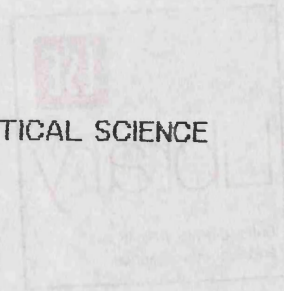


THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE



The Origins of the Angolan Civil War

International Politics and Domestic Political Conflict 1961-1976

Thesis submitted to the University of London in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations

Fernando João da Costa Cabral Andresen Guimarães

March 1992



UMI Number: U615363

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI U615363

Published by ProQuest LLC 2014. Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

TWESSES
F9723



1286551

ABSTRACT

This thesis views the Angolan civil war as a conflict that resulted from both internal and external political factors. The war, fought in the period 1975-1976 between the MPLA and the FNLA-UNITA coalition to succeed Portuguese colonialism in Angola, involved the intervention of external powers on behalf of both sides. This study examines, in part, the relationships that were established between these international powers and the Angolan movements. Due to the way in which these external relationships modified the nature of the internal political dispute, they became an intricate part of the origins of the conflict itself.

The internationalization of the Angolan civil war was predicated, however, on an internal political conflict that emerged from a dynamic interaction of the effects of both Portuguese colonialism and divergent currents of Angolan anti-colonialism. While the particularities of Portuguese colonialism and the Salazarist regime played their part in establishing some of the conditions within which Angolan anti-colonialism emerged, the latter was also a product of specific political choices on the part of the movements involved. In this interaction there can also be found the roots of the conflict between the Angolan movements.

This internal conflict was further exacerbated when the parties to it hoped to bolster their respective positions by establishing relationships with external powers. The establishment of these relationships was in part achieved by appealing to

external rivalries, in particular to that of the competition between the superpowers, but also to regional rivalries, such as that between Congo and Zaire and wider continental divisions. The interaction between the internal conflict and these external rivalries is shown to have contributed significantly to the origins of the civil war.

This thesis maintains its focus tightly on the specific question of the origins of the Angolan civil war. Those developments that led to the war, rather than the conflict itself are its main concern.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis was only made possible by the support of a number of people, without whom I would not have had neither the opportunity nor the inspiration for the work. To them I would like to express my gratitude.

Firstly, I would like to thank my family: my mother and father, António and Graça, my grandparents and my brother António, for their unwavering support and belief in the project. They made it possible and it is to them that this thesis is dedicated.

Secondly, I would like to thank Professor Fred Halliday for his supervision and encouragement, and the International Relations Department of the LSE, where I spent so much time and felt so welcome. In particular, I would like to thank all my colleagues in the Africa Seminar who helped to make the meetings an important part of the development of the thesis. The financial support provided by the British Council in the early phases of my work is much appreciated.

Lastly, but not least, I would like to thank my friends, who either on a day-to-day basis or far away, made my life better and my work worthwhile: Mark for starting it and Spyros for ending it; Lisa, Pedro, Gil, João, Claudia, Paulo, Hugh, Heiner, Richard, Allison, Shari, Nicky, Margarida, Leon, Joe, Karin, Anna, Fida, Mallory, Tony and Ariane for what they have given me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....p. 2
Acknowledgements.....p. 4
Table of Contents.....p. 5
Abbreviations.....p. 8
INTRODUCTION.....p. 11

**PART ONE
THE ANGOLAN CIVIL WAR 1975-1976**

CHAPTER 1 THE ANGOLAN CIVIL WAR.....p. 28
 (i) The Collapse of Portuguese Colonialism
 (ii) International Intervention

**PART TWO
THE INTERNAL SOURCES OF CONFLICT IN ANGOLA**

CHAPTER 2 PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM IN ANGOLA.....p. 93
 (i) Colonial Policy and the Portuguese New State
 (ii) Portugal and the Economy of Colonial Angola
 (iii) The Policy of Assimilation and the Formation
 of Colonial Society in Angola
CHAPTER 3 ANGOLAN ANTI-COLONIALISM.....p.147
 (i) The Origins of Angolan Nationalism
 (ii) Urban Radicalism and the MPLA
 (iii) The FNLA, Roberto and Bakongo Nationalism
 (iv) Savimbi and UNITA: the Third Force

**PART THREE
CONTINENTAL POLITICS AND ANGOLAN RIVALRY 1961-1976**

CHAPTER 4 EXILE POLITICS IN THE CONGO.....p.220
CHAPTER 5 THE OAU AND THE ANGOLAN NATIONALISTS: CONFLICT
AND RECOGNITION.....p.240

PART FOUR
THE GLOBALIZATION OF ANGOLAN CONFLICT 1961-1976

CHAPTER 6	<u>THE INTERNATIONAL ACTORS</u>	p.292
	(i) Cuba and Angola: Internationalism and Intervention	
	(ii) South Africa and Angola: Regional Power Politics	
	(iii) Zaire and Angola: the Search for Influence	
CHAPTER 7	<u>THE GLOBAL ACTORS</u>	p.369
	(i) The United States and Angola	
	(ii) The Soviet Union and Angola	
	(iii) China and the Angolan Movements	
	<u>CONCLUSION</u>	p.450
	<u>Appendix</u>	p.461
	<u>Bibliography</u>	p.493

Tables and Maps

Tables

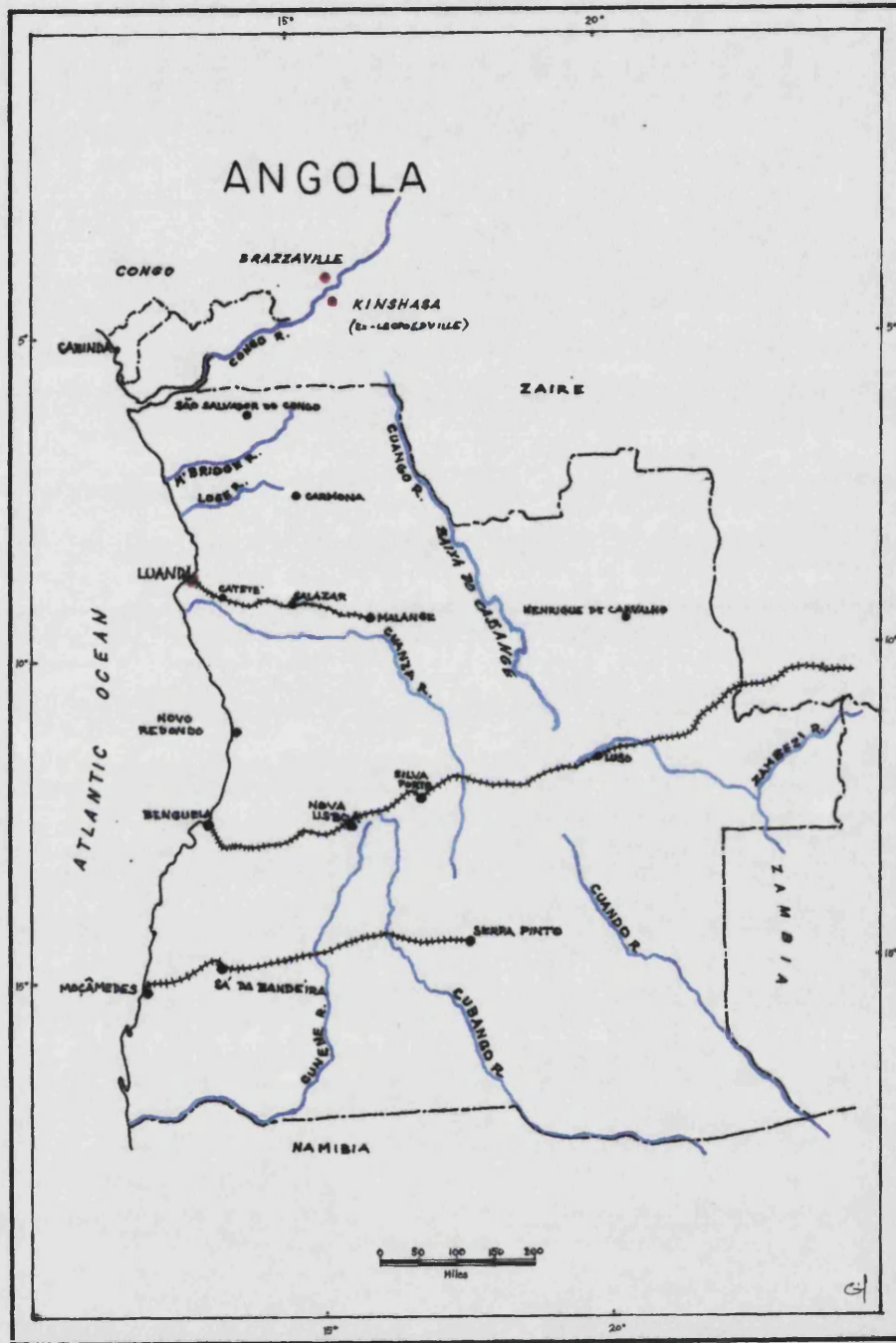
- 1 Value of Total Angolan Exports by Origin 1961 and 1962.p.123
- 2 Main Angolan Export Commodities 1966.....p.124
- 3 Coffee Exports from Angola 1948-1970.....p.128
- 4 Investment levels in Angola 1959-1973.....p.132
- 5 Angolan Population by Race and 'Civilized Status' 1950.p.137
- 6 Racial Composition of Angolan Population 1777-1970.....p.140
- 7 White Population in Angola 1940-1973.....p.143
- 8 Voting on Angola at OAU Emergency Session January 1976.p.287
- 9 Cuban Troop Strengths in Angola 1975-1976.....p.318






Maps

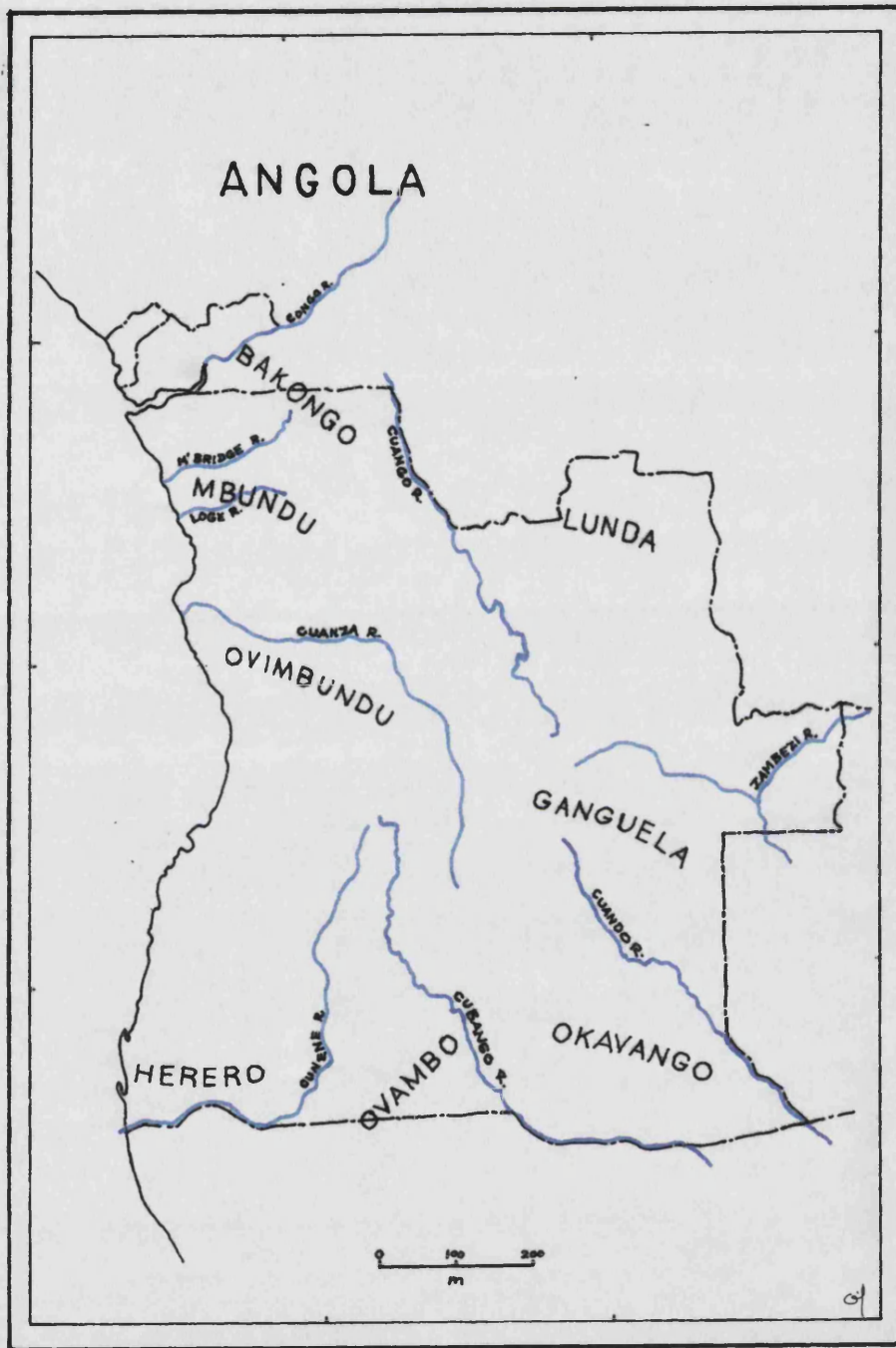
- 1 Angola 1975.....p. 9
- 2 Major Angolan Ethnic Groups.....p. 10

ABBREVIATIONS

ALC	African Liberation Committee (OAU)
ANC	African National Congress
BOSS	Bureau of State Security
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CONCP	Congress of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies
COPCON	Operational Command of the Continent
DGS	Security Directorate (ex-PIDE)
EEC	European Economic Community
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
ELNA	Army for the National Liberation of Angola (FNLA)
EPLA	Popular Army for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA)
FAPLA	Popular Armed Forces of the Liberation of Angola (MPLA)
FLEC	Liberation Front of the Enclave of Cabinda
FLN	National Liberation Front (Algeria)
FNLA	National Front of the Liberation of Angola
FRELIMO	Liberation Front of Mozambique
GRAE	Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (FNLA)
JSN	Council of National Salvation
MFA	Armed Forces Movement
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIC	Newly Industrialized Country
NSC	National Security Council (US)
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PAIGC	African Party of the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde
PCA	Angolan Communist Party
PCP	Portuguese Communist Party
PDA	Democratic Party of Angola
PIDE	International and State Defence Police
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SADF	South African Defence Force
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organization
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UPA	Union of the Angolan Peoples (ex-UPNA)
UPNA	Union of the Peoples of Northern Angola
UN	United Nations Organization
US	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics



-  INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES
-  RAILWAYS
-  RIVERS
-  CAPITAL
-  DISTRICT CAPITAL



ETHNIC GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

This thesis looks at how the convergence of internal and external political factors led to the Angolan civil war. While the civil war has generally been considered to have been a case of external intervention in internal Angolan affairs, this thesis examines the relationship between the international factors and the internal conflict. Within this relationship these international factors were an intricate part of the origins of the conflict itself, rather than a series of events that occurred after, and independently of, the internal dispute.

It will be argued that the domestic political actors in the conflict in Angola actively sought to internationalize their dispute in such a way that the dispute itself took on different natures. Thus, the civil war ceased to be solely a struggle for post-colonial succession and became, inter alia, part of Portuguese post-coup politics, a chapter in competition between African states, an incident in Sino-Soviet rivalry and a testing ground for post-Vietnam superpower competition. The MPLA and its rivals expressed their differences in ideological and political terms that served to establish their war as part of the wider global conflict between East and West.

The cold war was very much the context of the Angolan civil war, as it is for this study. The ideological and political competition between East and West was one of the battlefields on

which the Angolan adversaries sought to fight each other. The post-war bipolar international system formed the background to other levels of conflict which also played a part in the Angolan civil war. These other levels had, however, a dynamic of their own. The neighbourly rivalry between Zaire and the Congo (Brazzaville), which was itself set in the mould of the East-West schism, was also superimposed on the course of Angolan rivalry. In a similar way, the Sino-Soviet split was also present. Both Moscow and Peking are said to have become involved in Angola because of each other. These external conflicts will be shown to have become expressed in the Angolan civil war.

It will be contended that not only were other international rivalries superimposed on the Angolan domestic dispute, but so too were the particularist interests of certain states, that were allowed to enter the civil war. South Africa's drive for regional hegemony, Cuba's internationalism and Zaire's attempts to establish influence in the area were examples of such.

How these external structures of conflict (East-West, Sino-Soviet, Zaire-Congo, Portuguese Left-Right) and the pursuit of particularist interests (Zaire, Cuba, South Africa) became part of the Angolan civil war, is the focus of this study. It will be argued that the domestic actors of the internal conflict actively sought the imposition of these external factors, which led to the internationalization of the war.

In this way, this thesis attempts to define a continuum on which lie both the internal and external determinants of the

Angolan civil war, and on which there does not seem to be a clear separation between domestic politics and international relations.

This study focuses on the interaction between domestic political change and international politics; on what Little has called the 'third dimension' of the study of political behaviour.¹ This dimension of conflict is considered in the work of Rosenau and others to determine the role of internal wars in International Relations.² Their work recognized the indisputable external causes and implications of civil wars, and other violent domestic political transformations, which made them, in their very essence, international events.

Rosenau recognized that, as a violent political conflict for power emerges within a state, so one, or more, of the parties involved seeks to internationalize the conflict in order to gain an advantage over their opponents. In all probability, especially in what Rosenau has termed 'structural internal wars',³ this process of internationalization leads to some form of intervention by the relevant external powers. Intervention is made more likely

1. The first and second dimensions are respectively: political activity within the state; and relations between states. R Little, Intervention: External Involvement in Civil Wars [1975], p.ix.

2. Namely J Rosenau, G Modelski, M Kaplan, and A Scott in J Rosenau (ed.), International Aspects of Civil Strife [1964].

3. These are domestic civil wars which are fought to change not only the prevailing authority but also 'societal substructures' (such as the economy) and major domestic and foreign policies of the state. J Rosenau, op.cit., p.63.

when external rivalries are brought into play. This is particularly applicable in the international order that was dominated by East-West competition. The basis for this assumption is that the policy-makers of the superpowers saw political change within a state, such as that during a civil war, as a threat to shift the allegiance of this state from one bloc to another. To the superpowers, intervention in such a conflict to prevent or to support such a shift was seen as justified. A domestic civil war fought to gain power, but expressed in terms of superpower bloc politics, can thus be externalized. In this way an internal struggle may provide the international system, dominated by the superpowers, with what Little has called the 'interventionary stimulus'.⁴

In the case of the superpowers, intervention in third states became part of the very structure of international politics which their rivalry had established in the post-war period. The Soviet Union had established unofficially, through its interventions in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, its perceived right (the Brezhnev doctrine) to intervene in what amounted to its sphere of influence. The United States, acting under a similar doctrine with regard to the western hemisphere, intimated an acceptance of this right by not reacting to these interventions. The reasons for this were clear. In effect, any intervention in such a case would have brought about a direct confrontation between them. Outside their respective spheres of influence, however, it was

4. R Little, op.cit., p.8.

another matter. In a bid to avoid a nuclear catastrophe, the superpowers, under the promise of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), were inhibited from facing each other down in Europe. But, as Windsor has argued, instead of lessening conflict between East and West, MAD may have actually increased the incidence of non-nuclear confrontation elsewhere, particularly in the Third World, by, ironically, "...shaping a world which is safer for conflict and intervention..."⁵ In fact, Rosenau suggests that superpower intervention in the less-developed world may have actually been a perverse form of communication, or even co-operation, between them.⁶

Little has identified two opposing approaches to a definition of intervention which are particularly useful to an understanding of the dynamics of external intervention in civil wars.⁷ The 'push-theory', associated with views such as those held by Morgenthau, identifies intervention as being "...a conflict relationship between two states and analysed in terms of power..."⁸ In this approach, the target and intervening states are the only actors involved, and intervention is defined as the latter's act to force the former's compliance with its wishes.

A second opposing approach is the 'pull-theory', which considers intervention in a more complex model involving internal

5. P Windsor 'Superpower Intervention' [1984], p.48.

6. J Rosenau 'Internal War as an International Event' [1964], p.91.

7. R Little, op.cit., p.3.

8. R Little, ibid.

as well as external actors. According to this view, external rivalries can be drawn in by parties in a civil war in an attempt to bolster their own conflict. Intervention here is defined as an external response to internal actors. Clearly the external actors will have their own interests to fulfill by their interventions but these also occur in, and tend to be framed by, the internal political context of the particular conflict. It is this second approach, with its focus on the parallel national and international levels of conflict, which seems to be the most appropriate to a consideration of the Angolan civil war.

The intervention of external actors in a domestic political conflict cannot but have an overwhelming effect on its course and outcome. The effect can be fundamental. Modelski suggests that "the success or failure of an internal war is always dependent upon the behaviour of the international system."⁹ Especially when, as in the case of Angola, there occurred a direct, and indirect, military intervention in the form of Cuban and South African troops, and Soviet and American weapons. Modelski's argument that: "...external variables were primary determinants of the onset, course and termination of internal wars",¹⁰ is certainly applicable to the Angolan case. It is clear that bipolar international intervention "...transforms a struggle inside one political system into a struggle between two political systems."¹¹ This is,

9. G Modelski, 'The International Relations of Internal War', [1964],, p.29.

10. J Rosenau, op.cit., p.7.

in effect, a change in the very nature of the conflict. From a struggle for power within a state, intervention transforms the conflict into a bipolar contest which is expressed on two levels, both national and international. The 'pull-theory' referred to above seems to be applicable in this case.

An appropriate approach to achieve the aim of this study has been suggested by Rosenau. He believed that:

"the international aspects of internal wars cannot be analyzed apart from the conflicts that foster them...The interplay between the two sets of variables [external and internal] is continuous and complex, leaving the analyst no choice but to examine a broad range of political and social processes, from subnational to national to international."¹²

This study has adopted this approach and sets out to systematically analyse the conditions and factors that influenced the emergence of a political and military conflict for power in Angola after the collapse of Portuguese colonialism. This is done by looking firstly at the development of the internal conflict and, subsequently, at the process by which this rivalry was internationalized.

