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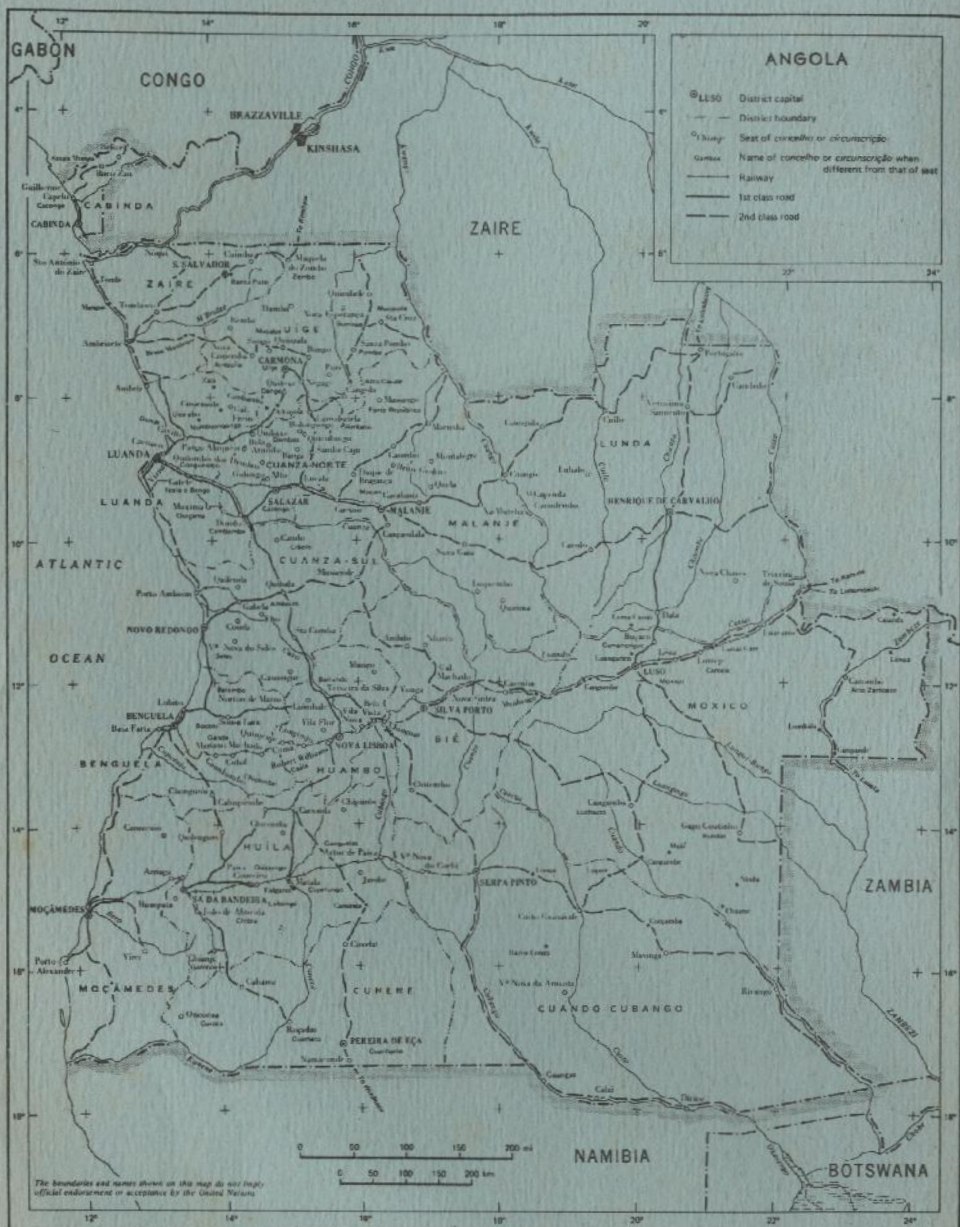
NO ONE CAN STOP THE RAIN

angola and the mpla



by Jennifer Davis, George M. Houser,
Susan Rogers and Herb Shore

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THE AFRICA FUND

(associated with the American Committee on Africa)

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No One Can Stop The Rain

Here in prison
rage contained in my breast
I patiently wait
for the clouds to gather
blown by the wind of history

No one
can stop the rain

—from "Here in Prison"
by Agostinho Neto
PIDE Prison
Luanda, July 1960

PREFACE

This pamphlet represents a collaborative effort. Originally, much of the material included was written by George Houser as sections of an Angola chapter for a book on liberation movements in southern Africa. Events overtook the writing of that book. Following the April, 1974 coup in Portugal and subsequent rapid changes in Guinea Bissau, Angola and Mozambique, it became impossible to find the necessary time for re-writing and updating the book manuscript in its entirety. It was therefore decided by the Africa Fund and the American Committee on Africa to publish a series of pamphlets based on sections of that manuscript. Two such pamphlets, "United States Policy And Southern Africa" and "Mozambique: Dream the Size of Freedom" have already been published. This is the third in the series. Others should be forthcoming soon.

We have all worked on the re-writing and up-dating of this pamphlet on Angola and the MPLA.

Jennifer Davis
George M. Houser
Susan Rogers
Herb Shore

NOTE ON THE USE OF THE NAMES OF THE CONGO/ZAIRÉ, LEOPOLDVILLE/KINSHASA. The Belgian Congo became the Democratic Republic of the Congo on June 30, 1960. In 1965, the name was changed to Zaire. The capital city of Leopoldville was changed to Kinshasa also in 1965.

In this pamphlet we have followed the policy of using the name current for the date of the events being discussed. Thus "Zaire" and "Kinshasa" are referred to as "Congo" and "Leopoldville" before 1965.

On November 11, 1975, independence finally came to Angola after fourteen years of guerrilla war, but the ceremony was short and perfunctory, the sounds of celebration subdued. The Portuguese flag was lowered hours ahead of schedule, solemnly folded and turned over to a small honor guard to be returned to Lisbon. The Portuguese High Commissioner, Silva Cordoso, proclaimed the independence of the land without designating any party as its legitimate government, then soverly withdrew. Later that day, Agostinho Neto, in the name of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), and the people of Angola announced the birth of the Peoples' Republic of Angola and a new flag was raised to the African skies. But independence for the Angolan people was not yet safe.

On November 12, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), and the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), announced the formation of a rival People's Democratic Republic, with its capital at Huambo (Nova Lisboa) in south-central Angola. Both the MPLA administration and the Huambo-based group appealed to the outside world for recognition. Within days 30 countries had recognized the Luanda government. In contrast not a single country ever accorded official recognition to the rival administration.

Yet although there was no official recognition for the UNITA/FNLA forces, there was tremendous covert military assistance. Not surprisingly then, the independence celebrations in the streets of Luanda were muted, as the Angolans faced the prospect of continued war to defend their hard-won victory.

A luta continua. . . continua. . . continua. . . was written on the walls and windows of Luanda. *A luta armada continua. . .* The armed struggle continues.

Three armies were in the field contending for the right to govern the new nation—and behind two of those armies stood interests profoundly concerned with preventing the establishment of a revolutionary people's government.

Both regional and extra-continental powers were deeply involved in attempting to shape the future of Angola, in part because of its own rich natural resources, in part because of its key strategic location in the geography of southern Africa.

With vast oil, mineral and agricultural resources Angola is potentially a very rich country. Because of the backwardness of the Portuguese economy, modern economic development only began in the 1960's in Angola and has been mostly under the control of American, British, and other western interests.

Angolan oil production has grown dramatically since 1971, and was almost totally controlled by American interests. Gulf Oil

alone had invested over \$300 million by 1975, and was producing 150,000 barrels of oil a day. Oil exports in 1974 were worth over \$500 million—the largest single contribution to Angola's foreign earnings. Only the oil companies know the exact size of Angola's oil reserves but all estimates acknowledge that they are huge.

Angola has also been the world's fifth largest diamond exporter—the industry being dominated by Diamang which is largely South African owned, and also includes American and British interest. It has iron deposits reputed to be among the richest in the world and recent prospecting indicates a treasure house of other minerals including uranium, phosphates and manganese. As Africa's second largest coffee producer Angola earned \$321 million in export income in 1974, in trade which sent some 50% of the coffee to the U.S. and most of the rest to Western Europe.

The desire of the US and Europe to protect their economic interests in the free and uncontrolled exploitation of Angola's resources was an important factor leading to their intervention. In Western eyes the MPLA with its program of radical reform, its insistence on the right of all Angolan people to be the major shareholders in Angola's wealth, posed a serious threat to future profits.

There were other concerns too, apart from the question of direct economic exploitation.

Angola shares a common border with Namibia, now illegally controlled by South Africa. Angola also has critical borders with landlocked Zambia and with Zaire. The Benguela railroad which reaches the Atlantic at Lobito, is a crucial life-line for the export of copper from both countries.

Zaire's attitude to the MPLA accentuated after the accession to power of Mobutu, has been one of consistent hostility, reflecting a concern that the establishment of a truly popular government with radical social programs in Angola would cause many problems. Hence Zaire gave constant support to the FNLA and, as the time of Angolan independence approached, intensified its efforts to prevent MPLA from inheriting the government.

South Africa's preoccupation with the security of Namibia's 1,200 mile long norther border with Zambia and Angola was reflected in the large scale mobilization of security forces in the border area during 1975. It was certain that an MPLA government would be most sympathetic to the struggle for Namibian independence, and thus such a government would pose a serious threat to continued white supremacist stability. A radical govern-

ment in Angola would also be in a position to threaten South Africa's detente strategy in the rest of Africa—a strategy which saw Zambia and Zaire as important elements in the building of friendly “peaceful” relationships with independent Africa—relationships which would isolate the liberation movements and give the apartheid regime a longer lease of life.

Concern for the continued stability of South Africa, long a cornerstone of U.S. policy in the region, provided an added incentive for U.S. intervention in Angola as post-Portuguese coup events made it increasingly clear that MPLA would probably dominate an independent government. The U.S. concealed its fundamental hostility to the liberation movements by language that alleged that an MPLA government in Angola would mean total Soviet domination. But the connecting links underlying U.S. actions were quite forthrightly expressed in testimony given to a Senate Committee by U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense Ellsworth early in 1976.

“We are also deeply concerned over the potential impact a sustained Soviet or Cuban presence could have on security and stability in southern Africa. We continue to work to promote peaceful solutions to the issues of majority rule in Rhodesia, self-determination in Namibia, and an ending of apartheid in South Africa. A Soviet presence in Angola could serve to support insurgencies in these three countries, following the Soviet policy of aiding ‘wars of liberation.’” (Angola Hearings before the Subcommittee on African Affairs, Feb. 1976 p. 62) Thus the MPLA having successfully fought a war of liberation against the Portuguese found itself confronting an alliance of U.S., Western European, South African and conservative African forces which were to place in the field the most heavily equipped armies ever seen in Angola. Before the fighting was over, and victory finally secured the toll of dead Angolans, damaged buildings, roads, bridges, would be greater than in all the years of the anti-colonial war against Portugal.

THE PORTUGUESE INTRUSION

Portuguese contact with Angola began about ten years before Columbus reached America. Within a few short decades the contradictions inherent in Portugal's interest in Africa's peoples and resources—contradictions that were to characterize the relationship for the next five centuries—had emerged.

