaining African colony, Namibia, Angola's southern neighbor. By 1981, South African efforts to defeat the guerrillas of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) based in southern Angola had led to a South African military occupation of a 100 mile salient of Angolan territory. Internally, the MPLA's 1977 decision to opt for "scientific socialism" and formally convert itself into a vanguard party added another critical dimension to the Angolan situation. A Marxist-Leninist regime in Luanda raised new and perplexing issues for American policy-makers. This thesis attempts to address these disparate events and the emergence of Marxism-Leninism by focusing on the evolution of Angolan foreign policy under its first President, Agostinho Neto. Two case studies will be examined: 1) the MPLA's relations with Zaire in the north and 2) its relation's with the diverse array of actors in the south and its involvement in the Namibian negotiation process.

Additionally, this thesis will examine the ways in which the MPLA has perceived and responded to its regional and international environment. It assumes that a state's foreign policy is determined by an number of factors including the ideological predispositions of decision makers, factional politics and the regime's external environment. For the leaders of the MPLA, a central issue has been the need to reconcile its Marxist-Leninist ideology and the prevailing Angolan interests. Ideology predisposes some MPLA leaders to perceive the world in certain patterned

ways. They regard countries like Zaire, South Africa, and the United States as unyielding foes who cannot be accommodated. Other less ideological officials believe this emphasis on ideology prevents an accurate perception of Angola's regional and international environment. They view foreign policies in Angolan, not Marxist, terms and see their foes in less absolute conditions. Over the past eight years, these two rival perspectives have competed for control of Angolan foreign policy. As a consequence, the resultant tension has complicated the formulation and implementation of its foreign initiatives. This thesis also examines the ways in which this tension has manifested itself with regard to the Zairian and Namibian issues and concludes that this tension has shaped the regime's future orientation, national long-term strategies and immediate tactics.

## II. MPLA IN THE NORTH: FROM CONFLICT TO RAPPROCHEMENT

When a 6,000 man force of Katangan gendarmes, exiles from an earlier internal conflict, crossed the Zairean border in May 1978, central Africa once again became the center of international attention and East-West competition. Previously, only the climax of the Angolan civil war had seen such an extraordinary array of international actors in an African internal conflict. In mid-May 1978, the playing field was Shaba Province of southern Zaire, a region rich in resources but torn by ethnic rivalries. On one side, there were the Katangans allegedly armed and trained by the Soviets, East Germans, Cubans and Angolans. On the other side, it was the beleaguered regime of Zairean President Mobutu Sese-Seko assisted in some fashion by the United States, France, Belgium, Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and China. Probably not since the European meddling in the Balkans at the start of the century had the world witnessed such a confusion of ideology, ethnicity, geopolitics, adventurism, and self-interest. Yet, scarcely two months after the retreat of the battered Katangans, Angola and Zaire announced a peaceful resolution of their differences and a normalization of relations. For the first time in nearly twenty years, their 1300 mile common border was quiet.

The two Shaba invasions of the late 1970s were not the only source of instability and friction between Angola and Zaire. The invasions marked another chapter in the turbulent history between the two antagonists: the self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist regime of the MPLA and the series of ardently pro-West, anti-Communist leaders of Zaire. An analysis of MPLA-Zaire relations from the

inception of the Angolan nationalist movement provides a useful framework for evaluating the root causes of the antagonism and the 1978 rapprochement. This chapter will analyze the history of their relations and argue that the Shaba II invasion provided not only the proper incentive for rapprochement but also an insight into Angolan foreign policy decision-making. For the MPLA, buffeted for nearly twenty years by the centrifugal and centripetal forces generated by Zairois nationalism, Shaba II offered Angolan President Agostinho Neto an opportunity to cut his losses and stabilize the border in the north in order to open ties with the West and focus attention and resources on the destabilizing forces in the south.

#### A. THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD: 1959-1975

Most scholarly research on the history of Angolan nationalism and the civil war has focused upon the two principal liberation movements, the MPLA and the FNLA, their revolutionary effectiveness, the knitting of their territorial alliances, and the sources of external intervention before and following the collapse of the Alvor Accords. Little research has centered upon what has generated their effectiveness, alliances, and external assistance: the relationship of the two exiled movements with the contiguous African states. This was of paramount importance to the MPLA who until 1963 lacked a sympathetic neighbor. The MPLA's antagonistic relationship with Zaire, until 1971 known as Congo-Leopoldville, undermined the quality and demonstrability of its own internal strength. Instead of a two dimensional, insurgent versus incumbent (MPLA/FNLA vs Portuguese) internal conflict usually encountered during the colonial period, the existence of FNLA-ally Zaire created a third dimension to the conflict, a dimension complicated by Zairean politics, nationalism, and ethnicity.

On the eve of the Portuguese coup in April 1974, the MPLA was at a greater military and diplomatic disadvantage than the FNLA. The MPLA's inferior position was not solely attributable to organizational or revolutionary weakness but instead to partisan, host-state interposition by Zaire cultivated and exercised throughout the 15 year Angolan independence struggle. Although Kinshasa claimed its position in the Angolan civil war stemmed from ideological considerations, Zaire's opposition to the MPLA and its affinity with the FNLA was based primarily on ethnic and personal compatibility. The MPLA drew its ethnopopulist support from the Mbundu groups of north-central Angola who historically were the implacable foes of the Bakongo peoples of northern Angola and southwestern Zaire. The Bakongo, from whom the FNLA drew its popular support, have also been the dominant force in Zairois politics and nationalism throughout its history. As a result, not only did Angolan nationalism interwine with Zairois nationalism but each post-independent Zairean leader frequently manipulated each Angolan liberation movement to serve Zairois interests. On nearly all occasions during the independence struggle, however, the MPLA was the loser.

#### 1. The MPLA and Congolese Independence

The Angolan national movement began somewhat unnoticeably in the slums of Luanda and the coffee plantations areas in north. In the years leading to the independence of the Belgian Congo, it was primarily the activities of the Bakongo in northern Angola and in Leopoldville that plagued the MPLA. The MPLA-centered activities in Luanda and the UPA (The Uniao das Populacoes de Angola, later to become the FNLA) activities in the north initially sparked apprehension within the Portuguese colonial administration in Luanda. The 1958 Portuguese national elections and the rioting in

Leopoldville triggered by the ABAKO (Bakongo) party, however, sent shock waves through Angola. The Portuguese overseas police (PIDE, Policia Internacional de Defesa de Estado) infiltrated the nationalist movements but most PIDE repression was directed at the urban MPLA. By 1960, waves of arrests and jail sentences had so devastated the MPLA that it was unable to lead an armed revolution from within the cities. With most of its leaders in jail and incapable of transcending its urban origins, the remaining elite, mostly mesticos, fled in February 1960 to Conakry, Guinea. The rank and file, mostly blacks, fled to the bush. [1] Consequently, when violence erupted in Luanda and in the northern coffee plantations during February-March 1961, mostly at Bakongo instigation, thus announcing the Angolan revolution, the MPLA was in exile and separated by 2200 miles from its ethnopolitist political base.

In the period 1956-1960, the MPLA faced a hostile environment both within Angola as Portuguese jails swallowed its leaders and in the Congo as political turbulence under Belgian auspices denied it support. In Conakry, therefore, the MPLA established and actively pursued two political-military goals: (1) to achieve a common front, or pan-Angolan, coalition with the UPA and (2) to gain access to an exile operational base close to Angola, preferably in Leopoldville. These goals, which formed the foundation of its "foreign policy" until 1975, reflected not only the MPLA's inferior insurgent position but also the importance of the role contiguous African states would play in the Angolan civil war. The independence of the Belgian Congo on June 28, 1960 sparked new hopes for the MPLA. Heretofore blocked by the Belgian colonial authorities, the MPLA hoped the newly elected Premier, Patrice Lumumba, would grant the exiled movement an operational base.

## 2. June-September 1960: Lumumba

Although Congo-Leopoldville was the first state in the region to gain independence, the MPLA was denied access to Angola and inhibited in the pursuit of a common front strategy largely due to the personal and ethnic considerations of Patrice Lumumba. In the wave of independence fever that swept Africa in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Lumumba embraced the leader of the Angolan Bakongo, Holden Roberto, as a revolutionary equal. The two originally met at the Cercle des Evolues in Stanleyville in 1948 while Roberto was an accountant for the Belgian colonial administration. They reunited at the 1957 All-African Peoples Conference in Accra. There, they were introduced and then adopted the ideological views of Franz Fanon and Kwame Nkrumah. In January 1960, at the 2nd All-African Peoples Conference in Tunis, Lumumba invited his personal and ideological friend to mount his campaign for the liberation of Angola from Leopoldville after Congolese independence. [2]

These overt considerations notwithstanding, the MPLA also found itself on the outside of Congolese nationalism and ethnic politics. Lumumba, from Kasai Province, took the Premiership in Leopoldville, as an outsider. The new Congolese Parliament and capital were dominated by the Leopoldville-based ABAKO party led by the newly elected President, Joseph Kasavubu. In the years leading to independence, Kasavubu had championed the revival of the historic Kongo Kingdom as an alternative to Congolese independence and, as a result, had earned considerable political clout throughout Leopoldville Province. Lumumba perceived Roberto as a counter balance to the political strength of Kasavubu. While the politics and alliance composition of the early days of Congolese independence are extremely complex and beyond the scope of this thesis, Lumumba's

invitation to Roberto in effect recognized the FNLA as the sole representative of Angolan nationalism.

The FNLA quickly capitalized on Luumba's vigorous support. In the months after Congolese independence, the FNLA broadcasted a series of weakly messages in French, Portuguese, and in Angolan dialects such as Kikongo to its supporters over Radio Leopoldville. The Congo, Leopoldville's Lumumbist daily newspaper, published many of Roberto's speeches. [3] Thanks to Lumumba, the FNLA enjoyed sole access to the Angolan frontiers. Meanwhile, the exiled MPLA leadership wallowed in Conakry. In September 1960, after two tumultuous months, Kasavubu dismissed Prime Minister Lumumba and assumed power. [4]

### 3. September 1960-August 1961: Kasavubu

On the surface, the MPLA saw no hope of gaining access to Angola and of convincing Roberto to adopt a pan-Angolan front. Kasavubu saw the intellectual mestizo-led MPLA as a threat to his dream of a trans-Bakongo state and of Bakongo domination in Leopoldville. The MPLA's increasing ties during this period with radical African nationalist leaders and radical opinion, in conjunction with its exile base in Conakry, generated the perception in Leopoldville that the MPLA was a Communist-directed movement. [5] Publically, Kasavubu supported Roberto's aims for an independent Angola. During this period, Kasavubu continued to shut off the MPLA from access to Leopoldville and consistently blocked MPLA contact with their supporters in the Dembos-Nambuungango forest region north of Luanda. Kasavubu's position vis-a-vis Angolan nationalism and the independence struggle, however, was much more subtle. During this period, criticism of the MPLA was muted, the FNLA tolerated, and Roberto, the archrival of Kasavubu, was mistrusted.

One of the chief issues of conflict between Kasavubu and Roberto was the role of the Bakongo in Congolese politics and Angolan nationalism. Their personal rivalry spilled over into the positions adopted by their parties. As noted above, Kasavubu and the ABAKO party, even after independence, pursued policies and interests that promoted the revival of the Bakongo state, a state which encompassed the Bakongo peoples living in the Congo, Congo-Brazzaville, and Angola. Alarmed by these schemes, Roberto urged an unified Angolan Bakongo position for the FNLA. These conflicting aims were exacerbated by the events surrounding the rebellion in northern Angola and the turmoil of Congolese politics in Leopoldville. In February-April 1961, the tensions in the region exploded after the Bakongo revolts and the subsequent PIDE repression. By April, 150,000 Bakongo had fled into the Congo. Kasavubu perceived the emigres as a potential regime threatening source that not only brought Portuguese forces closer to borders of the newly independent Congo but also strengthened the political position of Roberto in Leopoldville. As a result, Kasavubu loyalists and the ABAKO harassed FNLA officials and aided the Bakongo off-shoot, anti-FNLA Ngwizako party. [6] In early July 1961, in an interview with a Le Monde correspondent, Kasavubu implied that his government might ask the FNLA to cease all activity in the Congo and was considering the expulsion of Roberto. [7]

Although the FNLA's political power and influence in Leopoldville waned under Kasavubu, Kasavubu was unwilling to allow the MPLA access to the Congo. Unable to gain access to Angola and blocked by the conservative regimes in Leopoldville and Brazzaville, [8] the MPLA conducted a diplomatic-political offensive designed to gain increased international support and to pressure the contiguous African states and Roberto into accepting the MPLA strategy. If

there really existed the danger that the central Leopoldville government would suppress the FNLA, it was short lived. In August 1961, Roberto's position remarkably improved when Kasavubu appointed Roberto's old friend, Cyrille Adoula, as Premier.

#### 4. August 1961-July 1964: Adoula

In October 1961, with the Adoula [9] government under intensive international pressure, the MPLA moved its exile headquarters from Conakry to Leopoldville. [10] Adoula, fearing an MPLA challenge to the FNLA, moved to isolate the MPLA militarily and diplomatically. He used the FNLA forces and his own army, the Armee National du Congo (ANC), to intercept, disarm, attack, and often jail MPLA officials in Leopoldville and reinforcements columns en route to the Angolan border. [11] Additionally, Adoula refused to authorize arms shipments to the MPLA from its principle suppliers, Algeria and Morocco. When the MPLA circumvented that policy, Adoula required that all MPLA-bound arms shipments be brought into Leopoldville by easily monitored air transport. [12]

In January 1963, under increasing international scrutiny by MPLA supporters in the OAU, Adoula offered the MPLA its only access route to the Angolan border. The route was, however, in the heavily Bakongo populated Fuesse region of northern Angola where the FNLA enjoyed its greatest military strength and successes. [13] The route became more of an obstacle course for MPLA military units and severely restricted its ability to transport arms and extend insurgency operations into Angola. Those few MPLA partisans who were able to elude Portuguese patrols in Angola were often quickly decimated by the FNLA guerrillas. The paltry military effectiveness that the MPLA was able to generate during this period was constrained and mostly demolished by the

interference of the Adoula regime. This was demonstrated when the MPLA's fledging army made its debut in Cabinda on January 29, 1963. It was easily and swiftly routed by the Portuguese.

Diplomatically, Adoula further isolated the MPLA from its international supporters who had been the movement's only claim of revolutionary credibility. The founding conference of the OAU in May 1963 provided Adoula a perfect opportunity. At the conference, Adoula and Roberto, who travelled to the conference on Adoula's plane, proposed the creation of an African Liberation Committee (ALC) to aid liberation groups in southern Africa. [14] The OAU concurred, and at its first meeting in Dar es Salaam in June, the committee sent a goodwill mission to Leopoldville to reconcile differences within the FNLA and MPLA. Adoula did not wait for the committee to act. On the eve of the Congo's third anniversary of independence and several days before the arrival of the ALC mission, Adoula declared his government's recognition of the FNLA as the de jure government of Angola. [15] Adoula's intimidation, together with an untimely and complex power struggle within the MPLA leadership found by the ALC during its meetings in Leopoldville, [16] led the ALC to recommend formal recognition of the FNLA as the sole Angolan liberation movement to the OAU. [17] In July 1964, the OAU agreed. For the MPLA, it was a political-diplomatic disaster of the worst proportions attributed by Neto to the debilitating obstruction by the Adoula regime.

A seasoned observer of Angolan affairs, author Basil Davidson, wrote of the MPLA turmoil in the summer of 1963 that the MPLA "...had ceased to exist and should be forthwith ignored." [18] Kasavubu, meanwhile, was extremely disturbed with Roberto's increasing strength in Congolese politics. Several weeks after Adoula's de jure recognition

of the FNLA, Kasavubu arranged for Congo-Brazzaville President Youlou, who also feared the increased strength of the FNLA in Cabinda as well, to invite the MPLA to Brazzaville. Youlou agreed on the condition that Neto refuse to oppose both Cabindan independence and the annexation of Cabinda by the Brazzaville. [19] His movement isolated and its legitimacy questioned, Neto had no choice but to accept Youlou's offer in early August. The decision to flee Leopoldville was to have profound implications for the MPLA. Youlou's overthrow on August 14th, and the installation of the ideologically compatible regime of President Massamba-Debat allowed the MPLA to reorganize its leadership and resurrect its image internationally.

Although it achieved an exile operational base closer to Angola during Adoula's tenure in Leopoldville, the MPLA was continually frustrated in the pursuit of its overall strategy. The diminution of MPLA political and military effectiveness and the blocking of its access to the Angolan frontier correspondingly increased not only FNLA strength in Leopoldville but also FNLA military fortunes in Angola. As a result, with its bargaining leverage devastated, the MPLA was unable to convince Roberto to accept its common front strategy. The exigencies and centrifugal forces of Congolese politics and nationalism that buffeted the MPLA during this period implanted an indelible mark upon its future perception of subsequent Leopoldville (and later Kinshasa) governments.

5. July 1964-November 1965: Tshombe

Adoula's position considerably weakened in 1964 due to an insurgent movement from Congo-Brazzaville and a rural rebellion in the areas of Kasai and Orientale Provinces still loyal to Lumumba's former Vice Premier Antoine Ginzenza. On July 9th, Adoula resigned. Kasavubu

astonished everyone by recalling Moise Tshombe from exile in Spain and appointing him Premier. The MPLA, though based in Brazzaville, found its access to Angola still blocked throughout this period. The exigencies of Congolese ethnic, regional and international politics under Tshombe, however, had profound ramifications for the MPLA's later movement to eastern Angola and their post-independent relations with the Katangan gendarmes (discussed below, pp. 26-30). It was also during Tshombe's reign that the MPLA's relations with the Congo developed into two distinct and exclusive patterns, one set of factors relevant in Leopoldville and another set in the other areas, particularly in Katanga Province.

In Leopoldville Province, Tshombe pursued policies of gradual suffocation and splintering of both the MPLA and FNLA. His fierce and ethnically motivated distrust of the Bakongo and his personal hatred of President Kasavubu, stemming from the conflict over Katangan secession, prohibited active regime support of the FNLA. Although the MPLA had no direct antagonism with him, Tshombe's friendship with and financial assistance from the Portuguese colonial regime, both during the Katangan succession and in Leopoldville, precluded any support or appearance of support for the MPLA. On the other hand, Tshombe had inherited from Adoula an anti-Congo insurgency based in Brazzaville, the Comite National Nationale de Libération (CNL), and faced an hostile OAU who questioned the legitimacy of his rule. [20] By the quirks of African international politics the geographic zone in which the FNLA operated made the FNLA a valuable fighting force for Tshombe against the CNL and MPLA incursions from Brazzaville.

In southern Zaire, heretofore divorced from Angolan nationalist struggle, Tshombe's presence in Leopoldville led to the crystallization of ethnic alliances that had

previously surfaced during the succession years. The Lunda and the Bemba, friends of Tshombe, aligned against the Chokwe and the Lula, who were the implacable foes of the Lunda and, therefore, also of Tshombe. The center of the Chokwe empire, however, was in eastern Angola adjacent to a large population of Lunda and Lula. The Chokwe and the Lula then aligned with the FNLA who, again based upon Katangan conflict, was perceived by the Chokwe as a direct ally of Kasavubu. The picture became further muddled in 1964 when FNLA Foreign Minister Jonas Savimbi resigned. In 1966, he founded UNITA, a tenuous coalition of the Ovimbundu, Ngangela, and Chokwe ethnic groups of southern and eastern Angola. These groups, interestingly, were enemies of each other at one time or another during Angolan history. Although MPLA activity during this period focused on Cabinda and northern Angola, the mere presence of Tshombe in Leopoldville generated a complex and byzantine mosaic of ethnic alliances that, ironically, smoothed the introduction of MPLA military forces and the creation of the Third Front in eastern Angola in 1966. [21]

In the fifteen turbulent months of the Tshombe regime, MPLA political and insurgent activity continued to be stymied by a combination of Congolese, FNLA, Portuguese, and Congo-Brazzaville political, ethnic, and military forces. In the autumn of 1965, Congolese politics took a new turn as President Kasavubu dismissed Tshombe and appointed as Premier Evariste Kimba, Tshombe's former Katangan Foreign Minister. After several weeks of political confusion, the head of the army, Lieutenant General Joesph-Desire Mobutu, overthrew Kasavubu. [22] Mobutu's ascension to power once again placed a friend and political ally of Roberto in Leopoldville.