The thesis is divided into four parts. Part One serves as a scene-setter and, in addressing the civil war itself rather than its origins, stands somewhat separately from the other parts. It provides a portrait of the Angolan civil war and particularly of those developments the origins of which are considered throughout the study. It provides an outline of the intervention

11. G Modelski, op.cit., p.21.

12. J Rosenau, op.cit., (1964), p.1.

of the major external powers within the context of the escalation of hostilities between the Angolan movements. Before this, the events which precipitated the situation in Angola are considered. These are related to one event of paramount importance: the collapse of the authoritarian regime in Portugal in April 1974. Only the withdrawal of Portuguese colonial authority created the opportunity for Angolan political conflict and the form that it took.

Thus, the first section of Chapter One focuses on the implications of the 25 April coup that toppled the regime in Lisbon. The development of post-coup politics in Portugal can be seen to have been partly responsible for the creation of the conditions that were favourable to intermovement rivalry in Angola as the process of decolonization was entered into. It will be shown that the relationship between politics in Lisbon and in Luanda was sufficiently intimate for there to have been a discernible advantage provided to the MPLA in Angola by the dominant position held momentarily in Portugal by radical army officers. The section then turns to the international implications of the Portuguese withdrawal from Angola, with particular reference to what can be seen to have been a breakdown in authority, and consequently the creation of a power vacuum with regard to internal as well as external sovereignty.

It was in this vacuum in 1975, that the major Angolan nationalist movements moved rapidly down the road towards confrontation. As political competition for the succession of Portuguese authority reached ever-increasing levels of hostility, further es-

calations in the process of recruiting external backers were made. An arms race was entered into. The second section of Chapter One retraces those steps that led to the civil war.

The main body of the thesis thus begins in Part Two. From here, the origins of the civil war, as such, are the main focus of the argument. The objective of Part Two is to identify the internal origins of the political conflict in Angola. Although the focus of this thesis is the struggle for succession the issue of colonialism per se cannot be avoided. The Portuguese colonial state and society imposed in Angola played an integral part in the formation of the movements and of their protagonists, and must, therefore, be looked at in order to understand the roots of the conflict as well as the political parameters that framed the Angolan civil war. A formative influence of equal importance was the resistance and challenge to the Portuguese colonial regime, a defiance that led to over a decade of war and was fundamental in determining the political options open to the movements. Chapters Two and Three address these two interlocking issues respectively: the formative influences of both colonialism and anti-colonialism on the development of the conflict. Together they will show the emergence of a political rivalry out of the interactive effects of Portuguese colonialism and Angolan anti-colonialism. This will locate the origins of the Angolan civil war within the context of domestic political change.

The Angolan civil war had an anti-colonial war in its origins. The movements that faced each other in 1975 had been,

only a few months earlier, engaged in a war to destroy colonialism and establish an independent Angola. It is important to keep in mind this matrix of conflict in Angola: on one axis, there was an anti-colonial war; on another, there was a civil war. But the objectives of each movement involved were the same in whatever conflict: to capture the Angolan state and establish their respective structures of government.

Part Two begins with a chapter on Portuguese colonialism in order to establish the context of the anti-colonial challenge. One of the factors conditioning the nature of the Angolan movements was the intransigence of Portuguese colonialism. Its resistance to any form of change in the colonies limited the political options available to anti-colonialists and drove the movements to incorporate a more radical approach to their anti-colonialism, both politically as well as in their military strategy. The stubborn nature of Portuguese colonial policy was, in turn, linked very closely to the political stability of the Salazarist regime, and the first section of Chapter Two addresses this relationship. The chapter then turns to theme of colonial Angola itself and more specifically to the conditioning effects of Portuguese domination and policies on the economic development of the colony and on the formation of a colonial society. Within this colonial society lay part of the roots of the future conflict between the movements; and it was the particular conditions of Portuguese colonial rule in Angola as well as the general intransigent nature of the regime in Lisbon that partly determined the political and practical

choices of the anti-colonial movements.

Chapter Three focuses on the origins of modern Angolan anti-colonialism. Some of the more general issues of nationalism in Angola will be looked at, including the acceptance of the idea (framed under colonialism) of an Angolan nation, a factor which was central to the ethnocentric civil war as well as to the issue of sovereignty and international intervention. The remainder of Chapter Three will focus on the origins of the three movements that were involved in the Angolan civil war of 1975: the MPLA, the FNLA and UNITA. The origins of the MPLA are hotly disputed and part of the contribution of this chapter is to introduce new evidence on this question.

While the internal origins of the conflict will still be the focus of attention in Part Three, this will be done within a wider context of African politics. This part of the thesis restricts itself to the dynamics of the 'African' sphere of the politics of the Angolan nationalist movements. After the beginning of the anti-colonial war and the violent backlash of the Portuguese regime, the MPLA and the FNLA were in exile abroad, fighting for Angolan self-determination outside their country. In 1961, the focus of attention was Leopoldville, capital of the ex-Belgian Congo that shared a long border with northern Angola. Already well-established in Leopoldville circles, in 1962 the FNLA was joined there by the MPLA, and both movements sought to carry out their anti-colonial challenge from the Congo. It was during this period in Leopoldville, between 1962 and 1963, that the MPLA and

the FNLA expressed and consolidated the rivalry between them that underscored the whole period of the anti-colonial war and that certainly reflected the conflict that led to the civil war in 1975.

Chapter Four addresses this period of exile between 1962 and 1963 wherein the MPLA and the FNLA jostled for power, each trying to gain an advantage over the other. This rivalry is the focus of the chapter and the forms in which it was expressed will be displayed, providing a portrait of one of the roots of the Angolan conflict. Furthermore, it will be shown how the Congolese government's favour for the FNLA, in direct opposition to the spirit of continental support for anti-colonial movements, not only provided another source of conflict between the MPLA and the FNLA but also gave the latter an advantage based purely on political patronage.

How this advantage was capitalized upon is the subject of Chapter Five. It looks in particular at the issue of the recognition of the Angolan movements by the OAU's organ, the African Liberation Committee (ALC). In 1963, both the MPLA and the FNLA sought to be deemed the sole representative of Angolan anti-colonialism by the ALC, a status that delivered material assistance to the chosen movement as well as a form of internal and external legitimacy. How the FNLA won the battle for recognition and how the OAU recognition almost destroyed the MPLA are shown in Chapter Five. It also reveals how a pattern of bipolarity in African politics, which would also emerge later in 1975 and 1976,

reflected the increasing expression of Angolan politics in terms of the global ideological conflict between East and West.

The limited focus of Part Three is intended to reveal certain aspects of the history of the Angolan nationalist movements that form the roots of the conflict that emerged in 1975. It intends to show how external factors, such as the favour of the host state and the institutionalization of African politics, affected the course of the rivalry between Angolan nationalists.

The stagnation in post-coup Portuguese politics created a power vacuum in Angola that caused the implosion of the negotiated independence accords and precipitated the civil war. This collapse of authority allowed the involvement of external actors as the Angolan movements looked outside for support for their respective bids for power. As the international backers entered the fray with political support, finance, arms, and troops, the Angolan civil war became a global conflict. By 1975, the succession of colonial power in Angola had become a matter of the cold war conflict between the superpowers.

Why this occurred is the subject of Part Four. The effects of international intervention in the Angolan civil war are portrayed in Chapter One. In Chapters Six and Seven, the other side of the coin is sought: the motivations for each international actor's intervention. While this study argues that the Angolan civil war was primarily a domestic conflict, it cannot ignore the fact that international actors were drawn into the conflict. But it is argued that a mixture of internal Angolan and external in-

ternational pressures led to the major developments and the escalation of the civil war itself in 1975. That is to say that, as the movements sought to express their internal political struggle in a wider political and ideological conflict (at both a regional and a global level), the international actors in these conflicts were motivated by their own domestic and foreign policy considerations. This interaction brought about the externalization of the Angolan civil war, to a global level.

Chapter Six considers the three major international actors that became involved in the civil war. Cuba and South Africa deployed military forces on Angolan soil and are thus defined as interventionary actors in the most orthodox sense. Their intervention was linked to the wider context of the globalization of the war but was principally motivated by a dynamic mix of their own internal political factors. The Cuban intervention did converge with Soviet interests but, as a policy, it emerged from a process of political and ideological internal Cuban factors. In South Africa, the motivations for intervention lay in the very nature of the apartheid regime, while the implementation of the policy eventually emerged from governmental in-fighting in Pretoria. These internal factors led to the option of South African intervention although the common objective of anti-communism with Washington, among other conditions, created the opportunity for this.

Similarly, neighbouring Zaire, a long-standing actor in the Angolan conflict, deployed troops and provided the conduit for US assistance for the anti-MPLA forces. It was thus involved in

the Angolan civil war within a wider context of East-West competition. But Kinshasa's own political and strategic interests formed the basis for its involvement. Furthermore, Zaire's contribution to the conflict was particularly important in that not only did it provide the structure for US intervention but also held up the lens through which the conflict in Angola was viewed in Washington.

The global actors are the subject of Chapter Seven: the United States, the Soviet Union and China. Ultimately, the Angolan conflict worked its way into the context of East-West relations. In particular, the civil war became an arena where the rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States was expressed, much as the internal Angolan conflict was itself portrayed in wider ideological terms, of communism versus anti-communism. The Angolan civil war in the history of the cold war is related to the end of detente and the beginning of a major Soviet profile in Africa. In this way, the Angolan civil war became another cold war incident. What will be considered is the manner in which this competition was imported into the internal Angolan conflict.

China's involvement in the civil war was far more circumspect as it only provided weaponry and training for the FNLA and thus does not seem to qualify for any more attention than say North Korea or Romania. But the far more important political role played by China, considering the implications of its involvement with regard to Soviet policy considerations, makes it a global actor in this case. Similarly, Peking's desire to challenge Moscow's

leadership of the socialist and radical Third World blocs seems to have been a major motivation of China's involvement in the Angolan civil war. In this way, its interests in the conflict were not merely international but were set in the wider context of global rivalry with the Soviet Union.

These considerations and the involvement of these six states in Angolan political conflict is the subject of Part Four. In this way, the external factors of the Angolan civil war will be displayed; those inputs that were partly determined by, but essentially separate from, the internal origins of the conflict. In this manner, this thesis will show how the domestic political conflict that emerged in Angola during colonialism acquired the international dimensions that expanded the original conflict and gave it a wider, global significance.

PART ONE
THE ANGOLAN CIVIL WAR 1975-1976

CHAPTER ONE

THE ANGOLAN CIVIL WAR

(i) The Collapse of Portuguese Colonialism

The overthrow of the authoritarian regime in Lisbon, on 25 April 1974, was the beginning of the end of colonialism in Angola. Superficially, anti-colonial warfare had, up to that point, achieved very little of concrete advantage for the prospective independence of the country. During the 1960s Portugal had begun a late process of industrialization, of some success, leading one academic later to compare it to a NIC.¹ The Angolan colonial economy itself was experiencing a boom led by increased coffee production, which had created wealth and resulted in a late expansion of colonial society. Despite the continued colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, the Portuguese regime, at the time, seemed not to have been directly threatened. Certainly in 1970, a US NSC² study on Southern Africa (NSSM 39) ruled out the possibility of a collapse of Portuguese authority in Africa.³

1. G Clarence-Smith, The Third Portuguese Empire 1825-1975: A Study in Economic Imperialism [1985], p.193.

2. National Security Council.

3. The National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM 39) is discussed in Chapter Seven in a consideration of US foreign policy toward Angola.

The military ineffectiveness of the anti-colonial movements was considered to be partly responsible for the stagnation of the anti-colonial war in Angola.⁴ This relative failure can be attributed to a number of factors, not least of which is the very fact that the nationalist forces were divided into three, separate, rival movements. According to an ex-member of the MPLA, the military weakness of this movement was more than apparent in the face of Portuguese counter-insurgency operations.⁵ Despite the presence of its units on Angolan soil, there is little evidence to support the MPLA's claims that there existed 'liberated' territory: the Portuguese army controlled the borders and was free to move anywhere in the country. The other movements, UNITA and the FNLA, had not fared any better. Through the deployment of its armed forces the Portuguese regime had managed to retain effective as well as nominal sovereignty of the colony, despite the anti-colonial challenge.

All this changed on 25 April 1974. Overall, the development of political and economic forces in Portugal had outgrown the structure of authority so well-maintained for 40 years by Salazar. His successor, Marcello Caetano, had promised change but did (or could) not deliver it fast enough. The actual *coup de grace* was delivered by a malcontent officer class, the 'Captains' movement',

4. see M Newitt, Portugal in Africa: The Last Hundred Years [1981], pp.240-241. For the MPLA see P Chabal, 'People's War, State Formation and Revolution in Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Mozambique, Guine-Bissau and Angola' [1983a].

5. Interview with João Van Dunem, 23 August 1991.

but had been long in coming. The almost anachronistic nature of the New State⁶ would not have allowed this regime to survive. It was, aside from the anti-colonial challenge itself, the collapse of the Portuguese regime from within that directly resulted in Angola reaching the brink of independence in 1974. Nevertheless, it can be argued that, despite the fact that they had been unable to defeat the colonial regime, the movements had only to have waited patiently until it collapsed from within in order to succeed in their declared objectives. Consequently Mack's concept of asymmetric conflict may be applicable in this case.⁷ The nationalist movements needed only not to lose in order to, eventually, win.

The overthrow of the authoritarian regime in Lisbon precipitated the collapse of Portuguese colonialism, although this did not occur immediately. Strictly defined, there was no process of formal decolonization in Angola; only a chaotic withdrawal of both state and colonial society that created havoc as well as a power vacuum. This absence of sovereignty was manifest internally as well as externally. Firstly, at the domestic level: political

6. After Salazar had established control of the government in 1928, he oversaw the development of an authoritarian, semi-corporate regime that was known as the New State (Estado Novo). See Chapter Two.

7. According to Mack, insurgent wars are examples of asymmetric conflict not only because of the differences in resources between the government and anti-government forces, but also because the nature of the war is different for each side: ie. it is total for the insurgents but limited for the incumbents. Furthermore, the insurgents can never succeed militarily (because of the differences in resources). They can only affect the political capability of a regime. A Mack, 'The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict' [1975].

power in Angola was undetermined. Secondly, at the regional level: Portugal was no longer an African power. And finally at the international level: the withdrawal of Portuguese authority allowed the superpowers to participate directly.

The externalization of the Angolan conflict, which although related should not be confused with the previous international aspects of the anti-colonial war, only occurred at this point; when Portuguese sovereignty and its structure of authority essentially began to collapse. This process of collapse took approximately 12 months, although it could be argued that it had, in essence, been completed by the time Portugal signed the independence accords at Alvor in January 1975. Formally, however, Portuguese authority remained in force until the collapse of the Angolan transitional government in the summer of 1975. On 10 November 1975, the Portuguese High Commissioner lowered his country's flag for the last time in Angola. But when it is considered that in the run-up to independence day Portuguese authority was almost completely paralysed, unable to affect the course of the civil war, and the fact that the Portuguese representative transferred sovereignty to all Angolans and not to one specific movement, it must be concluded that, on that day, there was not a transfer of power from the recognised Portuguese authority to a particular state or government. In effect, the withdrawal of Portuguese authority, with the concurrent rescinding of responsibility of government, compounded by the wholesale abandonment of the country by most of colonial society and its economic agents, created a

vacuum of power. What amounted to a *de jure* as well as a *de facto* absence of sovereignty in Angola.

The implications of the April coup for Angola were immediately apparent to the nationalist movements that had spent the previous 13 years fighting a colonial and authoritarian regime that had stubbornly refused to accept the changes that had already taken place elsewhere on the African continent. Almost overnight, for the nationalists, the enemies in Lisbon and Luanda were replaced by friends. In particular, many in the MPLA leadership saw old friends and exile companions emerge in the new (and, in the case of the Portuguese Communist Party [PCP],⁸ not so new) parties that sprang to life, following the overthrow of the regime. Once the confrontation with the colonial regime had fallen away and it had become apparent that independence was approaching, the objectives and the strategies of the rival Angolan organizations changed considerably. The competition for ascendancy between them, that had always underlied the anti-colonial war, now emerged as a priority. Shorn of the need to challenge colonial authority, the movements now sought to legitimize their respective statuses vis-a-vis each other. Whereas until then they had sought external assistance to fight the Portuguese, they now sought aid to bolster their positions calculated against each other. Before, the MPLA had asked for assistance to fight colonialism; now it sought aid to fight neo-colonialism. The FNLA and UNITA had both sought aid

8. Partido Comunista Português.

to fight colonialism. They now wanted assistance to counter communism. As well as announcing the imminent transfer of internal sovereignty, the April coup also changed the very nature of the political life of the Angolan movements.

The withdrawal of Portuguese sovereignty from Angola also had international implications. Portugal had, until the April coup, played a prominent role in that region. In fact, it can be said that Portugal had been an African power. As will be seen in Chapter Six, Portuguese sovereignty in Angola and Mozambique played a prominent role in South Africa's defence and external strategies. Pretoria and the Portuguese colonial authorities had also co-operated on a number of other levels. They embarked on a number of joint ventures, such as the hydroelectric projects on the Cunene in Angola and at Cabora Bassa in Mozambique. The projects in these two countries would have resulted, if this had not in fact been the implicit intention, in the closer integration of these economies with that of South Africa. They also conducted joint security operations, along with Rhodesia, that sought to contain the activity of anti-colonial and anti-apartheid nationalists right across the southern African region. Certainly, South Africa had felt less isolated when Portugal was also being condemned by UN resolutions. Lisbon's stubborn rejection of the 'winds of change' seemed to reinforce South Africa's own belief in the permanence of white minority regimes in Africa. Consequently, the April coup created a dangerous vacuum in South Africa's strategic vision which, among other things, may have reinforced

its isolation and certainly led to a readjustment of its defence strategy in southern Africa. Furthermore, as developments in Portugal and Angola made it clear that sovereignty was heavily contested, it became apparent that Lisbon no longer held sway. This absence of authority may have helped South African policy-makers to believe that intervention was a feasible option. Had Portugal strictly enforced its authority until 11 November, the South African October invasion of Angola might have been ruled out of the question in Pretoria.

The withdrawal of Portuguese authority also had global implications. As demonstrated throughout the post-war period of the New State in Angola, neither of the superpowers had ventured to become directly involved in the challenge to Portuguese colonialism in Africa,⁹ and when they had it was on the sufficiently unprovocative level of ideological solidarity or in the covert provision of just enough weapons to keep the movements afloat but not enough to mount a serious attempt at destroying the colonial regime. The importance of Portugal's membership of NATO cannot be overstated when considering this situation. As a member of the Western Alliance, Portugal was in Washington's sphere of influence, a fact which kept Moscow at bay when considering Soviet policy for both Portugal and its African colonies. However, once post-coup politics in Portugal had developed into a power struggle between radicals and moderates which resulted in the hurried and

9. See Chapter Seven.

haphazard withdrawal from the colonies, the necessary gap for intervention by the superpowers was created. Despite the requests for superpower assistance on the part of the Angolan movements, a more forceful process of decolonization by Portugal (ie. the maintenance of a structure of authority) might have closed this gap.

Of course, the breakdown in the process of decolonization had not been intended by the post-coup leaders in Portugal. But part of the responsibility for this collapse resided in the very fact that in the months following the overthrow of the Caetano administration, authority in Portugal was at the very least ambiguous, if not divided.

The day after the April coup, General António de Spínola emerged at the head of the ruling Council for National Salvation (JSN),¹⁰ a body intended for the administration of the country during a transitional period. The coup had been carried out by a group of mainly junior officers¹¹ which called itself the Armed Forces Movement (MFA).¹² They had placed the well-known Spínola in a leadership role due in part to his popularity and prestige. A

10. Junta de Salvação Nacional.

11. Due to the fact that among these officers there were many with the rank of Captain, this group was also commonly known as the Captains' movement (Movimento dos Capitães).

12. Movimento das Forças Armadas. According to a Le Monde report, at the time of the coup, the MFA numbered around 300 activists, roughly 7 percent of the army officer corps. Cited in D Porch, The Portuguese Armed Forces and the Revolution, [1977] p.94. The MFA and the JSN both sat on a second administrative body, the Council of State (Conselho do Estado) intended to be the ultimate consultative organ of government.

somewhat flamboyant figure, the General was one of the top Portuguese military leaders with a high public profile. Immediately before the coup, Spínola had been fired from his post as Deputy Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff¹³ by Caetano following the publication of Portugal e o Futuro,¹⁴ in which he had openly challenged the decade-long official strategy of finding a military solution to the anti-colonial challenge in Africa:

"...as it is utopian to imagine that those powers would refuse their support as long as the masses prove themselves willing to fight, there remains only one way to end the conflict - and that an eminently political one. We can, therefore, come to the conclusion that, in any war of this type, a purely military victory is not possible."¹⁵

But General Spínola was not an anti-colonialist. Although not favouring full independence, Spínola did, in his book, refer to the issue of self-determination in the colonies,¹⁶ which was in itself a break from the long-standing organic concept of Portuguese empire (see Chapter Two). The effects of Spínola's book are said to have been inspirational. In the words of one naval officer quoted by Porch:

"Spínola had been the first general to say that the solution to the wars was political and not military. This had impressed many officers. When he was dismissed, we were

13. Vice Chefe do Estado Maior General das Forças Armadas.

14. A de Spínola, Portugal and the Future [1974].

15. A de Spínola, *ibid.*, p.20.

16. "The problem is how to give self-determination to overseas peoples yet keeping them a part of the Portuguese Republic, which is not easy." A de Spínola, *ibid.*, p.91.

indignant."¹⁷

This often-claimed influence of Spínola's book on the 'Captains' movement' has, however, been denied by some of the protagonists:

"The book had no influence on the course of the Armed Forces Movement...That was already a developing force. There are many who cite General Spínola as a catalyst of the movement, but this is not true. Besides, many of us were not happy that the book was published at this time...The process leading to the 25 April [coup] was already underway."¹⁸

Judging by the political gap that was subsequently opened between Spínola and the radicals of the MFA, it seems likely that the book did have little influence on the latter who were already preparing their action. Nevertheless, the book may have had the effect of influencing the opinion of some of the more moderate elements in the army, whose participation, or at least non-resistance during the night of 25 April, was crucial to the success of the coup.