The face of Portugal first shown on the African continent was that of a respectful stranger, desirous of establishing mutually beneficial relations between two sovereign states. When the explorer Diogo Cao entered the Congo River to find the powerful

Kingdom of the Kongo, he was welcomed at the Kongo court at Mbanza (later Sao Salvador). The Portuguese offered Christianity, Portuguese education, and technical assistance in exchange for friendship and trade. Representatives of the Kingdom of the Kongo visited Lisbon and in May, 1491, the King was converted to Christianity and baptised Dom Joao I. His successor, Affonso I, received a Portuguese education, while Affonso's son, Henrique, became the first Catholic Bishop in 1518.

During his long reign (1506-1543), Affonso I demonstrated great statesmanship and acumen in his dealings with the Portuguese. His purpose was to attract the kind of Portuguese assistance he sought for his people, i.e., missionaries, teachers, carpenters and masons of high moral integrity, while neutralizing the impact on his kingdom of the many corrupt individuals who actually came to trade in slaves, to exploit the wealth and people of the kingdom, and to live in luxury and leisure.

Within the Kingdom, Portuguese control of the slave trade and involvement in local politics was to become an increasingly serious source of stress and difficulty, and it is to the credit of the Kongo rulers and people that they were able to maintain their independence throughout almost a century of involvement with Portugal. From 1575 onward, however, the Kongo Kingdom succumbed to the forces of internal political dislocation, disintegration of its power in the outlying provinces and Portuguese military might. After 1665, it continued to exist in shadow form only, but with a collective historical memory capable of evoking for the Bakongo people an earlier glorious past that was to largely determine the political focus of one of the major Angolan nationalist movements.

To the south of the Kongo, within the Mbundu kingdom of Ndongo, the exploitative, destructive and conquering face of Portuguese colonialism was revealed more rapidly and blatantly. Guided by its strong monarch, the Ngola, from whose title modern Angola takes its name, the Ndongo royal court received the first Portuguese ambassador warily in 1520 and limited his movements to the royal township. Christianity did not attract the Ngola, and although his successors were sporadically interested in having missionaries, their experience with the Jesuits who came was mixed and commercial trade was all the Portuguese could establish for some thirty years.

It was not enough for them. Spurred by rumors of fantastic mineral wealth in the interior of the Ngola Kingdom, Portugal decided to act. In 1575, 400 settlers landed at Luanda with a newly-appointed governor, Paulo Dias de Novais. With the formal establishment of the colony of Angola in that year, the Kingdom

of Ndongo achieved the dubious distinction of becoming the "first African nation subject to European colonial rule." (Ronald Chilcote, *Portuguese Africa*, p. 65)

The Mbundu people responded by waging a century-long series of wars against the Portuguese invaders which began in 1578 and ended only in 1680 when the Ndongo kingdom lay in ruins. Under the leadership of the heroic Queen Nzinga, sister of the Ngola, a section of the Mbundu people trekked eastward to resettle, maintain their independence, and continue armed resistance against the Portuguese.

THE SLAVE TRADE

Until the mid-19th century, Portuguese control in Angola remained limited to the coastal area of Ndongo, with penetration beyond the Atlantic ports such as Luanda restricted to a few settlements along the Cuanza River and some scattered forts. This situation reflected both the continuing opposition of the Angolan peoples to Portuguese domination and the concrete reality of Portuguese colonial interests. From the 16th to the 19th century, Portugal focused on Brazil as the center for overseas economic development and regarded Angola as little more than a reservoir of slave labor which would make that development possible. About three and a half million slaves from Angola landed in Brazil; approximately a million more were sent to the Caribbean and North America; another three and one-half million died shackled together on forced marches, awaiting shipment under horrible prison conditions, or under the even more inhuman conditions of the Atlantic crossing.

The slave trade decimated Angola. To foster it, the Portuguese fomented warfare between the Angolan peoples. The results were famine, forced migration, the destruction of the structures of traditional African society, the loss of cultural ties, and the savage reduction of the population.

Although the slave trade was formally outlawed by international decree in 1836, slavery remained legal in Angola until 1858 and did not effectively end until 1878, when a new phase of Portuguese colonialism began. During this latter phase, the Portuguese set out to conquer the interior and to integrate the Kingdom of the Kongo into the rest of the colony. In 1859, in classic colonial tradition, Dom Pedro V, King of the Kongo, was duped into signing an oath of fealty to Portugal he could not read. Forts were established in the interior, and traders spread out into new areas.

EXPANSION, CONQUEST, AND ANGOLAN RESISTANCE

Active Portuguese expansionism was a necessary response to the European "scramble for Africa" of the late 19th century. Threatened by British, French, Belgian, and German claims, Portugal was forced to demonstrate effective occupation of the African territories it wanted. Although the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 provided the paper division of Africa into European "spheres of influence," the Portuguese did not complete the conquest of Angola until 1930.

During this period, continuing resistance on the part of the Angolan peoples provided an historical link between earlier armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism and the nationalist struggle that was to come. From 1907 to 1910, the Mbundu fought the Portuguese in the hilly Dembos area north and east of Luanda in battles that are "still alive in the collective memory of Angola's Kimbundu-speaking community. . . ." (John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, p. 16) In the south, the Cuanhama revolted time and again until defeated in 1915 by a force of some 5000 Portuguese troops. Other examples of fierce resistance, coming from the Kingdom of the Kongo and elsewhere, are legion in Angolan history.

FORCED LABOR

With the end of the slave trade and slavery, the Portuguese developed a compulsory labor system only slightly less odious in order to continue to utilize Angolan labor power to exploit the economic potential of Angola itself. Under the labor code of 1899, Africans were bound by a "moral and legal obligation to work," and so-called "contract labor" was instituted to procure workers for the plantations, for construction and road repair, and for the mines. As late as 1952-53, Marcello Caetano, then a professor at the University of Coimbra and later head of the Portuguese state after Salazar, was rationalizing this blatant system of forced labor. "The natives of Africa," explained Caetano, "must be directed and organized by Europeans but are indispensable as auxiliaries. The blacks must be seen as productive elements organized. . . in an economy directed by whites." (quoted in Basil Davidson, *In the Eye of the Storm*, p. 70)

In all, almost a million Angolans were conscripted into the contract labor system. Another million or more escaped, most notably the Bakongo, who crossed the northern border to form exile communities in the Belgian Congo, where almost half a million were unemployed or under-employed in the cities and towns.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

To further exploit Angola's economic resources and to relieve problems of unemployment which reflected the underdeveloped state of Portugal itself, immigration to Angola was encouraged in the 20th century. In 1913, there were only 12,000 Europeans in Angola, by 1940, there were 44,000 and in the next 20 years this number quadrupled. By 1975, an estimated 400,000 European settlers (in a total population of six and a half million) lived in Angola. Most were of peasant origin, poor in health and education. Some were convicted criminals, or, in Portuguese terms, "*degredados*." Once in Angola, however, their social and economic situation was transformed by the power they could automatically wield over the African population. Many observers agreed with the comment, "impoverished Portuguese would put on airs in ostentatious domination of Africans. . . ." (Douglas Wheeler and Rene Pelissier, *Angola*, p. 44.)

Although the Portuguese boasted about their so-called non-racial policy, racism permeated a stratified Angolan society in which the white minority was on top and the huge African majority was on the bottom. Ninety per cent of the Africans lived and still live from the soil; yet the European minority in Angola controlled 60 times more land than they did. The annual per capita income of independent African coffee farmers in 1968 was \$42.00. Their coffee sold for \$175 per ton, but the price paid to the European coffee exporter was \$630 per ton. According to the Portuguese themselves the average unskilled migrant worker, invariably African, was earning an average of \$20 a month by 1969, while white workers earned a wage at least six times larger. (Report, Dr. Afonso Mendes, Director of the Angolan Labor Institute)

For the Africans, Portuguese rule meant not only poverty and debt but also illiteracy. After 400 years of Portugal's domination, 90 per cent were still illiterate. In 1968, only 30 per cent of the children between the ages of 6 and 14 were in primary schools, and the numbers dropped sharply in the more advanced grades.

Given these conditions and the long history of resistance to Portuguese domination, the revolt which erupted in 1961 should have come as no surprise. Yet as late as 1954, Angola was referred to in a *Harper's Magazine* article as "The Kingdom of Silence," a place of "quiet", free of the political agitation and nationalist unrest that was already becoming commonplace elsewhere on the African continent. The *Harper's* article failed to note, however, that political organizations in Angola were prohibited and any signs of protest were dealt with expeditiously

and brutally; that the "quiet" was a veneer of fear covering a smoldering resentment and the silence was that of clandestine political activity in the midst of terror and repression.

BACKGROUND TO ANGOLAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

As early as the 1870's, clandestine and semi-clandestine political clubs were appearing in Angola. After 1910, however, with the replacement of the monarchy in Portugal by the more liberal First Republic, these organizations began to take a more definite form. During the first half of the 20th century, they tended to be elitist in membership—attracting the small, educated, urbanized segment of the Angolan population—and reformist in goals. For example, the *Liga Angolana* (the Angolan League), founded in 1913, drew its membership mainly from the elite of the *mestico* (mixed blood) community. Its aim was to improve the conditions of the mass of Africans and of *assimilados* (in Portuguese terminology, "civilized" Africans) within the Portuguese system. By 1922, its influence had faded.

Meanwhile, two other organizations founded in Lisbon in the 1920's focused on Portugal's African colonies. Reflecting the more general split in African nationalist thought of the period, the *Liga Africana* leaned toward the Pan-African philosophy of W.E.B. duBois; the *Partido Nacional Africana* (African National Party) advocated a type of Black Nationalism based on the teachings of Marcus Garvey.

Following the military coup of 1926 and the establishment of the right wing *Estado Novo* (New State) under the dictatorship of Salazar, these early nationalist organizations could no longer function in Lisbon. In 1929, the *Liga Angolana* was reconstituted in Luanda as the *Liga Nacional Africana*. Although still predominantly *mestico*, and reformist in approach, it admitted black Africans to membership. When, during the next decade, an internal split arose over demands within the organization to transform it into a mass movement, the secret police moved in and *Liga's* elected officials were replaced by appointees of the Governor-General. From then on, the League worked for limited goals to improve the lot of African civil servants and army personnel, avoiding the major political issues of the time.

In the 1930's, the *Associação Regional dos Naturais de Angola* (regional Association of Native-Born of Angola) was formed by a small group of *assimilados* in Luanda. ANANGOLA, as it was popularly called, became the force behind a growing movement of cultural nationalism. Early expressions of nationalist sentiment took the form of popular protest journalism, but eventually, poetry and literary prose took up the theme as well with

striking parallels to the "Negritude" movement of French West African intellectuals such as Leopold Senghor and Alioune Diop. In 1950, a literary journal, *Mensagem* (Message) was founded under ANANGOLA auspices. Its editor, Viriato da Cruz, was later to become the first Secretary-General of The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

Although it was banned after two issues, *Mensagem* had a long-lasting effect on Luanda's young intellectuals. Its motto was "*Vamos descobrir Angola*"—"Let us discover Angola;" its focus was the development of an Angolan identity and its writings spoke of the suffering of Angolan peasants and the inhuman conditions of white colonialism.