6. November 1965-November 1975: Mobutu

The MPLA's turbulent relationship with Mobutu during this period has been well documented elsewhere. [23] There are, however, two crucial points that have particular important implications for this thesis. First, more than his predecessors, Mobutu personally encouraged and actively supported Zairois and FNLA harassment of MPLA military units in Cabinda and along the Angolan frontier. Second, however, unlike his predecessors Mobutu brokered an FNLA-MPLA reconciliation during a period of severe FNLA weakness even as he ardently pursued policies of MPLA harassment. The subtlety of Mobutu's position was not lost upon the post-independent MPLA leadership.

Under Mobutu, the suffocation of the FNLA pursued by Tshombe was quickly reversed as Mobutu launched vigorous and widespread anti-MPLA activities. MPLA columns en route to Angola were attacked and often killed by Zairois and FNLA forces with brutal savagery reminiscent of the Adoula reign. Mobutu also resumed Kinshasa's active meddling in Cabinda on the side of the pro-Zairois Luis Ranque Franque wing of FLEC. Although the rejuvenation of the Franque wing conflicted with FNLA activity in Cabinda, it so frightened the Brazzaville government that most MPLA activity in Cabinda was curtailed and until mid-1975 nearly all MPLA-bound Soviet arms shipments were redirected to the Brazzaville supported wing of FLEC. [24] In the years leading to Angolan independence, Mobutu became the personal conduit of arms for the FNLA. While his ties to the United States and South African support for the FNLA are well known, Mobutu personally undertook efforts to broaden FNLA ties with other states. His diplomatic drives generated international recognition and arms deliveries from China (1966, 1973), North Korea (1973-1974), Rumania (1974), India

(1967, 1974), Libya (1974), and several West European countries. [25]

Mobutu's personal intervention in the Angolan liberation struggle on the side of the FNLA resulted in two significant implications for the MPLA. First, unable to launch raids or to dispatch reinforcement columns from Brazzaville, the MPLA was forced to move its primary military operations into eastern Angola even though those operations were farther from the MPLA's ethnopolist support and from its arms suppliers. Second, despite its weak position militarily, the MPLA benefited greatly from Mobutu's staunch and public identification with the FNLA. The MPLA leadership's assertion as the only "non-aligned" Angolan liberation movement brought increased international recognition and support. The resumption of Soviet military aid and the Cuban training of MPLA guerrillas in Brazzaville several months after the CIA-orchestrated Mobutu coup and the exponential increase in Soviet arms shipments in early 1975 on the heels of the arrival of a 112 man Chinese military contingent, led by a Major General, in June 1974, are but two examples of Neto's bargaining leverage with the international community.

In December 1972 under OAU auspices, the MPLA and FNLA finally agreed to end all hostilities with each other and to create a union of the two movements under a Conselho Supremo de Libertacao de Angola (CSLA). [26] Mobutu served as the principle OAU mediator in the reconciliation. His motivations, however, were suspect. A series of events occurred in late 1971 through mid-1972 that seriously undermined Roberto's and FNLA strength in the liberation struggle. In December 1971, the OAU withdrew recognition of Roberto's government in exile, the GRAE. Then the following March, a serious rebellion against Roberto erupted at the FNLA's Kinkuzu staging area along the Angolan border. The

dispute pitted Bakongo and non-Bakongo (Chokwe, Pende, Basusu, etc.) FNLA partisans that required the intervention of the Zairois army when fighting spilled to neighboring villages. Moreover, a reassessment of Chinese central African policy, precipitated by the gradual decline of influence in the region and the subsequent ouster from its principal base in Brazzaville in early 1972, resulted in the resumption of aid to the MPLA and Neto's June 1972 visit to Peking. [27] Perceiving the FNLA as racked by internal disarray and, perhaps more importantly, a shift of international support toward the MPLA, Mobutu intervened and convinced Roberto to engage in a reconciliation with Neto. Mobutu convened the talks in Brazzaville in June 1972. In the months following the December 1972 agreement, Mobutu placed the FNLA under Zairois tutelage, integrated FNLA forces into the Zairois army, eased Roberto out of the decision-making, and embarked upon an exhaustive tour of world capitals in search of international support for the FNLA. As he championed pan-Angolan unity, Mobutu resuscitated the beleaguered FNLA. The agreement, meanwhile, caused serious problems for the MPLA. The rapprochement with the FNLA under a CSLA provoked another severe rift in the MPLA leadership. Neto, who favored the agreement, purged several left-wing leaders. [28] Confused by the reconciliation and the purge of the more ideologically committed, the Soviets once again halted arms shipments. The agreement, only months before the Portuguese coup, had the ironic consequence of reviving the FNLA and fracturing the MPLA.

#### 7. The Katangans

In the analysis of Zairois politics, nationalism and external support during the Angolan civil war, a distinct pattern in the south often in conflict with that in the

north can be discerned. In the south, ethnic considerations ensured that the Lunda population in Katanga Province would side with any groups opposed to the Bakongo-dominated FNLA. These considerations also spilled over into Angolan ethnic politics such that as the ethnic brethren of the Angolan Lunda, the Katangan Lunda would also side with any group opposed to the Ovimbundu/Chokwe/Ngongela-dominated UNITA. With the end of Tshombe's secession effort in 1963 and the collapse of the second Zairois rebellion in 1967, the Katangan Lunda, or Katangans as they became known, fled Zairois persecution into the Moxico and Lunda Provinces of eastern Angola. Their entry into the Angolan political scene altered the regional balance and proved to be an irritating source of friction not only for the Portuguese but also for Zaire, UNITA, and the post-independent MPLA.

The Katangan exile in Angola during the civil war was a complex and remarkable saga. Organized, trained, armed, and financed by Belgian mining companies as the Provincial militia, the Katangans were a formidable force during the secession attempt of 1960-1963 by Moise Tshombe. After the secession effort collapsed, many Katangans, numbering about 5,000 (of whom 1,000 were soldiers), with their weapons, fled nearly en masse and quietly settled with their ethnic cousins in Angola. When Tshombe emerged in Leopoldville as Premier, most Katangans returned. Tshombe quickly integrated them into the national army and then unleashed the Katangans upon all anti-Tshombe dissident elements in Kwango, Kasai, Lulaba, and Katanga Provinces. [29] The target of their attacks in southern Zaire were the Chokwe and the Lunda as the Katangans utilized the pretext of rebel association to settle age-old ethnic animosities. In August 1964, unable to defeat the rebellion led by Antoine Gizenga in Stanleyville with Mobutu's poorly trained troops, Tshombe called upon his Katangan militia. Aided by 600

Belgian paratroopers, mercenaries led by Major "Mad Mike" Hoare, and US logistical support, the Katangans stormed Stanleyville and slaughtered 80,000 Congolese. [30] When Mobutu came to power in November 1965, the Katangans once again fled into eastern Angola. Many remained and in July 1966 were key participants in a two-month rebellion against Mobutu. The Portuguese colonial administration, longtime supporters of Tshombe during the secession and later in Leopoldville, for the first time faced mushrooming insurgent activity in eastern Angola. Not surprisingly, the Portuguese colonial officials welcomed the Katangans. The Portuguese trained, armed, and organized the Katangan militia into a separate entity, similar to the "Flechas" (Black Arrows), under Portuguese military control. The Katangans were resettled along the Benguela Railway at the key garrison towns of Luso and Lunge. [31] Although the Portuguese employed them against all Angolan liberation movements in eastern Angola, the Katangans were eager to manifest their traditional hostility against the FNLA and UNITA. It is interesting to note, however, the Katangans distrusted Savimbi not only for his allegiance to the Chokwe but also because of his earlier ties to Roberto, Leopoldville, and the FNLA.

The end of the second Zairois rebellion in 1967 brought thousands more Lunda into Angola and the saga took another turn. Nathaniel Mbumba, until 1967 a police officer and a driver for Gecamines (Le General des Carrieres et des Mines du Zaire) in Katanga Province, organized the Katangans in Angola into the Front for the National Liberation of the Congo (FNLC). [32] Although it claimed to be a progressive and revolutionary movement, the FNLC's only unifying ideology was the violent overthrow of the Mobutu regime. Numbering perhaps 10,000 and their sights set on an eventual return to Zaire, the Katangans exercised increasing autonomy

in eastern Angola. Many worked in the South African owned and managed Diamang diamond mine in Lunda Province and others engaged in subsistence agriculture in their resettled areas. Most Katangans, however as French speakers in a Portuguese colony, lived by the grace of the FNLC organization and their relatives in Zaire. [33] By the early 1970s, the Portuguese ability and willingness to mobilize the Katangans for counter-insurgency operations had rapidly declined thanks primarily to the MPLA and UNITA military failures in the east. Moreover, the Katangans refused to recognize Portuguese administrative and judicial authority. Mbunda, meanwhile, had carved an impressive empire in eastern Angola with his own laws, prisons, self-help associations, and administrative structure. On the eve of the Portuguese coup, the Katangans had become a forceful state within a state. [34]

The gradual withdrawal of the Portuguese military forces from eastern Angola and the approaching Angolan independence created new political realities for the Portuguese and the Katangans. [35] In late December 1974, in order to balance the military strength and to encourage the participation of all liberation movements at the mid-January conference at Alvor, Portuguese High Commissioner Almirante Rosa Coutinho arranged and negotiated a military alliance between Neto and Mbunda. [36] The struggle between the MPLA, FNLA, and UNITA for dominance during this period placed Mbunda in a difficult position. Mbunda perceived that his FNLC would have to make peace with the new government in Luanda in order to protect his gains and autonomy. Although ethnic considerations eliminated an alliance the FNLA and UNITA, Mbunda did not fully trust Neto or the MPLA's ideological flavor. In late April or early May 1975, Mbunda formally offered his militia to the embattled MPLA for friendly considerations after independence. The offer

clearly posed a dilemma for the MPLA. On one hand, the Katangans had formerly allied with the colonial Portuguese and were an ideologically unruly force that probably could not be controlled. On the other hand, the MPLA feared the Katangans would turn elsewhere. An alliance with the FNLC, however, would satisfy the MPLA's multiracial bonafides. Additionally, at a severe military disadvantage, the MPLA perceived that the Katangans could be used against the FNLA in the north. Pragmatism overcame ideology. The MPLA sided with Mbunda and within a few weeks Soviet arms began to flow to the Katangans. Although most attention has focused upon the Soviet and Cuban intervention in the civil war, the Katangan militia played a major role in the final months of the war. The Katangans aided in stemming the FNLA/UNITA advance at Kifangango in late October and retook Caxito from the FNLA in early November 1975. [37] Furthermore, the gendarmes were generally credited with organizing the successful defense of Luanda prior to arrival of the Cubans. [38] At the completion of the war, Neto awarded the Katangans several economic concessions that had previously belonged to the Portuguese in the area of Tshikapa and Texeira de Sousa in Lunda Province and promised to return the Katangans to Zaire. The autonomy exerted during the colonial period continued unabated as Mbunda consolidated his imposing empire and, as with the Portuguese, contested Luanda's authority at all levels.

#### 8. SUMMARY

The MPLA's two-pronged strategy employed throughout the liberation struggle was, first, to gain an exile sanctuary in order to conduct raids and to reinforce its partisans in the Dembos-Nambuango sector, and, second, to pursue an FNLA-MPLA common front policy. With the exception of selected pockets of resistance around Luanda, the MPLA was

never permanently based inside the colony and was consistently denied operational access in the north. As a result, MPLA military operations never received intimate collaboration from African peasants, even in the third front region of eastern Angola, nor developed the military potential of its small partisan force in exile or inside the colony. Additionally, the MPLA, and Neto in particular, tenuously navigated the stormy ideological waters at great peril in order to consistently pursue the common front policy. Although it can be argued that MPLA motives were derived from its inferior position throughout the civil war, Neto willingly and earnestly sought a common front much to the consternation of the leadership and often his principal international supporters. Many of the difficulties and weaknesses encountered from 1956-1975 were attributable not only to the Portuguese and the FNLA but also in large part to the prevailing regime in Kinshasa. The MPLA found itself at the mercy of the centrifugal and centripetal political, ethnic, nationalist, and personal forces generated by Zaire. It was not surprising, therefore, that when it declared independence on November 11, 1975, the MPLA turned its Soviet guns and Cuban forces upon and demolished the FNLA and Zairois military first and then upon UNITA and South Africa later.

#### **B. POST-INDEPENDENT PERIOD: THE ROAD TO SHABA I**

In one of his first foreign policy positions, Angola's first President, Agostinho Neto, actively sought detente with his neighbors. His intentions were clear, he wanted to stabilize all Angolan borders as the MPLA consolidated its position internally. Neto actively solicited peace with his antagonistic neighbors, Zaire, Zambia, and even South Africa, a policy similar to the common front strategy

pursued during the liberation struggle. On February 2, 1976, Neto publicly announced his desire to normalize with Zaire and Zambia. Neto and Mobutu met under the auspices of Congo President Ngoubai in Brazzaville on February 28-29, 1976. In a communique issued at the conclusion of the summit, the two leaders agreed to stabilize their common border, repatriate refugees residing on both sides of the border, and to establish diplomatic relations in the near future. Mobutu promised to respect the territorial integrity of Angola and to discontinue support for the FNLA and UNITA. Neto agreed to reopen the Benguela Railway to Zairian cargo and to forbid any military activity from Angola to be organized against Zaire. [39] In April, after lengthy negotiations and a history of mutual antagonisms not unlike those shared with Zaire, Angolan and Zambia extended diplomatic recognition. At peace with his northern and eastern neighbors, Neto was then able to turn his attention southward and, though reluctantly, to acquiesce to Castro's announced intention of withdrawing all Cuban troops. [40] Enforcement of the Brazzaville agreement, however, particularly given the complexity and history of Angola-Zaire relations, proved difficult.

#### 1. Trouble with Mobutu

With his dream of a sympathetic regime in Luanda disintegrating with the fortunes of the FNLA and Zairois forces, an alarmed Mobutu hastily retreated. Mobutu, as reflected in his concessions at the Brazzaville summit, was concerned about the entrenched, anti-Kinshasa regime's ability to strangle Zaire's only two outlets to the sea--the Benguela Railroad and the Zaire Estuary. He was also apprehensive about the political ramifications of his inability to prevent Cuban bombings of Zairois villages. As a result, Mobutu sought to appease the MPLA and the disgruntled

international community. In late January 1976, he declared that he would no longer insist upon the inclusion of the FNLA in an Angolan government. [41] On February 3rd, after a meeting with Roberto and Savimbi in Kinshasa, Mobutu announced that he was "neutral" in the Angolan conflict and would no longer allow anti-MPLA mercenaries to transit Zaire. [42] In an improved diplomatic climate, Mobutu then met with Neto in Brazzaville and further assuaged MPLA officials.

Meanwhile, despite official disclaimers, Mobutu stepped up covert assistance to the FNLA and FLEC, and in the spring of 1976 began in conjunction with South Africa a major air resupply effort to UNITA. [43] In mid-January 1976, aided by Zairois troops, the Franque wing of FLEC launched a last ditch effort to claim Cabinda and oust not only the Cuban troops but also the Brazzaville supported Henrique N'Zita wing of FLEC. When the attack ended in failure, Mobutu only then announced in late January the closure of the Cabindan border. [44] To bolster his regime after the series of military failures in Angola, Mobutu concluded a substantial arms assistance agreement with the United States during the April 1976 visit of Secretaries Henry Kissinger and Donald Rumsfeld. [45] Within weeks of the arms agreement, FNLA attacks in the Bakongo areas, UNITA activity in the south, and FLEC raids in Cabinda were revived. [46] Clearly, Mobutu's strategy during this period was similar to his position during the 1972 FNLA-MPLA reconciliation.

By the summer of 1976, the spirit of the Brazzaville summit had considerably deteriorated. With substantial justification, Neto claimed in June that "...in the north, in the south, and also, I think in the east, there are enemy troops encircling and helping to infiltrate guerrillas into our country." [47] Sensing the increasing turbulence in the

region, the OAU attempted to reconcile the differences. In July, under the auspices of the OAU, Nigerian Foreign Minister, Joseph Garba, offered his offices for talks between Neto and Mobutu on mutual security. After some initial success, the talks broke down and the mediation effort collapsed. [48] The prevailing climate was ripe for conflict. But as attention in Kinshasa and the West focused upon the Soviet and Cuban activity, General Mbumba's belligerence had increasingly posed problems for Neto.

## 2. Katangan Belligerence

Implicit in the Brazzaville agreement, Neto had agreed to prevent the Katangans from conducting any activities directed against Kinshasa and eventually to repatriate them to Zaire. Initially, Neto succeeded in convincing Mbumba to move his forces away from the border, but difficulties quickly ensued. In late December 1975, Neto provided his offices to effect a reconciliation among the various anti-Mobutu groups. [49] Included, among others, were the FNLC, the Parti de la Revolution Populaire (PRP) led by Laurent Kabila, the forces under Antoine Gizenga, and the Brazzaville-based CNL. Although Mbumba was not opposed to an alliance with Kabila, he adamantly refused an association with Gizenga, stemming mainly from Mbumba's affiliation with Union Minere and from Gizenga's position in the anti-Tshombe Lumumba government of the early 1960s. Mbumba finally agreed under intense pressure from Neto, a close friend of Gizenga. The alliance, however, quickly degenerated. Mbumba imprisoned two Gizenga representatives sent to eastern Angola to discuss the accord. Later, he jailed Jean Tshombe, the son of Moise Tshombe, who had arrived to join the alliance. Neto, who effected the alliance solely to diffuse the independent strength of the Katangans, was outraged. In the fall, he dispatched units of the Angolan

army and forcefully released all prisoners held by the FNLC. Moreover, the Katangans precipitated other problems for the MPLA's efforts at internal consolidation. The Katangans were an unruly community, frequently raided nearby Angolan towns in search for food, and generally resisted all MPLA local authority. Without sufficient administrative manpower in the region, the MPLA was able to exert little ability to control or influence Mbumba's empire. In late January 1977, eager not to set an FNLC revolt, the Angolan Defense Ministry ordered General Mbumba to Luanda for, it stated, medical reasons. In reality, Mbumba was placed under house arrest and, at Neto's insistence, Cuban troops were moved into eastern Angola.