On 14 May, Spínola was proclaimed President while a provisional coalition government, under the centrist Palma Carlos, was sworn in the day after. But it soon became clear that Spínola was not in complete control, being discernibly limited by the more radical Co-ordinating Committee (CCP)¹⁹ of the MFA. Barely a month after his appointment, Spínola and the MFA were already on a collision course. On the one side stood Spínola, the more moderate

17. D Porch, op.cit., [1977], p.86.

18. Oteló Saraiva de Carvalho quoted by D Porch, op.cit., [1977], p.83.

19. Comissão Coordenadora do Programa do MFA.

elements in the armed forces and the newly emerged political parties of the centre. Opposing them were the increasingly more influential left-wing officers in the MFA backed by a plethora of small radical political groups and the communist party.²⁰ The MFA's power was further reinforced by the creation of the Operational Command for the Continent (COPCON),²¹ a very powerful organ capable of deploying military units anywhere in the country. This effectively placed military power at the direct disposal of the MFA, by-passing the main body of the armed forces and effectively creating a parallel structure of authority; what has already been called a state within a state.²² At the head of COPCON was Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, the alleged operational leader of the 25 April coup. Otelo became one of the leading figures in the MFA and, at the time, one of the most popular heroes of what was being called 'the Revolution'. The effect of his appointment to the COPCON was to tilt the balance of power in favour of the MFA radicals.

At the end of June and the beginning of July, the collapse of the deadlocked provisional government marked an attempt by Spínola to gain ascendancy over the MFA. But the latter had been reinforced in the Council of State and now wielded a majority

20. In this early period, the PCP remained largely outside the power struggle, concentrating instead on organisation and extending its limited popular appeal.

21. Comando Operacional do Continente.

22. D Porch, op.cit., [1977], p.107.

in this body which effectively became the highest authority in the country. Under pressure, Spínola nominated a second provisional government on 18 July under a prominent member of the MFA, Vasco Gonçalves.²³ The presence of five members of the MFA in this second government (including the Prime Minister), as opposed to none in the first, testifies to the sharp move left that occurred in Lisbon at this stage, and more specifically to the ascendancy in government of the military revolutionaries. Following this, the MFA became increasingly more powerful as well as more radical in its programme; and, as the summer ended, was more and more involved in governing Portugal.

At the end of September 1974, there was one final confrontation between Spínola and the MFA radicals. A famous public argument between Spínola and Vasco Gonçalves at a bullfight seemed to personify the wider power clash between moderates and radicals. It was the latter that were successful in this confrontation. Spínola lacked confidence in his appeals to the 'silent majority' to come out and support his resistance to the radicalization that was occurring, and eventually he gave way. Without discernible political allies and no military backing, he resigned on 30 September. The moderates had temporarily lost the power struggle and Portugal moved left.

In many respects, Portugal's colonies were intimately tied to the collapse of authoritarianism in Lisbon, and to the

23. It is common knowledge that Vasco Gonçalves had strong ties to the PCP.

subsequent power struggle between moderates and radicals. With regard to the former, the relationship between the anti-colonial wars in Africa and the April coup has often been the subject of attention, leading some to claim that the African wars had had an overwhelming influence on the military officers who overthrew Caetano. Certain factors emanating from the colonial wars do seem to have been significant in influencing the army in the build-up to the coup. Firstly, the strengthening of the armed forces by the old regime to enforce colonial authority and the subsequent problems in maintaining their morale, resulted in the reinforcement of the very instrument that would lead to the regime's collapse. Secondly, the immediate catalyst of the April coup was a general dissatisfaction in the army with a governmental decree concerning the status of conscripted officers for military service. This decree would have given conscripted officers the same route to promotion and pay rises as that of their service counterparts; a move designed to attract flagging numbers but one that was a source of resentment for the incumbent officer class. General opposition to this decree allowed the malcontent officers to expand their base within the armed forces. Thirdly, on the personal level, it has been claimed that the radical orientation of the MFA officers was partly a result of having been exposed to the ideology of the anti-colonial movements, such as the MPLA, and the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau.²⁴ Oteló, while political officer for

24. The African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde was the most successful of all the anti-colonial movements in the ex-Portuguese colonies. It was founded and led

Spínola when the latter was Governor-General of Guinea-Bissau, was, according to Chabal, influenced directly by Amílcar Cabral's revolutionary thought.²⁵ In the words of Carlos Fabião, member of the Council of the Revolution²⁶ that later replaced the Council of State and the JSN in Portugal:

"The longer a subversive war lasts the more one assimilates the ideas of the enemy, the oppressed."²⁷

The far more difficult function to discern, however, is the overall influence of the wars on the demise of the regime. Certainly the morale of the armed forces had been under strain after 13 years of war, and this war-weariness was also reflected in Portuguese society at large. But so was an underlying desire in the political and economic elites for modernization and change

by the Cape Verdean, Amílcar Cabral, a much-admired figure in the history of anti-colonialism, both for his concrete successes in the war (a high degree of political mobilization) in Guinea-Bissau, as well as for his intellectual contribution to a doctrine of National Liberation of his pragmatic and flexible developmental nationalism. One of his most original ideas was his suggestion that the vanguard leadership of a revolution should commit suicide as a class once the conflict had been won. Amílcar Cabral was assassinated in 1973, probably by opponents incited by the Portuguese PIDE. The PAIGC was the single party in power in both Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde after independence from Portugal in late-1974 and July 1975 respectively. Unification was an aim. But in November 1980, an anti-Cape Verdean coup in Guinea-Bissau placed this out of the question. In Cape Verde, the PAIGC was renamed PAICV.

25. P Chabal, Amílcar Cabral: Revolutionary Leadership and People's War [1983b], p.149.

26. Conselho da Revolução.

27. Citation in P Chabal, op.cit., [1983b], p.149.

towards some form of Western European democracy. Furthermore, the economic effects of the war and of late industrialization had resulted in rapid growth and accumulation of wealth, which had strained the inflexible corporate system established under the rule of Salazar. The result was an emerging spirit of change, given some vent in the false spring of Caetano's liberalization. Although the colonial wars became the touchstone of politics in the last days of the New State, the internal pressures for change made the collapse of the regime inevitable. As Newitt wrote:

"Although Portugal's position in the 1970s cannot be isolated from its African wars, it is possible to analyse the revolt of 1974 in such a way that...Africa plays only a peripheral role. What is incontestable, however, is that the revolution in Lisbon had the most profound effect on Africa."²⁸

The fighting in Angola had not come to an end immediately after the April coup. According to official Portuguese sources, 21 soldiers and 33 guerrillas were killed in fighting in May, and 18 Portuguese soldiers died in July.²⁹ Initially, the Portuguese had insisted on holding a referendum on the future of Angola after the establishment of cease-fires; a proposal that had been rejected by all three movements. The MPLA, the FNLA and UNITA all demanded that the unconditional right to independence be affirmed by Portugal before any other steps were taken. In May, a

28. M Newitt, op.cit., [1981], p.245.

29. Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1974-1975 [1975], B530.

tacit cease-fire was agreed between the Portuguese and the MPLA, which was only translated into an official cessation of hostilities in October 1974.³⁰ Increasingly, parts of the Portuguese army showed themselves to be unwilling to keep fighting. In Luanda, a rash of strikes had broken out and added to the increased tension in the city as the uncertainty of what lay ahead set in. Eventually in July, after a 'trigger' incident, European vigilantes took the law into their own hands and entered the African suburbs (musseques)³¹ at night sowing violence. Riots followed and led to the recalling of the first post-coup governor-general. The situation in Angola was extremely volatile as political life there became dominated by the inevitability of a decolonization process. How this process was defined clearly reflected the power struggle between the Spínolists and the MFA.

The political residue of the April coup became instrumental in the move towards independence in the African colonies. As has been stated above, full independence for the colonies was not a foregone conclusion in the immediate aftermath of the coup. Spínola maintained his preference for his somewhat utopian concept of a global Portuguese community of 'federal states':

30. Much criticised by the other two movements, UNITA signed earlier on 14 June; the FNLA eventually signed on 12 October and the MPLA on 21 October. Hostilities were, however, generally over by the end of May. K Somerville, Angola: Politics, Economics and Society [1986], p.41.

31. The musseques are sand slums on the periphery of Luanda inhabited mostly by Africans.

"Our theory is that our future is only possible in a wider context or plurality in a community which remains together as parts of a Portuguese whole, in accordance with political statutes. This is our creed and on this basis we define our objective: that is the country that will become the Portuguese united nation."³²

This strategy clearly did not envisage full independence for the colonies and may even be seen to have been merely a modern version of previous Portuguese concepts of empire (see Chapter Two). The objective of Spínola's federative view was to allow the autonomous development of the colonies, including the dominant European settler societies, towards some form of self-determination within a global federal Portuguese community. Spínola favoured the parallel construction of liberal quasi-democracies in Portugal and the African colonies. But while this had certainly been an unorthodox position to take before the collapse of the regime, it took on a decidedly neo-colonial pallor in the pervasive socialist atmosphere that increasingly dominated Portuguese politics. Moreover, with the radical, sometimes Marxist, nationalist movements poised to succeed the Portuguese in all of the African colonies, this policy option verged on fantasy.

Opposing Spínola, was the MFA and all the political parties on the left, including the Socialists (PS),³³ whose leader, Mario Soares, was Foreign Minister in Vasco Gonçalves' government. They sought to grant full independence to Portugal's

32. A de Spínola, op.cit., [1974], p.87.

33. Partido Socialista.

overseas possessions. Furthermore, the more radical elements in the MFA did not conceal the fact that they would prefer to hand over sovereignty in each colony to the left-wing nationalist movements. This was the case in Guinea-Bissau with respect to the PAIGC, and in Mozambique with FRELIMO,³⁴ both of which were indisputably poised to inherit the mantle of government. But in Angola the radical MFA's support for the MPLA was not unopposed. The MPLA's rivals also had their supporters in the Portuguese leadership as well as in the local settler community. The anti-communist FNLA was favoured by the Spínolists, while UNITA found some support in European society in Angola. Furthermore, not one of the three Angolan movements was in any dominant position that would justify it being chosen over the others.

The African territories, and in this case their decolonization, occupied a dominant position in the power struggle that followed the April coup. In the words of Admiral Rosa Coutinho, a member of the MFA:

"All the crises up to 25 November [coup in 1975 that displaced the radical MFA] had, as a background, the decolonization problem."³⁵

In fact, Portugal's decolonization programme closely mirrored the power struggle that was taking place at the same time in the leadership in Lisbon. The eventual conclusion of the process in

34. Frente de Libertação de Mocambique.

35. Interview in H Gil Ferreira and M W Marshall Portugal's Revolution: Ten Years On [1986], p.169.

Angola was extreme and chaotic; reflecting the political complexion of the MFA radicals, who gained ascendancy in Lisbon during the most crucial months of decision-making on the colonies. Subsequently, despite the waning of the radical tendency, the process in Angola was incapacitated as a result of the semi-anarchic nature of post-coup politics. In Angola, this was the dynamic at work. Firstly, at particular stages, the MPLA was clearly favoured by the Portuguese authorities in Luanda and gained advantage from this in its bid to consolidate its power base in the capital. Secondly, the subsequent collapse of Portuguese authority aided that movement that was better positioned in the capital and other urban centres, that is, the MPLA. All accepted the fact that control of the capital implied sovereignty.

Despite the differences between Spínola and the pro-decolonization elements in the leadership, negotiations to reach cease-fire agreements were carried out with the Angolan nationalist movements on behalf of Portugal during his presidency. As one observer has pointed out,³⁶ these were not so much negotiations as celebrations, as Soares and the accompanying MFA officers reached agreements with the PAIGC and FRELIMO directly, which placed anything but the complete and direct handover of power to these movements out of the question. Even Spínola realised that full independence was inevitable.

36. Scenes of embracing and self congratulation broke out between the Portuguese delegation, led by Soares, and the PAIGC, astonishing their hosts who expected 'protocole a l'anglaise'. See D Porch, op.cit., [1977], p.113.

This occurred on 27 July 1974 when Spínola announced, during a televised broadcast, that the overseas territories would be granted total independence.³⁷ The communal violence of the summer in Luanda and the increasing power of the MFA forced a reversal in the initial policy that sought to hold a referendum in Angola. This reversal was also precipitated by Major Carlos Fabião, whom Spínola had appointed governor of Guinea-Bissau. Instead of following Spínola's directives Fabião had hastened the process of full independence in Guinea-Bissau by making what amounted to a unilateral commitment to hand power over to the PAIGC. By September Guinea-Bissau had become independent, a development which, despite the less important nature of the colony to Portugal, was symbolically significant and heavily weighted opinion in favour of the nationalist movements in the other colonies that were associated with the PAIGC; in Angola this was the MPLA. In Mozambique, there was a similar turn of events. FRELIMO was granted control of the transitional government, which effectively gave it complete sovereignty by the time the country was independent.

In Angola, Spínola's first envoy, General Silvino Marques, had not been welcomed by the movements. Silvino Marques had been a governor-general under Salazar between 1962 and 1966 and cannot be considered to have been the most diplomatic of choices. He attempted to motivate local European and African elites to challenge the nationalist movements' monopoly on politi-

37. D Porch, *op.cit.*, [1977], p.115.

cal legitimacy. At the same time, he sought to outflank the MPLA by establishing links with the FNLA through the Zairean president, Mobutu Sese Seko.³⁸ In July, the wave of strikes, riots and European-African violence in Luanda coincided with the resignation of Palma Carlos from the provisional government in Lisbon. These events weakened Spínola's position and allowed the MFA officers to press for the replacement of Marques in Angola. He was replaced on 25 July by Admiral Rosa Coutinho in the new role of High Commissioner. This appointment marked the start of the MFA's direct influence on the process of change in Angola. Rosa Coutinho and his aides did not conceal their preference for Agostinho Neto's MPLA. According to Soares, "...[Rosa Coutinho] favoured the MPLA and gave it a military strength it had never had."³⁹ He "...openly sympathized with Neto's MPLA as a 'left-leaning' movement of 'progressive ideas.'"⁴⁰

Spínola, on the other hand, did not favour Neto's movement. In a televised interview given later in April 1975, Rosa Coutinho stated that the ex-president had refused to negotiate with the MPLA "because this movement was getting instructions from Moscow."⁴¹ In a last-ditch attempt to make his mark on the process of decolonization in Angola, Spínola, with the help of the Zairean

38. D Porch, op.cit., [1977], p.116.

39. L Aguiar, Livro Negro da Descolonização [197?], p.378. My translation.

40. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Volume Two, [1978], p.252.

41. Reported in Diário de Notícias (Lisbon) 21 April 1975.

President, hosted a secret meeting on Sal, in the Cape Verde islands. The objective of this secret conference was to exclude Neto's movement from the political process in Angola. The meeting took place on 14 September and included the leaders of the FNLA and UNITA, Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi respectively, as well as two dissident leaders of the MPLA, Daniel Chipenda and Pinto de Andrade.⁴² At the Sal meeting, Spínola proposed the formation of a provisional coalition government that would include representatives of those movements present as well as of tribal groups and of the white and coloured minorities in Angola. The exclusion of Agostinho Neto's MPLA, as well as the fact that the Spínola plan envisaged the maintenance of some political influence by settler groups, infuriated the radical MFA officers including Rosa Coutinho, who, although High Commissioner in Angola, was not aware that the meeting was even taking place.⁴³ The range of Angolan political representatives present at the Sal meeting might have produced a workable project of decolonization. But the impetus behind the Sal agreement collapsed with Spínola's resignation at the end of September.

42. Daniel Chipenda had been the MPLA commander of the Eastern Region. He had challenged Agostinho Neto's supremacy in a bid for power that was known as the Eastern Revolt (Revolta do Leste). Mário de Andrade was a founder member of the MPLA and had been in charge of its external relations. Father Joaquim Pinto de Andrade was released from Portuguese imprisonment after the April coup. He had been the MPLA's honorary president. The Andrade brothers and others challenged Neto style of leadership and were known as the Active Revolt (Revolta Activa).

43. D Porch, op.cit., [1977], p.117.



The radical MFA officers now had the upper hand with regard to determining the direction of Angola's future. The preference shown for the MPLA by some of the Portuguese military leaders became evident in concrete assistance in Angola and political support in Lisbon. It was not, however, officially expressed. As a result of consensus politics in Lisbon, the initial programme to transfer power in Angola consisted of bringing the nationalist movements together in a transitional government. According to this programme, Portugal would remain in the government throughout the period of transition while a new constitution was drawn up and an administrative structure established. Demonstrating an admirable, but short-lived, degree of pragmatism the leaders of the three Angolan movements⁴⁴ came together in Mombassa where they recognized each other's legitimacy. On 15 January 1975, in Alvor, southern Portugal, the three movements signed an agreement with Portugal that seemed to promise peace and a workable political future for Angola.

The Alvor Agreement empowered a transitional government to administer Angola from 31 January 1975 until elections were held later that year to determine a new government that would accept the transfer of power from the Portuguese on 11 November 1975. The transitional government consisted of a tripartite Presidency,⁴⁵ a Defence Council and a Cabinet; the posts of which

44. Agostinho Neto led a reconciled MPLA, albeit without Chipenda. The FNLA was headed by Holden Roberto. The UNITA leader was Jonas Savimbi.

45. One post nominated by each of the three movements.

were divided equally between the three movements and the offices of the Portuguese High Commissioner. Foreign affairs were Lisbon's sole responsibility. The three-headed Presidency and the High Commissioner all sat on the Defence Council, which was charged with the defence and internal security of Angola.⁴⁶ At its disposal the Defence Council had Portuguese troops, the police and the nationalist forces. Perhaps unfortunately, none of the three leaders of the movements, Savimbi, Roberto or Neto, personally assumed the Presidency.

Significantly, Rosa Coutinho was replaced as High Commissioner at the end of January, just before the implementation of the transitional accord. The post was assumed by General Silva Cardoso, a more moderate figure whose term of office was characterized by a rather vain attempt at demonstrating neutrality vis-a-vis the three movements.⁴⁷ For all Silva Cardoso's impartiality, however, this posture came somewhat late to avoid the effects of Rosa Coutinho's quasi-anarchic administration in Angola. The latter's encouragement of revolutionary fervour within the local Portuguese authorities and particularly, within the armed forces, led to a near breakdown in the chain of command, between officers and soldiers, and between Lisbon and Luanda. This breakdown in the line of authority survived Rosa Coutinho's term and continued throughout the period of worsening violence until the wholesale

46. Details of Alvor agreement in Angola, Rumo á Independencia. O Governo de Transição: Documentos e Personalidades [1975].

47. D Porch, op.cit., [1977], p.119.

withdrawal of the Portuguese and the outbreak of civil war. According to Savimbi, when the High Commissioner had wanted to act against the supply of Soviet weaponry to the MPLA or against the suspected presence of Cuban military advisors, Silva Cardoso's found that his hands were tied by the pro-MPLA elements that remained in the Defence Council.⁴⁸

Army units stationed in Angola would sometimes refuse to act in any way against the fighting rival movements and pledged only to defend the Portuguese administration. One criticism that has been directed at the Portuguese armed forces in Angola during the period in which the civil war intensified has been that they did not adequately protect the settler population that was intent on abandoning the country. Partly responsible for this was the existence of friction between the Army and parts of the settler society, that continued despite the overthrow of the New State, and worsened as conservative settlers saw the radical officers hasten the end of empire. Conversely, the Army officers felt a considerable animosity to colonial whites whom they felt represented the harshest face of Portuguese colonialism, and with whom the Army had had a difficult relationship:

"I cannot forget that in general, the overseas white population were hostile to the Portuguese forces. This is something people forget very quickly."⁴⁹

48. F Bridgland, Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa [1986], p.119.

49. Captain Sousa e Castro (MFA member of the Revolutionary Council that had assumed power in Lisbon after the failed coup attempt of 11 March 1975) on 2 January 1976. Citation in D Porch, op.cit., [1977], p.120.

Even before the April coup there had been fears that Angolan colonialists would attempt a Rhodesian-style unilateral declaration of independence.⁵⁰ After the fall of the regime, these fears were intensified whenever European-African violence erupted during this volatile time. The Army often did not feel it was there to defend the interests of colonial Angola.

The total effect of this internal semi-collapse of authority was a failure to impose the political solution that had been agreed upon at Alvor. In fact, it reinforced the turn to a military confrontation as a means of deciding which of the movements would lead an independent Angola. According to the Portuguese High Commissioner:

"...there was a crisis of authority in Angola making it difficult for anyone to establish any kind of order, despite what the Portuguese military or the leaderships of the rival liberation movements might ordain."⁵¹

It can be argued that the MPLA was the movement most favoured by this chaos. The role that Portugal was to have played in the transitional period was one of neutrality to, and of mediation between, the three movements in order to achieve a peaceful transfer of power. The overall impression was, however, that the

50. In fact this had been a constant fear of successive Lisbon governments since the nineteenth century.

51. António Silva Cardoso interviewed by Expresso, quoted in The Times (London) 19 May 1975. Reproduced in full in Facts and Reports Press Cuttings on Angola Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Portugal and Southern Africa (Amsterdam: Angola Comitê).

Portuguese administration was biased. According to a Western reporter: "...it is widely held in Luanda that the Portuguese have favoured the MPLA at the expense of the other movements."⁵² This fear of bias was somewhat justified: one prominent member of the Revolutionary Council, Pezarat Correia,⁵³ made (not very) veiled criticisms of the FNLA and of the "intense greed of international and Portuguese capital interests."⁵⁴ In August 1975, the Gonçalves government was openly considering the direct transfer of power to the MPLA.⁵⁵ Certainly, the FNLA did not consider Portugal to be an uninterested party:

"Given the evident partiality and lack of objectivity shown by certain members of the Government of Lisbon to our movement ...the FNLA categorically refuses to take part in a meeting of the three Angolan movements with which a member of the Portuguese government will be associated."⁵⁶

If Portuguese authority had been in place and if its commitment to the Alvor agreement had been maintained, the virtual MPLA take-over of the capital during the summer of 1975 should not have occurred. Had Portugal maintained its neutrality and its ac-

52. James MacManus writing in The Guardian (Manchester) 5 May 1975. Reproduced in full in Facts and Reports op.cit. (Vol. 5, No.10, 17 May 1975), p.1.

53. Pezarat Correia had been in Angola with Rosa Coutinho.

54. Diário de Notícias (Lisbon) 4 May 1975.

55. C K Ebinger, 'External Intervention in Internal War: The Politics and Diplomacy of the Angolan Civil War' [1976], p.690.

56. Holden Roberto in Tunis, 11 May 1975, quoted by The Times (London) 12 May 1975.

cessibility to all the Angolan movements, it is conceivable that some negotiated settlement might have been reached. Instead, the breakdown in Portuguese authority in Angola, as a result of the combined lack of will and political chaos in Luanda and Lisbon, had a direct effect on the civil war. Its failure contributed to the outbreak of fighting as an instrument of political rivalry in the first place, and, subsequently, to the escalation of the conflict as external backers entered the fray.