On this plantation the rain does not fall
It is the sweat of my brow that waters the crops.
On this plantation of ripe coffee berries
those cherry-red drops
are drops of my blood turned to sap.
The coffee will be roasted,
ground and tortured.
It will turn black,
black like the color of the *contratado*
Black like the color of the *contratado*

(from "Monangamba" by Antonio Jacinta)

By banning *Mensagem* and the literary discussion group associated with it, the government closed off the only legal avenue of political protest that had been open to Angolans, and in so doing, helped to further radicalize the political climate in Luanda. Elsewhere on the African continent, nationalist organizations taking shape in the 1950's were to be ultimately successful in confronting British and French colonial administrations with demands for constitutional changes leading to political independence. In many cases, the road would not be easy and the colonial governments would try to throw up detours and barriers. In the Portuguese colonies, however, the Africans were finding the road mined at every step. According to Portugal's colonial doctrine, there simply wasn't any road. Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau were not colonies. They were Portugal overseas. There could be no independence for integral parts of the Portuguese state. There was no peaceful path to change.

THE POPULAR MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA

By the early 1950's, a nucleus of young Angolans were convinced that the old reformist channels provided no real

answer to Portuguese repression. Some of these, especially the young intellectuals who had studied in Lisbon and had had contact with the underground Communist Party of Portugal, were beginning to apply Marxist thought to Angolan conditions. A communist party was not established in Angola itself, however, until 1955. The first clandestine revolutionary party, established in 1953, was the *Partido da Luta dos Africanos de Angola*, (Party for the Struggle of Africans of Angola—PLUA).

PLUA was formed to overcome the dispersal and fragmentation of nationalist forces which at that time were scattered around the country in small organizations and committees. The first revolutionary party to attempt to build an illegal mass organization on a national basis, PLUA was a direct forerunner of MPLA. In 1956, a lesser-known group, the *Movimento para a Independencia de Angola*, (Movement for the Independence of Angola—MIA), and several smaller organizations, met with PLUA representatives in Luanda to form the *Movimento Popular para Libertacao de Angola*,—MPLA.

Founded and led principally by intellectuals, MPLA had its roots deep in the black population of Luanda and other urban centers. From the beginning, it shaped its nationalism ideologically by confronting the whole philosophy of *Luso-tropicalismo*,—of Angola as a part of greater Portugal. In the 1950's students in Lisbon like future MPLA leader, Mario de Andrade, Amilcar Cabral from Guinea-Bissau, Eduardo Mondlane and Marcelino dos Santos from Mozambique and others, were involved in political discussion with each other and with the whole range of underground anti-Salazar organizations, including the socialists and communists. United in their common opposition to the Portuguese state as embodied in Salazar, the two groups nevertheless defined the enemy differently. The Lisbon left defined the enemy as "fascism"; the Africans of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau perceived a double enemy—"fascism and colonialism." (see Immanuel Wallerstein, "Luanda is Madrid", *The Nation*, Jan 3-10, 1976)

The founding of the MPLA in Luanda marked the launching of the first nationalist movement in the Portuguese African colonies that linked anti-colonialism and the national liberation struggle with the struggle against fascism in Portugal, but rejected the idea that the movement to overthrow Salazar took precedence over the liberation of Angola. MPLA took the position that these movements were related and interacting, therefore, allied, but that the struggle in Africa had as much to contribute to possible change in Portugal as the other way round.

The MPLA Manifesto, adopted at its founding conference,

stated further that:

Portuguese colonialism can disappear only through struggle. As a result, the only path to freedom for the Angolan people is through revolutionary struggle. In order to achieve victory, however, this struggle can only come about through a united front of all anti-imperialist forces of Angola—regardless of political groups, social positions of individuals, religious beliefs and philosophies—within a vast popular movement for the liberation of Angola.

(Quoted in *Victoria ou Morte*, publication of the MPLA, May-July, 1973)

Since the MPLA was born inside Angola and worked under tight underground security, very little is recorded about its early activities. Its beginnings, however, were very similar to those of PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde) in Guinea-Bissau, whose leader, Amilcar Cabral, helped to launch the MPLA while working briefly as an agronomist in Angola during this period.

In 1962, Patricia McGowan Pinheiro, a specialist on Portugal, described some early MPLA programs. From the outset, the MPLA created underground schools to teach illiterates to read and write. "By means of these contacts," she wrote, the MPLA "engaged in continued agitation and propaganda, and leaflets were issued putting forward its policy." (Patricia McGowan Pinheiro, "Politics of a Revolt," *Angola, Views of a Revolt*, p. 108)

MPLA's first president, Ilidio Tome Alves Machado, had been a leader of the *Liga Nacional Africana*. Born in Luanda in 1915, he achieved his junior secondary school certificate there. His leadership was cut short when he was arrested in 1959 and imprisoned in Cape Verde.

1959 and 1960 were years of intense crackdown on the part of the Angolan branch of the PIDE, the Portuguese secret police, and Machado was one of the many victims of Portugal's attempts to use repression as a weapon against the rising tide of African nationalist organization in Angola. Reacting in part to fear engendered by events in the neighboring Belgian Congo, where in January, 1959, the Africans in Leopoldville engaged in massive rioting, the Portuguese sought to avoid any local repetition of such actions by rounding up and silencing all Angolans suspected of political activity.

On Easter Sunday, March 29th, and again in July, 1959, large-scale arrests led to a secret trial of fifty-seven persons accused of "attempts against the external security of the state and the unity of the nation." In May of that year, Portugal sent

an additional 2000 troops to Angola to deal with any emergencies that might arise from nationalist "agitation." Another round of arrests took place in June, 1960. Among those seized was Dr. Agostinho Neto, arrested in his consulting room in Luanda on the 8th of June.

Born the son of a Methodist pastor on September 17, 1922, in the village of Bengo (Catete) just south of Luanda, the soft-spoken Neto was a long time political activist and no stranger to the inside of a prison. He was one of the few Africans to complete secondary education at Luanda's *Liceu Salvador Correia*. For three years he worked in the public health services in Luanda. In 1947, he went to Portugal on a Methodist scholarship to study medicine, first at the University of Lisbon and then at Coimbra. In Portugal, he took an active, if clandestine part, in politics, joined an anti-Salazar youth organization, the *Movimento de Unidade Democratica Juvenil* (Movement for the Unity of Democratic Youth), and was arrested briefly in 1952. A sensitive and perceptive poet, his writings and political views led to expulsion from the university and further imprisonment from February, 1955 to June, 1957. Nevertheless he completed his medical degree in 1958. He married in Portugal and the following year returned to Angola. When he set up his medical practice, there were only 203 doctors in all of Angola, the vast majority of whom were Europeans and would treat only white, mulatto or *assimilado* patients. In Angola, Neto found,

Fear in the air!

On each street corner

Vigilant sentries light incendiary glances

in each house

hasty replacement of the old bolts

of the doors

and in each conscience

seethes the fear of listening to itself

History is to be told

anew

Fear in the air!

It happens that I

humble man

still more humble in my black skin

come back to Africa

to myself

with dry eyes.

He had been at his medical practice scarcely a year when he was arrested in June, 1960. He was flogged in front of his family and taken to prison. There he was tortured by being forced to go without sleep for four consecutive days and nights. A week after Neto's arrest some thousand of his neighbors from the village of Bengo and the adjacent village of Icolo went to Catete to demonstrate before the district office and protest his confinement. There they were met by 200 soldiers, brought in from Luanda and armed with Sten guns. In the withering fire thirty people were killed and more than 200 injured. "On the following day these soldiers went to Icolo and Bengo and killed or arrested everyone who was found in the two villages, which were then set on fire." The villages were "totally destroyed, with not a single soul [left] in them." (Basil Davidson, *Angola, 1961: The Factual Record*, p. 6)

In many ways, this incident was the Angolan counterpart of the Mueda Massacre in Mozambique and the Pidjiguiti Massacre in Guinea-Bissau. Not a word appeared in the press. The veil of silence still covered Angola.

In the face of terror and repression, the murder, exile and imprisonment of its known leadership and the constant attempts by the PIDE to infiltrate the MPLA, work inside Angola became even more clandestine, in careful preparation for the intensification and extension of the struggle. At the same time, MPLA established a leadership in exile, with the poet Mario de Andrade as president and Viriato da Cruz as secretary-general. External headquarters were established in Conakry, capital of the newly independent Republic of Guinea, with Lucio Lara as head of the secretariat there.

The establishment of an external leadership and headquarters by MPLA did not signal a shift in focus on the part of the movement. For the MPLA, the focus of struggle would always be within Angola itself, and the cultivation of international contacts and support was only viewed as valuable insofar as it could relate to and advance the struggle inside. Of particular importance was to be the close working relationship with the revolutionary movements of Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. In January, 1960, at the Second All-African People Conference held in Tunis, an inter-territorial anti-Portuguese front called FRAIN (*Frente Revolucionaria Africana para a Independencia Nacional*) was formed with Mario de Andrade as chairman.

Having established its international presence, the MPLA participated actively in the second Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference held in Conakry in 1960. It sent a delegation to visit the People's Republic of China in August of that year, and participated in

another conference in London, called by the British-based, anti-colonialist Movement for Colonial Freedom.

Despite the massive colonial violence and increased repression that the Portuguese authorities had visited on Angolans—violence that had so recently included the total destruction of the villages of Icolo and Bengo and the murder or arrest of all inhabitants—the MPLA sought, in mid-June, 1960, to reach Portugal with words rather than guns. In a declaration issued to the Government in Portugal, the MPLA's Steering Committee called for roundtable discussion involving representatives of all the political parties of Angola and the Portuguese Government before the end of the year. The statement charged the Portuguese Government with "pursuing in Angola a policy which amounts to a feverish preparation for a colonial war." It demanded the immediate withdrawal of Portuguese armed forces from Angola, permission to form legal political parties, release of and amnesty for political prisoners, and recognition of the right of the Angolan people to self-determination. The declaration ended by saying that "the Angolan people and the MPLA will hold the Portuguese Government responsible for all bloody events which may occur in Angola."

The Portuguese Government did not respond directly, but through unofficial statements in the press made it clear that self-determination for the "overseas territories" was not a subject for discussion. Before the end of 1960, da Cruz made a statement on behalf of the MPLA that direct action to achieve independence would be launched soon.

UPNA/UPA/FNLA—A DIFFERENT ROAD

The MPLA gathered together many currents in Angola's history of resistance to Portuguese colonial rule into a strong and ever-widening stream of Angolan nationalism. Within the movement, it was understood that a unity of all forces and the rejection of all ethnic particularism were absolute necessities if the Portuguese were to be defeated and a just Angolan society created.

There was, however, one strong nationalist current within the modern boundaries of Angola that the MPLA could neither tap nor unite with the mainstream, despite continuous efforts to do so. This current developed out of the historic tradition of the once-glorious Kingdom of the Kongo, which had straddled the border of northern Angola and whose people, the Bakongo, were the victims of the arbitrary division of territory between the French, the Belgians and the Portuguese at the Berlin Conference, 1884-85.

Throughout the years of colonial rule, Bakongo people living in northern Angola emigrated into the Belgian Congo to escape forced labor. Once there, they tended to drift into Leopoldville (now Kinshasa) to seek work in an area that was also dominated by Bakongo and related groups. The migrants settled, assimilated, and to this day speak better French than Portuguese. Not surprisingly, they found it easier to give up Angola than to give up the image of the Kongo Kingdom.