### 3. External Challenges

Even with Mbumba safely detained in Luanda, Neto faced serious challenges to his regime both externally and internally. To the north, an Zairois army major offensive directed at the PRP in Kasai Province spilled over into Angola inciting ethnic disturbances in Lunda Province. [50] The fractured and leaderless FNLA, armed by Mobutu, even launched frequent border attacks. In the south, UNITA raids grew more sophisticated and widespread and South Africa stepped up attacks into Angola against SWAPO guerrillas. Against this backdrop, on February 24, 1977, Neto summoned the foreign diplomatic community in Luanda and announced that he had discovered a plot called Operation Cobra 77, known in Angola as Operation Christmas, directed against the MPLA. [51] According to Neto, the plot consisted of a four-pronged attack on Angola from Cabinda, Zaire, Namibia, and from the Atlantic Ocean. The operation, scheduled to be launched in September, involved coordinated attacks by UNITA, FNLA, FLEC, Zaire, South Africa, France, Gabon, and anti-communist Portuguese elements supported by several

international commercial interests (ELF, etc.). In March, Castro arrived in Luanda on a state visit as part of his month-long African tour and, after consultations with Neto, reversed his troop withdrawal policy. Whether the plot was real or imaginary, the belief in Luanda that the same array of actors who had battled the MPLA only a year earlier were once again plotting intervention generated alarm and shock within the ruling elite. [52]

#### 4. Internal Challenges

Internally, as the mystique of the revolutionary victory wore off, Neto also faced serious challenges to his domestic and foreign policies from not only the whites and mesticos but also the rank and file blacks. The pro-Soviet left-wing was alarmed at Neto's foreign policy direction which sought a reduced economic dependence on the Soviet bloc, reconciliation with Zaire, and negotiations with the South Africans. The rank and file blacks, principally those who led partisan units in the Dambos forests during the liberation struggle, criticized Neto's lack of revolutionary zeal in implementing the dictates of Marx. In particular, this group publically attacked Neto's centralized, nationally-oriented approach to the development of the Angolan economy. Demanding a decentralized economic and politic system based upon poder popular, they assailed the party for awarding governmental posts to the whites and mesticos. [53] The smoldering struggle for leadership primacy erupted on May 25, 1977 during the abortive Nito Alves coup. Although the coup generated support only from the fringes of MPLA ideological opinion, the depth and breadth of the Alves-forged coalition provides conclusive evidence of the delicate balancing of international goals and domestic constraints confronting the Neto regime during this period. In early March, as the MPLA Central Committee

met in a stormy session, Neto's problems multiplied. General Mbumba escaped house arrest and fled to the frontier. On March 8, 1977, the Katangan Lunda invaded Zaire. [54] Several days later, Neto's only sympathetic leader in the region, Brazzaville's President Marien Ngubai, was assassinated. [55]

#### 5. Shaba I: Neto's Position

Shaba I provides a marvelous insight into the dominant perceptions of the Angolan foreign policy elite. For this thesis, the central issue is Neto's position vis-a-vis the Katangan invasion. Most observers, even those close to the regime, have attributed the invasion to Neto's decision to "unleash" the Katangans. Frustrated with Mobutu's intransigence at the negotiating table, his support of anti-MPLA insurgent groups, and his integral role in the Cobra 77 plot, they argue, Neto decided to punish Mobutu. These observers cite two events to support their conclusion. One, Castro's March 1977 state visit to Luanda coincided with the kickoff of the invasion and the announcement of the reversal of his troop withdrawal policy. Second, Mobutu's weak internal political and financial condition left him vulnerable to a Katangan attack. Although they do possess some validity, these observations presume that Neto wielded a far greater control and influence over events in eastern Angola than in fact he enjoyed (see endnote 55). In reality, for three reasons Shaba I shattered the carefully crafted direction of Angolan foreign policy and was a disaster for Neto.

First, Shaba I strengthened Mobutu's internal position. Instead of destabilizing the Kinshasa regime, the invasion elicited a surge surge of Western aid both during and after the "80 Day War" that shocked Luanda. Most Western intervention came from France which had its designs

on Cabinda. Even though Mobutu was under strict IMF observation in March, private foreign creditors announced a moratorium on debts of \$700 million and then loaned Zaire another \$200 million during the invasion. Not unlike his pleas for international aid for the FNLA in 1973 and for his own regime after the Brazzaville summit in 1976, Mobutu emerged from Shaba I in a stronger position militarily with French and Belgian support and a receptive international audience. At a time when Luanda faced a growing threat in the south, a revitalized Mobutu and unsecure northern borders were recipes for disaster.

Second, the invasion also endangered Neto's carefully orchestrated opening of ties to the West. Although several West European countries had extended diplomatic recognition to the MPLA, most perceived the MPLA as being foreign dominated and questioned Luanda's internal legitimacy. Neto, therefore, perceived that any Angolan-initiated border skirmishes or event that drew international attention would invariably invite charges of Cuban, Angolan and even Soviet complicity. While observers correctly point to Castro's announcement of the troop reversal made in Luanda coinciding with the Katangan invasion, the decision in fact had been in January for different reasons. Alarmed over increasing Katangan activity (that prompted Mbumba's arrest) and the revival of the FLEC insurgency, Neto convinced Castro in January to deploy Cuban troops into the Katangan areas of eastern Angola and more troops to Cabinda. [56] Under these circumstances and with the rising threat from UNITA and South African, Neto perceived that a continuation of the Cuban troop withdrawal was impossible. Taken in this light, not only did the invasion reflected Neto's inability to control events in eastern Angola but also derailed his attempts to open economic and diplomatic doors to the West.

Third, as noted above, Neto faced another round of crippling internal dissension. Serious challenges to his leadership and to his initiatives rose from both ends of the party's political spectrum. The far left was disenchanted with Neto's regional detente. The rank and file blacks, representing the staunchly pro-Marxist, anti-mestizo position, were equally frustrated with their non-participation in Neto's national policies. Both groups sought ways to mobilize political support in order to attack Neto's lack of revolutionary zeal. The groups never coalised because of their mutual distrust and hatred. In the bitter factional struggles that dominate the party in the early of 1977, Operation Cobra and Zairean machinations had strengthened the position the regime "hardliners." In this unstable political climate, Neto did not want to provide his critics another weapon. [57]

#### 6. Summary

Whether Neto and the MPLA unleashed the Katangans or were simply caught off guard, the invasion severely weakened and complicated the direction of Neto's foreign policy. By May 1977, as the Katangans retreated in face of French and Belgium forces, Neto saw a revitalized Mobutu who had been able to successfully manipulate the invasion into a rally for international assistance and to refocus world attention upon the Cuban presence in Angola. Congo-Brazzaville President Ngoubai had been assassinated and although the new government of Yhombi-Opango still expressed an interest in maintaining relations with Luanda, the new regime was comprised of individuals long associated with France. Ethnic animosities stemming from the return of the Katangans erupted between the Lunda and the Chokwe in the FNLC camps that were contained only by the forceful intervention of Cuban troops who cordoned the area. [58] Then, on May 25th,

the coup attempt by the Nito Alves coalition reflected the serious internal dissension and fracture within the regime. The Shaba invasion had not only failed, but it left the Neto regime severely weakened. Taken together, the events surrounding Shaba I amounted to a colossal disaster and the Angolan foreign policy was in shambles.

### C. POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD: THE ROAD TO SHABA II

In the months that immediately followed Shaba I, the 1300 mile Angolan-Zaire border remained calm. Border incursions from Zaire and insurgent activity in Cabinda curtailed sharply throughout the remainder of 1977. Even though a May diplomatic attempt by Nigerian Foreign Minister Joesph Garba, begun in March at U.S. insistence, to reconcile the differences between Luanda and Kinshasa ended in failure, by the end of the year a major improvement in relation seemed possible. In December, Mobutu sent a message to the 1st MPLA Congress held in Luanda expressing the hope that the Congress would "strengthen still further the blood ties which unite the two peoples." [59] In January 1978, Neto told a rally in Luanda that "We are going to improve relations with Zaire." [60] And in February, the Zairean news agency reported that Neto had assured Mobutu that he did not plan aggression against Zaire. [61] Nevertheless, while relation with Zaire seemed on the mend, skirmishes with UNITA in southern Angola escalated.

#### 1. In the South: The Revival of UNITA

In June, UNITA demonstrated signs of life for the first time since the 1975-76 civil war. The attacks demonstrated to Luanda that Savimbi's movement had not been destroyed in 1976 and represented a potent challenge of the MPLA's internal legitimacy. More importantly, UNITA's

revival revealed the heavy of South Africa, prompting fears of another South African intervention. The dynamics of the south will be discussed at length in Chapter 2.

## 2. In the East: The Revival of the Katangans

In eastern Angola, the MPLA once again was buffeted by the centrifugal and centripetal forces emanating from Zaire. Following their inept performance during Shaba I, the Zairois armed forces and Provincial security forces were extensively and brutally purged by Mobutu. Mobutu also launched a widespread campaign of terror against the Lunda population who, he claimed, had aided and supported the FNLC. As a result, nearly 250,000 fled into Angola and swelled General Mbumba's recruiting ranks. The fleeing Lunda also exacerbated ethnic tensions in the region. Reportedly, Mobutu also attempted to purge the Belgian and pro-Belgian Zairois officials of the state owned Union Miniere cobalt firm, whose plants were left untouched by the FNLC. [62] Though Mobutu's anti-Belgian efforts were largely unsuccessful, the harassed Belgians swelled the financial coffers of Mbumba. [63] Additionally, in the weeks after the return of the Katangans, Cuban troops were withdrawn from the FNLC camps and East German advisors were sent in to train the FNLC forces. Both Neto and Castro objected but were overruled by the Soviet Union. [64] In the period between May 1977 and May 1978, Mbumba reconsolidated his supremacy over the anti-Mobutu groups. Meanwhile, Neto, without any link to Mbumba, exercised little or no control over the affairs and activities of the FNLC.

## 3. Reassessment of Its Foreign Policy

In the fall of 1977, and then in conjunction with the MPLA's 1st Ordinary Congress in December, Neto and his closest advisors undertook a fundamental reassessment of

Angola's position in domestic, regional, and international affairs. While there are a number of factors that precipitated this reassessment, several are particularly important. First, UNITA insurgent activity widened into the central provinces after the FALPA/Cuban offensive in October. [65] Second, the Angolan economy had not responded as expected to the MPLA's socialist initiatives. Neto discerned that the solution to most of Angola's economic problems lay beyond the range of Cuban abilities and could only be found in such endeavors as the introduction of more private enterprise, expansion of contacts with multinationals, and soliciting the return of the Portuguese. Third, Neto perceived that although the Soviets were necessary friends, they were not willing partners in regional affairs. By this time, Neto had been able to discern the boundaries of Soviet willingness to support Angolan interests. It was clear that many interests were not only outside the limits of Soviet support but often incongruent with Soviets designs in southern Africa. Each of these factors necessitated a rapprochement with Zaire and an active participation in the negotiations for the independence of Namibia. A rapprochement with Zaire and a solution in Namibia would not only achieve a secure borders enabling the regime to shift military forces south. This would also permit the revitalization of the economy by shifting the focus from national defense to economic development. Additionally, secure borders would also serve as an imperative for eventual recognition from Western governments. The reassessment implied, however, a series of domestic and foreign policy initiatives that would encounter severe dissent within the ruling elite. The creation of a vanguard party, the MPLA-PT, at the 1st Ordinary Congress, designed to centralize power and decision-making with those loyal to the aspirations of Neto, must be seen in this light. [66]

Neto did not, however, alter his perception of the Soviet Union as the ultimate guarantor of Angolan security. While he pursued policies of detente, opening of ties with the West, and national reconstruction, he needed the security of Soviet armaments and Cuban troops. The FAPLA was not able to defend the borders and conduct counter-insurgency operations without more training from the Cuban troops who also served as a deterrent against a wider South African role in southern Angola. The assistance of the Soviets and Cubans was seen in the two government offensives during this period, one in October 1977 and the other in March-April 1978. Interestingly, on one hand, Neto perceived the Soviet Bloc as the only states willing to pursue Angolan security interests. While on the other, by invoking Soviet military assistance Neto could pursue detente in a position of strength and not alienate his political left or the Soviets. Certainly, at a time when the Soviets preferred party-to-party relations internationally, the creation of a vanguard party in Angola also provided Neto a broader latitude of action without invoking the ire of the Soviets and his own domestic constituencies. Taken together, the reassessment and the resulting implications became the foundation of Angolan foreign policy at the outset of 1978.

#### 4. Foreign Policy Tested

But as 1978 unfolded, events along the border with Zaire and elsewhere in Africa threatened to derail the initiatives of Angolan foreign policy. Even as Luanda and Kinshasa exchanged messages of goodwill, the FNLA and FLEC insurgency had heated up again. In late January, days after Neto's public address, FNLA guerrillas attacked the border villages of Namutenga and Luaokazombo. In February, 43 Angolan Bakongo were massacred at Pangala. The MPLA

protested the attacks to the UN, citing 20 cross border raids by Zairian troops. [67] On March 23rd, Luanda claimed that a Zairian military contingent, backed by Mirage aircraft and napalm, attacked and burned the Angolan town of Caianda. [68] Incensed, Neto moved Soviet-made Angolan gunboats into the Zaire River and threatened to cut off Zaire's only remaining outlet to the sea, the port of Matadi. [69] The expectation of an improvement in relations again evaporated as tensions along the border increased.

While the escalation of border skirmishes with Zaire threatened to damage relations with Zaire, the MPLA was shocked at the massive intervention of Soviet advisors and Cuban troops into Ethiopia. Castro had completed arrangements for a Cuban mission to train the Ethiopian People's Militia in early March 1977 and an advance party of instructors arrived in early May. After the outbreak of hostilities between Ethiopia and Somalia in mid-July 1977, the Cuban military mission increased sharply growing to 400 by November and to 1,000 by late December. By March 1978, nearly 17,000 Cuban troops 14,000 of whom were combat troops, had been deployed to Ethiopia. [70] The Cubans in Angola were not left untouched. In January, two Cuban armored battalions, an infantry battalion, and a large number of support troops, approximately 3,000-5,000, were deployed from Angola to Ethiopia. [71] The MPLA viewed these developments with horror. The Cubans were fully integrated into the security of Angola, responsible for the defense of the Cabindan oilfields, the Benguela Railway, and the training of FAPLA. After the government offensive in March-April, the Cubans were widely dispersed throughout Angola. The deployment of Cubans to Ethiopia, though limited by March 1978, could seriously hamper counter-insurgency operations at a time of increased guerrillas activity in the north and the south. Without the guarantee

of Cuban troops, the backbone of Neto's initiatives threatened to collapse.

In the spring, two significant events occurred as Neto's fortunes took a better turn. The second government offensive, launched on February 28th, succeeded in cutting UNITA supply and infiltration routes. The offensive recaptured all UNITA-held towns in Cuango Cubango Province and in the central highlands, towns taken after the previous offensive. Although most observers point to UNITA successes in the south as the cause for the offensive, in reality the circumstances were more complex. Early 1978 was a critical time for the Namibian independence negotiations. The talks had entered a sensitive phase after the contact group's presentation of draft proposals in mid-February, [72] and Neto was under tremendous pressure from the Soviet Union and SWAPO to sabotage them. [73] Then, on May 4th, South African forces launched a major lightning attack on the main SWAPO headquarters, training center, and refugee camp at the iron ore mining town of Kassinga, approximately 158 miles inside Angola. [74] The UN Security Council, in an emergency session convened at Angola's request, unanimously condemned South Africa for the raid and demanded the withdrawal of South African troops from Namibia. For the first time, the Security Council warned that future violations could lead to punitive measures. [75] The attack occurred nine days after South African acceptance of the Western contact groups' proposals and one day after the United Nations concluded a month-long session on Namibia in which the General Assembly called for the unconditional South African withdrawal from Namibia. [76] For Neto, these two events signaled a distinct shift in his fortunes. Not only had UNITA forces been ravaged, but also world attention had finally focused upon South Africa. His good fortunes, however, did not last. Just one week after the Kassinga raid, the FNLC launched another invasion of Zaire, Shaba II.

#### D. SHABA II

Unlike the ill-conceived Shaba I incursion in which both sides shadow-boxed for 80 days, Shaba II was an extraordinary well planned and executed operation. Knowing that the Zairois army had fortified their previous invasion route in western Zaire, the FNLC invaded from the south through the Cazambo Salient of Angola and Zambia. Success for Mubumba's forces came quickly. Kolwezi fell on May 13, a feat the FNLC failed to achieve a year earlier. The towns of Mutshatsha, Mungulunga, Kaiango, and Kakopon fell on the 14th. The FNLC attacked all key points simultaneously thus making it impossible for Zaire to shift its forces and reinforce key areas. Unlike their first invasion, the FNLC received almost total support from the local population, stemming from the heinous activities of the Zairois army and the Mobutu purges after Shaba I. But the FNLC advance stalled on the 16th at a hydroelectric plant near N'Zilo when Mubumba's forces encountered UNITA partisans. [77] The tide quickly turned with a considerably stronger and more immediate response from the West than in Shaba I. On May 16 and 17, French and Belgium paratroopers were dropped into Kolwezi. By the 19th, the FNLC had been routed and forced to retreat into Angola.

The role of the Angolan government and other external actors, particularly the Soviets, Cubans, and the East Germans, in the Shaba II affair has been a hotly debated issue. Though a detailed look at the role of these actors is beyond the scope of this thesis, a general appraisal does lend insight into understanding the response of Neto following the return of the Katangans. First, observers point to Moscow's massive cobalt purchase on the international market on the eve of the invasion as evidence of Soviet complicity. Interestingly, Zairean cobalt production

increased 30% in 1978, from 10,200 metric tons in 1977 to 13,300 metric tons in 1978, while copper production fell 60,000 metric tons during the same period. [78] Although cobalt prices zoomed from \$5 to \$60 per pound in 1978, it seems ironic that the West would accuse the Soviets of being better capitalists than anyone else. Cuban complicity, stemming from charges made by the Carter Administration in late May and early June, is also cited. At the time, Castro's forces, many of them posted in Angola, were involved in a massive air and sea lift to Ethiopia at the height of the Somalian invasion of the Ogaden desert. The Cuban troops remaining in Angola were widely dispersed in the southeastern provinces after the government offensive in March-April. Interestingly, it that Castro learned in early April of a possible FNLC attack and tried to warn the Angolans. [79] Castro's quick and unusually vehement denials, the overextended position of the Cuban military, and his opposition to training of the FNLC after Shaba I raise serious doubts of Cuban instigation or support of the Katangans. On the other hand, there is some evidence to suggest that the East Germans were involved. East German advisors, perhaps as many as 100, were stationed at three Angolan military bases in eastern Angola: Luso, Texeira de Sousa, and Henrique de Carvalho. The GDR Defense Minister, General Heinz Hoffman, was in eastern Angola and visited the three military bases on the eve of the invasion. Seasoned African analyst Colin Legum, writing in The Observer on May 21, 1978, suggested that the East Germans had been allocated on behalf of the Warsaw Pact countries the role of destabilizing the Mobutu regime. Furthermore, the East Germans had provided arms, training, vehicles and fuel to the FNLC. [80] Despite these allegations, the East German presence was minimal and inconsequential. While there can be little doubt that the FNLC had in some fashion benefited from the

presence of Soviet bloc forces in Angola, there is no conclusive evidence to support the contention that any of these actors abetted the invasion.

Likewise, Angolan complicity is difficult to perceive. First, the continuing legacy of the Neto/Mbumba relationship had primarily penalized the Angolans. Shaba I had served to complicate Angolan regional relations and generated the fear in Luanda of Mbumba's political and ideological independency. Second, the Western commitment to the Mobutu regime had strengthened those within the Angolan elite who criticized detente with Zaire and other Neto foreign policies. Although the creation of the MPLA-PT centralized decision-making, most Central Committee and Politburo members were military officers who, though somewhat loyal to Neto, questioned the credibility of any agreement with Mobutu. Third, during April 1-19, Neto was in Moscow for cancer treatment. [81] It was during this period that Castro reportedly informed Luanda of an impending Katangan attack. As is the case in most third world countries, without Neto in Luanda the MPLA forfeited any hope of restraining Mbumba. Fourth, as Shaba I so amply demonstrated, another Katangan invasion again provided the pretext for Western intervention. Another Western response would not only refortify Mobutu at a time when the MPLA faced a growing insurgency in the south but also would jeopardize the prospect of expanding and broadening ties with the West. Lastly, the Cassinga raid had finally directed world attention at South African presence in Namibia and its destabilization efforts throughout southern Africa. A Shaba II would certainly eclipse the world reaction to the raid. Therefore, from an Angolan perspective, support for or acquiescence to an invasion into Zaire was not in the MPLA's interests. In the history of MPLA-Zaire relation, a direct confrontation with Kinshasa usually had profound negative implications upon the internal

stability and foreign policy initiatives of the MPLA, and thus was to be avoided.