The internal political divisions of Portugal's post-coup leadership were partly responsible for Lisbon's failure to disarm the movements and establish order in Angola. At the heart of this failure was not only a lack of political will but also a certain incapacity to act decisively. At one point during May 1975 the Foreign Minister, Melo Antunes, was openly contemplating Portuguese military intervention in Angola for "pacification".⁵⁷ By June, Lisbon was threatening to call for the United Nations to send a peace-keeping force to Angola.⁵⁸ In Luanda, however, the Portuguese authorities had drifted further away from government into what Neto referred to as "criminal neutrality",⁵⁹ reluctant or unable to enforce their will:

"The High Commissioner, General Silva Cardoso...said that under the terms of the [Alvor] agreement, the High Commissioner could not intervene in domestic politics."⁶⁰

57. Diário de Notícias (Lisbon) 16 May 1975.

58. The Economist 14 June 1975.

59. Guardian (Manchester) 30 May 1975.

60. Report in Portuguese Africa reproduced in Facts and Reports

When the Revolutionary Council attempted to send more troops from Portugal to Angola to enforce Lisbon's authority, a mutiny of 60 soldiers revealed that the army was unwilling to return to Africa;⁶¹ furthermore, it called into question Portugal's military capacity to enforce order. It had become clear that due to both a lack of will and ability, Lisbon was unable to do anything to change the course of events in Angola. In late August the Alvor agreement was formally annulled.⁶²

On the eve of 11 November 1975, the Angolan capital was controlled by the MPLA. The High Commissioner hurriedly folded the Portuguese flag and with undisguised bitterness transferred sovereignty, internal and external, to the Angolan people. In Portugal, the days of the radical left in government were numbered. Two weeks later on 25 November, in the name of moderate politics the Portuguese Army clamped down on its hitherto dominant radical wing. The time of the MFA, which had played such an influential role in Angola, was over. The independent state of Angola declared by the MPLA on 11 November was only recognized by Portugal on 22 February 1976.

[Vol. 5, No. 11, 31 May 1975], p.16.

61. Financial Times (London) 9 June 1975.

62. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.271.

(ii) International Intervention in the Angolan Civil War

It is difficult to avoid forming a picture of reaction and counterreaction as the principal pattern of international intervention in Angola. This pattern has been used to point the finger of responsibility at one or another of the intervening parties; for having instigated the conflict, for having perpetuated it, for having provoked a reaction, and so on. Certainly, this study also draws similar conclusions from this pattern. It will be argued, however, that international intervention in the civil war was predicated on an internal political conflict that emerged in Angola. Parties to this conflict, the Angolan nationalist movements, actively sought the externalization of their dispute; resorting ever more to sources of larger arms supplies to better or equal those of their opponents. This is not to say that Washington, Moscow, Pretoria, Havana, Peking and Kinshasa did not all have very real interests and intentions behind their interventions in the Angolan civil war. This mixture of internal and international politics came together to produce the parameters of that terrible conflict.

The three liberation movements that survived the anti-colonial war, the MPLA, the FNLA and UNITA, did not have sophisticated fighting machines. As they emerged from exile and the hinterland in the latter half of 1974, they were little more than guerrilla forces. There is no record of their respective arsenals at this time but these were certainly made up of small weapons. A

year later, however, columns of motorized armoured carriers, large mortars, rocket launchers, tanks and jet fighters were all in action as the MPLA faced the combined forces of the FNLA and UNITA. In the intervening period, an arms race was entered into by these adversaries, one which had escalated exponentially as the lines of political rivalry were drawn; dividing communities into three, and eventually two, irreconcilable sides. International intervention in the Angolan civil war is revealed in the course of this arms race.

After the Portuguese coup, the MPLA managed to build itself up to a position of strength that placed it on a par with its major rival, the FNLA. From military ineffectiveness and internal disarray in 1973 and early 1974, the MPLA had, by early 1975, under a far more cohesive leadership, established its influence in most of the cities, including the capital, Luanda. This transformation was achieved by a dynamic merger of both internal and external factors.

The internal workings of the MPLA are anything but transparent. Throughout the leadership of Agostinho Neto, from 1962 until independence, the movement experienced three major splits. The first, in 1963, will be addressed later in Chapter Four. The other two occurred simultaneously during 1973 and 1974. The reason for giving attention to these dissensions is that they were, like the wider conflict between the movements, internationalized beyond their purely domestic components. More specifically, the challenges to Neto's leadership have, in one way or

another, been related to the state of affairs between the MPLA and Moscow. This is the case with the two very different dissensions that occurred in 1973 and 1974: the Eastern Revolt was a challenge to Neto's leadership by a rival, Daniel Chipenda; the Active Revolt was a political critique of the substance of Neto's leadership. It should be emphasised that both the scope and the nature of the challenges were very different. While the Eastern Revolt led to open hostilities, with Chipenda eventually transferring his forces to the FNLA, the Active Revolt was an attempt to change the direction of the MPLA on the part of intellectuals, most of whom remained within the movement after Neto's authority was imposed.

The Chipenda challenge was, according to Van Dunem, essentially personal and not political.⁶³ He had been the commander of the MPLA's guerrilla forces in the Eastern region of the country, where a military front had been opened in the late 1960s in response to activity in that area by UNITA. To all intents and purposes, Chipenda was the highest authority in that area; whose charisma had earned him a certain amount of popularity. In the early 1970s, military reverses at the hands of the Portuguese had spread discontent amongst the guerrillas. Inside Angola, the guerrilla units tended to stagnate, awaiting instructions from the leadership outside the country; directives that sometimes never

63. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991. João Van Dunem was active in the MPLA and in 1975 was with the Press Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the MPLA's army, FAPLA (Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola). See Appendix.

arrived.⁶⁴ Increasingly dispersed among various African capitals, the MPLA leadership's lines of communication to the fronts were inefficient and partly responsible for the military setbacks. This fed a growing resentment with the leadership among the partisans, which reached a high point on the Eastern Front. In an attempt to restore the profile of his leadership, Neto visited that region where he was openly challenged by a member of an audience who claimed not to recognize his authority.⁶⁵ This challenge was later generalized by Daniel Chipenda, whose substantial military force threatened Neto's group after an open split had been declared by 1973.

Some reports have claimed that during 1972 and 1973, Soviet assistance for the MPLA was reduced to a negligible trickle.⁶⁶ Legum considered this to have been a reflection of the fact that Moscow had switched its backing to Chipenda hoping that the battle commander would be easier to deal with than the "touchy" Neto.⁶⁷ This slowdown in Soviet aid is said to have preceded a total cut-off in all arms deliveries to the MPLA in March 1974,⁶⁸ only a month before the coup in Portugal. Con-

64. Aware of the resentment, Neto chastised this lethargy in a message delivered on 1 January 1970. Reproduced in English in MPLA 1970. p.8.

65. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991.

66. Van Dunem has backed these reports. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991.

67. C Legum, After Angola: The War Over Southern Africa, [1978], p.11.

68. G Golan, The Soviet Union and National Liberation Movements

tradicting this version, other sources have claimed that Chipenda may have turned to Peking after his break with Neto.⁶⁹ Whichever the case, the Soviet Union did reduce its flow of funds to Neto's group during the Eastern Revolt, while the movement appeared to be split and militarily ineffective.⁷⁰

The freezing of the conduits from Moscow did not last long. After the coup in Lisbon, the scenario had changed significantly for Soviet policy-makers. Furthermore, Neto had managed to recapture the initiative within the MPLA by outmanoeuvring the Revolts.⁷¹ The leadership of the movement was now in the hands of a tightly-knit ten-member Political Bureau, loyal to Neto.⁷² According to Van Dunem, the Soviets decided to reactivate their support after Neto had regained control.⁷³ Furthermore, a cease-fire with the Portuguese signed in October 1974 had relieved the military pressure on the movement. A year earlier it had seemed

in the Third World, [1988], p.270.

69. M Simpson, The Soviet Union and Afro-Marxist Regimes: The Path to the Treaties of Friendship and Cooperation [1989], p.191.

70. The Soviet action was apparently taken after a negative report on the operation of the MPLA given by Victor Lewin. G Bender, 'Kissinger in Angola: Anatomy of Failure', [1978a] p.69.

71. At an MPLA conference in Lusaka in Autumn 1974, Neto forged an alliance with the activists of the First Military Region of the MPLA against the Active and Eastern Revolts. These young guerrillas, who included Nito Alves, and Neto walked out of the conference in Lusaka and reconstituted the MPLA within Angola.

72. The Political Bureau was made of Agostinho Neto, Lopo do Nascimento, Lúcio Lara, Carlos Rocha, José Eduardo dos Santos, Joaquim Kapango, Rodrigues João Lopes, Pedro Maria Tonha (Pédalé), Jacob Caetano João (Monstro Imortal) and Henrique Teles (Iko) Carreira. J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.252.

that Neto was on the way out. Internally challenged and abandoned by his major external backer, recovery seemed out of the question. Yet this was what occurred. The event that did most to help Neto achieve this was, of course, the April coup in Lisbon. As a result of this, the situation in Angola from Moscow's perspective transformed itself from being 'whom to support in a protracted and indefinite anti-colonial war' to one that provided it with an opportunity to help establish a very friendly regime in an independent Angola.

The long-standing association between the MPLA and Portuguese communists provided the link to the Kremlin. This relationship came to its fruition after the April coup had brought the radical left-wing tendency to power in Lisbon; and especially, as described above, in Rosa Coutinho's chaotic term as High Commissioner from June 1974 to January 1975. The MPLA benefited directly from the favour shown to it by the Goncalves governments. Indirectly also, the MPLA accrued to itself a further predisposition on the part of the Soviets to favour this movement as a result of the close ties between some of the radical Portuguese officers and Moscow. These ties were consummated principally through the Portuguese Communist Party. According to Ebinger, it was the leader of the PCP, Alvaro Cunhal, who had personally recommended that Moscow resume its arms deliveries to the MPLA.⁷⁴

The date of the resumption of Soviet arms deliveries to

73. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991.

the MPLA has been variously cited as being sometime between August and October 1974, in the middle of Rosa Coutinho's term.⁷⁵ The supplies were routed through Brazzaville, which had been the MPLA's principal base since 1964, and included, according to US government sources, "...thousands of AK-47s." These weapons were distributed by the MPLA "...in the Luanda musseques where they proved useful in skirmishes between MPLA and FNLA partisans beginning in November 1974."⁷⁶ One report, attributed to British intelligence sources, claims that the MPLA received "...million dollars worth of Soviet weapons..." in the last four months of 1974.⁷⁷ In December, the MPLA sent 250 of its cadres to Moscow "...for military training."⁷⁸

The effect of this resumption of Soviet military aid was to expand the MPLA's military capacity, perhaps fourfold. According to Marcum, who quoted figures presented by the US State Department during Congressional Hearings,⁷⁹ the military force of the MPLA-Neto faction after the Chipenda split did not number more than 1,500 soldiers. By January 1975, however, the MPLA could, ac-

74. C K Ebinger, op.cit., [1976], p.688.

75. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.253; B D Porter, The USSR in Third World Conflicts: Soviet Arms and Diplomacy in Local Wars 1945-1980, [1984], p.156; M Simpson, op.cit., [1989], p.199; J Valenta, 'The Soviet-Cuban Intervention in Angola 1975' [1978], p.10.

76. J Marcum, op.cit. Volume Two, [1978], p.253.

77. Fred Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.116.

78. B D Porter, op.cit., [1984], p.156.

ording to the same US sources, arm a force numbering 5,000-7,000. This assessment of the strengthening of the MPLA may not be far off the mark. The Alvor agreement had stipulated that the respective military forces of each movement could number no more than 8,000.⁸⁰ According to a Portuguese military source, the MPLA could count on a force of 5,500, but an American researcher cited by Marcum put the number as high as 8,000.⁸¹ Even taking a conservative estimate as a basis, it is clear that the MPLA's strength had multiplied significantly during the latter half of 1974, before the Alvor accords were signed. Although this reinforcement only served to bring the movement closer to the far greater military strength of the FNLA,⁸² it also revealed two realities. Firstly, that the MPLA under Neto was a competitor for power in Angola; and that, secondly, this bid was backed by Moscow.

According to one point of view Soviet policy in the Angolan civil war was influenced by the action of China in support of the FNLA:

"The animosity between China and Russia over Angola exceeded anything either might have felt about US and other Western intervention."⁸³

79. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.253.

80. Angola, Rumo á Independencia. O Governo de Transição: Documentos e Personalidades, [1975], p.49.

81. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.257.

82. In January 1975, the FNLA army was said to total 21,000. This was made of 9,000 stationed in Angola and 12,000 waiting in Zaire. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.257 notes 128 and 129.

The involvement of Peking in the conflict was marked by the arrival of 112 Chinese military advisors at the FNLA's Zairean base at the end of May 1974, carrying 450 tonnes of arms. This is said to have been the red rag for the Soviet bull, leading Moscow to resume its shipments of arms to Neto.

The effects of Chinese support on the FNLA are difficult to judge although it must surely have played a part in the military consolidation of northern Angola by the movement in the latter part of 1974.⁸⁴ The establishment of FNLA influence in the zones where the movement was ethnically based but had not wielded authority to any significant degree throughout the colonial period, was instrumental in bolstering the confidence of its leader, Holden Roberto. By the end of 1974 the FNLA was in a strong negotiating position.

The strength of the FNLA was further enhanced when the US began a covert programme of support for this movement in January 1975. An ex-CIA operative who took part in the operation in Angola, John Stockwell, has claimed that the US intelligence agency had already reactivated its payments to Holden Roberto in July 1974.⁸⁵ At the same time as the Alvor agreements were being

83. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.22.

84. Although one source has attributed this consolidation by the FNLA to a secret deal struck between Spínola and Mobutu, in an attempt to favour the FNLA. Africa Confidential [18 October 1974], p.8.

signed in Portugal, the US Forty Committee⁸⁶ met in Washington to consider a CIA proposal that sought to endow the FNLA with US\$ 300,000. There and then, the proposal was approved by the chair of the committee, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Later Kissinger would argue that the funds were only intended for organizational purposes and not for the purchase of arms. Furthermore, he argued, the endowment was significantly less than the Soviet funds that had been channelled to the MPLA. This may well have been the case, but when relative strengths are considered, the MPLA was significantly weaker than the FNLA in mid-1974. Thus, the bolstering of the FNLA at that stage could have been considered to have been an escalation in the superpower levels of aid for the Angolan nationalist movements. Furthermore, these funds were only part of the total US aid received by the FNLA. US arms were also provided to this movement indirectly through the replacement of weapons supplied by the Zairean regime.⁸⁷

The relative effect of the US funds on the strength of the FNLA cannot be exactly quantified, as Roberto's movement was supported by two other major backers, Zaire and China. Yet it must be assumed that the US covert funds were responsible for sufficiently bolstering the confidence of the FNLA leader for the latter to move troops into Luanda. This occurred once a wide zone of

85. J Stockwell, In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story [1978], p.67. The CIA had payed the leader of the FNLA a retainer since the early 1960s. See Chapter Seven.

86. The Forty Committee brought together the disparate parts of the US Administration's foreign policy-making structure to decide on covert operations. See Chapter Seven.

influence had been established by the movement in northern Angola.⁸⁸ Furthermore, the FNLA embarked on an ostentatious bout of spending in Luanda; which included the purchase of a television station (renamed FNLA-TV) and the leading daily newspaper.⁸⁹ Amid rumours of US covert support, this level of exposure could not have failed to have imparted an impression of confidence on the part of the FNLA. Its overall military strength was increased in February when Chipenda announced, after being attacked by the MPLA, the merger of his force of around 2,000 with that of the FNLA.⁹⁰ Combined with an alleged display of militarism, these factors helped to stoke a fear in Luanda that the FNLA would not necessarily keep to the programme of transition that had been established at Alvor.⁹¹ This was a time when there were periodic confrontations between all sides; and when members of the respective movements attended meetings with pistols at their belts.⁹² It must have been difficult to escape the conclusion that the situation was worsening and that greater violence was not far off. Al-

87. S Weissman 'The CIA and US Policy in Zaire and Angola' [1978], p.406.

88. J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.246.

89. O Século (Lisbon) 24 March 1975, in Facts and Reports [Vol. 5, No.7, 5 April 1975], pp.19-20.

90. T Hodges, 'How the MPLA Won in Angola' [1978], p.49. As the Chipenda forces were not included in the Alvor agreements, conflicts between factions of the MPLA were considered 'internal'. J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.258. As the conflict escalated this peripheral role almost certainly drove Chipenda to join the FNLA.

91. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991.

though in February and March there had not yet been a discernible effect of the US programme of covert assistance, the burgeoning strength and confidence of the FNLA and the rumours that suggested the CIA was backing Holden Roberto created the impression that the conflict was about to escalate to another more bellicose level.

At the same Forty Committee meeting, Kissinger turned down a separate CIA proposal to fund UNITA to the order of US\$ 100,000. It has been suggested that the reason for this decision was that the US had always supported the FNLA and would not, therefore, change horses in midstream.⁹³ It is more likely, however, that the explanation for this lies in the special relationship between Washington and Kinshasa. As will be seen later, the importance of Zaire to the US was an important input in the American decision-making process on Angola. Consequently, the funding of the FNLA was also a gesture to the latter's ally, President Mobutu of Zaire. By July, the Forty Committee was ready to respond to UNITA's solicitations for weapons.⁹⁴ The US proclivity to support UNITA was influenced by the preoccupations that had been voiced to Washington by Zaire and Zambia about the

92. J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.258.

93. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.78.

94. By this time, UNITA was considering moving from a posture of nonviolence to entering the fray between the MPLA and the FNLA. Consequently, it had made its desires for the purchase of weapons known. The Agence France Press reported that the UNITA military commander, Samuel Chiwale, visited Peking on 20 March, presumably to request military aid. AFP report in Facts and Reports [Vol. 5, No.7, 5 April 1975], p.17. According to a later report, however, this fund-raising trip was not as successful as

worsening situation in Angola.⁹⁵ However, the US only began to arm Savimbi's movement from September.⁹⁶ With the FNLA, UNITA became a recipient of US covert assistance in a bid to dislodge the MPLA from Luanda. Estimates made by the US Congress conclude that total US aid, including that sent to replace Zairean and Zambian war materiel given to the FNLA and UNITA, amounted to US\$ 64 million; a figure that was double the official cost given at US\$ 32 million.⁹⁷

By March 1975, the MPLA was beginning to receive major Soviet arms shipments. According to official US estimates, the total amount of arms shipments between April and October 1975, before the South African intervention, were 27 shiploads and 30 to 40 air missions.⁹⁸ According to one report, Soviet weapons and ammunition were sufficient to equip 20,000 men in Luanda.⁹⁹ This major input in armaments coincided with, or may have actually helped to feed, the increasingly heavier confrontations between the movements in Luanda. The Alvor agreement was falling apart as

Savimbi may have wished. Afrique-Asie 19 May 1975.

95. J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.262.

96. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.79.

97. J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.263.

98. B D Porter, op.cit., p.160. These figures should be compared to those covering the period of heaviest fighting, between November 1975 and March 1976: 19 shiploads and 70 air missions. There was an obvious need for urgency in the flights; but the figures show also that a significant amount of Soviet weaponry had already been transferred to the MPLA before October 1975.

99. J Valenta, 'The Soviet-Cuban Intervention in Angola 1975'

the FNLA attacked the MPLA-Neto, which in turn attacked both the MPLA-Chipenda and the FNLA. Only UNITA, whose leader did not go to Luanda until 25 April, managed to remain outside the fighting at this stage.

According to João Van Dunem, who at this time was active in the MPLA's military command, the Neto leadership decided to embark on an attempt to reinforce the movement's position and establish political influence in the major cities and towns of the country, including the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda.¹⁰⁰ This process led increasingly to confrontation and violence in the cities. It is difficult to claim that these objectives were decided upon with Moscow's input. However, Soviet weapons gave the MPLA a viable fighting force which was used to sustain its bids for political influence among urban populations. The Soviet arms shipments to the MPLA at this stage were a significant escalation in the arms race.

In the period after the April coup, there had already been a number of clashes between rival supporters of the movements, especially between those of the MPLA and the FNLA, as well as violent confrontations between Europeans and Africans in the musseques. Throughout this period, however, the violence was not considered 'official'; Lúcio Lara, of the MPLA, is said to have dissociated the movement from the violent acts of its supporters at the end 1974.¹⁰¹ But on 23 March 1975 the FNLA attacked the

[1978], p.11.

100. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991.

MPLA's headquarters at Vila Alice with hand grenades.¹⁰² This incident can be used to mark the beginning of the semi-open phase of the civil war. Attacks and counter-attacks followed as an extra 500 FNLA troops were brought into the city at the end of the month. After a brief lull, clashes re-emerged at the end of April. During this period, violent confrontations between the MPLA and the FNLA flared up regularly in most of the towns, and especially in Luanda. Despite several attempts at establishing cease-fires, these rapidly collapsed after their signing. According to one estimate, by June 1975 this violence had left 5,000 dead.¹⁰³ The Alvor accords were all but defunct as each movement attempted to strengthen its own position. Only UNITA attempted to stay out of the fighting and pressed for the retention of the transitional process agreed at Alvor. Its military power was much more limited and could not have stood up against the other two movements at this stage. Before receiving US arms supplies, UNITA's best chances lay in its formalized role under the aegis of Alvor.

The direct motivations behind this increased tempo are difficult to pin down categorically. The MPLA, increasingly more influential in the urban areas and more consolidated internally, had been receiving a clearly enhanced flow of weapons from the

101. F Bridgland, op.cit., p.112.

102. J Marcum, op.cit., p.258.

103. Estimate given by J Bergerol Financial Times (London) 14 June 1975. Cited in F Bridgland, op.cit., p.119. Another estimate reported by The Guardian (Manchester) correspondent in Luanda states that 700 had been killed by 5 May. Report in Facts

Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact states. This reinforcement may have prompted the FNLA to move against the MPLA with a pre-emptive objective in mind. On the other hand, boosted by the support Holden Roberto believed he had in Kinshasa and now Washington, the FNLA may have acted against the MPLA in order to establish the former's own predominance by military means where it had little political influence. Whatever the reason, an arms race between the movements had begun and, as violence between their supporters took on epidemic proportions, military power was increasingly seen to be the main political instrument in Angola

The MPLA's military strength was further reinforced by the recruitment of a contingent of anti-Kinshasa gendarmes from Katanga numbering between 3,500 and 7,000. This force had been exiled in Angola since the failure of the secession of Katanga from the Congo and the rise of Mobutu.¹⁰⁴ They had previously been used by the Portuguese against the Angolan nationalist movements, but the gendarmes' anti-Kinshasa posture was now exploited by the MPLA to recruit them for its own conflict with the Kinshasa-backed FNLA.