By 1954, a number of northern Angolans living in Leopoldville were beginning to think about winning independence, not for modern Angola, but for the Ancient Kingdom of the Kongo. Prominent among these people were Manuel Barros Necaca and his nephew, Holden Roberto, who had lived in Leopoldville since 1942. In 1954, this small group did not yet have a name. Political organization was illegal, and they were careful not to incur the disfavor of the Congo's Belgian administrators. After working informally for three years, they adopted the name Union of Populations of Northern Angola (*Uniao das Populacoes do Norte de Angola*, UPNA.) In a petition to the United Nations sent at this time, the UPNA stressed that they were not speaking for "the country called Angola," but for "the Kongo which is an ex-independent territory with no treaty with Portugal. . . ." In a letter written in early 1957, Necaca explained, "It is not legal, the fact of calling the Ancient Kongo Kingdom as Angola, because we are not from Angola. . . . There were two different Kingdoms, that of Angola and that of the Kongo Kingdom." (Necaca to Houser, Feb. 15, 1957)

By 1958, however, the UPNA leaders had realized that it would probably be to their advantage to appear less tribalist in orientation. They therefore dropped "Northern" from the organization's title, changing it to the more inclusive Union of the Population of Angola (*Uniao das Populacoes de Angola*, UPA.)

Under the presidency of Barros Necaca, the UPA agreed to form a very limited united front with MPLA and with ALIAZO, an alliance of Zombo people that also included Bakongo coming from Maquela do Zombo in northern Angola. ALIAZO had developed in 1960 from a self-help and cultural association, ASSOMIZO, which had been founded in 1956, and which sought to form a front with UPA in 1960.

All efforts to coordinate UPA activities with those of other organizations were in fact thwarted by Holden Roberto, who continuously opposed those within the UPA who favored more unity. Operating under pseudonyms, Roberto acted as the UPA's representative abroad, returning to Leopoldville in mid-July, 1960, after Congo independence, and leaving again in September,

after the crisis in the Congo had begun. Successful in securing limited financial support from the U.S. government, Roberto found that this involvement as well as his opposition to a united front with MPLA, cost him the support of two young African nations that had initially befriended UPA, namely, Ghana and Guinea.

Returning to Leopoldville in January, 1961, from his second trip to New York, Roberto broke up the alliance between UPA and ALIAZO formed in his absence. As a result, 17 out of the 20 members of the UPA Steering Committee including Necaca resigned from the Committee. From this moment, Roberto assumed control of the organization. Necaca remained a member, but with no official position in policy-making.

The desire for greater unity which certain of the UPA membership shared with the MPLA might have borne fruit in 1960 had Roberto's power been less and the will of the pro-unity forces greater. But the odds against this were tremendous. The UPA drew its strength from a more distant historical past, while its present was shaped at least in part by vicissitudes in Congolese politics over which it had no control. The MPLA, in contrast, was grounded in the modern politics of Angola, and gained its strength through a clear concept of the kind of future it sought for the Angolan people. The MPLA worked to enlarge its base of popular support for the revolutionary programs it advocated and to carry its work throughout the land; the UPA sought primarily, indeed, almost exclusively, to widen its base in terms of ethnic identification and ethnic support. Its leadership periodically included non-Bakongo, but their stay was usually brief and frustrating.

A year later, both organizations were to begin armed struggle against the Portuguese. Far from uniting them in opposition to the common colonial enemy, however, the striking differences in attitudes toward the purposes and conduct of a war situation were to further divide the MPLA and the UPA.

ANGOLA AT WAR

The fateful year was 1961. It was the year in which the veil of silence was to be ripped aside and the armed struggle launched. It began with two desperate acts of rebellion. The more important of these, a peasant revolt which actually began late in 1960, was effectively kept from world attention by Portuguese censorship; the other, involving a dramatic ship hijacking, thrust this little-known land into the headlines.

The peasant protest had begun with the refusal of Angolan farmers of the Cassanga area to grow their forced allocations of

cotton and to pay taxes. Early in 1961, they staged protests against the conditions of obligatory cotton cultivation for Cotonang, the Portuguese company that held the export monopoly. Under the system, African farmers had to raise a cotton quota even at the sacrifice of necessary food production, and to sell the cotton to the company at a government price fixed well below the world market price. To demonstrate their dissatisfaction, the farmers attacked private and government property, but not people. The Portuguese army responded by using napalm against the farmers. Arrests and summary executions took place, and the leader of the revolt, Antonio Mariano, was arrested, tortured, and left to die in prison in Malanje.

No reporters were in Cassanga to watch the Portuguese army shower napalm on peasant discontent. But they flocked to Luanda in late January, 1961, hoping to witness an exciting conclusion to the bizarre exploits of a single, rather dramatic opponent of Portuguese fascism. The man was Captain Henrique Galvao; the exploit was the hijacking of the Portuguese luxury liner, "Santa Maria," off the coast of South America. Galvao, a former Deputy in the Portuguese National Assembly and Chief Inspector of Overseas Territories, had become a staunch opponent of the Salazar government in the 1950's, had written a damning report on contract labor in Angola in 1951, and had escaped to political asylum in Argentina and Venezuela. Galvao had announced to a world more interested in spectacles than oppression that he intended to sail the "Santa Maria" to Luanda. He never arrived. After holding the ship for eleven days, he had to abandon it in Brazil.

Thus, ultimately, the significance of Galvao's daring actions lay not in their effect on Salazar's tyranny, but in the unusual presence of foreign journalists stranded in Luanda awaiting a story that was not to come. Because a handful remained even after learning that Galvao wasn't coming, a crucial event in Angolan history—one which would like many others, have normally gone unreported—received international attention. It was the beginning of the revolution.

In the grey hours before dawn on February 4, 1961, MPLA militants led several hundred Africans armed with knives and clubs in an attack on the main political prison in Luanda to free the prisoners there. In the course of the action, some forty Africans were shot down and seven Portuguese police were killed. The following day, European civilians, leaving the funeral services for the policemen, attacked African bystanders. Many Angolans were shot. Further assaults on other prisons followed, but while the Africans focused on specific targets of oppression, the white

population retaliated with massive violence against the African population in general. For many days, Portuguese attacked African sections of Luanda, killing hundreds of people (as the police stood by) and leaving their bodies in the streets.

For the MPLA, February 4th was to become the National Day of Angola, a day on which to mark the anniversary of the commencement of the armed struggle for liberation. The initial target, the main prison of Luanda, was a clear symbol of the oppression of the Angolan people; the immediate objective, the freeing of political prisoners, an important step in the nationalist struggle.

Less is clear in the violence that erupted in the North on March 15, 1961. Prior to that date, there had been intense debate among UPA leaders over the initiation of an armed uprising in northern Angola. Necaca had been opposed to the idea on the grounds that the UPA was not sufficiently prepared and needed more time. Roberto wanted a limited action that would attract international attention and coincide with the UN Security Council meeting called to discuss the February 4th violence in Luanda. And Batista, the first commander of the UPA forces, wanted fighting to begin in earnest. A southerner who had escaped from the Portuguese army, Batista believed the revolt would rally support all over the country, and that the Portuguese would leave Angola after a few were killed.

The events of March 15 were typified by the confrontation which occurred on the Primavera plantation, when several hundred contract laborers who were owed several months' back wages confronted the owner to demand them. The owner refused, and in the heated argument that followed, shot a worker. This triggered an attack in which the plantation owner, his family and other Portuguese were killed.

The uprising was not confined to Primavera. A Reuters dispatch from Lisbon on March 17 named Nova Caipemba, Nambuanguo and Quitexe as localities of greatest violence. At a farm near Quitexe, not far north of Luanda, the Reuters correspondent reported that 28 whites were killed—10 men, their wives and children. On August 4, 1961, an official Portuguese publication entitled, "Portugal, An Informative Review", said that "it was at 6:15 a.m. that similar assaults to that of Primavera were launched by the same mobs on Nova Caipemba, Quimkombe, Nambuanguo, Dango, Quitexe, and Carmona."

Observers reported extreme brutality on both sides. Reverend Clifford Parsons, a British Baptist missionary who had served for many years in northern Angola remarked of the first few days of revolt, "It was a chilling demonstration of what the release of

long pent-up feelings can do."

By early April fighting had erupted from the Congo border to a point only thirty miles from Luanda and there was violence still in Luanda itself. More than a hundred administrative posts had been wiped out or neutralized by nationalist groups. The economy of northern Angola, mainly coffee production, was in disarray. Dozens of planters were ruined by the destruction of their crops. Laborers disappeared into the forests. The Portuguese military and police actually lost control of the vast area.

The revolt was principally an uprising of the Bakongo people, led or at least directed intermittently by the forces of UPA, but also involving the Mbundu of the Dembos region, followers of the MPLA, who were to make the Dembos forests an MPLA stronghold in the North. For six months, the rebel forces moved rapidly and at will. The very important center of Bembe was taken early in the war. Fighting was fierce and casualties high. According to a Brigadier in the Portuguese army, "The rebels had the upper hand from the start. They held on to it until Lisbon was able to rally reinforcements into the area. At that time it was touch and go whether they would be able to take Luanda or not." (Quoted in Al J. Venter, *The Terror Fighters*, p. 13)

Gradually over the next few months, the Portuguese poured reinforcements into Angola, and the army, backed by motorized units and the air force, began to recapture some of the towns and posts that had fallen. Villages suspected of supporting the rebels were burned, bombed and destroyed. Africans were shot indiscriminately. By mid-summer the Portuguese had re-occupied the main centers, but Angolans controlled the forests and the surrounding countryside.

Refugees streamed into the Congo to escape the war. During the next year or so about 300,000 Angolans, most of them Bakongo, crossed the border. By 1965, refugee numbers had reached a million. Along the southern border of the Congo, refugees outnumbered the Congolese themselves in village after village. The population of the Zaire district in northern Angola fell from 102,777 in 1960 to 30,000 in 1968.

The war for liberation had indeed begun, and the first year of struggle pointed up the weaknesses as well as the strengths of the two major organizations in the field and the differences in their approach to the struggle.

The UPA had assumed that once the revolt was underway, it would spread and grow automatically as masses of peasants flocked to join. In fact, even in the north, UPA's strongest area, mass involvement was limited. Little advance planning had been done, and little political education or organization in the north-

ern areas had been carried out. No one tried to explain to those who would be the participants or victims of the war what was going to happen. There was no clear ideology of what kind of country could or should emerge from the conflict. In short, there was no common purpose to the events sparked on March 15 other than hatred of Portuguese exploitation, and no clear analysis of what the aftermath might be.

For almost half of 1961, UPA forces controlled large areas of the North, but having taken control, many did not seem to know what to do with it. By an accident of tribal affiliation, and because the north of Angola had been the very heart of the hated contract labor system, they found themselves in a position to dominate and direct events. But some leaders expected the Portuguese either to flee or to negotiate. And when neither happened, they were at a loss as to the next move.

The MPLA, on the other hand, like the PAIGC of Guinea-Bissau and FRELIMO in Mozambique, expected the war of liberation, once begun, to be a long protracted struggle. Its base in the Dembos area of the north was solid, but in the face of increasing enmity from UPA, became isolated from the rest of the organization. The hostility with which UPA fighters regarded their MPLA brothers-in-struggle was made shockingly clear in November, 1961, when they captured and executed an entire MPLA patrol led by Tomas Ferreira that was attempting to take ammunition to units in the Nambuagongo area of Dembos.