In reality, the FNLC did not require the benefits of a Soviet bloc presence in Angola. The deterioration in the Zairean economy, rampant political corruption throughout Zaire, the depredations unleashed by Mobutu in the wake of Shaba I, and the volatility of 250,000 Lunda refugees in Angola provided the FNLC with ample reason and local sympathy for the rebellion. All of these facts considered, Soviet bloc assistance to the FNLC was a moot issue. For the Angolans, Shaba II once again exhibited the lack of Luandan administrative control within its own borders and seriously threatened to derail the December 1977 initiatives of its foreign policy. Neto, therefore, perceived that he had to act quickly before events precipitated another disaster.

As the routed forces of General Mbumda retreated back into Angola, Neto went on the offensive. First, he dispatched units of the Angolan army and disarmed the Katangans and confiscated their vehicles. Then he initiated measures to begin the herculean task of resettling them in the vicinity of Silva Porto (now known as Bie), nearly 400 miles from the Zaire border. Second, upon their return to Angola, General Mbumda and Antoine Gizenga were arrested and taken to Luanda. A few weeks later, in mid-June, Mbumda agreed, at Neto's insistence, to propose a reconciliation between the FNLC and Mobutu. [82] Third, in a Revolutionary Council statement issued on May 27th, Neto vehemently denied Angolan complicity, stating "In no way did Angola take part in the recent events in Shaba." [83] Then on June 10th, in a radio address broadcast over Radio Luanda, Neto again denied Angolan involvement. But he also held out an olive branch to Mobutu, saying "We hope to allay the apprehensions of the Zaire government... Good relations between Angola and Zaire are necessary for the peace and development of this part of

Africa." [84] Lastly, and perhaps most significantly, Neto sent a personal message through Angola's ambassador to the UN, Elisio de Figueiredo, to President Carter expressing a desire for a reconciliation with Zaire and better relations with the U.S. [85] The message, received in the second week of June, reflected the abrupt shift in the U.S. position on Shaba II. President Carter, in his June 14th press conference, signalled the shift when he indicated that the U.S. "never considered" supporting a pan-African strike force. [86] On June 20th, in a speech in Atlantic City, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance reinforced the new direction when he stated that the U.S. intended to work "in more normal ways" with the government of Angola. [87] Less than 24 hours later, Deputy UN Ambassador, and significantly the chairman of the UN Contact Group, Donald McHenry was dispatched to Luanda. Neto's actions clearly exceeded the limits of previous Angolan behavior, particularly after Shaba I. Not only had he taken extraordinary steps to extend the olive branch to Mobutu, Neto also had secretly invoked the intervention of the United States. In the process, Neto expended considerable political capital and was in an untenable domestic position unless his actions bore fruit.

Although both Shaba I and II had created the nearly identical recipes for disaster, Neto perceived that he finally had Mobutu on the ropes. Neto's superior position was reflected during the U.S. mediated reconciliation between Luanda and Kinshasa. [88] The U.S. delegation, led by Ambassador McHenry, went to Luanda twice, June 21-24 and again on July 10-12. Though other MPLA officials attended, the principal Angolan negotiators were Neto, Defense Minister Henrique "Iko" Carreira, and Neto's personal aide. [89] At the table, Neto demanded three concessions from Mobutu: the movement of Zairean Bakongo from the border areas, the expulsion from Zaire of Holden Roberto, and the

closure of the Kamina airstrip used to resupply UNITA. The demands were significant in that Neto utilized the McHenry delegation to extract concessions from Mobutu that he had not been able to achieve bi-laterally. The U.S. delegation, in turn, promised to "deliver" Mobutu and to block his threatened retaliation of supplying the FNLA and FLEC. Additionally, the U.S. asked for Neto's support in the Western Contact Groups proposals, particularly with SWAPO. The delegation noted that Neto appeared to have an unconstrained hand during the negotiations, that he possessed a consensus within the elite for reconciliation, and that he had a strong desire to expand Angolan cooperation with the U.S. to other areas of mutual interest, specifically in its links with SWAPO.

At this point, it is interesting to speculate about Neto's motives for invoking the United States to broker a reconciliation with Zaire. One, Neto clearly perceived the U.S. as the only external state who could exert sufficient influence in order to "deliver" Mobutu. Neto, with good reason, saw Mobutu as weak, corrupt, untrustworthy; an unreliable leader who would only respond to one of his friends. Second, Neto was not uncomfortable with the U.S. negotiators nor the prevailing diplomatic climate. Neto had received regular briefings by McHenry since the formation of the Contact Group in February 1977. President Carter's press conference and the Vance speech served as confidence building measures that reinforced Neto's perception of the U.S. as a credible mediator. Third, Neto also foresaw the value of a Namibian settlement. Active U.S. involvement in the pursuit of Namibian independence coincided with Angolan interests. Fourth, the U.S., in turn, was unwilling to invoke any preconditions for their participation. Both the Ford and Carter administrations had refused to recognize Angola, officially, because of the presence of the Cuban

troops. The continued presence and activities of the UNITA partisans posed problems for Luanda and Neto was in no position domestically to agree to such a quid pro quo precondition. Lastly, Neto saw reconciliation with Mobutu as a prerequisite for eventual ties with and recognition from the West, particularly the United States. In each of these instances, U.S. and Angolan interests coincided. Although the U.S. delegation noted an elite consensus for a reconciliation, Neto was under severe pressure to achieve a tangible and substantive agreement. Only such an agreement could satisfy his political left and ensure that the Soviets and the socialist community would continue to support his regime. Given the complexity and the gravity of the stakes for Neto, invoking the United States to effect an Angolan-Zaire rapprochement was nothing less than a brilliant maneuver.

#### E. RAPPROCHEMENT

Ironically, Shaba II created both the environment and incentives for a more permanent reconciliation between Angola and Zaire. After the McHenry mission, the steps to rapprochement progressed rapidly. On July 17th, delegations from both sides met in Brazzaville and agreed to settle several long-standing differences. Three days later, at the OAU Summit in Khartoum, Neto and Mobutu met secretly in talks arranged by the Belgian Foreign Minister and Guinean President Seko Toure. Then, on July 30th, both governments announced that diplomatic relations had been established. The normalization of relations included an agreement on three points: the repatriation of refugees, the opening of the Benguela Railway, and the creation of a Control Commission under OAU auspices to monitor any military developments along the Angolan-Zaire border. [90] By early

August, diplomatic representatives took their posts. Neto visited Kinshasa on August 19-21 and Mobutu visited Luanda on October 15th. At the end of the latter's visit, the two Presidents signed an agreement to disarm and relocate the Bakongo and Katangan rebels. Later in the year, confident the arrangements with Mobutu would hold, Neto granted a general amnesty to all FNLA and FLEC rebels. The long and arduous cycle of violence along the 1300 mile border had ended. The rapprochement permitted Neto to turn his attention to the more serious problems in the south.

### III. THE MPLA IN THE SOUTH: EVOLUTION OF TWO-TRACK STRATEGY

In the years since their rapprochement, Angolan-Zairean relations have warmed as the instability and tensions along their common borders has eased. Cross border commerce and migration have replaced raids and troops. To the south, meanwhile, the MPLA has become embroiled in another and more serious interstate conflict. Simmering since the 1974 Portuguese coup and left unattended by the newly independent regime in Luanda, the conflict has mushroomed into direct challenge to the survival of the MPLA. Similar to its conflict with Zaire, the MPLA faces an external, though more potent, destabilizing force: South Africa. Numbering nearly 4,000 men South African Defense Forces today occupy a 100 mile salient of southern Angola. Unlike its struggle with Zaire, however, the MPLA encounters a rejuvenated and expanded UNITA insurgency. UNITA today conducts regular insurgent operations with impunity in 14 of the country's 16 provinces, most recently in the Bango region ninety miles northwest of Luanda. Additionally, SWAPO (the South West Africa People's Organization), who aligned with the MPLA in 1976, has become a greater liability than an asset in a region where the MPLA has no ethnic allies. Cumulatively, the conflict, stemming from the dynamics of these forces and the resultant pressures imposed upon Luanda, comprises the MPLA's southern problem.

To solve its southern problem, the MPLA has pursued a two-track strategy: one of resistance and the other of negotiation. In the strategy of resistance, the MPLA has sought not only to counter militarily the advances of the South African and UNITA forces but also to attract the myriad of ethnic groups into the regime's political

consolidation process through internal stability and economic development. This strategy has yielded few rewards. The deployment of the approximately 20,000 Cuban troops and its own army (FAPLA) in the south has instead contributed to widespread instability and economic chaos. In the process, the MPLA has exacerbated regional ethnic tensions and considerably aided the internal legitimacy of UNITA. The MPLA's second strategy, one of negotiation, has invoked a diplomatic resolution. In particular, the MPLA has participated in the multi-lateral negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations for the independence of Namibia and in bi-lateral talks with South Africa. This strategy, which complements rather than substitutes for the initial strategy, has also borne little fruit. Principally, both the UN and bi-lateral negotiations have reached an impasse. As a result, the weak and fragmented MPLA is confronted with a unique foreign policy dilemma that generates enormous internal pressures.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the evolution and the objectives of the MPLA's two-track strategy and the underlying southern political and ethnic mosaic affecting the strategy. Additionally, this chapter will evaluate the internal regime dynamics while balancing the two strategies from 1975 until 1979.

#### **A. ETHNIC AND POLITICAL MOSAIC OF SOUTHERN ANGOLA**

Although most international attention focused upon the events in the north, the 1974 Portuguese coup and subsequent announcement in Lisbon of independence for all Portuguese colonies equally affected the political and ethnic dynamics of southern Angola. Many old alliances crumbled in the wake of new realities posed by the prospect of independence. The principal actors in the south, the MPLA and UNITA,

scrambled, jockeyed, and often waged pitched battles for southern supremacy. [91] Meanwhile, the Portuguese colonial administration attempted to create the incentives and climate for a multiparty post-independence government. The centrifugal forces generated by the Angolan conflict soon entangled the sideline actors South Africa and SWAPO. An evaluation of the prevailing political and ethnic dynamics in southern Angola provides a useful framework for an analysis of the evolution of the MPLA's southern strategy.

1. The Scramble for Independence, January-November 1975

The year 1975 began with immense hope for a peaceful transition to independence for Angola. In an attempt to lend legitimacy to the transition to Angolan independence, on January 15th, in the Portuguese Mediterranean resort village of Alvor, representatives of each liberation movement and the Portuguese government hammered out and signed an agreement establishing a framework for independence under the auspices of the Alvor accords. The accords proclaimed November 11, 1975 as the date of independence, mandated legislative elections during the eleven month transition period, and established a common national army. [92] Portuguese officials hoped the terms of the agreement would place a premium on the political process, on coalition building and on trans-ethnic alliances. Distrust among the Angolan participants, however, had only been partially muted. As a result, implementation of the accords proved exceedingly difficult. The FNLA, in the strongest military position and perceived to have the inside track to power in Luanda, was reluctant to fully participate in the coalition. To counter the FNLA's dominance, Portuguese colonial officials, particularly High Commissioner Almirante Rosa Coutinho, sought to balance the relative military strengths and internal positions of the competing national liberation

movements. In the months following Alvor, most Portuguese diplomatic arm-twisting focused on the MPLA and UNITA. In particular, Coutinho resumed arms shipments to UNITA and assiduously pressed for an MPLA-UNITA merger. [93] The agreement, however, never held. Pitched battles in the Luandan musseques between rival MPLA and FNLA forces in February and March, however, signalled the collapse of the Alvor accords. On August 29th, the Portuguese formally annulled the Alvor accords, dissolved the defunct transitional government, and then withdrew the bulk of its colonial army. The race for independence dramatically accelerated. For the MPLA and the FNLA, the accords served as an interference in their pursuit for power. In the south, however, the collapse of the Alvor accords generated a profound impact upon the most vulnerable actors: UNITA and SWAPO.

## 2. UNITA

For UNITA, the Portuguese coup and the Alvor Accords presently exactly the political opening for which Jonas Savimbi and his colleagues had long hoped. Situated hundred of miles from Luanda, UNITA was, however, in an extraordinarily impotent political and military position and thus unable to capitalize on its good fortunes. Savimbi, therefore, counted on the arm-twisting of Almirante Coutinho and exploitation of UNITA's advantage, its political stronghold of more than two million Ovimbundu in the central highlands, to provide him a share of the new government. By May, however, as it became evident that power in Angola would be taken by a force of arms rather than in a coalition government, a sense of desperation seized the UNITA leadership. Savimbi not only perceived that his strategy had collapsed but that international and domestic support for his fledgling movement had also eroded.

To adequately discern the complexities of the southern Angolan mosaic, it is necessary to evaluate the principle factors contributing to the erosion of UNITA's position in 1975. Internally, Savimbi's carefully and crafted coalition of the three principal southern and central ethnic groups, the Ovimbundu, Ngangela, and the Chokwe/Lczi, was unravelling. Until 1975, Savimbi had skillfully and successfully exploited the prevailing themes of anti-Portuguese colonialism and anti-mestizo ethnic animosities to forge and subsequently rally support for his liberation movement. [94] As UNITA's fortunes faded with the collapse of the Alvor Accords and Almirante Coutinho's endeavors, the traditional hatred stemming from the 19th century Ovimbundu dominance in the Angolan center and south erupted into severe infighting. Furthermore, the deterioration of UNITA coalition suffered from the machinations of Daniel Chipenda, a Chokwe and long-time Savimbi rival. Chipenda, who defected in 1973 from his post as the MPLA's Eastern Region Commander to joining the FNLA, began to mobilize support among the Chokwe community for the FNLA. He adroitly exploited the inherent ethnic animosities between the Ngangela and the Chokwe in UNITA's traditionally weak areas of eastern Angola. [95] Moreover, in May and again in July, he secretly travelled to Namibia in order to seek military assistance from South Africa against the MPLA. Chipenda's clandestine missions sparked serious alarm in the UNITA leadership. His strength and popularity among the Chokwe and his recruitment forays into the south threatened to split further Savimbi's fragile coalition. More importantly, Savimbi feared if the South Africans rallied to the FNLA's side, a victorious Chipenda would then unleash his powerful army upon UNITA's Ngangela partisans. A third factor contributing to UNITA's deterioration was a rapid escalation of MPLA military and political strength in the

south. By May 1975, MPLA partisans had extended its influence and position into the major cities and towns in the central highlands and around the Cunene installation along the Namibian border. Additionally, MPLA military forces inflicted heavy losses upon UNITA guerrillas in pitched battles near the Cunene complex. In the succeeding months, the MPLA drove Savimbi loyalists out of Lobito, Benguela, Mocamedes, Sa de Baneira, and Perceira d'Eca. The deterioration of Savimbi's internal position crippled his bargaining leverage, undermined his strategy and seriously complicated his negotiations with the Portuguese and the MPLA.

The weakening of Savimbi's coalition movement also corresponded with decline in external assistance. By May, support to UNITA from outside sources had been reduced to a trickle. Perhaps most seriously, Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, conforming to the intent of the Alvor agreement, refused to permit the transshipment of arms to UNITA. [96] Only a modicum of Chinese arms funneled into Angola by Zambian President Kenneth Kuanda and by SWAPO forces reached UNITA partisans. Moreover, as the Angolan conflict became internationalized by mid-1975, only UNITA forces had not benefited from a heavy input of outside military training and arms. [97] Savimbi had hastily mustered an army roughly estimated at 20,000 men, but his partisans were handicapped from a lack of training, organizational coherence, and discipline. The shortage of weapons to carry the struggle against the better armed and trained MPLA further exacerbated UNITA's woes. A second external factor was the increasing belligerency of South Africa. Equally alarmed by the events in Angola which threatened its cozy security relationship in Namibia, the South Africa forces launched a series of border incursions into southern Angola. Their attacks were aimed not only at the newly repositioned SWAPO

forces but also at MPLA and UNITA positions. The South African activities, together with Chipenda's clandestine missions, greatly worried UNITA officials. Moreover, Savimbi feared the creation of a South African-inspired greater Ovambo state under its own aegis, an entity that would revive the historical Ovambo-Ovimbundu animosities and exacerbate the ethnic fragility of the UNITA coalition.

In desperation Savimbi moved to shore up his collapsing position by mobilizing support on the political battlefield. In June 1975, he agreed to assist in the permanent movement and resettlement of SWAPO forces from Zambia into UNITA camps and territory in southern Angola thereby establishing a more formal alliance with SWAPO. [98] Previously, although the two movements shared close ethnic ties, UNITA had assisted SWAPO only in the infrequent passage of PLAN forces through the south to the Namibian border (for a fuller discussion, see pp. 61-3 below). Savimbi perceived that a stronger alliance with SWAPO would enhance his political strength and internal position in the south against the MPLA. Then, following the August 22nd South African incursion at Perçera d'Eca (now N'giva), Savimbi launched a peace initiative with the MPLA. Using Portuguese intermediaries, in particular the Antunes faction of the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement, Savimbi revived the Coutinho proposal by seeking an MPLA-UNITA coalition government that excluded Holden Roberto. [99] Following talks between the MPLA's Lopo do Nascimento and UNITA's Jose N'dele held in Lisbon on August 27-29th, Neto initially exhibited interest in a two-party alliance. By the end of September, however, lacking a firm response from Neto and fearing a manifestation of Chipenda's ties to South Africa, Savimbi dropped the proposal. Reportedly, the United States also interceded and dissuaded Savimbi from pursuing such an accord. [100] The failure to reach an accord with the MPLA fatally doomed Savimbi's prospects for power.

In late September, with independence imminent, Savimbi turned to South Africa for protection. He paid a grievous price, however. The South Africans provided a buffer against a further decline in UNITA's position and as well as arms and supplies. As a quid pro quo for South African help, Savimbi renounced UNITA's ties with SWAPO and agreed to provide the South Africans intelligence on the locations and strength of SWAPO guerrilla camps. [101] As a consequence, Savimbi's separate pact with South Africa transformed the Namibian nationalists of SWAPO from adversaries of the MPLA to adversaries of UNITA. Throughout its history, suffering from a chronic disadvantage in external aid, UNITA had often oscillated between resource political self-reliance and desperate expediencies. Savimbi's political dexterity in his arrangement with the Portuguese, Holden Roberto, and then the South Africans, permitted UNITA to survive. As a result, however, the ethnic and political mosaic of southern Angola was radically altered.

### 3. SWAPO

The turbulent events following the Portuguese coup also affected and immensely interested SWAPO. Until 1974 anti-insurgent cooperation between the military and intelligence services of South Africa and the Portuguese colonial administration in Angola border had relegated SWAPO's military and political wings to the desolate Baroste Province of southwestern Zambia. Situated hundreds of miles from its ethnopopulist support, SWAPO was never able to generate serious political strength nor a challenge to the South African administration in Namibia. Instead, its infrequent insurgent forays focused on the unpopulated and barren Caprivi Strip of northeastern Namibia. Without a major external supporter, SWAPO was largely a feeble and impotent force in the Namibian struggle and in the ethnic mosaic of

southern Angola. The Portuguese coup and the Alvor accords provided an opening that dramatically improved SWAPO's fortunes. As a consequence, however, it also forced SWAPO officials to take sides in the Angolan conflict.