Adding to its increased manpower and armaments, the MPLA also began to receive military assistance from Cuba. According to one source that quoted Luanda Radio, the first Cuban military advisors began to arrive in Angola around 7 May. At this time an MPLA representative journeyed to Havana while the Cuban ambassador

and Reports [Vol. 5, No.10, 17 May 1975], p.1.

to Kinshasa was on a visit to Luanda.¹⁰⁵ A meeting between Neto and the Cuban military commander in Brazzaville is said to have taken place some time in May. At this meeting an initial programme of logistical and strategic co-operation between the MPLA and Cuba was drawn up and commenced. The date of arrival of 230 Cuban military advisors has not been agreed upon by observers of the conflict,¹⁰⁶ but is placed sometime in May or June. Official US sources reveal that Washington first detected the presence of Cubans on 25 July.¹⁰⁷ It is reasonable to assume that sometime in early summer is a likely date for the arrival of this contingent of Cuban military technicians. The multiplicity of reports and sighting of Cubans in Angola that followed, precludes the possibility, advanced by some sources, that this first Cuban contingent did not arrive until August.

The primary task of this contingent was to set up and run training camps for the MPLA's military arm, FAPLA. Some reports have claimed, however, that Cubans were involved in fighting by the end of May, or at the very least by June.¹⁰⁸ Even if the first Cubans were not involved in the fighting, their presence shifted the balance of the movements' forces. Once again, compared to the military makeup of the MPLA twelve months before, it represented a

104. J Marcum, *op.cit.*, Volume Two, [1978], p.259.

105. J Valenta, *op.cit.*, p.11.

106. See Chapter Six.

107. See Footnote 256 in J Marcum, *op.cit.*, p.273.

significant reinforcement of its forces as well as an indication that the confrontation with the FNLA was more rather than less likely. In addition, it raised the prescient spectre of a Cuban-Soviet operation of support for the MPLA. As was subsequently revealed, the Cuban advisors did not only provide basic military training but also instructed the FAPLA troops in the use Soviet weaponry that was being delivered to the MPLA.

Also at around this time, perhaps a little later in July when the MPLA's control of Luanda was practically absolute, a number of Soviet military advisors arrived in Angola. The Portuguese news agency reported, on 25 April 1975, the approaching visit of a Soviet delegation that "...will hold talks with the MPLA regarding material aid and training of cadres."¹⁰⁹ According to Van Dunem, there were more than 10 but less than 50 Soviet military personnel with the MPLA, up to and including the rank of colonel in the Soviet Army.¹¹⁰

As will be shown later, the FNLA benefitted most from its rather amorphous relationship with Zairean regimes, particularly with that of Mobutu Sese Seko. Some analysts have gone so far as to say that the movement was no more than an instrument of Zairean foreign policy.¹¹¹ If all things are considered, it can be seen that the FNLA did not ever clash with Zaire over conflict-

108. J Valenta, op.cit., p.11.

109. Reported in Facts and Reports [Vol. 5, No.10, 17 May 1975], p.21.

110. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991.

ing interests. Mobutu's regime did seem to be pursuing a parallel agenda to that of the FNLA. At the heart of this Zairean agenda was a desire for a friendly regime in Angola; one that shared Mobutu's anti-communist posture and, at the same time, undoubtedly a keen interest in the oil-rich Cabinda enclave. The fact that Zaire seemed to be pursuing a particularist set of interests when supporting the FNLA does not preclude the existence of very real internal sources of the conflict in Angola. Even considering that the FNLA seems to have been more at home in the Zairean capital than in Angola, this movement represented, as will be seen later, an integral part of the process of Angolan independence.

Nevertheless, Zaire's support for the FNLA was crucial in making the movement a competing force in 1975. The Zaire factor already alluded to is seen to have been an important input in the US decision-making process on the Angolan civil war. The close relationship of the regime in Kinshasa with the FNLA was fundamental to the latter's access to US support. The flow of US arms to Roberto's movement was conducted principally through Zaire, where the weapons would either replace Zairean army supplies already provided to the FNLA or would easily cross the border into Angola to resupply FNLA forces already deployed. As well as providing a haven for its leadership, redirecting the US covert operation and providing diplomatic backing for the FNLA, Zaire also intervened militarily in the Angolan civil war to aid Roberto's movement in its conflict with the MPLA. Reports of Zairean troops alongside FNLA forces¹¹² begin to emerge even before the total collapse of

the Alvor accords. According to an Observer report, 1,200 Zairean army soldiers were operating inside Angola as of mid-May.¹¹³ Marcum claims that this deployment was in reaction to the recruitment by the MPLA of the anti-Kinshasa Katangese gendarmes, an action which had "...incensed President Mobutu..."¹¹⁴ The presence of Zairean troops on the side of the FNLA served to further reinforce the impression that this movement was a threat to the MPLA and its power base in the cities. The FNLA's opportunity lay in its fighting capacity. According to Heimer:

"...the FNLA...was convinced that its military strength would in the end permit it to grab the whole cake."¹¹⁵

The deployment of Zairean troops represented an escalation in the conflict and hastened the process of disintegration that was taking place in the fragile structure for decolonization established at Alvor.

Despite claims to the contrary and well-intentioned attempts to patch up the tripartite accord, such as the Nakuru agreement,¹¹⁶ it was more than clear to most that a full-scale

111. C K Ebinger, op.cit., p.674.

112. One source states that in April, the FNLA forces numbered between 15,000 and 20,000 elements. Africa Confidential [11 April 1975], p.1.

113. C Legum in Observer (London) 18 May 1975. Reproduced in Facts and Reports [Vol.5, No.11, 31 May 1975], p.1.

114. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.259.

115. F W Heimer, The Decolonization Conflict in Angola: 1974-1976, [1979], p.65.

civil war was being prepared for in Angola. According to Roberto, on 29 July: "We have signed a number of agreements, all of which have been violated by MPLA. Now we will no longer be tricked. Now we will go forward." In a similarly defiant tone, Nito Alves, of the MPLA, declared on 27 July: "We are 100 percent enemies and can never come to any agreement. Our fight must go on until FNLA is defeated as the American imperialists were in Vietnam."¹¹⁷

The steady process of confrontation had resulted in the creation of virtual spheres of influence for each of the movements. Thus, the FNLA controlled the north while the MPLA tended to hold sway in the capital and in the ports along the coast. Heavy fighting broke out on 9 July and within a week, after a well-executed and resourced offensive, the MPLA had expelled the FNLA from Luanda and established its control in other towns. The MPLA now controlled the capital of Angola. As the government collapsed, the transitional process agreed at Alvor had all but been discarded at a time when Portugal still maintained nominal sovereignty.

116. Neto, Savimbi and Roberto met at Nakuru, Kenya, from 16 to 21 June 1975, chaired by Kenyatta. There they signed the Nakuru agreement (without the Portuguese) which reaffirmed the terms of the Alvor accords with regard to the transitional government and the holding of elections. One of the clauses referred to the disbanding of the Katangese gendarmes, which were, by this time, fighting for the MPLA. Two days after the signature, there was more shooting between the FNLA and the MPLA in Luanda. On 9 July, major fighting broke out once again. For details of the Nakuru agreement see reproduction of text in Africa Contemporary Record 1975-1976, p.C80.

117. Both quotations in T Hodges, op.cit., p.53.

Also at this time, the exodus of the European population had escalated considerably. The abandonment of Angola by the ex-colonial society *en masse* served to contribute to the climate of violence and instability, and to emphasise the disintegration of authority.¹¹⁸ According to the Angolan Minister of Social Communication, speaking at a press conference in mid-June, about 200,000 Angolan residents were awaiting repatriation.¹¹⁹

Fighting continued throughout July and it was the MPLA that seemed to have the upper hand. As a result of its July offensive, the MPLA controlled 11 out of the 15 provincial capitals. Furthermore, earlier in June, the MPLA had managed to establish its influence in the important enclave of Cabinda. Clearly, the delivery of Soviet weapons and the Cuban training had been beneficial to the MPLA.

Hitherto adept at side-stepping the confrontation between the MPLA and the FNLA, UNITA could not, however, avoid the fighting after the breakdown of the Nakuru agreement. In what had been a last-ditch push in favour of a political solution, Savimbi had apparently worked tirelessly for the Nakuru meeting.¹²⁰ With far less military capabilities than the other two movements, UNITA had a much better chance of participating in a post-independence

118. Reports of the sabotage, looting and transfer to Portugal of capital goods abounded, and underlied the bitter tension between the communities.

119. Diário de Notícias (Lisbon) 13 June 1975.

120. T Hodges, *op.cit.*, pp.51-52.

government if elections were carried out:

"The possible outcome of elections held in 1975 was thus almost exclusively a function of the relative demographic weight of the different population segments. The FNLA, counting mainly on the Bakongo and on part of the whites, would certainly not have obtained more than 20% of the votes, and probably substantially less. The MPLA, having the support of the Akwambundu, and of the majority of the urbanized non-whites as well of the eastern tributary societies, might have got 35 to 40%. The sheer number of the Ovimbundu, plus part of the whites, of the southern/south-eastern tributary societies, and of the Cabindans, would have guaranteed UNITA a relative majority of 40 to 45%."¹²¹

But an alleged massacre of about 50 UNITA recruits by the MPLA in early June, soured UNITA's mediatory stance. According to one source, this attack was an attempt to force Savimbi's hand by the more radical elements in the MPLA,¹²² following attempts in mid-June between the leaderships of the MPLA and UNITA to establish a union of sorts.¹²³ As the war between the MPLA and the FNLA escalated, UNITA was caught in the fighting. As one source puts it, UNITA officially entered the fray on 4 August, after Savimbi had met with Kaunda in Lusaka.¹²⁴

The breakdown of the transitional government has been attributed most often to the Soviet arms-backed MPLA push to stamp its sole authority on the upcoming transfer of sovereignty.

121. F W Heimer, op.cit., [1979], p.64.

122. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.260.

123. Reports in Provincia de Angola 15 and 17 June 1975. Cited in Facts and Reports [Vol. 5, Nos.13/14, 12 July 1975], p.28.

124. F Bridgland, op.cit., p.127.

There is little doubt that the MPLA had achieved significant successes by the summer, and that this was the result of a qualitative and quantitative improvement in its military power thanks to Soviet aid, and an extension of its political organization in the major urban areas. But whether this situation was the result of a conscious decision to grab power or, alternatively, a consequence of the dynamic escalation of political irreconcilability between the MPLA and the FNLA, is difficult to say.

While unable to deny the fact that the FNLA's aggression in the spring had contributed to the escalation of the conflict, Valenta, however, points to the elections that had been set by the Alvor agreements and confirmed in the Nakuru meeting, as the major stimulus for the MPLA's July offensive. In April, senior MPLA leaders had not concealed their opposition to elections and argued for the creation of a "socialist council of state".¹²⁵ On 22 April, Neto had predicted that the elections "...may be cancelled."¹²⁶ The transitional government itself had been an object of criticism from the more radical groups in the MPLA. According to a press report, the MPLA Popular Committees (Comités Populares) in Luanda held an anti-government demonstration in early March.¹²⁷ Taking into account the above predictions as to the relative electoral strengths of the movements, it is not un-

125. J Valenta, op.cit., p.12.

126. O Século (Lisbon) 23 April 1975.

127. L'Opinion (Morocco) 10 March 1975 in Facts and Reports [Vol. 5, No.7, 5 April 1975], p.1.

reasonable to consider that part of the intention behind driving the FNLA and UNITA out of Luanda in the summer was to destabilize the transitional government and, therefore, avoid elections. These the MPLA may have feared would not have provided it with sufficient or, more likely, the total power that it had concluded the movement could obtain by other means.

Valenta's analysis also concludes that it is likely that by the summer, once it was in virtual control of Luanda, the MPLA had communicated its intentions to Moscow, Havana and Brazzaville, and obtained a contingency plan to shore up its hold if necessary.¹²⁸ These conclusions that point to the conscious implementation of a bid for power by the MPLA are supported by Van Dunem who was active in the capital.¹²⁹ According to him, the mood in Luanda was defiant and the MPLA was determined not to share power. After the MPLA had signed the Nakuru agreement on 21 June, José Van Dunem, the Political Commissar of the FAPLA command, told his brother while returning from Kenya that to the MPLA leadership the agreement had been purely tactical.¹³⁰ There was no intention of keeping to the transitional process.

The military strengths of the three movements in the summer are difficult to assess due to the lack of reliable estimates. According to an April report in a Portuguese daily, UNITA

128. J Valenta, op.cit., p.13.

129. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 22 August 1991.

130. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 22 August 1991.

had 40,000 troops at its disposal.¹³¹ Since only a month or two before this UNITA's forces had been quoted as being no more than a thousand-strong, this figure is almost certainly an exaggeration. In the north of the country, a later report places the FNLA's strength at around 17,000,¹³² reinforced by 1,200 to 1,300 Zairean army regulars.¹³³ Estimates of the MPLA's strength are few and far between. One observer has placed its guerrilla strength in the spring at 6,000,¹³⁴ but this is almost certainly underestimated.

At this stage, the FNLA was being supplied by Zaire, China and, covertly, the United States. In July, the Forty Committee had agreed a further sum of aid, US\$ 60 million for the FNLA. Now aware of UNITA's potential, Washington also began to fund Savimbi's movement that was backed by Zambia. The MPLA was receiving weapons from the Soviet Union and training from Cuba. The arms caches of all three movements were further increased when a Portuguese para-military organization, the OPVDCA,¹³⁵ was disbanded by the High Commissioner in April. According to Diógenes Boavida, of the MPLA and Minister of Justice in the transitional government, the well-stocked arsenal of this organization, of over

131. Diário de Notícias (Lisbon) 23 April 1975.

132. Diário de Notícias (London) 15 July 1975 cited in T Hodges, op.cit., p.52.

133. J Marcum, op.cit., p.269.

134. T Hodges, op.cit., p.50.

135. The Provincial Organization of Volunteers for the Civil Defence of Angola.

40,000 weapons, was plundered by members of the three movements.¹³⁶

The lines were now drawn and the war was open. According to the FNLA "only an all-out war will once and for all finish the continual attacks by the MPLA..."¹³⁷ In control of Luanda and the major towns, the MPLA seemed to be in the most favourable position; and its heavily reinforced military power was successfully matching the FNLA's forces in the north of the country. According to Kissinger's testimony, it was at this stage that Zaire and Zambia¹³⁸ approached Washington requesting US aid for the FNLA and UNITA in their joint effort to defeat the MPLA and challenge the Soviet bid for influence in the region.¹³⁹ According to Nathaniel Davis, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, it was on or about 17 July that the US administration took the decision in favour of a sustained covert military intervention.¹⁴⁰ The successes of the MPLA had escalated the conflict to a new level where periodic clashes were no longer effective. All that remained was an all out war between armies. At the

136. Interview in Expresso (Lisbon) 3 May 1975.

137. O Século (Lisbon) 9 June 1975.

138. The Kaunda regime's intervention in the Angolan conflict in this way stems from the importance of the Angolan Atlantic ports in the export of Zambian copper. The MPLA's control of Lobito, and therefore, the terminal of the Benguela railway put Zambia under pressure.

139. C K Ebinger, op.cit., p.689.

140. N Davis, 'The Angola Decision of 1975: A Personal Memoir' (1978), p.121,

end of the summer, the FNLA and UNITA were faced with the task of dislodging the MPLA from the positions it held in the towns, and particularly, in Luanda. Taking the capital became the principle military objective. The joint FNLA-UNITA offensive was, however, not launched until mid-October, by which time a new international actor, South Africa, had entered the Angolan conflict, while another, Portugal, with little authority remaining, had withdrawn its troops far ahead of the timetable established at Alvor.

After the MPLA had consolidated its positions in the summer, the FNLA had attempted to march on Luanda but had been stopped by MPLA forces at Quifangondo, no more than 15 miles from the capital. And yet, in the following months, it could not get closer to Luanda than this point, as the movements' respective forces held each other down.¹⁴¹ The period between the end of July to September was characterized by a relative lull in the fighting with no substantial change in the overall balance, which was tilted in favour of the MPLA.

The intervention of South Africa marked a further phase in the civil war. Pretoria had already demonstrated its preoccupation with the Angolan conflict, and its willingness to deploy military forces inside that country: in August the South African Defence Force (SADF) moved to positions around the Cunene River hydroelectric project which South Africa had co-financed with the Portuguese. According to the South African government, the SADF

141. T Hodges, op.cit., p.55.

forces were deployed to protect those installations, but by early September they were moving further into Angolan territory. It is clear that both UNITA and the FNLA had established contact with Pretoria and that South Africa began to provide the badly-armed UNITA with a source of weapons and by late August had set up training camps for both movements.¹⁴² What is not clear, however, is when a co-ordinated strategy to challenge the MPLA was agreed upon by the disparate parts of the anti-MPLA alliance.

After the spring of 1975, UNITA's leader, Jonas Savimbi had been making pronouncements on the positivity of co-operation with South Africa and on the 'responsible' nature of Vorster's leadership.¹⁴³ Militarily the weakest of the three movements, UNITA had been searching for a source of armaments as it became clear that force was going to be used to solve political differences in Angola. Savimbi's alliance with South Africa, undoubtedly a tactical one, was, however, against the grain of continental politics. Certainly a number of African leaders that had favoured Savimbi could not continue to support UNITA once it had been revealed that the South African army was fighting alongside their forces. Despite this political fall-out, the South African intervention tipped the military balance in favour of the anti-MPLA forces. In early October, South Africans were already in action alongside UNITA in fighting against the MPLA in Huambo (ex-

142. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.269.

143. 'Vorster is Hailed by Savimbi' in Star Weekly (Johannesburg) 3 May 1975.

Nova Lisboa), an important town on the Benguela railway.

The main South African intervention began on 14 October.¹⁴⁴ An armoured column (code-named Zulu) made up of Bushmen, ex-Portuguese army officers and a 1,000-strong force ceded by Chipenda, under South African command crossed into Angola from Namibia. The column engaged the MPLA at Pereira de Eca and moved north and was joined on 23 October by South African units and a Portuguese right-wing force (ELP)¹⁴⁵ numbering a few hundred. Well-supplied by air, and accompanied by helicopter gunships, the South African column, made up of 1,500-2,000 regular SADF troops, moved north and soon reached Novo Redondo, on the coast about 200 miles south of Luanda. The Zulu column had covered 500 miles by mid-November. Reinforced by US covert supplies, the FNLA and UNITA moved against the MPLA from the north and south. By November, the MPLA had lost all its summer gains and was practically reduced to its positions in Luanda and along a corridor of territory that cut across central Angola. At this stage, the anti-MPLA alliance seemed to have regained the advantage. The strength of the South African column seemed to augur badly for the MPLA, some of the leadership of which considered abandoning Luanda. According to Van Dunem, however, a certain defiant courage was the order of the day

144. Details of the South African military operation in J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.269.

145. The Popular Liberation Army (Exército de Libertação Popular) was made up of ex-Portuguese army, ex-PIDE and other dissatisfied whites. Another ELP unit was said to be fighting the MPLA with the FNLA in the north. F W Heimer, op.cit., pp.70,75,77

in the besieged capital.¹⁴⁶ .

The approaching day of independence, marked yet another turn in the course of the civil war. As the last Portuguese High Commissioner, Leonel Cardoso,¹⁴⁷ transferred the sovereignty of Angola to all its people and put centuries of Portuguese authority to an official end, the civil war was raging on the battlefield. What this event did, however, in conjunction with the anti-MPLA coalition's declared objective of taking Luanda, was to provide the MPLA with an opportunity to interpret the civil war as the defence of the newly-independent state from an interventionary force payrolled by Washington. It is not even important that the intervention of Cuban troops certainly occurred before 11 November, or, for that matter, that civil war had been raging since the first half of that year. From then on, for the MPLA, the conflict was framed in terms of the defence of Angolan independence. Thus, the People's Republic of Angola was declared on 11 November, and a government was formed, one that was recognised by a number of communist countries, as well as by authoritarian Brazil, in itself a diplomatic coup. The subsequent deployment of several thousand Cuban troops was always justified in this post-independence context. It was justified as an act designed to support a recognized government.

The Cuban intervention, along with the massive flow of

146. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991.

147. Silva Cardoso had been replaced in August.

Soviet weaponry had an overwhelming military impact on the civil war. According to South African claims, their forces did not take Luanda from the south because Washington "...had pleaded" against such a move.¹⁴⁸ Presumably, it was preferred that an Angolan force, that of the FNLA in the north, be the first to arrive in the capital. The problem was that the FNLA was unable to achieve this. Already stalemated outside Luanda for weeks, the FNLA army did not improve its position when well-supplied MPLA forces moved against them. But as the date of independence approached, an impatient Roberto wanted his movement installed in the capital. Apparently disregarding his American, South African and Portuguese military advisors, Roberto ordered a single column of troops down the road to Luanda.¹⁴⁹ This was a fatal mistake. The column disintegrated under fire, especially from Cuban-operated mobile 122mm rocket launchers (known as 'Stalin's organs'), that screeched and terrified the approaching FNLA troops. With the newly-arrived Cuban expeditionary force, the heavily-armed MPLA¹⁵⁰ managed to push the FNLA forces back until, completely demoralized, they fled with the Zairean troops just ahead of them. By January, the military threat to the MPLA from the north was negligible.

148. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, footnote 261, p.274.

149. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.274.

150. "By mid-January 1976, the MPLA was reported to be supported by 9,000 Cuban troops, 6,500 Katangese gendarmes and 400 Russian advisors. The movement had large numbers of 'Stalin's Organs', 68 PT-76 light amphibious tanks, 10 T-54 tanks, 20 T-34 tanks, 12 MiG-21 jets and 3 FIAT 91 jets." Africa Contemporary Record [1975-1976], p.B432.

The defeat of the FNLA marked the military turning-point of the civil war. If the central objective of the anti-MPLA operation had been for the FNLA to take Luanda by or around the date of independence, when this was not achieved the remaining parts of the coalition were left high and dry. Certainly the political alliance between the FNLA and UNITA led to nothing, as can be seen by the failure of the rival proclamation of independence.¹⁵¹ With the defeat of the FNLA in the north, the Cuban-backed MPLA turned south against Chipenda's forces and UNITA. Apart from a few skirmishes of which there is little information, there was no major confrontation with the South African forces in 1976. Despite Savimbi's requests, on 4 February, Pretoria announced, after negotiations with the MPLA, that the SADF forces had withdrawn to within fifty miles of the Namibian border.¹⁵² Practically alone against the MPLA-Cuban forces, UNITA was routed.