A STRUGGLE DIVIDED: THE PROBLEMS OF UNITY

For the MPLA, there were both practical and ideological reasons for seeking greater unity with the UPA. On the practical side, the MPLA felt severely hampered with no border base and with its external headquarters in Conakry, several thousand miles away from the armed struggle. In October, 1961, this practical problem was solved temporarily when, after months of negotiations, the MPLA was allowed to move its headquarters to Leopoldville. Once there, it hoped to broaden its front and establish a working relationship with the UPA. Such a relationship was sought not only because the MPLA realized that unity would strengthen the Angolan fighting forces in the battle against Portuguese colonialism, but because the MPLA firmly believed that successful struggle required the unity of all anti-imperialist forces.

Attempts to reach a unity agreement with UPA were therefore made on a number of occasions in 1961 and 1962. One such attempt was initiated in April, 1961, when the UPA was invited to attend a conference of FRAIN in Casablanca. Apparently

warned by the Kasavubu Government of the Congo that anyone attending the conference would be refused re-entry into the Congo, the UPA did not attend, nor did it affiliate with the organization, which was renamed the *Conferencia das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colonias Portuguesas* (Conference of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies—CONCP). At the April meeting MPLA leader Mario de Andrade was elected CONCP President and Marcelino dos Santos of FRELIMO was elected head of the Secretariat. CONCP formed an organization of coordination for MPLA, FRELIMO and PAIGC during the entire struggle for liberation and continues to coordinate post-independence educational, economic, political, military and informational activities. UPA remained outside the alliance by choice.

Shortly after the April conference, the MPLA sent a delegation to Leopoldville to discuss their plan for a Front for the liberation of Angola with representatives of UPA and ALIAZO (later renamed the Democratic Party of Angola, PDA), and MLEC (the Movement for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda.) Although there was agreement on the need for such a front, further discussion was postponed until May, when de Andrade and Roberto were scheduled to meet in Liberia. But once in Monrovia, Roberto stated that no serious unity talks could take place without prior consultation with other UPA leaders.

The MPLA was involved in at least two other attempts to create a viable working relationship in 1962. In June of that year, President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana called a conference at Winneba, inviting representatives of all African organizations fighting for freedom to hammer out divisive issues between certain groups. Roberto himself did not attend, and when the representatives of his organization, which had formed an alliance with the PDA in March, 1962, that was now known as the *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* (National Front for the Liberation of Angola—FNLA), returned from the conference with a temporary and minimal agreement with MPLA, Roberto opposed it and it was never implemented.

A further attempt came in July, 1962, when Agostinho Neto, who had been moved by his Portuguese jailors from Cape Verde to Portugal, escaped from house arrest in Lisbon with the assistance of the anti-Salazar underground, making his way first to Morocco and then to Leopoldville. Early in August a meeting was arranged between MPLA and FNLA; again, however, direct consultation between the two organizations came to naught.

In the absence of reliable evidence, it is impossible to know precisely why the UPA/FNLA, and Roberto in particular, were

basically opposed to unity with the MPLA. It seems reasonable to suggest, however, that dependence on the Congo, and the extent to which the organization felt it could survive, grow and emerge the dominant force in the Angolan struggle *without* recourse to cooperation with the MPLA were factors in this situation.

In April, 1962, for example, with the strong backing of the Congo government, the FNLA had announced the formation of the *Governo Revolucionario de Angola em Exil* (the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile—GRAE). A month later, Viriato da Cruz, who had been Secretary General of MPLA since 1956, was ousted from his post and led a small group of dissident members out of the organization. This group affiliated with GRAE, and it is possible that the FNLA leadership, with its strong position in the Congo and self-declared status as a government in exile hoped that gradual defection or submission to GRAE authority rather than unity agreements would solve the "problem" of the MPLA. With the support of the Congo, and support, however limited, from the United States, the FNLA seemed to be holding strong cards. And when, in mid-July, 1963, the Coordinating Committee for African Liberation of the newly-formed Organization of African Unity (OAU), meeting in Leopoldville, bowed to pressure from the Congo government to recommend that the OAU give sole support to GRAE, the FNLA hand seemed almost unbeatable. From all external appearances the conditions were certainly present for GRAE/FNLA to claim to be *the* united movement capable of shaping the struggle for an independent Angola, and to point the finger of accusation at the MPLA for refusing to submit to the overlordship of Holden Roberto.

For the Congo government of Cyrille Adoula, OAU support for GRAE/FNLA provided the necessary excuse to step up the harrassment of MPLA. Their offices were raided in June and arms and explosives were seized. Neto and Lara, who carried travel documents from independent African states, were arrested for traveling under "false" papers. In October, the MPLA's medical clinic was closed, and finally, in November, 1963, the organization was expelled from the country and its office shut down.

With the MPLA completely swept out of the Congo, the way was now clear for GRAE/FNLA to control and dominate the struggle for the liberation of Angola with the full backing of the OAU. That they were not able to do so was a further reflection of realities inside Angola, most importantly, the degree to which the MPLA was gaining internal support through a clear focus on the needs and requirements of the Angolan people and their

struggle, while the FNLA failed to develop a broad popular base inside the country.

THE MPLA PROGRAM

For the MPLA, it was clear from the beginning of the armed struggle that the Angolan people deserved and needed more than guns and a promise of freedom to achieve an independence in which all people would share both the fruits and responsibilities of victory. In June of 1962, the MPLA set forth the first full statement of its ideological position for the Angolan revolution in a booklet published in Dakar outlining its minimum and maximum programs.

The minimum program called for the formation of an Angolan Front for Freedom to liquidate colonialism in Angola, and for a wider alliance of progressive forces throughout the world in support of the struggle of the Angolan people. The maximum program was more detailed. It called for the sovereignty of an Angolan state and for an egalitarian society without distinctions of ethnic group, class, political beliefs or religious faith. It supported the unity of all African peoples and countries. Freedom of speech, conscience, press and assembly, and universal suffrage were designated as basic rights. It called for the end of economic privileges derived from the colonial system, but at the same time guaranteed the protection of industry and private enterprise. In a section on agrarian reform, MPLA committed itself to liquidating the "private monopoly of special rural production" and to the fulfillment of the principle "the land is for those who till the soil." Redistribution of the land was called for. In international affairs, MPLA advocated "non-alignment to whatever military bloc."

Within the context of this general and long-range plan for the future, the MPLA began to set up concrete programs to deal with the immediate and pressing needs of the people. Foremost among these was the need for health care, to which the MPLA responded with the establishment at its Leopoldville headquarters of a major medical service program, the *Corpo Voluntario Angolano de Assistencia dos Refugiados*, CVAAR, with a staff of trained medical personnel under the leadership of Dr. Americo Boavida.

One of a handful of Africans who had managed to get a secondary school education in Luanda, Boavida had received a medical degree in Portugal in 1952, and had completed further training in the fields of hygiene and tropical medicine in Spain and Czechoslovakia before returning to practice in Luanda from 1955 to 1960. He joined MPLA in 1960 and became one of its

outstanding and most devoted leaders until his death in a bombing raid in eastern Angola in 1968.

Although closed down in 1963 under pressure from the Congolese government that culminated in the expulsion of the MPLA from Leopoldville, the short-lived CVAAR nevertheless provided the foundations on which the MPLA was to build its free medical program in the liberated areas inside Angola, the *Servicio de Asistencia Medica* (Medical Assistance Service—SAM).

In December, 1962, the MPLA held its first national conference in Leopoldville. It was a time of great difficulty for the organization, for it was already abundantly clear that both the host country and the recently established GRAE/FNLA were determined to prevent the successful establishment of fighting bases in northern Angola by the MPLA. Under such pressure, differences of opinion on how the MPLA should proceed were extremely likely, if not inevitable. One such difference had already led to the removal of Viriato da Cruz from his position as Secretary General. Yet seventy voting delegates attended this first MPLA conference and refused to succumb to further factionalism that could easily have led to the disintegration of the movement. They came from the youth, trade union and women's organizations, from CVAAR, and from the liberation army. They elected a new leadership, with Agostinho Neto as President and Mario de Andrade as Head of External Affairs. The expulsion of Viriato da Cruz was confirmed.

Most important of all, however, the conference showed its determination to further the struggle inside Angola by adopting the guiding principle of the "priority of the interior over the exterior." On the one hand the adoption of this principle was a clear response to the establishment by the FNLA of a government in exile. The MPLA was not going to play politics with GRAE/FNLA by trying to establish a rival government in exile somewhere else. But this was more than just a negative gesture. In his address to the conference, Dr. Neto called for the MPLA to establish close ties with the Angolan peasantry and to emphasize military action inside the country rather than international appeals from the outside. He also emphasized that the MPLA should reflect a policy of non-alignment in its relations with countries round the world.

Within a month after his election, Dr. Neto traveled to the United States to seek whatever material support he could gain and to present the MPLA position and programs directly. Although he met with many individuals and organizational representatives, he gained little support. The U.S. government

had already opted to support Holden Roberto, a choice that accorded more closely with a policy that was essentially negative to the liberation struggles but was concerned with achieving some leverage in the event that African independence was eventually achieved.

More promising by far than Neto's visit to the United States was the return of the first group of MPLA militants from a period of training abroad—primarily in Algeria. The MPLA now had a nucleus of 300 highly trained troops as the core of the Angolan Peoples' Liberation Army. But to struggle inside, it remained essential to have an external base from which to supply and nourish the Angolans fighting there. Both hope and the necessary base came in November, 1963, when the new revolutionary government that had overthrown the government of Abbe Youlou in Congo-Brazzaville invited the MPLA to cross the river from Leopoldville and establish its headquarters there.

Patiently, Agostinho Neto and the MPLA leadership began rebuilding and strengthening the organization. In January, 1964, a conference of militants in Brazzaville examined the war situation and concluded, "The armed struggle unleashed in our country in February 1961 continues to be essentially insurrectional in character, disorganized in practice, leaderless, isolated from the majority of the African population, confined to a small part of the territory, and short of arms and ammunition." (quoted in Basil Davidson, *In the Eye of the Storm*, p. 234.)

ADVANCING THE STRUGGLE

Determined to alter this situation, MPLA decided to open a second war front in Cabinda, a dense forest area of some 60,000 inhabitants, bordering both Congo-Brazzaville and Congo-Leopoldville. It is estimated that as many as 5,000 Portuguese troops were sent to the area to combat the MPLA. Although the capital city was never attacked, and Gulf Oil continued its oil operations with only brief interruptions, MPLA was able to state at one point that it controlled more than 50 per cent of the territory. The South African journalist Al J. Venter wrote after an on-the-spot investigation that the guerrillas actually occupied more than 90 per cent of Cabinda.