With the MPLA prior to 1974, SWAPO had little contact. Operationally, SWAPO partisans at times encountered MPLA forces while in transit to Ovamboland. In 1969-1970, SWAPO collaborated with the MPLA eastern front political leaders in the Huila and Cuando Cubango Provinces in order to ensure continued access to the Namibian border. When the MPLA attempted to extend its position among the Angolan Ovambo, however, acute ethnic warfare erupted and all SWAPO-MPLA cooperation ceased. [102] Politically, in the late 1960s, SWAPO joined the alliance of the four socialist anti-Portuguese liberation movements, the CONCP (Conferencia das Organizacoes Nacionalistas das Colonias Portuguesas), which included the MPLA. [103] Ideologically, the SWAPO leadership saw that its interests lay within the socialist community, largely thanks to Soviet willingness to provide military assistance. But SWAPO officials detested the MPLA's left-wing multi-racialism which SWAPO viewed as merely an extension of white rule.

With UNITA, on the other hand, SWAPO shared a broad "operative alliance." Militarily, UNITA partisans provided safe passage for SWAPO forces through southern Angola. In return, SWAPO partisans served as principal conduits of the UNITA-bound Chinese arms to Saviabi's guerrillas. Joint SWAPO-UNITA military operations never occurred. Ethnically, relations were cordial at best. On one hand, the Cuanhama tribe, the largest of the seven Ovambo ethnic groups, shared close filial ties with the Ngangela. On the other, however, the Kwayhama and the Ovambo, together with the Ngangela, shared an intense hatred for the Ovimbundu, the traditional ethnic overlords in southern Angola. Politically, their

interests were mixed. Although SWAPO joined CONCOP largely to solicit a broader base of external support, pressure from CONCP and the Soviets failed to prevent SWAPO from persisting in pragmatic cooperation with UNITA. Ideologically, their relations were strained. UNITA was ideologically aligned with SWAPO's rival organization, SWANU (South West Africa National Union), a militant Herero-backed movement that included members of the Herero community in southern Angola. To complicate matters further, UNITA and SWANU both espoused Maoist rhetoric and were militarily supported by China. SWAPO, on the other hand, was aided primarily by the Soviet Union. Although many observers frequently depict a close SWAPO-UNITA friendship during this period, in reality only geography and limited ethnic loyalties provided a basis for collaboration. But after the Portuguese coup, the SWAPO leadership perceived that its interests in Namibia more directly coincided with the southern position of UNITA. Thus, in the scramble for independence in Angola, SWAPO cast its lot with Jonas Savimbi.

Another element that affected SWAPO's perception of the Angolan political and ethnic dynamic was its relationship with Zambia. Although the Portuguese coup created new political opportunities for the SWAPO leadership, the movement found its hands bound and its operations restrained by Zambian President Kenneth Kuanda. Over the years, SWAPO had cultivated close relations with the Barotse Province ethnic groups who stridently opposed Kuanda's Bemba-based governing party, the UNIP (the United National Independence Party). After the Portuguese coup, SWAPO military activity in the Caprivi Strip and the movement of SWAPO forces into the Huila plateau generated tremendous alarm in Pretoria. This led to an dramatic escalation of South African incursions into Zambia. As a result, a worried Kuanda moved to isolate SWAPO. He curtailed SWAPO military operations, seized most

of its weapons, and jailed many of its leaders. Zambian authorities, also concerned with the trend of the Angolan conflict, diverted Soviet arms shipments from SWAPO to UNITA. [104] Kuanda's moves further strained SWAPO's internal fragmentation, particularly between the Ovambos and the Caprivians. In early 1975, Kuanda intervened with Zambian troops to prevent rebellious SWAPO factions from a mutiny. Kuanda's moves also strained SWAPO-UNITA cooperation. Thus, despite the opening created by the withdrawal of the Portuguese colonial forces, the cumulative effect of the Zambian and South African actions and the internal political fragmentation had left SWAPO demoralized, poorly armed, and an enfeebled liberation movements.

#### 4. The MPLA

During liberation struggle, MPLA strategy in the south focused on the control of the major urban areas and key seaports followed by efforts to exert political influence in the southern ethnic groups. After the coup, the MPLA's formidable organizational structure quickly established control in the important southern cities of Lobito, Huambo, Benguela, and Mocamedes. Its attempts to build trans-ethnic alliances failed. Yet, throughout the liberation struggle, the MPLA pursued a pan-Angolan policy in large part due to its inferior internal position. With victory at as independence approached, the MPLA was unwilling to relinquish its political dominance. It discarded its strategy of trans-ethnic alliances. In September, as Neto considered a tactical alliance with Saviabi, the MPLA elite embarked upon a hardline campaign against its adversaries, to include UNITA. The MPLA pursued anti-UNITA initiatives essentially for two reasons. One, the MPLA perceived UNITA to be solely a military rather than a political movement and, therefore, without legitimacy.

Despite encompassing nearly 40% of the Angolan population, UNITA had failed to mount a serious challenge to the Portuguese colonial administration. Even the insurgent activity in eastern Angolan, UNITA's home turf, during the late 1960s and early 1970s was initiated by MPLA partisans. Furthermore, Savimbi's acceptance of assistance from the Portuguese and then from South Africa had convinced the MPLA elite that UNITA, like the FNLA and FLEC, represented foreign and not Angolan interests. Second, the MPLA leadership saw UNITA's ethnic base as a potential threat to the ethnic imbalance within the MPLA. This, in turn, would endanger the position of the dominant whites and mesticos and dilute the party's authoritarian control of the new government. Thus, in the months before independence, it became necessary to undercut both the domestic and international support to UNITA. Additionally, Savimbi's feeble military and political wings made a hardline position more enticing to the MPLA elite. Taken together, the MPLA viewed the UNITA as a challenge to its internal legitimacy, a challenge that also characterized MPLA policy vis-a-vis UNITA after independence.

##### 5. MPLA-SWAPO Alliance

The political and ethnic balance in the Angolan south was further altered by the October 1975 South African invasion of Angola. For SWAPO, the invasion and Savimbi's links to South Africa redefined its political realities. After casting its lot with UNITA, SWAPO officials perceived themselves to be caught in a diplomatic and military no-man's land. Similarly, for the MPLA, the South African invasion forced the MPLA to alter its strategy in the south. Instead of perceiving the south as solely an arena of internal, ethnic conflict, the invasion added an additional dimension to the political dynamic. Though the South

African intervention created common interests, upon Angolan independence neither Neto nor Nujoma proposed mutual cooperation. Instead several African leaders, led by Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, who viewed the decolonization of Namibia as the next logical step, convinced Neto to forge an alliance with SWAPO. In December 1975, they coordinated the Neto-Nujoma meetings. [105]

The proposal of an alliance with SWAPO posed another dilemma for the MPLA. On one hand, Neto perceived that political and military ties with SWAPO could shift the tenuous political balance in the south in favor of the weaker MPLA while simultaneously exploiting the existing ethnic animosities caused by the rupture of the SWAPO-UNITA relationship. Furthermore, the independent MPLA regime did not have a single southern ethnic ally. Moreover, flushed with an impressive victory in Angola, Neto saw MPLA support of SWAPO as critical not only for the decolonization of Namibia but also necessary for "revolutionary solidarity" in southern Africa. On the other hand, many in the MPLA elite, particularly those in the political left and allies of Neto, were ideologically fearful of any dilution of party supremacy. More particularly, many were deeply suspicious of Nujoma's socialist credentials and of his true ethnic affinities. [106] Nujoma's radical speeches in early 1976, though interpreted by some observers to appeal to the Soviets, were instead intended to allay the anxieties of the skeptical MPLA officials. Additionally, the Soviets sweetened the the alliance by offering increased arms shipments to SWAPO in return for suspension of Chinese assistance. [107] Neto hoped that a tie to Soviet assistance would transcend the doubts of Nujoma's ethnic loyalties. In the end, Neto perceived that a politically impotent and militarily enfeebled SWAPO presented little danger to the Namibian military balance. The offer to SWAPO, Neto reasoned, would

not overtly alarm South Africa. [108] In January 1976, Neto offered to SWAPO the use of Angolan bases for its insurgency in Namibia and Luanda as SWAPO Headquarters. For the newly-independent MPLA, the alliance reflected its perception of the new southern realities and led to a formulation of a series of initiatives designed to protect its gains in the south. The alliance also represented the final piece in the southern Angolan political and ethnic mosaic.

## B. THE SOUTHERN INITIATIVES, 1976

Upon gaining independence in November 1975, the MPLA immediately focused its foreign policy attention toward Zaire first and the combined forces of South Africa and UNITA second. This secondary role characterized the regime's external policy throughout its first years. To the south, the MPLA approached its overall goals of political consolidation and regional stability with considerable uncertainty and trepidation. Early in 1976, more as a form of crisis management than formal decision-making, the regime settled on the pursuit of three initiatives each of which addressed a specific policy objective: the destruction of UNITA, the ouster of all South African forces, and cultivation of ties with SWAPO. The initiatives, however, did not emanate from Luanda as a package. Instead, they were pursued as distinct and separate entities without harmony or congruency. and without consideration of the resulting ramifications. Moreover, they underscored the regime's fundamental misperception of the complex interrelationships comprising the southern political and ethnic dynamic.

### 1. Silencing UNITA

The collapse of the FNLA forces in the north and the withdrawal of South African troops in the south dangerously

overexposed the internal position of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA. Capitalizing on this, MPLA forces, with Soviet arms and Cuban troops, quickly sought to squash the Ovimbundu-based liberation movement. A series of Cuban-led offensives routed UNITA partisans from all its previously held territory, to include the vital provincial capital of Huambo in the central highlands. By mid-February 1976, the MPLA had recaptured all major cities, towns and roadways taken during the South African invasion.

In the face of the MPLA/Cuban onslaught and the South African withdrawal, the UNITA coalition deteriorated into open warfare. Severe fighting erupted between UNITA's Ovimbundu army and elements of the Ngangela population along the Angolan-Zambian border. The demise of the FNLA sparked fighting between Chipenda's Chokwe army and the Ovimbundu so severe that UNITA suffered as many crucial reversals to the Chipenda loyalists as to the MPLA/Cuban forces. In the northwest, MPLA-backed Lunda tribesmen clashed with Chokwe, Ovimbundu, and Ngangela partisans. Although some of this fighting was related to the larger Angolan struggle, most represented a settling of old scores. The remainder of UNITA's disheveled guerrillas fled in disarray into the sanctuary of a sparsely populated savannah in southeastern Angola from where they had waged a protracted, small-scale struggle against the colonial Portuguese.

Diplomatically, the MPLA then sought to sever UNITA from its external supporters. Following a summit with Neto in Brazzaville in late February, Zairean President Mobutu promised to discontinue all aid to UNITA. [109] Several weeks before, after a meeting with Savimbi in Kinshasa, Mobutu announced that he was "neutral" in the Angolan conflict and would no longer supply UNITA. [110] Neto then pressured Zambian President Kenneth Kuanda, who had previously sided with UNITA in the civil war, to adopt publically

a more favorable position toward Luanda. At the time, Kuanda was in an untenable position. To his west, MPLA control of the Benguela Railway threatened Zambia's crucial copper exports. Additionally, thousands of Nyanjas refugees escaping Ovimbundu and Chokwe depredations fled into western Zambia thus posing an increased security threat to the Bemba-based regime in Lusaka. In the south, the interne-cine struggle within the SWAPO hierarchy once again threatened to upset the delicate ethnic balance in Bartose Province. To his east lay the blossoming Rhodesian civil war. Kuanda, meanwhile, was under increasing pressure from other southern African states to conform to the position of the emerging coalition of Frontline States. Lacking any viable alternatives and a loser in the Angolan conflict, Kuanda capitulated. In March, he ordered the impoundment of two UNITA aircraft of French origin at Lusaka airport, banned Zambian air-space to UNITA and closed the Zambian border to UNITA partisans. One month later, on April 16th, Zambia extended diplomatic recognition to the MPLA. Later in the year, Kuanda announced the expulsion of all UNITA officials from his country. [111]

The cumulative efforts of the MPLA were a serious setback for Savimbi. Only a year earlier, the Transitional Government appeared to provide UNITA an avenue to power. Then in January 1976, Savimbi's hopes of power in the post-independent government again soared when the Organization of African States failed to condemn the South African intervention in the civil war. Instead, the South African troops withdrew and Zairean and Zambian support collapsed. UNITA guerrillas faced the Soviet guns alone. In March, a desperate Savimbi repropoed the MPLA-UNITA coalition. Through Mobutu, Savimbi asked Kenyan President Jomo Kenyatta to serve as the intermediary. [112] Neto was in no mood for a reconciliation. Negotiations over the South African troop

presence in southern Angola had eliminated all MPLA incentives for such an accord. Although Savimbi vowed to wage a guerrilla war indefinitely, his loyalists were left to fight with SWAPO partisans for control over the sparse cattle and water resources in the barren south.

## 2. Ouster of South African Troops

The complete withdrawal of all South African forces from Angola was the second critical MPLA objective. In December 1975, the SADF reached the outskirts of Luanda until political realities precipitated their withdrawal. Although most withdrew into Namibia, approximately 4,000-5,000 South African troops remained thirty miles inside Angola in a cordon sanitaire around the Cunene River facility. The intent was obvious: to elicit assurances from the MPLA for the continued construction of the hydroelectric plant and to polish off the SWAPO camps. [113] The occupation of the crucial areas worried the MPLA, but it made no attempt to attack South African positions in the area. Instead, MPLA officials decided to negotiate through third parties to secure a South African withdrawal. In mid-March, the British Foreign Secretary, James Callaghan, and Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, met in London and shortly afterwards confirmed to the UN Secretary-General the MPLA's willingness to permit continued operation. On March 27th, confident of Luanda's pledge to safeguard the installation and its anti-SWAPO operations complete, South Africa withdrew its remaining forces. [114] In early April, an MPLA delegation, led by Foreign Minister Lopo Nascimento, opened secret talks with South African Defense Minister Pieter W. Botha at a site inside Angola to thrash out the details of an agreement. [115] Cuban troops then assumed the role of guardian for the facility. Despite the talks, which also included a prisoner and casualty exchange, tensions along

the border remained high. Neither government trusted the other as each expressed fears. South African officials worried about the MPLA-SWAPO alliance while the MPLA elite was apprehensive about South Africa's failure to recognize MPLA sovereignty in Angola.

### 3. Cultivating the Alliance

Although it attracted overwhelming pre- and post-independence support from the urban mestizo communities in the south, the MPLA failed to generate allegiances with any southern ethnic groups. The MPLA leadership, therefore, viewed an alliance with SWAPO as crucial in its efforts at effecting political consolidation and administration in the areas loyal to UNITA. The MPLA leadership quickly moved to enforce the ties. Neto agreed to permit the training of SWAPO guerrillas at FAPLA bases and the relocation of SWAPO refugees to MPLA controlled areas. Nujoma established his headquarters in the Presidential guest house, one of Luanda's more posh residences.

Many in the MPLA elite, however, owing to SWAPO ethnic ties to other southern groups, doubted Nujoma's revolutionary credentials. In September, Neto tested the alliance by enlisting SWAPO participation in a major MPLA/Cuban offensive against UNITA positions in Cubango Cuango and Huila Provinces. FLAN, SWAPO's military wing, provided intelligence and location on UNITA forces and, reportedly, led the Cubans to UNITA camps. [116] The operation indicated a refinement in regime's pursuit of southern initiatives. But more importantly, it also reflected serious dissent within the party over Neto's decision to align with Nujoma. The operation served an effort by some in the regime to win support Neto's position. In the process, Neto formulated a new and important linkage in the southern initiatives: continued assistance to SWAPO in its struggle for

independence in Namibia would be directly tied to its cooperation in the MPLA's anti-UNITA strategy.

SWAPO's participation in the September offensive, however, was lukewarm and reflected the severe internal fragmentation. First, SWAPO's shift in allegiances from UNITA to the MPLA had generated enormous dissension in many quarters. In particular, the shift was immensely unpopular among the Cuanhama, the dominant group within the Ovambo. They shared strong ethnic affinities with UNITA's Ngangela. Moreover, at the outset of the shift, most PLAN forces were firmly entrenched in UNITA territory and some were colocated with UNITA partisans. Additionally, there were an estimated 30,000 Ovambo refugees settled in UNITA-held areas. Thus, any MPLA/Cuban drive against UNITA would seriously endanger SWAPO supporters. Second, PLAN's role in the September offensive sparked another round in the internecine struggle within SWAPO. At issue was not only the anti-UNITA offensive but also SWAPO's participation in MPLA interests. The offensive radically split the existing tensions between the SWAPO hierarchy and its young recruits, between the rival pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese factions, and escalated the tensions between SWAPO's active forces led by Andreas Shipanga and the external leadership led by Sam Nujoma. Rebellious factions in the Zambian camps led a mutiny in late April against Nujoma that required the intervention of Zambian troops. Shipanga and ten other senior SWAPO officials were arrested, sent to Dar es Salaam and jailed in Ukongo prison. [117] Internal dissension was further exacerbated when, during the offensive, PLAN partisans abducted 142 Cuanhama UNITA sympathizers and executed 120 of them. [118] The internal fragmentation seriously constrained Nujoma's range of political actions and forced him to adopt a less pro-MPLA stance. It also signalled to Luanda that the MPLA-SWAPO alliance possessed several irreconcilable weaknesses.

### C. THE INITIATIVES UNRAVEL, 1977

As the second year of independence unfolded, the MPLA's foreign policy concerns continued to be dominated by activities along the Zairean border and in Cabinda. The regime's three southern initiatives had become a more formal policy although no refinement and little attention had been devoted to the problems and difficulties inherent in the south. As the year progressed, the southern policy began to unravel. Among the most crucial factors were the revival of UNITA, the increasing belligerency of South Africa, and the collapse of the MPLA-SWAPO alliance. As a result, the regime suddenly was confronted with a serious problem without the resources, capability, or coherent policy to manage it.

#### 1. The Revival of UNITA

After his humiliating retreat into the Angolan bush in February 1976, Savimbi carefully reconstituted his coalition. Joined by cadres of young, educated Ovimbundu, and with his roster of ethnically diverse leaders still intact, Savimbi organized a renewed rural insurgency. Although he perceived himself to be the odd man out, Savimbi pursued a broad strategy of trying to prove the essentiality of UNITA participation in the ruling government in Angola. [119]

In 1977, for the first time since the civil war UNITA showed signs of life. In June, UNITA partisans launched a series of major attacks against MPLA garrisons along the Kavango River on the Angolan-Namibian border. The town of Cuangar, largest in the area, fell to UNITA along with the villages of Calai, Cueli, Fungo, and Cabo de Santa Maria. [120] In perhaps the most spectacular incident, an Angolan transport plane, a Soviet-built Antonov-26 twin

engine turboprop, was shot down on July 13th over Cuangar in which 23 men were killed. [121] In addition, guerrilla raids on the Benguela Railway repeatedly disrupted commerce. UNITA attacks continued to increase in frequency and severity throughout the year. The focus of the insurgent activity was in areas of little or no MPLA administrative control. Comparisons to the Katangans in eastern Angola generated alarm in Luanda.