Two external developments of significance also influenced the course of the civil war. The first was the effects of the public disclosure of the US covert operation in Angola. In the US, this occurred only on 14 December 1975 when the operation was advanced as the cause of Nathaniel Davis' resignation.¹⁵³ Sub-

151. The Democratic People's Republic of Angola was declared with: two capitals, Ambriz in the north and Huambo in the south; a rotating premiership and unintegrated armies. It was never recognized and rapidly collapsed.

152. African Contemporary Record [1975-1976], p.B432.

153. N Davis, op.cit., p.119. Earlier reports, on 25 September and 3 and 4 November, of the US covert operation in Angola apparently provoked none or little public reaction in the US.

sequently, the US Congress did turn its attention to covert funding of the CIA Angola programme. On 19 December, the Senate passed the Tunney Amendment prohibiting all further funding of the anti-MPLA forces in Angola. From this point on the balance of forces changed significantly. It left the FNLA and UNITA without their principal financier and arms supplier. Furthermore, this anti-MPLA coalition was left in the lurch allied to South Africa, undoubtedly a political liability but even more so once the US had withdrawn from the conflict. On the other hand, the Congressional rein on the US administration boosted the confidence of the MPLA, and its backers in Moscow and Havana, solidifying their resolve in the use of Cuban troops to ensure an MPLA victory.

The second development of significance, which effectively came to mark the end of the Angolan civil war, was the recognition of the MPLA government by the OAU. Singularly ineffective under Idi Amin's chairmanship, the OAU's emergency summit between 10 and 13 January, showed the continent to be split down the middle as to which of the sides in the Angolan civil war they would recognise. A crucial development was Nigeria's recognition of the MPLA in late November, allegedly as a result of South Africa's intervention. Followed by a number of other African states, this important show of support eventually led to the breaking of the deadlock on 2 February 1976. On 10 February, the People's Republic of Angola was recognized by the OAU. Wholesale recognition followed and, apart from a stubborn US administration, the sovereignty of the MPLA's government and state was globally

accepted.

PART TWO
THE INTERNAL SOURCES OF CONFLICT IN ANGOLA

CHAPTER TWO

PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM IN ANGOLA

(i) Colonial Policy and the Portuguese New State

To begin a look at Portuguese colonialism in Angola it is essential to establish the importance of Angola as a colony to the Portuguese state, in both economic and political terms. Taking the latter first, this study will address the link between colonialism and the Salazarist regime, known as the New State, in power between 1928 and 1974. Colonial policy under Salazar and his successor, Marcello Caetano, consisted of, in its most basic characterization, maintaining the integrity of Portugal's overseas possessions, while all around them others were losing their own. This apparently anachronistic stance was, however, determined by the importance that Angola, in particular, and the Portuguese empire, in general, played in supporting the authoritarian regime established by Salazar. Whereas other colonial powers were able to withdraw from their dominions without generally suffering major internal costs,¹ the Salazarist regime could not have decolonized and survived as the power in Portugal, as a result of this political and economic dependence on the colonies. For this regime then, basic

1. One exception is, of course, France and the independence of Algeria.

colonial policy was thus always the defence of colonial authority, if necessary to the very end, as the "loss" of the colonies would have signified the end of the New State.

Since the much lamented "loss" of Brazil to independence in 1822, Angola had replaced the South American giant at the centre of affections of the idealists of Portuguese grandeur. This very large, underpopulated territory in south-west Africa held the aspirations of those that still believed in the possibility of a return to past greatness that had, since the seventeenth century, become more and more elusive for Portugal. The wealth and potential of Brazil had been lost, but was, by the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, being sought after in Angola.

Actual pursuit of a development of wealth in Angola during the nineteenth century was, however, a poor reflection of the achievements claimed by successive metropolitan regimes anxious to impress their more powerful European neighbours. These attempts to hide a somewhat mismatched share of African territory, notoriously mal-administrated, were not simply a product of grandiose empire-fantasy ideology, but were an intrinsic part of an astute diplomacy intent on defending Portugal's already diminished role in a world of rapacious politics, if not actually fighting to preserve its very independence in Europe. The complex turn-of-the-century arena of alliances often threatened to dismember the Portuguese territories in Africa and distribute the parts between the major powers.

Despite singularly humiliating incidents,² this diplomacy was largely successful.³ By acting as a buffer between Britain, France and Germany, Portugal managed to maintain Angola and other overseas territories into the twentieth century.

When the Berlin conference of 1884-1885 sought to determine the European spheres of influence in Africa, it also set down the new rules of imperialism. No longer was colonial rule to be defined by historical rights. The "General Act" of the conference, that claimed to define a "new colonial public law,"⁴ determined that only effective occupation would constitute effective colonial sovereignty. This "Act" was unfavourable to the small and poor colonizers such as the Portuguese and placed Lisbon under pressure to extend their hitherto largely coastal administration of colonies to the hin-

2. The British issued Portugal with an ultimatum in January 1890 which forced Lisbon to desist from its dreams of establishing a trans-African empire, linking Angola to Mozambique, one that would have conflicted with Rhodes' own dream of "British dominion from the Cape to Cairo".

3. This was usually due to a deft ability to play the major European powers off each other. For example, Portugal managed to fight off Bismark's claims to its territories by enlisting French support, the latter being interested in containing German expansion. Similarly, the British could be counted on in disputes with either the French or the Germans. By appealing to British interests Lisbon managed to ward off Boer designs on the Lourenço Marques (now Maputo) port. This small-state diplomacy was no easy task for the nineteenth century Portuguese governments, that faced, at all times, the threat of financial collapse, which would have delivered the colonies to the great powers on a platter.

4. A H de Oliveira Marques, History of Portugal Volume II: From Empire to Corporate State [1972], p.111.

terland in order to establish effective occupation, or else risk losing the colonies. Despite not having the funds or the manpower to achieve this objective, the government in Lisbon organized a number of expeditions between 1885 and 1890,⁵ in a vain attempt to "pacify" the colonies and meet the conditions set by the "imperial club".

Colonial "pacification" (the enforcement of colonial control, both military and financial, through the establishment of an administrative unit) had not been a characteristic of Portuguese colonial policy until this time. The greater part of Portuguese intercourse with the territories it controlled had been dominated by trade. In Angola, this was carried out by the various traders based in the coastal ports of Luanda and Benguela, who would trade with the interior African kingdoms, through intermediaries. After the Berlin conference, the commercial nature of Portuguese contact in Africa, once informal, became increasingly inserted into a framework of colonial control and administration. Despite centuries of its presence in Africa, Portugal only began to establish a colonial state towards the end of the nineteenth century as a result of pressure from the Great Powers that threatened to push the Portuguese out of Africa.

In Portugal, the pressure to colonize, that is to establish full control of the overseas territories and establish a

5. A H de Oliveira Marques, *ibid.*

colonial state, then became part of political discourse. Even before the fall of the monarchy in 1910, reformers were already campaigning for the development of autonomous colonies, with a large degree of administrative and financial independence from the metropole.⁶ To achieve this stage, however, it was believed that the military conquest of the colonies was required, a task of such expense that would involve dispatching large military forces to Africa. The monarchy, already on very shaky ground, could not afford this, either financially or politically.

With the advent of the Portuguese Republic in October 1910, this reform agenda was expanded and taken on by the new Republican governments. In keeping with the modernist and enlightened ideology of the new republic, the rational exploitation of colonialism was called for, so that the potential of the colonies could be developed for Portugal's benefit. This Republican model of colonialism, somewhat inspired by the imperialism of the Great Powers, involved the conquest, or pacification of the territory, its taxation, the cultivation of viable produce, the practice of enforced labour and the implementation of a statute of the status of the colonial population distinguishing the civilized from the natives.⁷ For the

6. Reformers such as Mouzinho de Albuquerque and António Enes emphasised that colonial policy should focus on decentralization, development and autonomy. see M Newitt, Portugal in Africa: The Last Hundred Years [1981], p.177.

7. see G Clarence-Smith, The Third Portuguese Empire 1825-1975: Study in Economic Imperialism [1985], p.12.

Republicans, the colonies, in as much as they were, like Portugal, potential targets for the application of a theory of a rational society,⁸ were as important to their idea of Portuguese nation as they subsequently became under Salazar.

Colonial policy under the Republic, during the period between 1910 and 1925, can be described as having been over-ambitious if not even utopian. Much of the grand legislature that was aimed to develop the overseas Portuguese empire remained on paper. Difficulties in stabilizing the metropolitan economic and political environment were as, if not more, responsible than Republican rationality for the resulting decentralized rule in the colonies. Increasingly acute budget crises and political instability crippled governments in Lisbon, and colonial administrations were given wide powers to administrate their territories almost independently.

In Angola, the Norton de Matos era⁹ characterized the high level of authority that was then increasingly installed in each colony. As the highest authority in the territory he could rule by decree and even solicit international loans independently of Lisbon. Norton de Matos carried out frantic development projects based on deficit financing. These projects included transport networks which sought to attract the settler

8. The Republican view of the colonies was influenced by the applied enlightened rationality of the secular regime, in essence, no more than a modernist variation on the "civilizing mission".

9. 1921-1923 as High-Commissioner, and earlier, 1912-1915, as Governor.

society, which the Republic (and all Portuguese regimes) dreamed would thickly populate the overseas empire. Although the colonies were, during this time, thrown open to foreign investment, the Portuguese Republic was considered a risk liability in an unsympathetic Europe and there was not much incoming investment capital. Levels of colonial trade actually fell during the Republic although this can be attributed to the crackdown on slavery and the profitable alcohol trade, and by the stagnant pace of economic development in Portugal itself.¹⁰

But despite metropolitan instability and meagre economic development, Republican policy and Norton de Matos' proto-Keynesianism did establish the basic pillars on which the Angolan economy later emerged: a significant road and railway network, the encouragement of cash crop production and the contracting of labour (wage-earning). The minor, but nevertheless increased, levels of capital investment helped to attract higher numbers of metropolitan immigrants.

The Republican regime was short-lived. The financial chaos in Portugal crippled government after government, and conservative forces had been long in waiting for the opportunity to strike back at the Republicans. In a climate of political instability,¹¹ bombings, strikes, high inflation, corruption,

10. G Clarence-Smith, op.cit., p.116 and p.120.

11. Between 1920 and 1928 there were 29 inaugurated heads of government, 15 of which were in the twelve-month period of 1920-21. see A H de Oliveira Marques, História de Portugal, Vol. III: Das Revoluções Liberais aos Nossos Dias [1981], p.611-12.

the Republic was an easy prey for the concerted revenge of the dispossessed Catholic church, of landowners fearing the reform of the feudal system they relied upon, of monarchists, and of industrialists fearing the radicalization of the working classes. The constant disruptive activity of anarcho-nihilists helped to send the worried urban middle classes (hitherto the backbone of the Republican experiment) and the frustrated military into the waiting arms of the right. A coup destroyed the Republic on 28 May 1926.

In the throes of a financial crisis, the new regime of General Oscar Carmona invited a popular right-wing academic, António de Oliveira Salazar, to solve the mounting problem of the budget deficits that Portugal and its colonies were in the grip of. Lisbon feared that its bankruptcy would lead to, among other things, the loss of the colonies.¹² Balancing the books was a priority for the new regime and it handed Salazar, the new finance minister, the absolute powers he demanded as a condition for "saving" Portugal. Once he had obtained absolute veto over the budgets of every single government department, Salazar implemented his long standing doctrine of balancing the budget, and clearing the deficit. This policy was also applied to the

12. The government had investigated the possibility of securing a loan from the League of Nations. The conditions demanded by the League were that Portugal be submitted to international financial controls, which implied that Portuguese Africa might be transferred to international political control. see David M Abshire, "From the Scramble for Africa to the 'New State'", [1969], p.85.

colonies including Angola, where the colonial government had begun to build up chronic deficits.¹³ His immediate success (the 1928-1929 domestic budget showed a surplus, the first for 15 years),¹⁴ gave Salazar wide support, and allowed him to extend his claim to intervene in other aspects of government other than finances.

This was the beginning of Salazar's process of regime-building, using the military coup of 1926 as a basis, that culminated in what was known as the New State. While the regime was supported by a number of right-wing factions, monarchist groups and the church, only the latter was given any significant amount of its demands. Salazar managed to allay, and not meet, the demands for either the restoration of the monarchy or for a more dynamic commitment to fascism. Only the church saw its role in society restored as the spiritual partner of the regime in the other world. This may have been partly the result of Salazar's own devout faith, which undoubtedly accounted for much of his popularity in the country. The church had been the only effectively organized political opposition to the Republicans and Salazar owed his own rise to power to his political prominence within this circle. When the army moved in to wrench power from the Republicans, the choice of Salazar resulted as much from his

13. By 1931, Angola's accumulated debts amounted to ESC\$ 300,000,000, the servicing of which consumed half of the colonies' income. see M Newitt, op.cit., p.178.

14. see A H Oliveira Marques, op.cit., [1981], p.371.

powerful position as a political actor for the church as from his academic prowess. But he never returned the bishops to political power, giving them instead absolute sovereignty of cultural life.

Despite never having visited any of the Portuguese colonies, Salazar gave paramount importance to the notion of empire in the political constitution of the New State. In this notion, the proclamation of the indivisibility of the Portuguese 'nation' contrasted sharply with the constitutional detachment of Britain from its own colonial empire. This link between the empire and Salazar's own domestic political power was cast at the level of historical myth-making. It was weaved in to the very origins of Portuguese independence, characterized heroically by the maritime discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This adventurous and worldly image of Portugal was paradoxically espoused by the New State, contrasting with its somewhat isolationist, nationalist economic and foreign policies. In political discourse, the Portuguese colonies were an integral part of the nation, and tied to the very structure of Salazar's regime.

The principal pillars of Salazar's power were the bureaucracy, which was mostly created to fill all the institutions of state, and the armed forces, which had established the conditions that brought him to power in the first place. The security of these two groups guaranteed, and were themselves guaranteed by, the functioning of the New State. Salazar's

authoritarian regime was based on taking over each and every institution. By establishing each public institution as a government department populated by a loyal bureaucracy which imposed mounds of paperwork on the Portuguese and the colonies, Salazar did more to suffocate resistance than by just using outright force. Undoubtedly, part of the security of the regime lay in the repression of individuals on the mainland as well as in the colonies by the use of the political police PIDE (later DGS).¹⁵ But the successful control of all information, a steady flow of propaganda and the 'statification' of any institution in the public domain, even in the economic sphere did as much, if not more, in perpetuating the survival of the regime for nearly 50 years.

The structure of the New State regime has been described as an organic socio-political state that directly implemented Salazar's economic directives. Salazar was careful, however, never to challenge the security of the industrial and financial families that had dominated these sectors. Associations for employers (Grémios) and syndicates for workers were created for most sectors of private and public enterprise, and agricultural production, the resulting effect being the imposition of a centralized order. The institutionalization of all sectors of society in this manner, under the direct control of

15. International and Defence of the State Police (Polícia Internacional e de Defesa de Estado) and Security Directorate (Direcção-Geral de Segurança).

the government via the bureaucracy, ensured authority and stability. This control was complemented by economic intervention according to a central logic by the imposition of price controls and production quotas on private enterprise, and by nationalized control wherever necessary, which completed the practically full command of the economy by the New State.

In large sectors of industry, shipping and banking, a few corporations had acquired what amounted to monopoly control. These were the domain of the social and political strata of Salazar's immediate support. The economic power of the country was centralized in the hands of a small number of families that had dominated each particular economic sector. During the depression, a large amount of bankruptcies resulted in the further concentration of capital in an even smaller number of hands, which further reinforced the old system of oligopolistic control of the economy under the monarchy. This control in the metropole, more often than not, resulted in the primacy of these family-controlled financial and industrial groups in the colonies as well. This economic control was further complemented by the occupation of the top political and state jobs by members of these extended families. In this way, Salazar not so much as established a new state as institutionalized an oligopolistic society that had its roots in the nineteenth century. The New State perpetuated the traditional political and economic order that had been developed previously and was temporarily threatened by the jacobite interruption of the Republic.¹⁶ In

these terms, the only originality (and perhaps the reason for its durability) of Salazar's New State was in the systematic process of institutionalizing these social relationships.

Despite the creation of a one-party political environment, the National Union (União Nacional), and the activity of a crypto-paramilitary organization, the Portuguese Legion (Legião Portuguesa), and even a youth movement, the Portuguese Youth (Mocidade Portuguesa), there was little else in the way of creating a fascist movement by the New State. The mythology of nation was promoted, especially through the concept of empire (as Mussolini had sought to invoke the Roman empire), but the order over which Salazar presided was fundamentally a conservative one, both politically and socially. The catholic and nationalist bases of the regime's ideology were not compatible with any new-fangled ideas of social-Darwinism that may have been promulgated by other dictatorships in Europe at the time. If anything, Salazar was trying to ride what he saw was the wave of authoritarian change that was spreading throughout Europe in

16. It is interesting to take this opportunity to dispel any conceptions of the Republican period as being an attempt to establish democracy. It was also a period of one-party rule: the Portuguese Republican Party, and later, the Democratic Party, also represented an option for the armed forces. The Republicans systematically enforced their revolution quashing any organized opposition, including socialists and syndicalists, unleashing a period of arbitrary state terror. See Vasco Pulido Valente, O Poder e o Povo: A Revolução de 1910, [1974]. Only when, in the wake of the collapse of the monarchic opposition in 1919, the conservative groups had found their organization and political destiny in the church did the army find a more suitable, that is more stable, framework for a new order.

the interwar period, putting paid to what he considered to be the dangerous ideas of liberalism, a precursor to socialism because it would be unable to defend itself from communism. Salazar believed, however, that fascism was too progressive and too atheistic.¹⁷ Salazar's political discourse harked back to a pre-industrial revolution era in both social as well as economic terms. For the regime, the paternalist ideology of god and nation sought to hold the mass of the populace to the semi-feudal economic order that Salazar had institutionalized. The colonies and the images of empire played a central role in this political ideology of the New State.

Salazar's priority with regard to the colonial territories was to reaffirm Portugal's ability to run an empire. He apparently held a mistrust of Great Power intentions; a mistrust that may have helped to propel his overwhelmingly nationalistic development policies for both Portugal and the colonies. According to Salazar's early policies, all colonial territories were to be principally developed by Portuguese capital. Tight exchange controls were placed on trading, a practice that was similar to the mercantilism of the monarchy,¹⁸ while at

17. According to Oliveira Marques, Salazar spoke against totalitarian regimes and criticised both the Italian Fascists and the German Nazis. In 1931, Salazar defined the goals of his regime as the establishment of a "well-understood political, economic and social nationalism, controlled by the unquestionable sovereignty of the strong state." A H de Oliveira Marques, *op.cit.*, [1972], p.181.

18. G Clarence-Smith, *op.cit.*, p.146.

the same time the access of foreign capital to the economy in general was greatly limited, although it continued to have access to those industries, such as diamonds and other mining activity, where foreign technological know-how was essential. This development strategy was based on a strategy of industrialization which sought to utilize internally generated resources. Under this same strategy, Portugal's own economy was not seen in a separate light from that of the colonies. On the contrary, under Salazar's directed economy, all the so-called provinces of Portugal (a term which included the colonies) were to be fused into "...an integrated Lusitanian world economy;"¹⁹ the central prerogative of which was, however, to provide for the requirements of industrializing Portugal.

Thus, in Salazar's economic strategy, the colonies, and Angola in particular, were to play a subsidiary role to the planned semi-autarchic development of Portugal in the inter-war years. But as well as this economic role the colonies also represented what Duffy has called "a living link with the past."²⁰ Already in the early 1930s, Salazar was expounding his soon-to-be-perfected myth of empire, based solidly on the exploits and adventures of the navigators and discoverers of a far-off age. For the Portuguese, the remaining territories, a historical legacy of these times, were hard evidence that their nation was

19. M Newitt, op.cit., p.121.

20. J Duffy, Portuguese Africa [1959], p.269.

still great:

"We must always keep alive in the Portuguese people the dream of the beyond-the-seas [Ultramar] and the consciousness and pride of empire. Africa is more than a land to be exploited...Africa is for us a moral justification and a 'raison d'etre' as a power. Without it we would be a small nation; with it we are a great country."²¹

Thus waxed the editorial of O Mundo Português in the mid-1930s, on the occasion of the first of a number of cruises to Angola and the islands designed to inculcate a sense of duty in the young students they carried. The organizer of these cruises was Marcello Caetano, later to succeed Salazar and inherit his state.

What played a part in attempts to aggrandize the country's importance on the world stage also began to play a part in underlying the legitimacy of the regime at home. The territories became central to an intensely nationalistic ideology of society based on a spiritual sense of civilizing duty. When confronted with a changing world in which the early grandeur of the country was mostly recalled when reciting at school the epic poem, os Lusíadas, the New State ideologues clung desperately to the colonial world as the extension of the regime, as its legitimization in the proclamation of a Lusitanian world. This sense of an organic nation in which the country of Portugal is treated in abstract to include the

21. O Mundo Português, II (1935), p.218, quoted in J Duffy, *ibid.*, p.276.

widespread territories under its rule was the main mythical theme used in the expression of colonial policy under the New State. This nationalistic, almost isolationist, tendency became even more emphatic and important when the regime reacted to negative international public opinion in the post-war world of changed ideas about colonialism, but it had its roots and justification in the ideology of nation proclaimed by Salazar for his state.

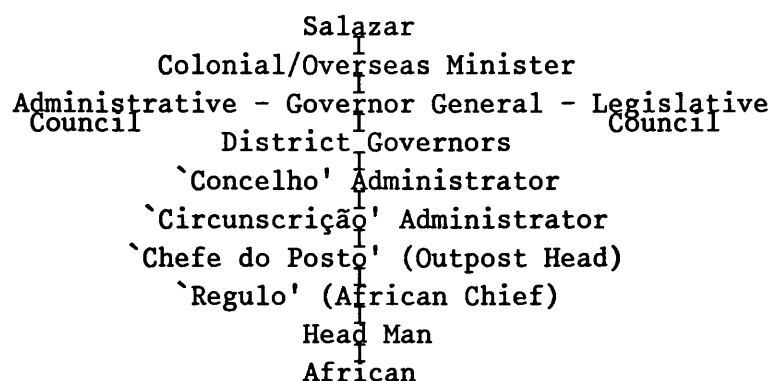
The New State's colonial policy had a number of distinct names throughout its lifetime but only two really separate tendencies. The first period, lasting from the late 1920s to the late 1950s, was principally characterized by a reversal of the Republican drives for decentralized autonomy and the firm establishment of the colonies in Lisbon's administrative orbit. The second period began at the end of the 1950s, but was more noticeable in the early 1960s, particularly after the uprisings in Angola in February and March 1961, and went on until the collapse of Marcello Caetano's government in April 1974. The main drive of colonial policy during this period was towards the further administrative integration of the colonies with the metropolis, as well as a speedy implementation of development programmes especially of a social nature (particularly education and social services), but also agricultural and industrial, designed to assimilate the African population as much as possible in the colonial economy. In both periods, however, colonial policy related directly to the economic needs of the

metropolitan country, and was, furthermore, ultimately linked to the political survival of the regime.