Assessing the importance of the Cabinda struggle, MPLA pointed out,

The war in Cabinda had an enormous psychological impact on the entire population of Angola. It restored the confidence of old militants who, in the towns and countryside of Angola, had kept alive their faith in the movement. The Cabinda guerrilla area was not only a laboratory where the

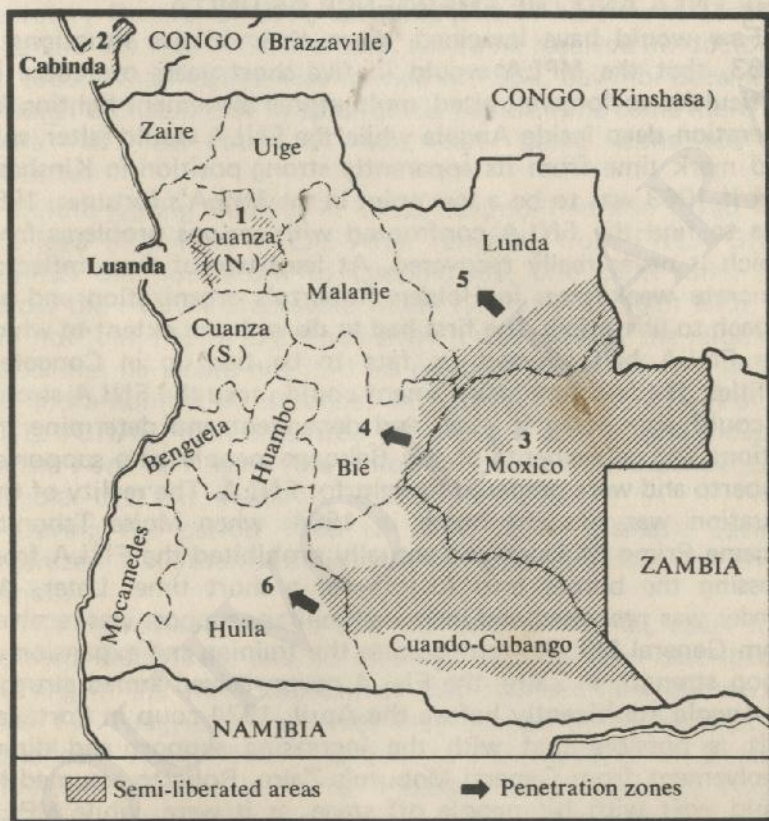
MPLA put into practice its concept of guerrilla war and trained very able cadres, but it was also the first nucleus of a national and popular armed struggle to be organized in the history of the Angolan people.

(*The National Liberation Struggle in Angola*, MPLA Pamphlet, p. 10)

In 1966, MPLA was able to establish a base in newly-independent Zambia. It moved its main headquarters to Lusaka and opened a new significant fighting front in eastern Angola. This was called the Third Region—the First being the North; and the Second, Cabinda. Both the terrain in the Third Region, and its size, made the movement of supplies and guerrilla warfare itself exceedingly difficult. Four times larger than Portugal, this region is a vast plateau, with an altitude of close to four thousand feet, fed by many rivers and forming the basin for the Zambezi. Although there are scattered forests, the territory is largely savannah, unrelieved by hills or mountains. The population density is low. The Portuguese called southeastern Angola, "*Terras do Fim do Mundo*," the "land at the end of the earth."

In 1967, Dr. Neto announced that the war was now "generalized" and that although external offices would still be maintained in Brazzaville, Lusaka and Dar es Salaam, MPLA including its steering committee, would work continuously from inside the country. By 1967, the MPLA had gained the reputation of being the most effective liberation movement in Angola. The Portuguese were forced to admit their enemy's calibre. A Portuguese captain told South African journalist Venter, "MPLA men are by far the most resilient fighters. They are tough, wily and dangerous. They have been well-trained. They know what they want and they know how to set about getting it." (Venter, *op. cit.*, p. 31) Wilf Nussey, an editor for the Johannesburg *Star*, echoed the same assessment after two weeks in Angola with the Portuguese. "The MPLA men are efficiently trained They came like ghosts from Zambia and attacked like thunder The front is wherever a man and his gun are. It is an enervating, chilling series of brief, but murderous clashes, usually ambushes, plus dogged slogging through harsh country in search of an enemy as elusive as mist Death waits a few kilometers outside any village." (Johannesburg *Star*, July 31, 1968)

In 1965, the OAU had recognized the achievements and growth of MPLA by granting it official status as an Angolan liberation movement. In 1968, it reconfirmed that judgement by withdrawing recognition from GRAE as a government in exile, and placing MPLA and FNLA on an equal footing in receiving OAU assistance.



Map of MPLA zones of combat and semi-liberated zones in Angola, early 1970's.

If further proof of the MPLA's strength and successful conduct of armed struggle was required, it came in August of 1968, with the holding of the first Eastern Regional Assembly. 200 people attended the Assembly, the first to be held inside Angola.

THE FNLA AND THE EMERGENCE OF UNITA

Few would have imagined, given their relative situations in 1963, that the MPLA would in five short years overcome its difficulties to forge a united, multi-ethnic movement fighting for liberation deep inside Angola while the FNLA would falter, split and mark time from its apparently strong position in Kinshasa. But if 1963 was to be a low point in the MPLA's fortunes, 1964 was to find the FNLA confronted with serious problems from which it never really recovered. At least two of these reflected concrete weaknesses in Holden Roberto's organization and approach to liberation. The first had to do with the extent to which the FNLA had allowed its fate to be tied up in Congolese politics. If the Congo government could make the FNLA strong, it could also make it weak and dependent and determine the actions and movements of the Bakongo people who supported Roberto and were prepared to fight for FNLA. The reality of this situation was brought home in 1964, when Moise Tshombe became Prime Minister and actually prohibited the FNLA from crossing the border into Angola for a short time. Later, the border was reopened and increased military support was received from General Mobutu, but despite the training and expansion of troop strength in Zaire, the FNLA never revived armed struggle in Angola significantly before the April, 1974 coup in Portugal.

It is possible that with the increasing support and direct involvement from General Mobutu's Zaire, Roberto assumed he could wait with his people off stage, as it were, while MPLA fought Portuguese colonialism and took the inevitable losses involved. The idea that the liberation struggle was a process of evolution as well as revolution, and that sustained growth resulted from that process and depended upon it was not an idea to which the FNLA leadership gave much thought.

If the instability of Congolese politics shook the FNLA temporarily in 1964, a second problem—the result of internal dissension erupting into a critical split, also exposed a deep weakness in the FNLA. At an OAU meeting in Cairo in July, 1964, Jonas Savimbi, past Secretary-General of UPA and FNLA and Foreign Minister of GRAE resigned, accusing Roberto of "flagrant tribalism" and of accepting support from "American imperialism."

Savimbi had been a student in Switzerland studying Political Science and Law at the University of Lausanne when war broke out in 1961. Shortly thereafter, Roberto, who needed to break the tribal image of UPA and wished to attract mission-trained "intellectuals" untainted by the left-wing politics of Lisbon, contacted Savimbi and some of his friends. Savimbi became Secretary-General of UPA, spending part of his time in Leopoldville and the rest in Switzerland, where he received his doctorate in 1965. When GRAE was formed in 1962, Savimbi became its Foreign Minister. But in spite of his position, he came more and more to feel that he was not being consulted by Roberto.

Before joining Roberto in 1962, Savimbi had also toyed with the idea of joining MPLA. After resigning from FNLA/GRAE Savimbi did not return to Leopoldville, but spent some time across the river in Brazzaville where he was in contact with, but did not join, the MPLA. Apparently it was clear by the middle of 1965 that he would not find his political home with the MPLA. He and a number of associates who had followed him out of the FNLA/GRAE, then organized the *União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola* (the Union for the Total Independence of Angola—UNITA), in March, 1966.

During the period 1966 to 1974, the charismatic Savimbi organized a southern ethnic base for UNITA among the Ovimbundu.

The movement had no external base or friends, apart from isolated individuals, and an ideology that has been described as shifting in the wind. Sometimes they sounded like followers of Mao Tse Tung; at other times they echoed the rhetoric of the American Black Power Movement. The Institute of Strategic Studies in London in its 1975 assessment of events in Angola reflected a view quite widely held, that UNITA if not actually in collusion with the Portuguese played a role helpful to the colonialist strategy by weakening MPLA. In their view "Deprived of any significant external patron or facilities, UNITA survived by adopting an enforced strategy of self-reliance, helped perhaps by the fact that the Portuguese army refrained from any full scale offensive against them, regarding the organization as a useful counterbalance to the MPLA." (Strategic Survey 1975, p. 29)

In the transitional period after the coup in Portugal, UNITA used a liberal voice, spoke of bringing about rapport between Black and White, and had attracted the support of many of the remaining Portuguese settlers and of local business interests.

During the same period (1966-74) the FNLA, protected by General Mobutu, built up its army in Zaire, maintained limited control over some areas in northern Angola, and left the Portuguese largely untouched. Incident after incident in which the FNLA and Zaire authorities took action involved the harassment, pursuit and imprisonment not of Portuguese soldiers but of MPLA cadre.

THE MPLA PROGRAM AND IDEOLOGY IN ACTION

As Immanuel Wallerstein has concluded in his comparison of the Angolan nationalist movements, MPLA alone went on fighting a continuous guerrilla war, becoming in the process a true mass movement with a multi-ethnic base, resisting the temptations of anti-white racism, and shaping the future of Angola in the zones which they liberated. With the Zaire border closed to them, and working across the open dry plains from Zambia, they faced enormous logistical problems. Nevertheless, by 1971, the MPLA was fighting in ten out of the fifteen districts of Angola and claimed control of more than one-third of the country with a population of approximately one million people.

In the villages of the liberated zones, the MPLA promoted collective agricultural work and emphasized self-reliance. Although the people often offered food willingly to the guerrilla units, members of the MPLA liberation army cultivated land and grew their own crops. The MPLA program did not call for an elite army fed through the sacrifice of the farmers. The hoe and the gun were both necessary instruments to be inter-changed as the situation required.

In the Eastern Region, the MPLA organized Peoples' Stores. Each sector had one of these stores. The movement bought or received contributions of clothes, salt, soap, and other staples. Prices were fixed so that they would be uniform throughout the region. The people paid with products they raised or gathered such as rice, potatoes, fish, meat, honey, or if they wished, with Angolan currency. Medicines, though in short supply, were free. Money received by the stores was sent through the action committees to party headquarters in Lusaka where it was exchanged for Zambian currency and used to purchase more goods and supplies.

Under its free medical program, SAM, the MPLA set up health posts, clinics, and aid stations in all zones and sectors by 1972, and training schools for nurses and para-medical assistants were functioning in three regions. In 1970 there were only four doctors and seven qualified nurses. By 1972, there were seven

doctors and 120 nurses and assistants. Malaria and other parasitical diseases, contagious infections, and malnutrition are widespread medical problems in Angola, but for many people there had been no health care at all until the coming of the SAM program.

More than forty primary schools were set up in the liberated zones with over 3000 pupils by 1971. All the teachers were Angolans and the schools were prepared to provide five years of study. In addition to the basics of reading and writing, mathematics and natural sciences, the children learned about Angolan history, the meaning of the liberation struggle and their own social and political role in that struggle. MPLA prepared some of its own textbooks and shared others with FRELIMO and PAIGC. A secondary school was also established, and Centers for Revolutionary Instruction, offering short courses of three to four months were also set up throughout the Eastern Region. The importance of these centers was described in an *MPLA Report to the UN Committee on Decolonization* in May, 1969:

The MPLA regards our struggle as a political-military struggle in which politics have priority. The guerrilla is not, therefore, a traditional soldier, a war-making robot. The guerrilla is above all, one who wishes to revolutionize society, an essentially political person. This is why the courses held at the CIR are both political and military. . . .