As his partisans skirmished with government forces, Savimbi launched a major diplomatic offensive designed to win international support for his movement. Despite official disclaimers, Zaire and South Africa funneled arms and equipment into southern Angola. The South Africans stepped up the training of UNITA guerrillas in SADF bases in northern Namibia. [122] Following a November 1976 secret meeting in Dakar, Senegal, between French President Giscard d'Estaing and UNITA Foreign Minister Jorge Sangumba, France began to supply UNITA with large infusions of arms both from Zaire and by direct airlifts from French garrisons in Gabon and the Central African Empire. [123] At the outset of 1977, Savimbi admitted to receiving arms from South Africa, China, Kenya, Zaire, Senegal, and France. [124] In March, in conjunction with the 4th UNITA Congress held at Sambu in Huambo Province, UNITA's first such Congress since 1973, Savimbi announced the formation of a separate southern Angolan entity: the Republica Negra Africana e Socialista de Angola (The Black African and Socialist Republic of Angola). [125]

Although the formation of the "UNITA republic" was not designed to a secessionist move, Luanda feared two possible catastrophic implications for their southern policy. First, coming on the heels of the revelation of Cobra 77 and the western response to Shaba I, the MPLA feared that Savimbi's "republic" might achieve international

recognition for UNITA from several moderate African states, notably Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Zaire, Sudan, and from West European governments, perhaps France and Belgium. Second, and considerably more serious, UNITA's plans generated concern that South Africa was once again attempting to create a "Great Ovambo" state under its own aegis that would unify the Cuanhama speaking communities of northern Namibia and southern Angola. In August, Ovamboland's Chief Minister Pastor Cornelius Ndjaba, appointed and salaried by South Africa, accelerated his calls for Ovambo nationalism and for the creation of an Ovambo Citizen Force. This raised the possibility of the formation of an Ovambo/UNITA forces designed to thwart not only MPLA initiatives in the south but also SWAPO military activity in Namibia. [126] In the fall, reports of South African trained Ovambo troops fighting with UNITA fueled the speculation. [127]

By October, when no public African support for the "UNITA republic" appeared, Savimbi quietly dropped the plan. His announcement, however, succeeded in marshalling critical political and military support for UNITA. The increasing sophistication of UNITA attacks as the year progressed demonstrated the vitality of the movement. Reports from Western journalists traveling with UNITA, in particular the account of a seven month sojourn by Leon Dash published in the Washington Post (August 7-13, 1977), heralded the achievements of UNITA and raised questions in international circles concerning the internal legitimacy of the MPLA. The revival of UNITA did not go unnoticed in Luanda.

## 2. South African Belligerence

Despite the negotiated withdrawal of its troops from Angola in February 1976, South Africa continued to play an active role in the dynamics of the Angolan south. The South Africans feared that the relocation of SWAPO guerrillas into

areas adjacent to its ethnopopulist support and closer to Soviet supply lines would, on one hand, embolden the SWAPO military and, on the other, rejuvenate SWAPO's political fortunes within Namibia. This would also, in turn, critically endanger South African political influence and designs in Namibia as well as its territorial Bantustan policies. As a result, the South African government under Prime Minister John Vorster embarked upon an enormous increase in its military presence and activity in Namibia. Initial indications of the South African build-up came in December 1976 when the UN Commissioner for Namibia, Sean McBride, reported that South African troop strength had ballooned from 12, 800 to nearly 50,000 men over a three month period. [128] Most were deployed along the Angolan border in the operational zones of Kaololand, Kavango, and Caprivi. In addition, the troops increasingly assumed from the Namibian-based South African Police most of the internal security functions and patrolling along the Angolan border. [129] Furthermore, the SADF accelerated its elaborate efforts to organize, train, and then indigeneous military forces. In July, Ovambo and Kavango battalions were formed followed by a Bushmen battalion and Rehoboth Baster and Nama companies. [130] Additionally, South African military officials strengthened the units composed of Portuguese refugees, former black Portuguese Angolan troops, elements of Chipenda's Chokwe army, West European mercenaries, and Bushmen Scouts, many of whom participated in the South African interventions into Angola in August and October 1975. [131] Most significantly, the South Africans undertook a major effort to dramatically augment and intensify its assistance to UNITA guerrillas. Enormous amounts of captured Soviet-made military equipment were given to Savimbi. UNITA partisans joined other indigeneous forces in insurgent training at Grootfontein, Namibia. Savimbi's

forces received logistical assistance such as fuel, transportation and food from South African installations along the Angolan border. Finally, beset with a widening civil war in Rhodesia, South African forces broadened its cross-border raids against SWAPO and ZAPU (the Zimbabwe African People's Union, led by Joshua Nkomo) camps in Angola and Zambia. The raids by Namibian-based South African forces often were designed to complement UNITA military objectives.

The increase of South African military presence and activity along the Angolan border generated tremendous alarm and paranoia in Luanda. Not only did the MPLA leadership fear another South African invasion, but the MPLA elite perceived that its support of SWAPO and now ZAPU provided the South Africans yet an additional incentive for intervention in the south at a time when most of its forces were concentrated in the north. The revival of UNITA and South African belligerency signalled to Luanda that the southern policy was rapidly unraveling while the regime possessed little capability to counteract the process.

### 3. The MPLA-SWAPO Alliance Collapses

Although the lukewarm SWAPO cooperation in the September 1976 offensive signalled the initial cracks in the MPLA-SWAPO alliance, by mid-1977 Neto realized that his offer was a colossal mistake. The tension and political dynamics of the Angolan and Namibian conflicts severely strained the MPLA's relationship with SWAPO. First, Neto realized that MPLA and SWAPO interests in the region were largely incompatible. While the MPLA desired to consolidate its political gains, destroy the UNITA insurgency and seek stable borders, SWAPO instead wanted to immediately pursue confrontation in Namibia. When Neto attempted to restrain SWAPO's cross-border incursions, their cooperation waned.

Second, Neto severely miscalculated the South African response to the alliance. Originally, Neto perceived that the feeble and impotent SWAPO posed little danger to South African interests and to the overall military balance in the region. By mid-1977, however, MPLA officials saw SWAPO insurgent activity as yet another incentive for continued South African meddling in Angolan affairs. Third, the MPLA enjoyed little operational control of PLAN activities or influence in SWAPO leadership circles. As the Soviet and later East German role in arms resupply and, reportedly, direct battleground advise for PLAN operations increased, SWAPO's incentives for cooperation with the MPLA deteriorated. [132] Fourth, Neto also perceived Sam Nujoma as an irascible opportunist. Despite the strident Marxist tenor of his speeches, Nujoma repeatedly failed to criticize Jonas Savimbi or UNIFA. On a personal basis, Neto and Nujoma never established a close friendship. [133] Fifth, the MPLA elite discovered that an alliance with SWAPO did little to endear the new regime to the southern ethnic groups. The SWAPO-UNITA rupture failed to earn any new loyalties among the disenfranchised ethnic groups. As a result, MPLA-SWAPO alliance generated increased South African interference, exacerbated the existing ethnic tensions in the region, and threatened the MPLA's internal political consolidation goals. The offer, it became painfully obvious to Neto, had backfired. Distrust and hatred of SWAPO and Sam Nujoma spread from the rank and file blacks in the political left to include most of the MPLA elite. Unfortunately for Neto, Luanda was saddled with a perplexing albatross that it could not easily jettison.

#### 4. Foreign Policy Reassessment

Alarmed at the deterioration of its overall position in the south, the MPLA was forced to respond. On July 21,

1977, Angola protested to the United Nations South Africa's escalating aggression. In message to the UN Secretary-General, Foreign Minister Paulo Jorge warned that Angola might call on "friendly states" to help withstand South African attacks. [134] In October, led by the Cubans, FAPLA launched another major month-long offensive against UNITA positions in Cuando Cubango Province and in the wooded hills of Huambo Province. [135] The offensive marked the first significant FAPLA action against UNITA in over a year and, interestingly, did not include SWAPO participation.

Despite these actions, the revival of UNITA and South African belligerency dealt the MPLA another serious blow. The turmoil in the south occurred on the heels of the revelation of Operation Cobra 77 in February, the first Shaba invasion in March and April, and the Nito Alves coup attempt in May. The regime's actions in the halls of the United Nations and on the battlefields of the south reflected the grave concern in Luanda that its southern initiatives, along with its other prevailing foreign policies, had collapsed. The leadership, in internal disarray and still bogged down with the machinations of Mobutu and Mbunda in the north, lacked the necessary capabilities to stem the declining tide.

Thus, in the fall of 1977, and implemented at the MPLA's First Ordinary Congress held in December, Neto and his closest political allies undertook a fundamental reassessment of Angolan domestic and foreign policies (see also pp. 41-43). The roots of the reassessment lay in the country's economic collapse, the severe externally-provoked instability, the resultant deterioration of its initiatives in the north and south, and the unsettled nature of relations among the party's factions and leaders. Domestically, Neto perceived that the inherent conflict between an economic and political system based upon poder popular

(decentralized and highly participatory) and one controlled by a national plan (highly centralized and restrictive in degree of participation) had in large part spawned the economic duress and intra-party political fragmentation. The efforts to reconcile the two ended in ideological and political confrontations between factions vying for power. It was the Nito Alves faction, after all, that had gained control of the organs of poder popular and used it to build a separate power base from which he challenged the leadership of Neto. Thus, to shore up his internal position, Neto launched a wide-sweeping purge and rectification campaign in all national organizations. Then, at the Congress, the MPLA formally converted itself into a vanguard Marxist-Leninist "labor party" whose base in the hierarchical structure was centered upon the 11-man Political Bureau loyal to Neto. [136]

Externally, Neto perceived that the intervention activities of South Africa and the mushrooming insurgency of UNITA posed a far greater threat to Angolan security than that of Zaire. Neto, in conjunction with his internal efforts, decided to pursue a hardline confrontation against UNITA who the MPLA believed existed solely upon the graces of South Africa and who also represented a serious challenge to the party's reassertion over poder popular. Additionally, in a series of overtures to the West, Neto embarked upon a cautious international initiative to attract greater Western assistance for the wobbly Angolan economy. The overtures also had their political dimensions: Neto hoped that western participation in the Angolan economy would induce the erosion of western support to Savimbi and, in turn, diminish South African incentives for intervention. Against South Africa, however, Neto had little leverage. Saddled with the albatross of SWAPO and in 1977 the establishment of ZAPU camps, political realities prevented a

public alteration of the MPLA policy toward South Africa. Furthermore, the reassessment also implied the abandonment of common political goals with Nujoma and the rigid curtailment of SWAPO military activities in Namibia. The domestic and foreign aspects taken together, the reassessment and the resultant initiatives became the foundation of MPLA policy toward the south at the outset of 1978. In the process, the three disjointed and antiquated southern initiatives had evolved into a more formal policy and as a crucial factor in the MPLA's overall national strategy.

##### 5. UN Contact Group Formed

The final significant event of 1977 to impact upon the dynamics of the Angolan south was the formation of the United Nations Contact Group. Eleven years earlier, in Resolution 2145 adopted in 1966, the United Nations terminated its original "Class C" mandate and asserted direct responsibility for the independence of South-West Africa (Namibia.) [137] Since 1966, the UN had repeatedly failed to engineer the independence of Namibia. In February 1977, the Western powers of the UN Security Council--Canada, France, Great Britain, the United States and West Germany--assumed the role of the "Contact Group," chaired by US Deputy Ambassador to the UN, Donald F. McHenry, in order to negotiate with South Africa and the dominant Namibian political parties a transition to independence. The contact group's basic terms for an international settlement were formulated in Security Council Resolution 385. As its strategy established as the year progressed, the group sought to elicit cooperation from the Frontline States (Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia) to bring SWAPO, as the dominant Namibian political party, to an agreement while the contact group obtained the approval of South Africa. [138] The contact group toured southern African several times in

1977 attempting to persuade South Africa and the Frontline States to join the negotiations. The formation of the contact group generated little interest in Luanda, however. The MPLA leadership had not devoted much attention to the problems in the south and had yet to understand the political complexities of the Namibia question. Moreover, the elite severely mistrusted the Western dominance of the Contact Group most of whom were aligned against the MPLA only one year earlier. The absence of the consideration of the benefits of participation in the Namibian negotiations in Neto's December foreign policy reassessment reflected the failure of the Contact Group to encourage active MPLA cooperation with the Frontline States. As 1978 progressed, Neto perceived that the efforts of the Contact Group were indispensable to the implementation of his December initiatives.

#### D. THE SOUTH ERUPTES, 1978

##### 1. Neto Takes the Initiative

In the months following the its First Ordinary Congress, the MPLA implemented its new foreign policy in a three-pronged effort. The immediate intent was to recapture the diplomatic and political terrain lost in 1977, solidify Neto's internal position, and to establish congruency in the party's foreign policy. First, in March, FAPLA launched a month-long offensive with the assistance of Cuban and East German troops and Soviet advisors against UNITA positions in Cuando Cubango Province. With five battalions backed by helicopters, the offensive was the largest yet assembled against UNITA since the civil war. [139] Interestingly, the offensive complemented its newly redefined relations with SWAPO. In order to reduce South African incentives for intervention in Angola and to achieve greater influence in SWAPO's leadership circles, Neto had to improve both

Angola's and SWAPO's security position in the south. Thus, the offensive was designed not only to crush UNITA resistance but also to alleviate South African pressure on SWAPO. At the same time, Neto ordered Nujoma to resist attacking South African bases in Namibia. [140] Second, Neto commenced a diplomatic effort to achieve Western European acceptance of his regime. Utilizing the prospect of economic investment as the principal attraction, Neto, through several close personal intermediaries, directed overtures at France, Portugal, Belgium, and the Scandinavian countries. Additionally, he initiated talks with the European Economic Community to seek accreditation to the Lome Convention and membership in the group of 57 African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries benefiting from preferential tariffs and economic assistance. [141] Third, when the UN Contact Group submitted its initial blueprint for a Namibian settlement to the Security Council and South Africa in February 1978, [142] Neto realized that his assumption of a more active role within the Frontline States and the Contact Group Strategy was crucial to the success and the viability of his policy. [143]

In the first few months of 1978, Neto's initiatives achieved several notable successes. The anti-UNITA offensive roused Savimbi's partisans from all the towns and villages in the southeast and cut his logistical supply routes to Namibia. The offensive also precipitated a flood of refugees across the Kavango River into Namibia that endangered Savimbi's political support within his fragile coalition. Neto later claimed that on March 28th FAPLA forced Jonas Savimbi to flee from the area and was rescued by a South African helicopter. [144] Then on April 25th, South African Prime Minister John Vorster announced his government's acceptance of the Contact Group proposals for a constitutional settlement in Namibia and the installation of

a United Nations peacekeeping force. [145] The announcement came as the UN General Assembly opened a special session on Namibia and followed several weeks of intense Western pressure on Pretoria. Economically, negotiations began with, among others, Belgian Petrofina and the French ELF-Aquitaine over off-shore oil exploration rights and with Volvo Corporation for the purchase of urban buses. [146] But perhaps the most spectacular for the MPLA and the Angolan people was the historic three day summit meeting held in Guinea-Bissau between Neto and Portuguese President Antonio Ramalho Eanes. [147] The summit, preceded by the accreditation by Portugal of Angola's first Ambassador, Adriano Sebastiano, signalled a breakthrough in relations with Portugal and a resolution of the severe rift plaguing the MPLA and its former metropole. The cumulative effect of the Neto initiatives appeared to reinvigorate the foreign policy initiative in favor of the MPLA.

## 2. Foreign Policy Unravels

As the 1978 unfolded, however, events along Angolan borders once again threatened to derail Neto's initiatives. On May 4th, only eight days after Prime Minister Vorster's acceptance of the Contact Group proposals, South Africa launched a major lightning airborne attack on the main SWAPO headquarters, training center, and refugee camps located approximately 158 miles inside Angola. [148] The raid, mounted from bases in South Africa, struck the iron ore mining town of Cassinga, code named "Moscow", and simultaneously at other SWAPO bases, one of which, Chetequera, was code named "Vietnam." [149] Over 500 Namibians were slaughtered, including women and children, and nearly 200 captured. The raid was the first significant South African military operation into Angola since the civil war. The UN Security Council unanimously condemned South Africa for the

attack and for the first time threatened punitive measures. [150] While there can be little doubt that SWAPO was the focus of the raid, the operation was also designed to alleviate pressure on UNITA. South African officials hoped that the attack would allow UNITA time to recover and recoup from its losses incurred in the March Angolan offensive. Moreover, the raid occurred on the eve of a scheduled meeting in New York between the Contact Group and Nujoma. [151] For Neto, the attack dealt a serious blow to his efforts to mold a congruent policy in the south. It also appeared that the two weaker and more vulnerable southern actors, UNITA and SWAPO, were becoming both instruments and victims in an escalating regional conflict between the more formidable forces of South Africa and the MPLA. Although Neto clearly desired to avoid such a conflict, his fortunes further plummeted just one week after the Cassinga Raid when the Katangans launched their second invasion of Shaba Province.

The Cassinga Raid and Neto's opening to the West also sparked alarm in Moscow. [152] Despite the MPLA's conversion to a vanguard party and its continued reliance upon Soviet military assistance, a number of Soviet officials were clearly wary of Neto initiatives. In general, the Soviets were openly frustrated and impatient with the progress and direction of the Angolan revolution. In particular, the Soviets were dissatisfied with Neto's overtures to the West, his restraints on SWAPO, and the lack of success against UNITA. As a result, the Soviets stepped pressure on its friends in the MPLA to sabotage the Namibian negotiations, urging a continued military resolution to the Namibian conflict. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that Soviet diplomatic personnel in the spring of 1978 opened talks with UNITA's Paris and Dar es Salaam representatives on the conditions necessary for a possible MPLA/UNITA reconciliation. The Soviets used several

supporters of Nito Alves and Jose Van Dumen, architects of the 1977 coup attempt, to render the overture to the MPLA. Then in June, further complicating the climate, SWAPO dissident and Nujoma rival Andreas Shipanga was released from a Tanzanian prison. Immediately upon his arrival in London, Shipanga held meetings with high-level UNITA and dissident SWAPO leaders aimed at creating a third Namibian political party to challenge the strength of SWAPO. There is no evidence to suggest, however, that neither the Soviet nor the Shipanga activities occurred with the knowledge of either Neto or Savimbi. The Soviet machinations, however problematic, underlined the severe pressures imposed upon the regime and confusion generated by both the Cassinga Raid and Shaba II. Additionally, to many in the MPLA, it also underscored of its inability to exercise internal political initiatives without external interference.

### 3. SWAPO Accepts UN Proposals: Neto's Role

Within this political climate, Neto quickly sought to minimize his losses and resume control of the Angolan scene. In early June, he sent a secret, personal message to President Carter through the Angolan Ambassador to the UN, Elisio de Figueiredo, expressing a desire for a reconciliation with Zaire and better relations with the West. After several weeks of diplomatic posturing, Ambassador McHenry was dispatched to Luanda and Kinshasa. During their talks in Luanda, McHenry proposed to tie U.S. pressure on Mobutu to Neto's more active participation in the Contact Group strategy. Neto's quick agreement surprised the Americans. In reality, Neto was under increasing pressure from several quarters. First, privately, he elaborately relayed the Carter message to circumvent the knowledge of the Soviets, his political left, and even his closest political advisers. Publically, however, to placate his more militant critics,

Neto talked tough. He announced that reconciliation with the FNLA and UNITA was impossible and that if Western countries continued to support groups trying to overthrow the MPLA, Angola would provide more "internationalist help" in Namibia, Rhodesia and South Africa. [153] The Cassinga Raid and Shaba II had overexposed his position and provided ammunition for those within the regime to challenge Neto's initiatives. Second was from the Frontline States. In a summit held in Luanda on June 10-11, 1978, the leaders of the Frontline States actively solicited a more direct role for Neto in the Namibian negotiations. After the Cassinga Raid, Nujoma had suspended talks with the Contact Group. The leaders were concerned that Nujoma lacked any incentive to return to the bargaining table. Thus, in Luanda, the leaders, in particular Tanzanian President Nyerere and Zambian President Kuanda, pressured Neto to persuade Nujoma to rejoin the negotiations and to respond constructively to the South African acceptance of the Contact Group proposals.

Despite the pressure from within his party and from the Frontline States, Neto in July 1978 was clearly in the strongest internal position since independence. His brilliant maneuvering to elicit rapprochement with Zaire had muted his more militant critics. Neto also adroitly manipulated the Frontline State pressure to his political advantage. The pressure afforded the MPLA a measure of regional legitimacy and importance, heretofore only grudgingly conceded, that Neto could use to extract the support from the "internationalist" segment of his party. Also, the pressure afforded Neto the leverage needed to coerce Sam Nujoma into a more moderate position.