The first period of colonial policy emerged from the collapse of the republican experiment and of all its ideals for a rational exploitation of empire. Emanating from the central hub of the capital, the needs of the new regime were placed above all and the surrounding periphery, including the colonies and the mainland regions were placed at the economic disposal of the centre. Administratively, the Colonial Ministry was reactivated and given all financial and political authority for the colonies. The once powerful position of governor was reduced to a role of formal representation devoid of any space for lateral initiative. Under Salazar, the colonial budgets were now to be balanced by direct decree from Lisbon, and any loans were to be procured only by the ministry in Portugal.

Colonial policy, like economic policy as a whole, reflected the progression of the regime in the metropolis. With the consolidation of power by the regime in ever more overlapping circles of institutionalized public life, colonial policies also sought to achieve the collusion of the colonial state to the metropolitan one; the two becoming one. The legislation and implementation of policy in the colonies thus became centralized in the metropolitan state. In the mid-1950s, the chain of command could be seen to run directly from Salazar to the African:²²

22. A description of the colonial structure of authority in the



All the intermediary positions were no more than a bureaucratic administration for the implementation of the directives of the governor-general, who, in turn, had little room for manoeuvre outside that which was approved by the Colonial Ministry in Lisbon. In the colonial minister lay all powers of legislation, loan procurement and appointments.²³ Should the governor have exceeded the expenditure authorized by the minister he would have been liable to prosecution. The legislative council (which included members chosen by an electoral college) had little power beyond minor local-policy legislation, serving more as a safety valve for local issues that arose among the European population. In this way the colonial state as an administrative unit, was linked directly to the source of government in the metropolis, with budgetary control, economic policy and practically all legislative authority determined in Lisbon,

This structure of state power was rooted in the legislative promulgations of the government, through the lame Na-

1950s taken from J Duffy, op.cit., pp.283-288.

tional Assembly. In 1930, with an already firm grip over the emerging regime, Salazar legislated a bill for the colonies, later appended to the Constitution of 1933, where the particularities of the first period of colonial policy are evident: the proclamation of the abstract Portuguese nation including its empire, the primacy of Portuguese over foreign capital and the use of forced labour.²⁴ This bill was sufficient to support colonial policy until after the end of the Second World War.

Portugal's position after the war had improved significantly with regard to political and economic stability. Lisbon had profited from its neutrality throughout the war, but for a regime that had access to colonial raw materials, the post-war boom in commodity prices was even more of a windfall. This economic success for Portugal was also changing the availability and disposition of Portuguese capital to colonial investment, and in a rare display of foresight, the early 1950s saw a legislative accommodation to the changing times.

Despite the emergence of an eventually overwhelming flow of pro-decolonization forces in international fora, the Portuguese government firmly maintained its conviction as to the right of maintaining a colonial empire. While Britain and other European colonial powers, were slowly losing, albeit under pressure, their own economic and political belief in the immortality of empire, the Portuguese closed ranks around the concept of im-

23. M Newitt, op.cit., p.186.

perial nation. From 1951, the "colonies" ceased to exist in the public lexicon and the empire was conceptually replaced by a Portuguese nation made up of continental and "overseas" provinces.²⁵

This was followed in 1954 by a statute which enshrined the rights of indigenous populations and emphasized the pursuit of a cultural assimilation policy for the integration of non-Europeans in the colonial economy and society. The assimilation policy imposed by Salazar was fundamentally a return to the basic tenets of its Republican precursor in which certain requirements²⁶ made it possible for Africans to achieve the rights and duties endowed on Portuguese citizens. Demanding literacy from Africans as a precondition for being considered "civilized" was not convincing coming from a regime in Portugal where an illiteracy rate of 40 per cent had been officially registered in 1950. Nevertheless, the colonial ideologues of the New State hid behind this seemingly humanist approach to its civilizing mission where the superiority of their administration was couched not in racial terms but in equally discriminating cultural ones. As with all the New State's colonial initiatives,

24. A H de Oliveira Marques, op.cit., [1981], pp.521-2.

25. This constitutional reform was designed to by-pass Portugal's obligations under UN Article 73, under which Lisbon would have been forced to provide information on its "non-self-governing territories" to the UN. With the designation of colonies as provinces, Lisbon was able to shirk these responsibilities. J Freire Antunes, Kennedy e Salazar: o Leão e a Raposa [1991], p.39.

26. The ability to read and write, paid employment and no

*

this assimilation policy became part of the ideological justification for maintaining Portugal's overseas possessions. They argued that there was now no empire only an extended Portuguese "nation", populated by aspiring Portuguese "citizens".

In the 1960s, a more fundamental shift in the New State's colonial policy became clearer. By the beginning of 1962, 'late colonialism', a radically different colonial policy involving a greater role for foreign capital, full-scale development plans, the encouragement of colonial-specific production and a large increase in settler population had begun to be implemented. This shift is usually explained away as the reaction of a dying regime to the internal anti-colonial challenge, in an attempt to, rather belatedly already, postpone the inevitable. Because development in the colonies had emerged in strength in the 1960s, this has been attributed to the events of February and March 1961, which marked the beginning of the anti-colonial war in Angola. That is, the colonial development policies were part of the Portuguese regime's attempts to appeal to the "hearts and minds" of the population and crush the anti-colonial challenge. There are both economic and political reasons to claim that this was not solely the case.

Firstly, as Newitt has shown, the shifts in economic policy had already taken place in the mid-1950s as a reaction to the take-off of the Portuguese economy and, therefore, did not emerge as a reaction to the anti-colonial challenges of the 1960s. Newitt argues convincingly that Portugal was entering a a

modern economic phase. With high industrial growth rates of 9% per annum (mid 1960s) and expanding international economic relations with Europe, the times were demanding a different approach to the economy, distinct from the self-sufficiency of the first Salazarist period. It was, therefore, the needs of the expanding Portuguese economy that spurred plans for a limited industrialization of the colonies,²⁷ before the anti-colonial challenge in Angola emphasized the need for change and reinforced this underlying tendency.

The New State was already under strong internal political pressure to change before the Angolan uprising.²⁸ The February 1961 attacks in Luanda followed by the March violence in the Northern coffee growing areas, marked the start of the war for independence in Angola. But in fact, these incidents, followed as they were, by a military clamp-down and a long period of eclipse for the movements, may have, perversely as Newitt says, not so much spelled the end of the regime as actually prolonged its life for another 13 years.

Opposition forces in Portugal, effectively quelled during most of Salazar's rule, came to exploit the limited relaxation of authority surrounding the 1958 presidential campaign, expressing both their number and passion. Standing against Salazar's candidate was General Humberto Delgado, a

criminal record.

27. M Newitt, op.cit., pp.220-1.

product of the regime, who had collected around him broad support across the political spectrum, from communists to monarchists. Inevitably, Delgado was not elected but demonstrated to Salazar that the regime was not unassailable. Increasingly, the call for political modernization was heard. At the end of January 1961, the hijacking of the liner **Santa Maria** by an anti-Salazarist, Captain Henrique Galvão, attracted world attention to the regime in Lisbon as well as to Portuguese colonialism in Africa.²⁹ Of further worry to Salazar was a threat from senior military figures, allegedly with support from elite sectors of society and the US embassy in Lisbon.³⁰ In April 1961, the pro-American Defence Minister, General Botelho Moniz, planned a palace coup. He was, however, outmanoeuvred by Salazar.

Nevertheless, Salazar's authority was under threat, but Newitt argues that the nationalist revolt in Angola may paradoxically have given Salazar and the New State a political reprieve. The wars of independence in the colonies (Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique following in 1963 and 1964 respectively) came to represent a political crusade for Salazar that may have

28. M Newitt, *ibid.*

29. The flamboyant Captain Galvão and a small force took control of the **Santa Maria** in the Caribbean, and were lost for a number of days. The liner was finally located by the US Air Force. Under the glare of the world press, Galvão declared the political status of his act and intimated that the liner might set sail for Angola. From there, he intended to base an anti-Salazarist challenge, but did not foresee decolonization. The adventure finally ended in surrender in Brazil and the **Santa Maria** was returned to Portugal.

salvaged his tottering regime and led the Portuguese to rally around their own nationalist cause. A jingoistic campaign to defend the colonies came at the right moment to postpone the downfall of the regime that seemed to have been announced at the end of the 1950s. Once again, the colonies played an ideological function in the definition of nation for the regime and, at the same time, played a political role in maintaining the authority and control of the state.

On the other hand there is nothing to show that the replacement of Salazar would have necessarily led to a reform of the New State. In fact, as the ailing of Salazar in 1968 showed, the perpetuation of the regime was in-built and, under Caetano, certainly no change to the colonial status of Angola and the other territories was envisaged. While the underlying economic changes should be recognised, as should the political pressures of Portuguese society, a major part of the responsibility for the increased pace of colonial development in the 1960s was in the nationalist revolts of 1961 in Angola. As Heimer has put it, the period of 'late colonialism' in Angola:

"...was originally economic in nature, but became predominantly political within the framework of a colonial 'counter-insurgency strategy'."³¹

The New State also found itself under pressure internationally. In the 1960s, the intransigent Portuguese colonial

30. J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991].

31. F W Heimer, The Decolonization Conflict in Angola 1974-1976:

empire stuck out in an overwhelmingly pro-decolonization international environment. Nevertheless, at no time did the Portuguese regime ever consider or assume the future possibility of decolonization. Even when confronted with inevitable transformations, Lisbon reacted with an inability to accept such a change. When its willingness to renounce long-range administrative control was shown to be absent, newly-independent states began to take matters into their own hands. In 1960, Dahomey requested that Lisbon renounce its sovereignty over a fort at São João de Ajudá on its coastline. It was clear that Portugal could not maintain its control, and yet, the Portuguese government ignored calls for a formal hand-over. The governor returned to Portugal after having petulantly set fire to the fort. On the Indian subcontinent, Portugal had the administration of Goa and two other enclaves.³² Having made its intentions perfectly clear, in 1961 the Indian government sent its army in and took control of the Portuguese territories. Salazar never accepted the loss of Goa, and despite the fact that it was administrated by India, a representative for Goa continued to sit at the National Assembly. The Portuguese territories in India were referred to as temporarily occupied. To Salazar, Goa had unfortunately, but only temporarily, succumbed to the designs of another power, comparable perhaps to the temporary occupation of Luanda by the Dutch in the middle of the seventeenth century.

An Essay in Political Sociology [1979], p.12.

This intransigence and inability to accept change must be emphasized as it reflects the structural relationship between the Portuguese regime and its colonial possessions that has been described above. The New State believed perhaps correctly that, once the principle of decolonization was accepted anywhere (such as Goa for example), the consequences for the other colonies (in particular, Angola) would have been fatal. Subsequently, this collapse would have been felt overwhelmingly in Salazar's domestic authority. The New State was partly built on the economic and political pillars of colonial rule and its very authority based on a mythical idea of empire. It was therefore inevitable that it not accept the nationalist urge for change and self-determination in Angola and the other colonies. Consequently, faced with an intransigent metropolitan and colonial state, the Angolan nationalists were forced to consider and eventually opt for the violent expression of anti-colonialism. In turn, as will be shown later, this eradication of political choice, but for that of guerrilla warfare, may have had a profound radicalizing effect on the organization and the nature of the nationalist movements.

(ii) Portugal and the Economy of Colonial Angola

Colonial Angola also played an economic role for Salazar's regime. The economic relationship between Portugal and Angola, that is between the metropole and the colony, was, in many ways, central to the New State's own economy. This was especially the case during the period of Salazarist rule before the onset of what has been called late colonialism. Throughout the whole of the modern colonial period, the Angolan economy functioned as an exporter of agricultural and mineral raw materials.³³ Alongside this role, Angola, as with the other colonies, provided a market for the sale of Portuguese products, such as textiles and wine.

The rationale of this colonial commercial relationship (that is, the exchange of raw materials for manufactured goods) sought to meet the specific needs of Portugal's own internal economy. The regime used exchange fund restrictions and fixed prices, as well as obligatory production and purchase quotas to orchestrate this system in accordance to domestic needs, accommodating wherever necessary the interests of Portuguese domestic industry.³⁴

32. Diu and Damão.

33. Coffee, cotton, sisal, sugar, timber, maize and diamonds, iron, manganese, copper, ferro-manganese.

34. When sales of Angolan maize threatened metropolitan producers, the application of a strict sales quota and a low fixed price, ran the Angolan producers down. Consequently, sales of Angolan maize, unlike other agricultural exports to Portugal,

The local Angolan economy was actively encouraged to purchase manufactured Portuguese products. Exporters were enticed to sell to the metropolis by government fixed prices that were generally above the average on the world market, as well as by incentives such as tax rebates (50 to 60 per cent) on sales to Portugal. Furthermore, colonial exchange funds were created to support Angolan purchases of metropolitan goods. The foreign exchange revenue of local exporters was sunk into this fund and emerged as Portuguese escudos, good for purchases in the metropolis.

As well as providing a captive market for Portuguese products, Angola also provided the raw materials for a number of industries, which helped to spur the metropolitan economy. Portuguese manufacturing industries were supplied with raw materials from Angola, and other colonies, at beneficial prices, and would then offer the finished product for sale to the colonies. A case in point was the revival of the metropolitan textile manufacturers. Transforming the cheap colonial raw cotton, these Portuguese firms spun out fabrics and clothes for resale to the colony.³⁵ As with any other raw material/manufactured product ratio, however, this trade did not give equal benefits. The relative profit levels of Angolan producers and Portuguese manufacturers can be deduced from the

fell dramatically. G Clarence-Smith, *ibid.*, p.148.

35. By 1960, over 90 per cent of cotton goods imported by Angola, Guinea, Cape Verde and São Tome were of metropolitan origin. This represented, however, only 30 per cent of cotton

following figures describing the price rises between 1939 and 1949: profits of colonial raw cotton purchased by the metropolis rose by 61 per cent; profits of metropolitan cotton textiles sold in the colonies rose by 224 per cent.³⁶

Even more dependent on sales to the colonies were the wine producers in Portugal. As the main suppliers of raw materials to Portugal in Brazil were gradually replaced by those in the colonies, the revenues of wine sales to Brazil fell drastically, threatening to bankrupt the Portuguese viniculturalists. With the help of the government, they established the colonies as exclusive markets, inviolable even to local producers. The result was a very substantial market to support domestic wine consumption. In 1960, Angola took 53 per cent of all Portugal's exports of wine.³⁷

Local industry in Angola had little opportunity to get off the ground in this first period. Attempts to establish a cotton mill in Angola were bitterly resisted by metropolitan competitors until 1943.³⁸ Only those domestic industries that had control of part, if not all, of the Portuguese market could, during this time, venture into colonial production of manufactures. Where national capital was unavailable (or not enough), or where technology was insufficient, the largest investments

manufactures sales. see G Clarence-Smith, op.cit., p.159.

36. G Clarence-Smith, *ibid.*, p.160.

37. *Ibid.*, p.162.

were held by foreign interests, this despite a legal stipulation that half an enterprise's capital be of national origin. The Benguela Railway and Diamang, the diamond extraction juggernaut, were the biggest examples of this period. Despite strict controls on foreign capital and a personal aversion to its foment, Salazar insured that these, and other, enterprises were not stamped out of the colonies and authorized the repatriation of their profits without too much bother. Furthermore, these large enterprises were exempt from contributions to the colonial exchange fund.

In 1957, the export of primary commodities accounted for 71.1 per cent of Angola's total exports.³⁹ This general ratio was maintained in subsequent years:

TABLE 1

Value of Total Angolan Exports by Origin 1961 and 1962
(to the nearest Million escudos)

Product Sector	1961		1962	
	ESC\$ Mil.	%	ESC\$ Mil.	%
Agricultural or vegetable origin.....	2,285	59.0	2,802	65.7
Industrial products of agricultural origin.....	243	6.3	223	5.2
Mineral extraction.....	882	22.8	761	17.9
Fishery products.....	289	7.4	235	5.5
Animal Husbandry.....	57	1.5	51	1.2
Various.....	117	3.0	192	4.5

(Source: Situação Económica de Angola no ano de 1962 [1963], p.12. Number of ESC\$ to US\$ between 1950 and 1970, roughly 29.)⁴⁰

38. Ibid., p.164.

39. A Castro, O Sistema Colonial Português em Africa [1980], p.164.

Table 1 shows that nearly two-thirds of Angolan exports were of an agricultural or vegetable origin, making the economy significantly dependent on the fluctuations of world commodity prices. In 1966, the primacy of raw materials in Angolan exports was still maintained as Table 2 shows in greater detail:

TABLE 2

Main Angolan Export Commodities (in Millions of Dollars) 1966

Product	Value	Percent of Total
Coffee	107.2	48.1
Diamonds	39.4	17.6
Fish Products	14.1	5.8
Sisal	10.5	4.7
Iron Ore	4.7	2.0
Timber	4.3	2.0
Maize	4.1	2.0
Cotton Fibre	3.7	1.7
Other	34.8	16.1
Total	222.8	100.0

(Source: F Brandenburg 'Development, Finance and Trade' [1969], p.241.)

Although sales of the above goods to Portugal were an important part of the latter's supplies of raw materials, they were only a minor proportion of total Angolan exports. In the early 1960s, only around 20 per cent of Angolan exports were transferred to Portugal.⁴¹ Overall, however, the sale of Angolan exports earned important revenue for Portugal. In 1957, accord-

40. G Clarence-Smith, op.cit., [1985], Annex 2, p.228.

41. In 1962, the major proportion of Angolan sales were to the US (25.15%) and to Europe (16.5% to EFTA and 24.74% to EEC).

ing to one source, Angolan exports accounted for nearly 40 per- cent of Portugal's total foreign trade sales.⁴²

In conclusion then, Angolan production and export of raw materials was mostly subjugated to metropolitan industrial and consumer needs, while, providing, at the same time, a sig- nificant proportion of Portugal's foreign exchange earnings.

Portuguese colonial rule had vast formative effects on the economic structure of Angola. During almost 50 years of Salazarist rule, Portugal imposed, extended, and developed a wide process of economic moulding which went to great extremes in the restructuring of the economic, and consequently social, relationships of indigenous Angolan societies.

In very general terms, the effects of colonialism on Angolan society were instrumental in establishing certain economic production regimes that were inherently distinct from those of traditional societies. The introduction of wage-earning and of cash-crop production radically changed the rural subsis- tence life-style of the great majority of the population. Cer- tain indigenous groups had benefited in previous centuries from a trading relationship with the Portuguese, especially in slaves. But by the twentieth century economic interaction be- tween the Portuguese and indigenous groups had surpassed its early commercial nature.

Situação Económica de Angola no ano de 1962 [1963], p.14.

42. In 1957, Portugal's exports totalled ESC\$ 8,253,000,000 of which ESC\$ 3,328,000,000 were of Angolan origin. A Castro,

The cultivation of cotton was an example of the radical change colonialism brought to the rural hinterland. A very exploitative system of contract farming was imposed whereby the growth of anything but cotton was prohibited, and the sale of all produce dictated and determined by the dealers. This system was in force in the Baixa do Cassanje area and may have been at the root of the violent anti-colonial disturbances of 1960-1961. The cotton revolt had not been organized nor was it apparently politically motivated, seeming to emerge partly as a reaction to the extreme conditions of poverty as a result of the imposition of that cash-crop economy. Later that year, similar sentiments of revolt were exposed during the March violence against settlers in the north. Although not overwhelmingly during this period, the imposition of contract labour on a population for the cultivation of cash crops, changed the basic economic structures of many areas. Independent African farmers exceeded cultivation at subsistence levels in order to sell to the Portuguese, while others were contracted, with or without force, as wage labour.

These general characteristics of the Angolan economy remained in place until after the end of the Second World War. After this time, the Angolan economy exploded into growth, partly the result of the growth of one single commodity: coffee. According to Paige:

"...the modern economic history of [Angola] did not begin until the rise of the coffee economy in the 1950s...[that] radically changed the internal economy of Angola, altered its

relationship with the metropolitan and world economies...[and] converted the colony into a mono-cultural export economy."⁴³

The dominant role in Angolan exports played by coffee by 1966 can be seen above in Table 2, when it accounted for nearly half of the total value of sales abroad. Between the early 1950s and the early 1960s, Angola experienced a coffee boom, the effects of which laid down the bases for the economic and social development experienced under the period of late colonialism.

The neutrality maintained by Portugal throughout World War II had been very profitable. With its production and distribution undisturbed it could continue to supply colonial raw materials at the then much higher prices as a result of the war. The shortages of raw materials continued into the period of the Korean War and helped to sustain a period of generally high commodity prices. The value of Angolan sales of coffee, one of the most important commodities in world trade after crude petroleum or grains,⁴⁴ multiplied dramatically. Increased revenues on coffee plantations soon attracted metropolitan cultivators wanting to make their fortune, while existing African and European production was vastly expanded with the increased profits. The result was a rocketing of production, quadrupling harvests in the space of 15 years, making Angola the third or fourth largest

op.cit., p.165.

43. J Paige, Agrarian Revolution [1975], pp.212,226,227.

44. I S van Dongen, "Agriculture and Other Primary Production"

supplier of coffee in the world by 1967.⁴⁵ Table 3 shows the expansion of Angolan coffee exports between 1948 and 1970. The steep rise in price between 1948 and 1952 clearly multiplied, by more than twice, the value of the coffee sold abroad, while in actual fact less of it was sold. The high prices continued until about the end of decade, when they collapsed world-wide. But the effect of about a decade of high prices led to an increase in Angolan production which was eventually noticeable in the increased export tonnages of the 1960s.