The students have to carry out all the required tasks, from agricultural work to fighting, when the situation so demands. At no time, therefore, do they lose contact with the hard realities of the struggle. So it might be said that the symbols of the CIR are the book, the weapon and the hoe. (pp. 44-45)

Ideologically, the MPLA has a socialist orientation. This does not mean that MPLA has forfeited its independence. Agostinho Neto has stated clearly, "Our policies are not subordinated to the socialist countries, to their practical policies, to their orientation or daily ideology; we consider them to be our natural allies. . . . Our movement defines its external policies as those of an independent movement, a movement not tied to or subordinated to the policies of another country." (*Motive, An Interview with Agostinho Neto, February, 1971, p. 58*) The movement also has categorically rejected both racialism and tribalism. It has consistently emphasized that it was not fighting white people, but rather the Portuguese colonial structure. Socialism has meant ending exploitation, or as Agostinho Neto expressed it, "We don't intend to allow either Angolans or foreigners to exploit others in our country. . . ." (*Angola in Arms, MPLA publication,*

August, 1972)

Another important issue with which the MPLA has grappled has been the status of Angolan women. Deolinda Rodrigues de Almeida, like Josina Machel of Mozambique, was a pioneer in this area of work. In 1962-63, she began to organize the women of MPLA. Secretary of CVAAR, she was arrested in the Congo when the MPLA was expelled, and along with others tragically "disappeared." OMA, the Organization of Angolan Women, carried on educational work preparing women for all roles in the movement, from administrative to political to agricultural to military. During the struggle women served as technicians, radio operators, doctors, teachers, political organizers, and troops in the field.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES TO MPLA STRUGGLE

Throughout its struggle for Angolan liberation the MPLA sought support from a broad spectrum of countries and organizations. It received some assistance from Scandinavian governments, but in other western countries—the U.S., Canada, the Netherlands and Great Britain—help came not from governments but from private organizations. The World Council of Churches gave well-publicized aid to the MPLA and other liberation movements. In addition, the OAU became a source of support, while special help came from Tanzania, Algeria and Zambia. But during the course of the armed struggle, the bulk of MPLA's aid came from the socialist countries, including the U.S.S.R., Yugoslavia, Rumania and Cuba.

It is not enough simply to say that the United States and other western powers declined to support MPLA. The reality was a much harsher one for the Angolan liberation struggle, since the U.S. Government and other western powers were in fact supplying fascist Portugal (a NATO ally) with crucial military equipment and economic aid to fight in Africa. Additional support for Portugal came from the illegal white minority regime in Rhodesia and from the government of South Africa, which had long regarded colonial "stability" in Angola and Mozambique as fundamentally important to the continuation of white domination in South Africa itself.

With respect to the issue of international support or the lack of it, a major and continuing problem for the MPLA remained the hostility of Zaire. As Wallerstein has pointed out, after 1965 "it was clear to Mobutu and to the United States that any success for the MPLA would threaten the internal order they had imposed in that part of the Congo now called Zaire." (Wallerstein, p. 2) The MPLA's only real chance of solving this problem

seemed to be through closer cooperation with FNLA. Thus, even as late as December 13, 1972, and under pressure from the OAU the MPLA entered into a unity pact with FNLA. The agreement, calling for the establishment of a Supreme Council for the Liberation of Angola and most importantly, for a Unified Military Command, was never implemented, and the Supreme Council had not yet held its first meeting before the coup in Portugal changed the entire situation.

AFTER THE COUP: CONTRADICTIONS AND STRUGGLE CONTINUE

On April 25, 1974, an impoverished and backward Portugal was dramatically liberated from fascism through a coup which can accurately be termed Africa's gift to the Portuguese people. The backbone, heart, and brains of the coup were provided by members of the Portuguese armed forces who had been politicized and radicalized by the experience of fighting uselessly and seemingly endlessly against the liberation forces of Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and Angola. From the dedicated men and women of FRELIMO, PAIGC, and MPLA, the Portuguese who were to form themselves into an Armed Forces Movement capable of toppling the Portuguese Government, learned that they were themselves victims of an archaic colonial philosophy and dependent capitalism that enriched the few at the expense of Africans and the vast majority of Portuguese alike.

Both the PAIGC of Guinea Bissau and FRELIMO of Mozambique were able to confront the altered situation created by the coup from positions of unambiguous strength. The PAIGC had already proclaimed independence in September, 1973. FRELIMO, while facing threats from hostile segments of Mozambique's settler population, was unquestionably the power with which the new Portuguese Government had to negotiate for the transition to independence.

In Angola, however, the situation was far less clear and hence susceptible to the machinations of foreign powers seeking to advance and protect their own economic and political interests in southern Africa by imposing neo-colonial solutions. The state of uncertainty in Angola at the time of the coup was in part the result of conditions that have already been discussed. The MPLA had not been able to come to terms with the rival FNLA and UNITA, each of which could claim some support in the north and south of Angola respectively. Fear of an MPLA victory on the part of Zaire, South Africa and the United States suddenly became intense, and the attempts on the part of these governments to undermine MPLA strength took on new and blatant

forms.

Moreover, at a time when the MPLA needed to be solidly united in order to claim final victory against the enemies ranged against it, the Movement was in fact seriously split and struggling to overcome factional strife that had surfaced in 1973. In that year, the leadership of Agostinho Neto was challenged by the MPLA Commander of the Eastern Front, Daniel Chipenda, who was also charged with responsibility for an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Neto late in 1972. The pretext for Chipenda's revolt against Neto was the serious losses inflicted on the MPLA during the strong Portuguese military offensive of 1972. Blaming Neto's leadership for the setbacks suffered, Chipenda and his followers tried at the beginning of 1973 to take over an MPLA base in Zambia by force. Having created for himself a local power base in Eastern Angola, Chipenda charged Neto with autocracy, and sought to advance his personal ambitions through playing on tribalist tendencies firmly rejected in MPLA ideology and practice.

The MPLA had by no means dealt with this blow to its unity when a second challenge came in May, 1974, just a month after the Lisbon coup. This time, it came from Brazzaville, where an MPLA splinter group calling itself the *Revolta Activa* published a manifesto critical of Neto's leadership. This group was led by Mario de Andrade, a founder of MPLA, Joaquim Pinto de Andrade and Afrique Viana. Only 10 of the 19 signers of the anti-Neto manifesto were MPLA militants.

There can be little doubt that internal factionalism within the MPLA forces served the interests of the FNLA and UNITA at a critical period in the struggle. In an attempt to resolve differences and to bring unity once again, an MPLA Congress was held near Lusaka in August, 1974. The Chipenda and Active Revolt factions were grossly over-represented relative to their actual strength, and after the Neto delegates, who represented the overwhelming majority of the MPLA, walked out in protest, Chipenda was declared MPLA president, having been elected to the position by the two minority factions. Shortly thereafter Chipenda opened proceedings which eventuated in a common front with FNLA.

At the end of August, the legitimate presidency of Neto was reconfirmed at a conference in Brazzaville of the Heads of State of several African states. Neto and the leaders of the two MPLA factions were also at the Conference. But the damage could not be repaired and maneuvering for power on the part of the rejected factions continued. Chipenda, taking a sizeable MPLA fighting force with him, finally joined FNLA as its Secretary

General, but kept his armed forces separate from the FNLA's.

With the FNLA and UNITA declaring their strength to be equal to that of an MPLA struggling to ward off erosion from within, the situation was ripe for the application of neo-colonial principles for Angola's future. These were precisely what General Spínola, President of Portugal's first post-coup government had in mind. In his book *Portugal and the Future*, Spínola had clearly projected a "Lusitanian Federation" for Portugal's African colonies. Thus, when he assumed the presidency, Spínola supported "self-determination" for the colonies, but differentiated between this and "independence." The peoples of the colonies, he argued, were insufficiently prepared to be able at present to decide for themselves about the future.

All the liberation movements rejected the idea of federation, but Spínola set out to exploit the divisions among them and isolate the MPLA. He initiated contact with Savimbi and a cease fire with UNITA was announced on June 18, 1974. FLEC, the Zaire-backed breakaway movement in Cabinda, was permitted to open an office in Luanda.

The April coup in Lisbon was followed by a wave of strikes among the workers in the banks, public transport, and sugar refineries in Luanda. MPLA tried to keep the situation under control, but the tension increased among whites, and racial tension grew. There were rumors of a movement for unilateral independence, and the situation reached a pitch of violence in July, 1974. Forty-three people were killed in an attack on African areas by white settlers. MPLA called a general strike in the city.

It was clear by then that the idea of federation was a dead issue. The question now was what kind of independence and when. At stake was MPLA's involvement in any future Angolan government. White settler support for Savimbi and UNITA increased rapidly as Savimbi assumed the stance of a moderate non-racialist, willing to ease the situation for Portugal, for western capitalist interests, and for Angolan whites fearful of losing land, possessions and small businesses. The divisions in MPLA strengthened Spínola's hand. The Chipenda faction indicated that it favored autonomy for Cabinda and, as noted above, even suggested merging MPLA into the FNLA.

Spínola then made contact with President Mobutu of Zaire. In September, they met secretly on Sal Island in Cape Verde with Holden Roberto and Savimbi and apparently agreed on a coalition government of UNITA, FNLA and the Chipenda faction of MPLA. At the end of the talks, Mobutu said, "If it only depended on General Spínola, the decolonization of Angola

would go much more quickly."

Spinola warned of "abandoning the African populations to the domination of new dictatorships." He announced that he personally would supervise the negotiations in Angola. The stage was set for a settlement that would effectively exclude MPLA. But on September 18th, Spinola was forced from office as a result of his abortive attempt to seize total power in the Portuguese.

Admiral Rosa Coutinho had been appointed head of the Angola provisional military government by the Armed Forces Junta in July 1974. Following Spinola's fall, he assumed the post of High Commissioner in Luanda as Portugal sought the establishment of a national coalition government to guide Angola to independence. Coutinho refused to negotiate with any splinter faction of MPLA. A cease fire was signed with the FNLA and MPLA in October. All three movements then opened offices in Luanda in the tense atmosphere of the dock strike. Coutinho dismissed FLEC as a "political current that is both very divided and subject to diverse pressures", and like the OAU refused to recognize it as a liberation movement.

In Luanda, there were clashes among the three movements. On November 25th, FNLA and UNITA signed an agreement of political and military cooperation. Representatives of the Portuguese government, in discussion with Presidents Nyerere, Kaunda, and Mobutu of Tanzania, Zambia and Zaire, respectively, were pressing for an agreement between FNLA and MPLA. Some elements in Lisbon saw Savimbi and UNITA as a possible mediator between the two. The OAU agreed to recognize UNITA as a valid liberation movement in the hope that a firm three-way coalition could be achieved.

In January, 1975, at a meeting held in Mombasa, Kenya, the three leaders of the liberation movements agreed on a joint negotiating position to present to Portugal. Finally, on January 17th, the three movements met with representatives of the Portuguese government, at Alvor in southern Portugal, and agreed on a formula that would lead to Angola's independence. Angola was to become independent on November 11th. In the interim the Alvor agreement called for the establishment of a coalition transitional government which was to take office on January 31st, 1975. Portugal's interests would be represented by a High Commissioner, and a representative from each movement would sit on the three member Presidential Council. In addition, a Council of Ministers consisting of twelve ministers, three from Portugal and three from each of the liberation movements, would function as a Cabinet. The Presidential Council would preside over the transitional government, and during the months that it

functioned the groups would rotate in chairing cabinet meetings. A unified army was to be formed by the end of September, consisting of 24,000 Portuguese troops and 8,000 from each of the liberation movements. The National Council of Defence would be headed by the Portuguese service chiefs and would include one delegate from each movement. They would be responsible for national security and defense. The withdrawal of the Portuguese was to be completed by February, 1976. General elections were to precede independence.

Given the mutual hostility and differences which continued to exist between the three movements, successful implementation of the Alvor Agreement would have been difficult under any circumstances. Each movement feared and mistrusted the other. The FNLA, for example, charged that the Portuguese High Commissioner, Coutinho, favored the MPLA. Coutinho was soon replaced by Silva Cardoso.