A few weeks later, the Frontline leaders and the contact group met in Luanda. The intent of the meeting was to persuade SWAPO to follow South Africa's lead and approve the Contact Group proposals. [154] After two days of stormy

negotiating sessions, Nujoma announced on July 12th SWAPO's acceptance of the western proposals for the transition to independence. Most observers credit Neto as the key player in the talks. Neto persuaded Nujoma to moderate SWAPO's insistence of the inclusion of Walvis Bay in the settlement agreement. SWAPO's acceptance of the UN plans marked a major breakthrough in the negotiations. More importantly, Neto had regained the initiative in the search for stability in the south.

#### 4. The December Purge

A few months later, events once again precipitated the demise of the Neto initiatives. On September 20th, as he announced his resignation, South African Prime Minister John Vorster rejected the UN Secretary-General plans for implementation of Resolution 435. He also announced the approval of an internal solution to the Namibian issue by holding elections in December. The announcement was a devastating blow to the progress of the Namibian negotiations. Two days later, on September 22nd, at a press conference in Lusaka, SWAPO Vice-President Daniel Muyongo threatened to walk away from the talks saying that SWAPO "didn't want to be taken for a ride any longer." [155] South Africa's rejection of the implementation plan was followed by an upsurge in cross border raids and air attacks against not only SWAPO targets but also against Angolan infrastructure. In October, SWAPO likewise vetoed the UN plan and called for greater support from the "socialist states." [156]

The rejection by Vorster and Pretoria massive build-up of its forces along the Angolan border sparked renewed and severe dissension within the MPLA. In particular, the regime bickered over its response to the South African move. MPLA Defense Minister, Henrique "Iko"

Carreira, apparently forced the debate public when he announced that the South African build-up was a prelude to an invasion. [157] He detailed intensified South African reconnaissance flights and the enlargement of several northern Namibian airfields to take Mirage fighters. He claimed the attack would be an airborne invasion focused on the cities of Lubango, Huambo, Lobito, and even Luanda itself. Carreira then, on November 7th, imposed a curfew in all areas and, for the first time, ordered a general mobilization of the country's militia and defense forces. Some in the regime saw a similarity to the Cobra 77 plans. Others, though not downplaying the severity of Pretoria's moves, saw the build-up in different terms. Since the MPLA lacked the intelligence capabilities to ascertain South African motives, they perceived the heavy hand of the Soviet Union attempting to re-exert influence within certain regime quarters in order to torpedo the negotiations. The situation worsened when on November 10th, the day before independence, two bombs exploded in the busy municipal market in Huambo killing 40 and injuring 121 people. UNITA claimed responsibility. [158]

Against this background, the MPLA Central Committee met in a stormy four day emergency session of the eve of the party's Ordinary Congress. In a major regime shake-up, on December 9th Neto dismissed Prime Minister Lopo do Nascimento, the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Planning Carlos Rocha "Dilolwa," and three other deputy ministers. [159] The two Prime Minister posts were also abolished. At the time, most observers, including a visiting U.S. Congressional delegation led by former Senator George McGovern, saw the dismissals as signifying a reduction of Soviet and Cuban influence in the MPLA hierarchy. [160] Nascimento had renegotiated the Angola/Soviet Friendship and Cooperation Treaty only two months earlier on October 7th.

Rocha had signed in late September, without Neto's approval, an agreement with Cuba to send an additional 6,000 technicians to Angola. In the words of a Portuguese citizen with close ties to Neto, both were "too close to Havana."  
[161]

This explanation, however, was far too simplistic. Instead, the shake-up resulted from, on one hand, disagreement over the direction of Angolan economic policy, and, on the other, from another direct challenge to Neto's personal power within the regime. By the end of 1978, after three years of independence, Angola faced a major economic crisis. Although hidden by the bonanza of oil revenues and diamond production, the economy had not responded to the regime's socialist initiatives. None of the country's remaining economic sectors had attained pre-independence production levels. At issue for the MPLA was the twin problems of declining food production and the severe lack of human infrastructure, particularly technicians, supervisors and those capable of operating the basic industries. As part of his initiatives formulated a year earlier, Neto favored a larger role for Western investment and limited Angolan private ownership of companies in the construction and transportation sectors. Others in the regime, particularly more ideologically committed blacks and the hardline mesticos, favored the broader participation of the socialist community in the development of the Angolan economy. More importantly, the dismissals were further evidence of Neto's assertion over pois popular. The target of the December purges was the civil service within the economic ministries, those appointed to governmental positions without party membership and without loyalties to Neto. The purge of Nascimento and Rocha, both longtime Neto allies, further consolidated Neto's personal position in what was already a highly centralized presidential system.

## E. THE TWO TRACK STRATEGY, 1979

As Neto erased all sources of internal opposition, South Africa conducted elections in Namibia without UN supervision to form a Constituent Assembly on December 4-8, 1978. After secret deliberations with the newly elected "internal" leaders, South African Prime Minister Pieter W. Botha informed the UN on December 22nd that the new leaders had agreed to cooperate with the UN implementation plans. [162] Then on January 3, 1979, UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim announced the resumption of the UN negotiations. He dispatched Martti Ahtisaari, then UN Commissioner for Namibia, to Windhoek to negotiate dates for a cease-fire and elections. At the end of January, after consultations with the Contact Group, Botha, and South African Administrator-General for Namibia, Justice Steyn, Ahtisaari confidentially predicted the arrival of the UN Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG), a 5,000 men multi-national force to monitor the transition to independence, by the end of February. A few days later, March 15th was set as the cease-fire date. [163]

Within a few weeks, however, the bright prospects for independence appeared on the verge of collapse. Difficulties first appeared in January when South Africa adamantly rejected two key elements of the UN plan: the provision of SWAPO bases in designated location inside Namibia as the outset of the cease-fire and insistence of UNTAG monitoring of SWAPO bases outside Namibia. [164] Then on February 13th and 26th, SWAPO guerrillas attacked South African military bases in northern Namibia with mortar and artillery fire. [165] The attacks came only a few days before the scheduled arrival of the UNTAG. Mutual hostility and distrust multiplied as South Africa retaliated days later with heavy raids on SWAPO bases in Angola and

Zambia--the largest since the Cassinga raid. [166] The climate turned completely sour in late February. After an Ahitisaari briefing in Luanda with Neto, Nujoma announced SWAPO's refusal to accept the establishment of SWAPO bases inside Namibia and the monitoring by UNTAG of SWAPO bases in Angola and Zambia. He also renounced the July 9th acceptance of the UN plan and repeated his demand for the total withdraw of all South African troops before a cease-fire. [167] In a desperate attempt to keep the UN plan alive, the Contact Groups acted as intermediaries in "proximity talks" held in New York in late March. The prospects for a final outcome in Namibia seem remote.

1. The Stalled Negotiations: Neto's Position

SWAPO's military attacks and rejection of the UN plan infuriated Neto. Neto believed that Nujoma had balked only in order to improved his bargaining position against the proposed merger of SWAPO-D (SWAPO-Democrates formed by Andreas Shipanga) and the Namibian National Front (NNF, a non-ethnic based opposition party). Also, he saw Nujoma's belligerence as not only impeding the progress of the negotiations at a crucial time but further endangering the tenuous military balance in the south. Nujoma's rejection came as the MPLA, in a joint effort with Zambia and Zaire, undertook new measures to reopen the Benguela railway, closed since August 1975. UNITA sabotage in the east and sporadic attacks in the central highlands threatened to spoil the planned April 1, 1979 debut. The resumption of South African raids once again revived the fortunes of Jonas Savimbi who feared a Namibian settlement would isolate him between SWAPO and the MPLA. As a result, together with Kuanda, Neto ordered Nujoma to resist attacking any South African bases as long as negotiations proceeded. He also warned the SWAPO leader that a cease-fire along the

Angolan-Namibian border would be scrupulously observed.  
[168]

The stalled Namibian negotiations also endangered Neto's initiatives. First, although most West European countries had responded to Neto's overtures, in particular France in 1978 and West Germany in 1979 extended recognition, most countries withheld further investment until a resolution of the conflict with UNITA and the Namibian question. Second, a right-wing backlash in South Africa appeared to constrain the position of Prime Minister Botha. In April, on the heels of the Muldergate scandal and dwindling fortunes of Ian Smith in Rhodesia, South African officials talked openly of a "Constellation of Southern African States." Then in early May, the Wiehahn and Riekert Commission reports, recommending sweeping reform in the black labor system, were released. The verlighte-verkrampste rift imposed new pressures upon Botha's position in the Namibian negotiations. For Neto, this meant the continued presence of South African troops on his southern border and South African obstinacy at the bargaining table. The newly elected Constituency Assembly in Namibia took advantage of the chaos in Pretoria by announcing its intention of pursuing an "internal route" to independence. [169]

The cumulative effect of these events rendered Neto's previous southern initiatives obsolete. The situation on the ground in the south simply had gone beyond the initiatives and thus necessitated a reappraisal of the regime position towards the south. Neto perceived that the deadlock in the Namibian talks warranted the MPLA assuming a leading role in the negotiations on behalf of the Frontline States. In Neto's view, SWAPO intransigence could not continue. But, on the other hand, regime political dynamics and political realities would not permit any alteration in the regime's perception of UNITA. The result was a

substantial shift in MPLA policy toward the south: the adoption of a two-track strategy. One was a strategy of active negotiation within the context of the UN plan for Namibian independence. The other track was a strategy of continued resistance against the UNITA insurgency and South African attacks. The significance appeared subtle to most. To the MPLA, the adoption of the two-track strategy marked a clear upgrading of the negotiation option. Whereas previously the regime pursued solely confrontation policies against UNITA and South Africa, Neto perceived that only his forceful and open intervention into the Namibian talks could sever the South African regional pressure and isolate UNITA.

## 2. The DMZ Proposal

The principal stumbling block in the negotiations remained the disposition of SWAPO's guerrillas after the cease-fire. As a means of reactivating the talks, the Frontline State leaders decided to once again moderate SWAPO's position. Meeting in Lusaka in May, the leaders prevailed upon Sam Nujoma to accept the South Africa's primary objection to the UN plan, the provision of SWAPO bases in Namibia. Nujoma reluctantly acquiesced that upon South Africa's acceptance of the implementation plan, SWAPO would in turn no longer insist upon Namibia bases. [170] South Africa's second objection, the insistence of UNTAG monitoring of SWAPO bases outside Namibia, was rejected by not only Nujoma but also by Zambian President Kuanda. As a result, the settlement talks once again stalled.

To overcome South African insistence on UNTAG monitoring, Neto offered a compromise. In June, while his son, Jose Manuel, was undergoing surgery at the Cleveland Medical Clinic, Neto secretly relayed a message to McHenry through his personal Portuguese physician who was attending the surgery. After a meeting of U.S. and Angolan officials in

Lisbon, McHenry and Gerald Funk flew to Luanda on July 13th. McHenry, Funk, and Neto met at the Luandan airport at night in order to avoid tipping off not only the Soviets and Cubans but also SWAPO. There, Neto proposed the establishment of a demilitarized zone of 50 kilometers on each side of Namibia's borders with Angolan and Zambia. Under this plan, the UN forces could not only monitor SWAPO bases on the Namibian side, as envisioned in the UN plan, but also would be permitted to operate on the Angolan and Zambian sides within the zone. Furthermore, Neto agreed to allow the governments South Africa, Angola, and Zambia to retain certain forces within the 100KM wide zone at designated locations. SWAPO guerrillas, if unwilling to return to Namibia to participate in the independence elections, would be restricted to their bases under Angolan supervision.

[171]

Neto's compromise proposal was a landmark breakthrough in the negotiations. Armed with a viable alternative to the South African and SWAPO positions, the Contact Group was able to rejuvenate and refocus the negotiations. On one hand, the compromise was intended to promote the prospects of a final settlement and to allay South African concerns. In the larger picture, however, the compromise reflected Neto's careful evaluation of the regional environment, the structure of that environment, regime capabilities and constraints, and the MPLA's orientation and role. Neto's pressure on SWAPO, his leading role within the Frontline States, and his flexibility at the bargaining table were products of this evaluation. Clearly, Neto hoped the regime role in the region, that of a mediator of conflict resolution, would carry over to other forums. In particular, Neto hoped to demonstrate to South African officials the MPLA's willingness to co-exist on the basis of mutual respect of sovereignty. The Neto's evaluation also

had its political dimensions: a clearly defined, well-known MPLA regional role would show South Africa that the Luanda posed no serious security threat and, therefore, assistance to UNITA would be unnecessary.

### 3. Neto's Death: The End of an Era

As the Contact Group sought South African approval of the DMZ proposal, Neto became seriously ill. On September 6th, he was rushed to Moscow for treatment. Two days later, during exploratory surgery, doctors found an inoperable cancer of the pancreas. On September 10th, suffering from chronic hepatitis, cirrhosis of the liver, and a kidney infection, Neto died at the age of 57. [172] A month of national mourning was declared as Neto was buried in his birthplace of Catete. Ten days later, a compromise candidate, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, was chosen the new President of Angola.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Previously, the pattern for most African states at independence was to retain the foreign policy orientation bequeathed to them by the departing colonial regime. In spite of all the subsequent rhetoric about non-alignment, the newly-independent African governments pursued close ties, identification and a similar orientation with its former metropole. In April 1974, however, a radical military coup in Portugal set in motion a series of events that led to the emergence of a new phenomenon, the African Marxist-Leninist state. These new regimes embraced a radical form of socialism and boldly rejected the idea of a foreign policy legacy. In varying degrees, they looked more to the foreign powers that had assisted them in the wars of national liberation than to colonial powers. It was an evolutionary change in the African political climate. Although it was rooted primarily in the internal political developments of each state, the African Marxist-Leninist state adopted new foreign policy orientations based principally upon its perception of the international system and its place in that system.

Angola was one of these countries. Upon independence, the leaders of the MPLA fashioned a unique brand of external relations. Regionally, the MPLA took the posture of establishing and cultivating friendly ties with only those African states that had energetically supported its cause during the liberation struggle. Buffeted for twenty years by the centripetal and centrifugal forces generated by Zairois nationalism, the MPLA kept its distance from the array of African actors who had backed the FNLA and UNITA. As a result, the MPLA never perceived Africa as the

center-piece of its foreign relations. Internationally, the MPLA instead saw that its identity and form of socialism was more compatible with that of the socialist community. A victor in not only an anti-colonial but also an anti-imperialist struggle, the MPLA shunned cooperation with Western powers in favor of links to the eastern bloc. The MPLA perceived a commonality of interests and revolutionary destiny with SWAPO, the ANC, and ZAPU. Thus, its foreign relations reflected more the internationalist view within the pro-Soviet domain than a pan-African perspective. This brand of external relations also fitted comfortably to the perception of those within the myriad of internal factions that comprised the MPLA.

Over time and as the harsh realities of nation-building confronted the MPLA leaders, a measure of realism was adopted. The once one-lane ideological highway to Havana and Moscow was broadened and redesigned to include numerous access routes to the West. This evolution was rooted in four areas. First, threats to regime security and legitimacy, in particular the border instability with Zaire and South Africa and the UNITA insurgency, precipitated a change in the relations with other African states. Neto solicited rapprochement with Zaire, accommodation in several venues with South Africa, and pressured SWAPO to moderate its demands. Second, internal economic realities forced a readjustment of the regime's external economic relations that, as a consequence, extended onto the political level. Neto courted Western powers and sought to improve relations with them, including those that had always maintained anti-MPLA positions. Third, the realities of participating in the international system and its orientation with the Soviet Union imposed costs that Neto was unwilling to bear. He sought to diversify Angola's foreign relations and to distance the regime from the internationally-perceived

commitment to the Soviet bloc. Fourth, the crippling internal dissension and factionalism forced Neto to define more rigidly the progress and direction of the regime's external and domestic policies. Thus, after the Nito Alves coup, Neto asserted absolute control over the national organs of poder popular, opted for a more centralized political and economic system, and eliminate all opponents to his policies. In the process, Neto welded absolute control over the party and governmental institutions that were necessary in order to transcend not only the difficulties imposed by the international environment but also those imposed from within the regime.

The result was the formulation of the MPLA's own brand of non-alignment. Regionally, this was reflected in a more active involvement and participation in those issues confronted by the Frontline States, in cultural and economic agreements with its neighbors Zaire and Zambia, and in the activities of the OAU. Internationally, the MPLA established links to numerous countries of all political persuasions and played a leading role in the United Nations' effort to negotiate a transition to independence in Namibia. Undeniably, however, the regime remained committed to the principles of scientific socialism and felt more comfortable in its relationships with the socialist community. Marxism-Leninism continued to be the rules of the game in Luanda. Angola had chosen its own political course irrespective of colonial legacies. In the process, it was forced to adapt to its environment as it sought to reconcile the conflicting demands of ideology and interests. Whether its adaptation was precipitated by internal design or by hostile neighbors, the Angolan regime had no cause to live in enmity with those who had chosen their own different creeds. Such is the legacy of Agostinho Neto.

## NOTES

1. John A. Marcum, The Angolan Revolution, Volume I, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1969), pp. 24-28.
2. Ibid., pp. 35-38.
3. Marcum I, p. 45 and interview with U.S. intelligence community officials in Washington, D.C., February 1983.
4. The leadership of the Congo was in turmoil during this period. In September, a rift developed between Lumumba and Kasavubu and each dismissed the other from office. A week later, Joseph Mobutu, an ex-army sergeant appointed by Lumumba to be the Commander of the Congolese National Army, shoved both men aside, took control, and ran the government with the "College of Commissions" until Lumumba's death in January 1961. Mobutu then handed power back to Kasavubu who appointed Joseph Ileo, the Senate President and a Bakongo, as Premier. In effect, however, Kasavubu dominated the decision-making in Leopoldville during Sept 1960-June 1961 and, for our purposes, will be considered the Congolese leader.
5. Interestingly, Kasavubu made this accusation against Roberto and the FNLA following Lumumba's ouster in September 1960. Marcum I, p.48.
6. Interview with U.S. intelligence community officials, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
7. Pierre de Vos, "Angola: Avec Les Rebelles," L'Express, July 16, 1961 and Le Monde, July 6, 1961, cited in Marcum I, p. 176.
8. The Bakongo based UDDIA party of Congo-Brazzaville President Abbe Fulbert Youlou was a sympathetic supporter of the ABAKO, and shared similar pan-Bakongo plans. Youlou also shared Kasavubu's perception of both Angolan liberation movements.
9. Adoula was a former left-wing trade unionist and founder-member of Lumumba's MNC. At independence, he broke and joined Kasavubu.
10. During the summer of 1961, the MPLA, largely through the efforts of Mario de Andrade, mustered sufficient external support to force Adoula to grant the movement an exile base. Marcum I, pp. 200-204.
11. The most celebrated incident was the Loge affair where a large contingent of MPLA forces were slaughtered by an unit of the FNLA transported to the area and supplied by the ANC. John A. Marcum, The Angolan Revolution, Volume II.

(Cambridge: MIT Press, 1978), p. 43, 45. Hereafter cited as Marcum II.

12. Ibid, p. 66, 98.
13. Ibid, p. 43, 67.
14. Ibid, p. 72.
15. Ibid, pp. 77-78.
16. During this period, Neto was conducting a purge of the left-wing, pro-Maoist faction of the MPLA. The ALC heard testimony from several of these purged leaders and concluded that the MPLA suffered too much internal dissension to warrant OAU support.
17. The ALC also recommended that all external aid to the Angolan nationalist movements be channelled through the Leopoldville government. This formal decision by the ALC and Neto's purge of his most staunchly ideological left-wing led the Soviet Union to halt arms shipments to Neto in July, 1963. Ibid, p. 92, Charles K. Ebinger, "External Intervention in Internal War," Orbis, Fall 1976, p. 678, and private interview, January 1983.
18. Basil Davidson, "Unity in Angola," West Africa, December 14, 1963, p. 1399.
19. By 1963, the Congo had a de facto split in its foreign relations between the official policies of Premier Adoula and the machinations of President Kasavubu. Youlou saw the MPLA as a counter to FNLA military activity in Cabinda that was severely straining his ability to effect a Cabindan settlement in Congo-Brazzaville's favor. Youlou's convening of PLEC representatives in Pointe Noire, August 2-4, 1963, to form a united Cabindan front under Brazzaville auspices should be seen in this light.
20. The OAU was extremely uncomfortable with Tshombe as the leader of the Congo. The legacy of his three year succession attempt initially caused OAU concern but it was the brutal extermination of former pro-Lumumba Christopher Gbenye's People's Republic of the Congo in Stanleyville in October 1964 that precipitated the OAU rejection of Tshombe's legitimacy in Leopoldville.
21. Interviews with U.S. officials in Washington, D.C., February 1983. The MPLA had begun the groundwork for their eastern front in the fall of 1964. Zambian independence in October 1964, the Bemba/Lunda link to internal Zambian politics, and the offices of Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere accelerated the opening of the MPLA's third front.
22. Mobutu placed Kasavubu under house arrest and declared himself President. Tshombe, meanwhile, returned to Spain and lived in exile until 1967 when, after convicted in absentia in Leopoldville court, he was kidnapped and taken

to Algiers. He remained a prisoner in Algeria until his death in 1969. Kasavubu died in Leopoldville in 1970. Kimba was hanged in a mass public execution ordered by Mobutu in June 1966.

23. See Marcum I and II, Ebinger, *op. cit.*, and Basil Davidson, In The Eye of the Storm: Angola's People. (New York: Doubleday, 1973), and Ebinger, The Politics and Diplomacy of the Angolan Conflict, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983).
24. The MPLA regained its Brazzaville base in 1972 following its ouster in 1968 due primarily to the military successes of the Franque wing and, in part, due to the MPLA's support of Brazzaville President Marien Ngoubai during the 1972 Peking and Kinshasa orchestrated coup attempt led by Ange Diawara. Although Ngoubai was also worried about MPLA military activity against the Brazzaville supported wing, he allowed the MPLA to reestablish its base but imposed stringent conditions upon the receipt of arms shipment similar to those of Cyrille Adoula. The leftward drift in Brazzaville politics and Neto's personal visit in July 1975 caused Ngoubai to resume the transshipment of Soviet arms.
25. Marcum II, pp. 222-240.
26. The agreement collapsed in May 1974 when FNLA forces wiped out a large MPLA troop contingent attempting to infiltrate Angola. The following taken from Marcum II, pp. 208-209.
27. Peking Review, February 12 and 13, 1972 and interviews in Washington, D.C., February 1983.
28. The agreement and Neto's purges was the catalyst for the defections of the Revolta do Leste and Revolta Activa factions in 1974.
29. Galen Hull, "Internationalizing the Shaba Conflict," Africa Report, July/August 1977, p. 4 and interviews with U.S. officials, February 1983.
30. Madeleine G. Kalb, The Congo Cables, (New York: McMillan Publishing, 1982), pp. 378-379 and interviews with U.S. intelligence and State Department officials, February 1983.
31. Basil Davidson, In The Eye of the Storm: Angola's People, (New York: Doubleday, 1973), p. 112 and interviews with U.S. intelligence officials, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
32. Hull, p. 5.
33. Interviews in Washington, D.C., February 1983.
34. Interviews with U.S. intelligence and State Department officials, Washington, D.C., February 1983. The Katangans were not totally unified, however, as serious rifts existed

within the sizeable community and not all trusted nor claimed allegiance to the leadership of Mbumba.

35. The following evidence collected in a series of interviews with officials in the CIA, Dept. of State, NSC, and others in Washington, D.C., February 1983, and with former Portuguese colonial officials in Lisbon, May 1983.
36. Almirante Coutinho's official purpose was to balance the relative military forces of the three liberation movements. Without such, the chances of a negotiated Transitional Government at Alvor would have been slim. Personal considerations, however, prevented favorable actions for the FNLA. In 1961, as a naval surveying officer, Coutinho was captured by Zairois forces, jailed and severely tortured for six months before his release.
37. Marcum II, p. 274.
38. Ibid, p. 443 and N'Zambia K. Afri-Ku-Nyeng, Jeune Afrique, June 10, 1977, p. 15.
39. The New York Times, February 29, 1976.
40. Jorge Dominguez, in "Benefits and Costs of the Cuban Troops in Angola," Cuban Studies, January 1978, argues that the Cuban intervention severely strained the Cuban domestic economy, particularly in those areas requiring skilled personnel. Neto's perception of a limited and perhaps temporary Cuban commitment may have contributed to his active pursuit of peace with his neighbors.
41. Ebinger, p. 693.
42. Arthur J. Klinghoffer, The Angolan Civil War: A Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980), p. 59.
43. Interview with a former senior U.S. administration official, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
44. Ebinger, p. 693.
45. Ibid, p. 694. Rumsfeld was the first U.S. Secretary of Defense to visit Africa.
46. It is unclear whether any US arms were transshipped by Mobutu into the hands of FNLA or UNITA after the April visit. UNITA had received a bounty of captured Soviet arms from the South Africans. The implication of the April visit is that the agreement reinforce Mobutu's designs of continued destabilization of the Angolan border.
47. Henry Freedman, "Skirmishes in Angola--Destabilizing from Pretoria," New African Development, March 1977, p. 191.

48. Washington Post, March 23, 1977, and interview with a former senior U.S. administration official, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
49. The following taken from interviews conducted in Washington, D.C. and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, February 1983, and from N'Zambia K. Afri-Ku-Nyeng, "Zaire-Angola: Les Origines Secretes de la Guerre," Jeune Afrique, June 10, 1977, pp. 15-16.
50. The Times (London), March 1, 1977.
51. See Colin Legum and Paul Webster, "The Undoing of Operation Cobra," The Observer (London), April 17, 1977 and Antony Terry, "South Africa Backs Secret Plan to Invade Angola," The Sunday Times (London), May 29, 1977.
52. It is interesting to note that amid these external challenges, Neto met with UN Ambassador Andrew Young in Lagos on February 9, 1977. Neto broached the subject of normalization of relations saying, "The Russians are friends although there are many things with which we disagree." The New York Times, February 10, 1977.
53. For an excellent discussion of the Alves' position, see Paul Fauvet, "Angola: The Rise and Fall of Nito Alves," Review of African Political Economy, no. 9, May-August 1978, pp. 90-95.
54. Interviews with officials in Washington, D.C., February 1983.
55. Apparently, the FNLC invasion was part of a wider plan that included simultaneous attacks against Mobutu from Brazzaville and from inside Zaire. The coordinated operation failed because Mbumba launched his attack three days early and Ngoubai balked at the last moment. Ngoubai's refusal probably led to his death. Former Congolese President Massamba-Debat was executed a week later after admitting prior knowledge of Ngoubai's assassination. James Fox and Antony Terry, "Angola Warns as Moroccans Help Mobutu," The Sunday Times (London), April 10, 1977 and The Washington Post, March 25, 1977.
56. The wings of FLEC merged under the leadership of Franque in January, stepped up attacks on Cabinda City, and warned Gulf Oil Company to abandon the oilfields. Gulf turned to Luanda for more protection. Interview with Gulf Oil officials, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, February 1983.
57. It is interesting to evaluate Neto's purposes behind revealing the Cobra 77 plot. Under extreme pressure from the Soviets and his left to take action upon the alleged plot, Neto revealed the plot to the foreign diplomatic corps thus ensuring maximum international publicity and appeasing the intellectual elites and the Soviets. Additionally, Neto may also have decided to act in order to strengthen his case with Castro only a few weeks before his arrival in Luanda.

58. Interviews with former Carter administration and Gulf Oil officials, Washington, D.C. and Pittsburgh, Pa., February 1983.
59. Colin Legum, ed., African Contemporary Record, Volume XII (New York: Africana, 1981), p. 8499. Hereafter cited as ACR.
60. Radio Luanda, January 14, 1978.
61. Radio Kinshasa, February 25, 1978.
62. Interviews in Washington, D.C., February 1983.
63. Interviews with U.S. intelligence officials, February 1983.
64. Interviews in Washington, D.C., February 1983.
65. Unknown to Neto, the October government offensive had the ironic consequence of forcing UNITA partisans from their bases in southeastern Angola into the central highlands.
66. The MPLA also formally adopted the "Leninist" principles of political organization and "scientific socialism" was declared as the official doctrine. This strategy for national reconstruction allocated increased authority and capacity to the President and the Politburo. See Paul Fauvet, "MPLA Congress," New African, February 1978, p. 41.
67. The Star Weekly (Johannesburg), February 11, 1978.
68. The New York Times, March 25, 1978. Actually, Mobutu may have had good cause to initiate the raid. The town of Caianda lies in the Cazambo salient, one of the invasion routes the FNLC would use only six weeks later.
69. Ibid.
70. William J. Durch, "The Cuban Military in Africa and the Middle East," Studies in Comparative Communism, Spring/Summer 1978, pp. 73-74.
71. The New York Times, February, 9, 1978.
72. See Michael Clough, "From South-west Africa to Namibia," in Changing Realities in Southern Africa, Clough, ed., (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1982).
73. Interview with former Carter Administration official, Washington, D.C., Feb 1983.
74. The New York Times, May 5, 1978.

75. The New York Times, May 7, 1978.
76. Ibid.
77. As the Zairian army fled in front of the FNLC, only UNITA partisans stood and fought. "Interview with General Mbumba," New African, July 1978, pp. 15-16.
78. Minerals Yearbook, 1978-1979, Volume III (USGPO: Washington, D.C., 1981), p. 1062. Although I could not confirm this, there is some evidence to suggest that the cobalt plants in the Kolwezi areas were not attacked or damaged during the invasion. Instead, the FNLC directed its efforts at the joint French-Belgian copper concerns and at not the Belgian owned cobalt areas.
79. Hours after President Carter's public accusation on May 17th, Castro summoned Lyle F. Lane, the head of the U.S. interests section in Havana, and assured Lane of no Cuban involvement in Shaba II. Though Lane had arrived in Havana in September 1977, Castro had never met with Lane. Also, Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodrigues made an abrupt denial of Cuban complicity before the UN General Assembly. The New York Times, June 11, 1978, and ARB, May 1-31, 1978, p. 4867.
80. The GDR was given the responsibility of creating 45 pockets of "permanent revolution" in Zaire. ACR, Volume XII, p. B602.
81. Klinghoffer, p. 174.
82. "Mbumba Seeks Reconciliation," New African, October 1978, p. 22 and the Washington Post, July 22, 1978. Mbumba was deported to Guinea-Bissau in October, 1979 as part of an arrangement with Mobutu that also included the deportation of Holden Roberto from Zaire.
83. ACR, Volume XI, p. B499.
84. Radio Luanda, June 10, 1978.
85. Private interviews with former senior Carter Administration officials, Washington, D.C. and New York City, February 1983 and an interview in Estoril, Portugal, May 1983.
86. At the opening session of the NATO summit conference in Washington, D.C. on May 30th, Carter stated that the U.S. was ready to assist in the formation of an African peacekeeping force for Zaire. For a text of Carter's new conference, see The New York Times, June 14, 1978.
87. The Washington Post, June 21, 1978.
88. The following taken from interviews with former senior U.S.

administration officials, Washington, D.C. and New York, New York, February 1983.

89. It is interesting to speculate the reason for Carreira's primary negotiating role. Organizationally, on one hand, his presence was critical to any agreement and implementation of the agreement. On the other hand, however, Carreira also had strong ties to the political left and thus Neto may have invoked his presence in order to balance the concerns of his domestic constituencies.
90. The New York Times, July 31, 1978 and ACR, Volume XI, p. B499-500.
91. For a fuller discussion, see Marcum II, pp 241-271.
92. Ibid, pp. 255-257.
93. Private interview with former Portuguese colonial officials in Lisbon, May 1983.
94. Savimbi formed UNITA in 1966 as an alliance of regional ethnic groups around a small nucleus of fellow Ovimbundu and members of the Ngangela (Luena, Luchazi, and Mbunda) together with the Chokwe ethnic groups. Historically, however, the Ngangela and Chokwe were implacable foes of the dominate Ovimbundu. UNITA's internal strength catapulted with the demise of the MPLA's eastern front in the early 1970s. During their withdrawal, the MPLA forces attacked Chokwe, Luchazi, Mbunda and Lozi leaders in western Zambia. MPLA tactics thus considerably aided UNITA fortunes among the Ngangela, Chokwe, Cuanhama (related to the Ovambo) and the Herero groups while reinforcing Savimbi's anti-mestizo theme. Washington Post, December 25, 1973.
95. Colin Legum and Tony Hodges, Angola: The War Over Southern Africa, (New York: Africana, 1975), p. 75.
96. Marcum, II, p. 265.
97. Although the Ford Administration authorized on July 17th a \$14 million covert paramilitary program against the MPLA, most assistance destined for UNITA was funneled and subsequently off by Mobutu. John Stockwell, In Search of Enemies, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), p. 55, 258.
98. ARB, December 1-31, 1975, p. 3871. In July 1975, the MPLA alledged SWAPO involvement in the Angolan war on UNITA's behalf. Ibid, September 1-30, 1975, p. 3771.
99. Marcum II, p. 439 and Hodges, p. 54.
100. John Marcum, CSIS Africa Notes (Washington, D.C.), February 18, 1983, p. 5.
101. Reported by Western intelligence sources. FBIS, Southern

- Africa, March 2, 1976, p. 2 and The Washington Post, April 26, 1976.
102. Private interview with State Department officials, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
  103. Marcum II, p. 224.
  104. Michael S. McCrary, "Guerrilla Warfare in Namibia and Associated Implications for External Military Involvement," Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, December 1981, p. 90.
  105. Private interviews in Lisbon, Portugal and Washington, D.C., May and June 1983.
  106. Private interview, Estoril, Portugal, May 1983.
  107. ARB, February 1-29, 1976, p. 3942.
  108. Private interview, Estoril, Portugal, May 1983.
  109. The New York Times, February 29, 1976.
  110. Klinghoffer, p. 59.
  111. ACR, Volume IX, p. B449-450.
  112. Private interviews with former Carter Administration officials, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
  113. ACR, Volume XIII, p. B432.
  114. The Times, (London), March 22, 1976 and The Guardian, March 26, 1976.
  115. Private interview with a senior Carter Administration official, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
  116. Marcum, CSIS Africa Notes, p. 4, and McCrary, p. 97.
  117. ACR, Volume XIII, p. B774.
  118. ARB, September 1-30, 1976, p. 4174.
  119. For an interesting assessment of UNITA during this period, see Lord Chalfont's interview with Savimbi, The Times, (London), September 27, 1977.
  120. The New York Times, July 22 and 26, 1977.

121. The Times (London), July 16, 1977.
122. Paul Fauvet, "Cobra 77...How Zaire Seized Angola's Aircraft," New African, May 1977, p. 395.
123. Private interviews with U.S. intelligence and State Department officials, Washington, D.C., February and June 1983.
124. The Times, (London), January 17, 1977, and confidential interview with UNITA officials in Washington, D.C., June 1983.
125. The Republic's northern border was to be roughly the eleventh parallel from Novo Redondo on the Atlantic Ocean to Texeira de Sousa in the eastern border with Zambia.
126. Roger Murray, "War Hots Again in Southern Africa," New African September 1977, p. 921.
127. The Times, (London), December 19, 1977.
128. The Times (London), December 11, 1976.
129. McCrary, p. 119.
130. ARB, November 1-30, 1977, p. 4643 and McCrary, p. 124.
131. Private interviews, Washington, D.C., June 1983 and McCrary, p. 128.
132. Private interview with U.S. intelligence officials, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
133. Private interview, Estoril, Portugal, May 1983.
134. "Angola: UNITA Renews Its Challenge," African Confidential, August 19, 1977, p. 3.
135. Paul Fauvet, "Increasing Tensions on Angola's Borders," New African, April 1978, p. 51.
136. Paul Fauvet, "MPLA Congress," New African, February 1978, p. 41.
137. Solomon Slonim, South-West Africa and the UN: An International Mandate in Dispute, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1973), p. 313. Also, see Clough, p. 62
138. Private interview with a senior Carter Administration official in Washington, D.C., February 1983.

139. Angolan Defense Minister Henrique Carreira on Radio Havana, May 5, 1978.
140. Private interviews with State Department officials in Washington, D.C., February 1983, and a private interview in Estoril, Portugal, May 1983.
141. David Ottaway, Afrocommunism, (New York: Africana Publishing, 1981), p. 170.
142. For a description of the proposals, see Donald McHenry's testimony before the House Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 96th Congress, 2nd Session, September 9, 1980, p. 4.
143. Private interview, Estoril, Portugal, May 1983.
144. Neto's Independence Day address, Radio Luanda, November 11, 1978.
145. ARB, April 1-30, 1978, p. 4829.
146. ACR, Volume XI, p. B495 and interviews with U.S. intelligence officials, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
147. Africa Report, September-October, 1978, p. 36. Interestingly, President Eanes' special envoy to the talks, Major Melo Antunes, was also a key actor in the implementation of the Alvor Accords and the one who in September 1975 attempted to merge UNITA with the MPLA.
148. The New York Times, May 5, 1978.
149. McCrary, p. 104.
150. The New York Times, May 7, 1978.
151. "South Africa Invades Angola--Again," New African, June 1978, p. 37-38.
152. The following taken from a series of interviews with former Carter Administration, State Department, UNITA and other officials in Washington, D.C., February and June 1983, and interviews in Lisbon and Estoril, Portugal, May 1983.
153. The Washington Post, July 22, 1978.
154. Private interview with a senior Carter Administration official, Washington, D.C., February 1978. Also, ARB July 1-31, 1978, p. 4935.
155. ARB, September 1-30, 1978, p. 5000.

156. Roger Murray, "South Africa Chooses Confrontation Course with Namibia," New African, November 1978, p. 14.
157. ARB, November - 1-30, 1978, p. 5050.
158. Radio Luanda, November 10, 1978.
159. The Washington Post, December 10, 1978. The three deputies were from the ministries of Internal Trade and Housing and Construction. Also purged was Costa Andrade Ndunduma, the director of Jornal de Angola, Luanda's only newspaper, and of Angolan television.
160. Ibid, December 15, 1978. Interviews with State Department officials, Washington, D.C., February 1983.
161. Private interview, Estoril, Portugal, May 1983.
162. Clough, p. 73.
163. ACR, Volume XII, p. B829.
164. Testimony by Donald F. McHenry before the House Subcommittee on Africa, op. cit.
165. ARB, February 1-28, 1979, p. 5173.
166. ACR, Volume XII, p. B 829.
167. ARB, February 1-28, 1979, p. 5169.
168. Private interview, Estoril, Portugal, May 1983.
169. ARB, April 1-30, 1979, p. 5234.
170. McHenry testimony, op. cit.
171. Private interviews in Washington, D.C., February 1983 and in Estoril, Portugal, May 1983. Also, McHenry testimony, Sept 9, 1980.
172. Though cirrhosis of the liver is usually associated with chronic alcohol abuse, Neto was not known as heavy drinker. Hepatitis, however, is a common maladie throughout Africa. Neto's liver problems probably caused the kidney infection. Interestingly, chronic alcohol abuse is also a predisposing factor in cancer of the pancreas. Black men, ages 35-70, are particularly susceptible to this form of cancer. Some observers have speculated that the Soviets allowed Neto to die. Neto's ailments suggest that his death was not sudden and probably could not have been prevented.

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