But the most serious plan to "stack the deck" in favor of one movement over the others was hatched not in Angola nor even in Zaire or Portugal. It was the work of the CIA and of the U.S. government's 40 Committee, a group of officials whose job it is to approve covert intelligence activity.

In January of 1975, in the same month that the Alvor Agreement was signed, the 40 Committee voted, with their usual secrecy, \$300,000 in clandestine support to FNLA leader Holden Roberto in order to "advance his cause in the anticipated scramble for power." (Roger Morris, "The Proxy War in Angola," *New Republic*, Jan. 31, 1976, p. 21) As Roger Morris had noted, "the action was extraordinary. After a hiatus of some five years in CIA support, just as the competing factions began their final delicate jockeying prior to independence, Washington bestowed on its former client 30 times the money he had been receiving." (*Ibid.*)

In July, the 40 Committee was to secretly approve an additional 30 million dollars for CIA financing of arms and material to the FNLA. When, in the months following, reports of this covert action were leaked and congressional approval belatedly sought, Secretary of State Kissinger (who personally promoted this astonishing increase in assistance to FNLA) was to insist that covert aid to FNLA was simply a necessary response to the massive infusion of Soviet arms to MPLA.

In fact, the reverse was the case as, in the Spring of 1975, the Soviets responded to the CIA-sponsored FNLA military build-up by supplying the MPLA with additional arms to defend themselves against full scale attacks from FNLA and UNITA.

During the first two months of 1975, there had been few

clashes, but all three movements were mobilizing and arming their supporters. Neto accused Zaire of organizing a "silent invasion" as both FNLA troops, recruited and trained in Zaire, and Zairois regulars crossed the border. For its part, MPLA armed the youth in the *muceques* (working-class slums) of Luanda. The "*Poder Popular*" (Peoples' Power) was formed, factory and neighborhood committees were organized in strength, and an effective popular militia developed.

Late in March, George Houser spent several days in Luanda. His notes record the deep dissension that lay behind growing tensions in Angola.

"At this time, it was obvious that distrust among the movements, far from being lessened, was increasing. The real power lay not with the transitional government, but with the individual movements. The separate military forces—not the integrated forces as had been agreed upon in January—represented the real power."

The overwhelming popular support expressed for MPLA in the development of the peoples's committees and militia alarmed the FNLA, as did the nationalization of the banks. In mid-April, they launched an attack on the MPLA, and in a week of fighting, there were many casualties before the Portuguese intervened with a policy of "active neutrality." Fighting broke out again in late April when FNLA sacked the offices of UNTA (Uniao Nacional dos Trabalhadores de Angola), the MPLA-affiliated trade union movement, and forced the cancellation of May Day celebrations. Between then and the middle of May, there was almost continuous fighting between FNLA and MPLA in the *muceques* of Luanda. The situation continued to deteriorate.

On May 22nd, the city was paralyzed by a general strike called by UNTA and MPLA. With the assistance of Zaire, the FNLA had already begun military operations designed to clear MPLA out of northern Angola, using arms and equipment from Zaire, the U.S. and France. By this time, the MPLA was receiving increasingly sophisticated arms from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries.

Heavy fighting broke out again in Luanda in June, and under pressure from the Presidents of Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana, and Mozambique, a meeting of the three movements was called once more in Nakuru, Kenya. Another agreement was signed on June 21st, calling for a cease fire, the disarming of civilians, and elections for a constituent assembly in October. But the fighting continued.

The effect was to force the MPLA to reconsider the workability of the policy of peaceful competition among the move-

ments implicit in the Alvor Agreement. In the face of the armed action of FNLA and Zaire, in the face of the escalation of covert support of FNLA and UNITA by the United States and the reports of military movements by South Africa, MPLA decided to launch a counter-offensive against FNLA in Luanda. They held the main approach roads to Luanda from the north and effectively cut off the FNLA troops in the city from their support bases. FNLA was unable to counterbalance MPLA's strength and popular support in Luanda. They reacted by declaring "total war" on MPLA. At first UNITA seemed to stand on the sidelines, but Savimbi in the Council of Ministers and elsewhere supported FNLA. He denounced the Poder Popular as "MPLA's street soviets," and declared that he would not tolerate them in *his* territory. In August both UNITA and FNLA withdrew their ministers from the Transitional Government, and UNITA declared open war on the MPLA.

In August too, South African troops moved into Angola. Their initial pretext was protection of the Cunene River hydroelectric sites. "Hot pursuit" of SWAPO militants and attacks on their camps then became the excuse for additional military operations in southern Angola. By the end of October, a clear-cut invasion of Angola was underway. Using armored cars, Unimog trucks, personnel carriers, jeep mounted recoilless rifles, mortars, automatic weapons, helicopters and U.S.-made C-130's, South African troops drove deep into the country, taking over MPLA-held towns and districts as they went. By early November, South African forces, using Namibia as a staging area, were deeply involved in a war against the MPLA, at one point maintaining a base camp at Sa da Bandeira, 250 miles inside Angola. Using the supply lines, excellent equipment and momentum provided by the South African forces, mercenary and UNITA troops advanced in the wake of the South African onslaught, as did the troops under Chipenda's command.

In the North, Zaire was actively involved in support of FNLA military operations. The objective was to enable UNITA to establish control over the south, overrun Luanda and destroy MPLA, or failing that, at least to create the conditions for an agreement that would partition the country.

South Africa had relied in its strategy on U.S. approval for its military invasion, and once inside Angola, had apparently hoped for full-scale U.S. support or direct intervention. When later asked whether the U.S. had in fact "solicited South Africa's help" in Angola, Prime Minister Vorster replied that he couldn't violate the confidentiality of government to government communications. "But if you are making the statement," Vorster

added, "I won't call you a liar." (*Newsweek*, May 17, 1976) In fact, the South African press was the first to reveal that the U.S. was training ex-G.I.'s as mercenaries. The South African strategy failed because the U.S. Congress was not prepared to accept the Administration's anti-Soviet hysteria as sufficient grounds for further involvement in the Angolan conflict.

On November 11, with the proclamation of the People's Republic of Angola, Neto requested increased aid from the Soviet Union, Cuba and other nations who had supported the MPLA struggle in the past. In late October, when South Africa had launched its full-scale invasion, there were only 400 Cubans in Angola. Now, with the MPLA under heavy attack Cuba responded to Neto's request swiftly and in the last months of 1975, sent upwards of 10,000 troops to fight with the MPLA.

By December, 1975, the peaceful conditions in areas where MPLA had maintained or already regained full control were in stark contrast to the devastation and confusion that existed in FNLA and UNITA-held territory. Reporting on December 7, George Siemensma of the *Sunday Times* of Zambia noted that in the town of Malanje, 248 miles east of Luanda, and in the entire MPLA-controlled "corridor" from Luanda to the Zambian border, calm and stability prevailed. Under the direction of MPLA cadres, cooperatives were under way and farmers were being organized to plant before the heavy rains commenced. In Malanje itself, various government departments were being set up. Postal, rail and air services were all functioning normally, though the cotton and tobacco factories were suffering from labor shortages, the sabotaging of machinery by departing Portuguese, and the absence of necessary spare parts and materials.

In January, 1976, MPLA launched a series of offensives and, with Cuban assistance rapidly turned the tide of war. Although UNITA and FNLA had declared the formation of a government and capital at Huambo in central Angola in November, 1975, they failed to receive formal recognition from any government. Describing conditions which she found during two weeks traveling in central and southern Angola where FNLA and UNITA had "taken over," Jane Bergerol reported:

At its worst, the FNLA-UNITA alliance deliberately set out to eliminate its civilian opponents; at best the alliance leaders were either unable or uninterested in controlling their armed forces, allowing wholesale destruction and murder. (*Observer*, London, February 29, 1976)

In 1976 the list of countries recognizing the MPLA government grew steadily longer. In Africa there were attempts, by some countries sympathetic to the international enemies of the

MPLA, to insist that only a coalition Angolan government could have legitimacy; but as the MPLA established undisputed control throughout Angola this camp weakened, and on February 12th, 1976, Angola under the MPLA was admitted to the OAU as its 47th member.

Independence is not the end of the struggle. It is a new beginning. *A luta continua*. . . . In the words of Eugenia Neto, "There is so much, so much, so much to be done before peace returns to our country, martyred by five centuries of colonialism." The long bitter anti-colonial liberation war has ended. The struggle for the freedom of all of southern Africa—Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa—still lies ahead. In Angola itself the task of reconstruction and reconciliation, the task of revolutionary transformation, has just begun.

As you will see, my brother
There will be no more wars in Angola

The bands of guerrillas will leave their weapons
The hands of the Portuguese soldiers
Will go to till the soil
And cover it with flowers

And one day
Not far from that moment
Men who once killed each other
Can build in unity
The future of mankind

Eugenia Neto

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ALIAZO—Alliance des Ressortissants de Zombo (Alliance of the People of Zombo)—a political movement formed from the cultural organization of ASSOMIZO—1960

ANANGOLA—Associacao Regionaldos Naturais de Angola (Regional Association of Native-Born of Angola) 1930's

CONCP—Conferencia das Organizacoes Nacionalistas das Colonias Portuguesas (Conference of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies)—organization formed to coordinate MPLA, FRELIMO, PAIGC

CVAAR—Corpo Voluntario Angolano de Assistencia dos Refugiados (Volunteer Angolan Corps for the Assistance of Refugees)—medical service program—1962

FLEC—Frente para el Libertacao Enclava da Cabinda (Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda)—1974

FNLA—Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola (National Front for the Liberation of Angola)—essentially the front formed by UPA and PDA

FRAIN—Frente Revolucionaria Africana Para a Independencia Nacional (African Revolutionary Front for National Independence)—1960

GRAE—Governo Revolucionario de Angola no Exilio (Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile)—the governmental structure of FNLA—1962

LIGA AFRICANA—(African League)—Pan African group founded in the 1920's leaning to the philosophy of W.E.B. deBois

LIGA ANGOLANA—(Angolan League)—founded in 1913

LIGA NACIONAL AFRICANA—(African National League)—the reconstituted LIGA ANGOLANA—1929

MIA—Movimento para a Independencia de Angola (Movement for the Independence of Angola)—1956

MLEC—Movimento para el Libertacao Enclava da Cabinda (Movement for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda)—1961

MPLA—Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola)—1956

OAU—Organization of African Unity

OMA—Organizacao da Mulher de Angola (Organization of Angolan Women)—1962-63

PARTIDO NACIONAL AFRICANA—(African National Party)—advocated black nationalism based on the teachings of Marcus Garvey

PDA—Partido Democratico de Angola (Democratic Party of Angola)—formed out of ALIAZO—1961

PIDE—Policia Internacional de Defesa de Estado (Portuguese secret police)

PLUA—Partido da Luta dos Africanos de Angola (Party for the Struggle of Africans of Angola)—1953—first clandestine revolutionary party

SAM—Servicio de Assistencia Medica (Medical Assistance Service)—1963

UNITA—Uniao Nacional para Independencia Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)—1966

UNTA—Uniao Nacional dos Trabalhadores de Angola (National Union of Workers of Angola)—founded in Leopoldville in 1960—MPLA-affiliated trade union movement

UPA—Uniao das Populacoes de Angola (Union of Populations of Angola)—1958—Renaming of UPNA

UPNA—Uniao das Populacoes do Norte de Angola (Union of Populations of Northern Angola)—1957

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