TABLE 3

Coffee Exports from Angola 1948-1970

Year	Value (Mil Esc)	Weight ('000 tons)	Price (Esc per Kilo)	% of Agric Exports	% of Total Ex- ports
1948	459.8	53.4	8.61	39.6	30.9
1952	1137.6	47.7	23.83	53.3	41.3
1955	1275.6	60.1	21.22	62.8	45.5
1958	1539.4	79.6	19.33	67.5	41.7
1961	1398.5	118.1	11.84	57.5	36.1
1964	2859.1	138.7	20.61	71.8	48.7
1967	3546.8	196.5	18.04	88.3	51.9
1970	3880.0	180.6	21.48	61.0	31.9

(Source: J Paige Agrarian Revolution [1976], p.227)

Coffee production in Angola jumped from not more than 50,000 tonnes or so in 1948 to over 200,000 tonnes a year by 1965.⁴⁶

[1969], p.255.

45. I S van Dongen, op.cit., p.255. van Dongen placed Angolan coffee's share of the world market in 1967 at 6.1%, behind the Ivory Coast, at 8.1%, the largest African producer.

The increased production of coffee signified a dramatic change for Angola, especially in the northern regions. Paige considered the northern province of Uige as a not-uncharacteristic example, and calculated that in 1958, over 75 per cent of the local male African working population was involved in the production of coffee.⁴⁷ A highly labour-intensive production, the coffee boom multiplied exponentially the effects of the colonial regime by bringing even more of the population into the cash-crop and wage-earning agricultural economy.

The growth of coffee by African producers accounted for nearly 40 per cent of the total in 1941. By 1958, the expansion of massive European estates, the largest of which employed over 11,000 Africans, had reduced this participation to 26 per cent.⁴⁸

One of the effects of this new production regime was somewhat negative with regard to ethnic divisions. The high demand for labour was often met by contracting in the south and centre of the country, among the Ovimbundu. Intercommunal friction was common between the northern peoples, of a Bakongo or Mbundu background, and the Ovimbundu, among whom UNITA was later based. In 1961, during the UPA March attacks in the north, it has been noted by a number of sources that the Ovimbundu contract workers were also victims chosen by the Bakongo of the

46. I S van Dongen, *op.cit.*, p.255.

47. J Paige, *op.cit.*, p.247.

UPA, partly because they were considered to be beneficiaries of colonialism and because many were participating in its defence.⁴⁹ Whether or not a deep ethnic rivalry emerged from the production regimes established under the coffee boom is, however, difficult to say.

At the same time as Angola was experiencing a coffee-led boom, Portugal itself was beginning to take a relatively faster track towards industrial development. The war profits, expanded colonial trade and Lisbon's own state development plans had resulted in a certain amount of growth by the end of the 1950s. But it was the burgeoning trade with Europe, that provided the basis for this economic drive. The increased economic dynamism provided, in turn, large amounts of investment capital that began to look towards Africa, and Angola in particular, for capitalization. It was at this time, during the mid-1950s, that the regime began to modify its policies and ushered in a new direction in colonial development.

Large conglomerates of Portuguese capital were in a position to provide the investment capital to finance such a change in economic direction. In the long term, the colonial economy would move from primary production to industrial development based on import substitution. This transformation would theoretically be achieved with financing from mainly Portuguese but also foreign, capital sources. And thus, state and

48. J Paige, op.cit., pp.230,228.

49. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, Angola [1971], pp.178 and 182;

private capital began to pour into Angola, framed by the ever-present hand of the regime in the form of two five year plans: 1953-1958 and 1959-1964. These were the beginnings of the final period of colonial rule under the New State, a period described as late colonialism.

During late colonialism, there occurred a basic reversal of the regime's previous colonial policies. Angola became less and less a subsidiary part of the metropolitan economy. The separate industrial development of the Angolan economy, at this time, more widely penetrated by foreign capital,⁵⁰ became the basis of what seemed to a development policy for the colony. It was no longer primarily subjugated to the economic necessities of the Portuguese economy, but seemed to be following its own path of development. This would be achieved by both the public and the private sectors. The State planned to finance the development of infrastructures such as roads,⁵¹ port facilities⁵² and hydroelectric projects to supply cheap energy,⁵³ all for the projected take-off of industrial develop-

J Paige, op.cit., pp.249-250.

50. Restrictions on foreign capital were lifted in 1965.

51. Paved roads increased from 250 miles in 1960 to 2,200 miles in 1967. F Brandenburg 'Transport Systems and Their External Ramifications', [1969], p.326.

52. The natural facilities and increased capacities at the ports at Lobito, Luanda and Moçamedes were sufficient to cope with the increased international traffic, including minerals from the Katanga copper region of Zaire and Zambia. See F Brandenburg, *ibid.*, pp.321-322.

53. In 1965, the Portuguese and the South African government

ment. This state investment was complemented by the larger corporate conglomerates in Portugal. The opportunities in diversifying, vertical integration, relocation and in supporting this new industrialization were looked upon kindly by leading industrialists. In encouraging the major financial-industrial groups to invest in Angola, the State provided these with privileged, and many times monopolistic, positions in both the colonial and metropolitan economies.

In Table 4, the levels of investment in Angola under the Portuguese development plans can be seen. The source of these figures is not unbiased and is identified closely with the MPLA. Furthermore, these figures are not attributed to any primary source. Nevertheless, here they serve only to indicate the general increasing trend of investment in Angola:

TABLE 4

Investment levels in Angola

	1959-1964	1965-1967	1968-1973
Total Investment Million Escudos	4,714	7,210	25,045

(Source: Revolution in Angola [1972], p.61.

It is ironic that, the realignment of political and economic factors that provided an opportunity for a more extended

reached agreement to expand the Cunene river project to result in an Angolan-South West African power grid. D M Abshire 'Minerals, Manufacturing, Power and Communications' [1969],

sive colonial commitment in the 1960s, was in fact facing in another direction. These new factors were partly a result of better trade relations with Europe,⁵⁴ and the ever-burgeoning remittances of emigration, both of which, in turn, relegated colonial trade to a relatively less important role in the Portuguese balance of payments. On the one hand, a relatively significant strategy for colonial development, comparable to other colonial powers,⁵⁵ was being implemented in Angola. This markedly transformed production regimes and their social frameworks, and linked the Angolan economy more emphatically with more diverse markets. But on the other hand, the colonies themselves became, although more profitable, actually less economically necessary for Portugal and its own expanding economy.⁵⁶

(iii) The Policy of Assimilation and the Formation of Colonial Society in Angola

The basis of Portugal's proclaimed civilizing mission

p.303.

54. Portuguese sales increased 400% (between 1957 and 1970) after membership of EFTA. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Vol II: Exile Politics and Guerrilla Warfare, [1978], p.22.

55. Amounts invested by the state in the colonies under the plans were broadly comparable with those invested by other colonial powers in the same period:

	<u>1953-1958</u>	<u>1959-1964</u>
Mozambique	#20m	#41m
Uganda	#16m	#30m
Tanganyika	#17m	#18m

see: M Newitt, op.cit., p.196.

56. G Clarence-Smith likens Portugal's development to that of a

of achieving a multiracial society in Africa was broadly similar to the French attempts at assimilation in their own territories. Rather than placing a time limit on colonial tutelage as the British eventually assumed in their imperial policies, this stance envisioned an infinite imperial existence for mainland Portugal and its overseas provinces by the extension of the spiritual nation to include all peoples under its sovereignty. According to the Portuguese colonial minister in 1933:

"We don't believe that a rapid passage from their African superstitions to our civilization is possible. For us to have arrived we we are presently, hundreds of generations before us fought, suffered and learned, minute by minute, the most intimate secrets in the fountain of life . It is impossible for them to traverse this distance of centuries in a single jump."⁵⁷

The colonial policy behind this multi-cultural fantasy, however, may have had the unintended effect of creating some of the very conditions in which Portuguese sovereignty could subsequently be challenged. Despite its ethnically divisory nature, Portugal's colonial policy in Angola produced an indigenous colonial class that, on the one hand, may have come to both accept and expect the economic and social rewards of joining the central colonial society,⁵⁸ while on the other

NIC. see op.cit., p.193.

57. Armindo Monteiro, quoted by G Bender, Angola under the Portuguese: The Myth and the Reality [1978c], p.150.

58. This perspective of Angolan colonial society has been usefully developed by F W Heimer, op.cit. Heimer calls the core European society, central, which provided the colonial state and economy. Access to it was limited and required the acceptance of

began to frame a collective definition of a wider Angolan national identity rather than maintaining their narrower ethnic loyalties. This process of assimilation, furthermore, may have been responsible for the creation of an intellectual class that could interpret and express this latent nationalism and eventually direct it against colonial rule.

The process of assimilation as envisaged by the Portuguese colonial vision was based fundamentally on the 'lusofication' of Africans. According to the colonial ideology of the regime, the empire (now simply Portugal and its overseas provinces) was to be populated by a culturally-defined Portuguese. As described above, this policy had a political rationale; what better way to defend the possession of overseas territories than to proclaim them as an organic part of the nation. The uplifting image of the timeless Portuguese voyager as the modern colonizer was now fed by the imputation of an even more ephemeral and mythical quality, that of non-racism, and by the definition of Portuguese nationality as not being that of race or territory but as existing on a spiritual plane somewhere between the end of the world and heaven itself. This may seem to be an exaggeration but when the theory of lusotropicalism is considered, wherein a historically unique absence of racism in

colonial norms. Outside central society were the ethnically centralized tributary societies. Centred around traditional political and social hierarchies, they represented the 'uncivilized' legacy which Africans had to renounce to be considered Portuguese. Central society was fundamentally coastal, urban and industrially based, while tributary societies remained confined to the hinterland. Overlapping occurred when labour was

the Portuguese is identified,⁵⁹ the above characterization of Portuguese social colonialism is not far off the mark:

"...if one day the Lusotropicology here suggested is developed into a science, one of its main objects of study will be this process of the surpassing of the ethnic condition by the cultural, by virtue of which the blackest of blacks of tropical Africa is considered Portuguese without having to renounce any of his dearest habits of an ecologically tropical man."⁶⁰

Before 1961, the assimilation of Africans into colonial society was to be achieved by the recognition of the 'civilized' status of prospective Portuguese citizens among the African population. African offspring from European parentage could expect immediate citizenry but the remainder of the African population had to prove their deserving status. The prerequisites to obtaining rights before the law were ironic if compared to the social reality of Portugal. Demanding that an African read and write, have the means to support himself and his family and sport an impeccable civil record before he could be considered 'civilized', was farcical when illiterate, unemployed and convicted Portuguese moved about the colony unfettered. But even leaving this contradiction aside, the process

sought or when cash crops were grown for sale to central society.

59. Interestingly, lusotropicology is derived from the socio-anthropological work done in Brazil in the 1930s concerning miscegenation in that country. For a critical view of lusotropicology see Chapter One of G J Bender, op.cit.

60. Gilberto Freyre, Brazilian sociologist whose work was very prominent in both Portugal and Brazil. Reproduced in R H Chil-

of assimilation in Angola was anything but an attempt at multiculturalism. The clause which allowed 'civilizado' status to be endowed only if the vaguely defined 'proper' qualities of Portuguese civilization were held by the 'candidate', made this process largely arbitrary in Angola.⁶¹ Furthermore, despite the possible attractions of holding Portuguese citizenship, not many ventured to achieve this privileged status. In 1950, out of a total number of over 4 million Africans, only 30,089 (including dependents) were registered as 'assimilados'. One reason for this low number may have been the desire to avoid taxation, which would have been incurred by the newly civilized.⁶²

TABLE 5

Angolan Population by Race and 'Civilized Status' 1950

Race	Total Population	Total 'Civilized'	Per Cent 'Civilized'	Per Cent 'Civilized' 1940
African	4,036,689	30,089	0.7	0.7
Mestiço	29,648	26,335	88.8	82.9
White	78,826	78,826	100.0	100.0

(Source: G Bender, Angola Under the Portuguese: The Myth and the Reality [1978c], p.151.)

In 1961, Portuguese law was changed and this paternalistic method of assimilation was dropped in favour of a blanket declaration of citizenship. It is, therefore, difficult

 cote, Emerging Nationalism in Portuguese Africa: Documents [1972], p.19.

61. In Cape Verde, Macau and Goa all inhabitants were given full Portuguese citizenry.

to assess the overall impact by this time. However, judging by the complete lack of improvement between 1940 and 1950, as seen in Table 5, it can only be assumed that the already negligible percentage of the 'civilized' African population, was not increased significantly, certainly not enough for Angolan society to have been described as multiracial. Only within the mestiço population can there be assumed to have been the development of a sense, however limited, of participation in and belonging to central colonial society.

What the figures in Table 5 do show is that the Portuguese policy of assimilation, despite the lack of legislative discrimination as trumpeted by the apologists of Portuguese colonialism, managed to produce a tiered colonial society, by driving a wedge between traditional African societies and those that were allowed to join the colonial society. This conclusion seems to be justified further when nationalist politics are considered. Specifically, friction between mestiços and assimilados on the one hand and non-co-opted Africans on the other emerged as one of the characteristics of MPLA-FNLA rivalry. Furthermore, the educational formation of those inside central colonial society separated them even further from Angolans outside the sphere of privilege. This is how the FNLA saw the MPLA in 1962:

"[The MPLA]...especially recruited their members from the Angolan population classed as 'civilized' by the colonial regime; i.e. the half-castes and the assimilados...But they never got very far in [the regions around the urban centres]. Their lack of support was principally due to the privileged position granted to the half-castes and the

assimilados by the colonialists (education, exemption from forced labour, official recognition of property ownership and of liberal professions, existing civil rights, and a standard of living far superior to that of the exploited peasant mass). This ordinance [granting these privileges] dug a social and psychological trench between them and the oppressed peasant mass."⁶³

Critical references to the cultural superiority of the MPLA leaders betrayed a sense of inferiority on the part of the FNLA. It can only be concluded that Portuguese colonial policy served to divide a small elite of Angolans from the majority, a schism that subsequently emerged in Angolan politics and, in particular, in the rivalry between the MPLA and the FNLA. But Savimbi, the UNITA leader, also revealed the importance of this racial issue when he referred to the domination of the MPLA by mestiços:

"It may sound like racialism, and it is certainly not the way we feel today because we have learned a lot. But it is a fact that it was very difficult at that time for blacks to understand why mestiços should be leading a liberation movement to fight the Portuguese. It was not clear to us that mestiços were suffering in Angola; they were privileged people."⁶⁴

62. A H de Oliveira Marques, op.cit., [1981], p.525, states that thousands avoided 'civilizado' status for this reason.

63. 'Glimpses of the Angolan Nationalist Organizations'. GRAE (FNLA) Press Release (Leopoldville, 11 December 1962. Reproduced in R H Chilcote op.cit., pp.150-151.

TABLE 6

Racial Composition of Angolan Population 1777-1970

YEAR	WHITE		MESTIÇO		BLACK		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1777	1,581	-	4,043	-	-	-	-	-
1845	1,832	0.03	5,770	0.10	5,378,923	99.9	5,386,525	100
1900	9,198	0.20	3,112	0.06	4,777,636	99.7	4,789,946	100
1920	20,700	0.48	7,500	0.18	4,250,000	99.3	4,278,000	100
1940	44,083	1.20	28,035	0.75	3,665,829	98.1	3,737,947	100
1950	78,826	1.90	29,648	0.72	4,036,687	97.4	4,145,161	100
1960	172,529	3.60	53,392	1.10	4,604,362	95.3	4,830,283	100
1970	290,000	5.10	-	-	--	-	5,673,046	100

(Source: G Bender, *Angola under the Portuguese: The Myth and the Reality* [1978c], p.20.)

The racial composition of the population of Angola did not alter significantly until the last two decades of colonial domination. As Table 5 has shown before, no more than a negligible percentage of the African population had ever achieved the 'assimilado' status and gained access to central colonial society. This signifies, if we consider the figures for 1960 in Table 5, that before the period of late colonialism, no more than five per cent of the Angolan population was ever able to obtain direct access to the privileges of colonialism. Until the early 1960s, over 95 percent of the Angolan population had remained outside the hub of colonial life.

In the period of late colonialism, Angola experienced an explosion of social reform and economic development, such as the abolition of different racial statutes and the extensive

development of health and educational services available to African populations, which altered the picture shown above. The growth of the Angolan economy had transformed its requirements. The new industries now needed a semiskilled, semi-urban mobile work force. Initially, this new labour force was drawn from the African population, and education, social services and benefits, training, et cetera, began to become available to a certain number of a growing African bourgeoisie. According to a survey carried out by Heimer in 1970, 74 per cent of Luanda slum children aged 6 to 12 were attending or had attended school.⁶⁵

These centrifugal economic forces, drew more and more Africans into urban colonial society and began to create a semi-industrial class which began to supplement its traditional tribal identity with a wider sense of community. The 1950s had seen the nationalist challenge grow in the British and French colonies. The emergence of self-determination forces in neighbouring colonies was not lost on an increasingly nationally-minded Angolan bourgeoisie. As the economy provided more benefits, and a place in urban colonial life, a sense of Angolan nationality began to emerge, without, however, the total dissolution of a tribal and racial identification. According to Heimer:

"...it is not much of an exaggeration to say that only by the beginning of the seventies had one all-encompassing, though still very loose and highly heterogeneous, Angolan social formation been brought into existence. One of the ideologi-

64. F Bridgland, Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa [1986], pp.45-46.

cal consequences was that, for the first time, important numbers of Africans in the central society (and not just small segments) had begun to think of themselves as Angolans instead of, or, more frequently, as well as, members of a given ethnic group...And even in an increasing number of tributary societies, a kind of a 'secondary identification' with Angola as a whole had begun to take place."⁶⁶

Thus it may be possible to claim that the consolidation of a national identity was partly rooted in the formative influence of colonial society, but also, as will be shown later, in the nationalist anti-colonial challenge. In the early 1960s, by the time the nationalist movements had organised, they and their leaderships already had a basic political character that had been formed in the 1940s and 1950s. Thus, by the 1970s, the 'Angolan social formation' referred to by Heimer was not only still very loose and in an initial phase, but must also be considered to have been partly the result of the political choices made by Angolan nationalists.

The post-war coffee boom in Angola and the growth of the economy introduced a new conditioning factor in this period of late colonialism. The colonial industrialization programme of the New State for Angola included plans to significantly increase white immigration to the colony.

65. F W Heimer, op.cit., p.13.

TABLE 7

White Population in Angola

1940	44,083
1950	78,826
1960	172,529
1970	290,000
1973	335,000

(Source: M Newitt, [1981], p.164.)

For the ideologues of the regime, the settlers represented a second wave of discoverers and navigators, who braved the unfriendly seas (in this case the international mood of pro-decolonization) to live and work in the tropics, once more emphasising the unique Portuguese way. For the industrialists they represented a potential work-force, much needed as the Angolan economy expanded. For the colonial developers they represented a settler class ready to spread out over Angola, to continue the unfinished job of 'pacification'. Despite considerable expense,⁶⁷ the immigration was an apparent success for Lisbon, at least quantitatively.

The effects of this increased immigration were, however, less than desired. The great majority of this immigration had a very low level of education or training. In the period between 1965 and 1972, over 55 per cent of Portuguese

66. F W Heimer, *ibid.*, p.14.

67. The cost of transplanting a family from within a village community to Angola was put at US\$ 100,000. see G Clarence-

emigrants to Angola, over the age of seven, had no years of education whatsoever.⁶⁸ Furthermore, only a few chose to settle in rural areas and attempt agricultural activities. Most had wanted to escape that same life in Portugal and chose instead to settle in the cities and towns. The result was the flooding of the lower end of the urban job markets by a labour-force with little or no skills. Moreover, the market was racially weighted in their favour. Despite claims of impartiality, it was difficult to see an employer picking an African over a European for most jobs. Despite the availability of opportunities for trained Africans, the predominance of uneducated whites at the lower end of the market began to eat into the newly-promised life-style opportunities of the African urban populations.

From 1961, there were also increased attempts at establishing multiracial settlements in Angola by directing emigrants from Portugal and Cape Verde, usually of mixed extraction, into the rural hinterland. Bender has concluded that this policy was a failure:⁶⁹ From 1961 to 1968, the directed settlement programme cost over US\$ 100 million, and out of the original number of settlers less than half remained at the end of this period. Those settlers that abandoned attempts to populate rural Angola, did not, however, leave the country. They moved to the cities and towns and, basically unskilled and

Smith, op.cit., p.177.

68. G Bender, op.cit., p.230.

uneducated, added to the already crowded 'lower strata' competing with Africans for jobs and living space.

According to Heimer, this had far-reaching effect as this denial or displacement of privileges anticipated under late colonialism may have provided a disgruntled support for the emerging nationalist anti-colonial challenge:

"The petty bourgeoisie was primarily motivated [to protest] by its frustration over a manque a gagner - an economic 'upward mobility' and an equality of social treatment it aspired to, but which it was denied by a racial barrier reinforced by the ongoing immigration of 'poor whites'."⁷⁰

Furthermore, the majority of the poor whites, perhaps as a result of the competitive job market, tended to wield their racial power to ensure that African challenges to the colonial regime were put down. This was the case in 1961 and on subsequent occasions when reactionary groups of white vigilantes would carry out terror raids of the slums in Luanda, or when groups of farmers carried out revenge attacks in the north after the March attacks by the FNLA. Apart from few individual exceptions, most white sympathizers of Angolan self-determination tended to be of an educated background. But over 83 per cent of white immigration to Angola in the period between 1965 and 1972, had had less than four years of education.⁷¹ This pool of anti-African-nationalism emerged again in Luanda after the 1974 coup

69. G Bender, op.cit., [1978c], pp.107-131.

70. F W Heimer, op.cit., p.20.

when over a hundred people are said to have been killed in black-white violence in July. The influence of the settler majority in the civil war cannot be easily judged although their mass exodus between 1974 and 1975 was partly a result of, but almost certainly helped to feed, the chaotic and disorderly situation that characterized the breakdown of Portuguese colonialism.

The Angolan colonial experience of the Portuguese policy of assimilation, seems to have had two major aspects which are related to the emergence of the political conflict between the nationalist movements that led to the civil war in 1975. Firstly, the process of 'civilization' created a tiered society in which the privileged centre was separated from and resented by those who remained outside. This segregation of privilege also tended to be identified in racial terms. Mestiços and educated Angolans were the object of criticism from other Africans. This division was a facet of the MPLA-FNLA rivalry. Secondly, the assimilation policy helped to create in the privileged centre not only an acute sense of national identity, as will be shown later, but also the enhanced expectation of material and political benefits. The frustration of these expectations, by the local colonial society and by an intransigent regime in Lisbon, helped to feed an already growing sense of nationalism and anti-colonialism in Angola.

CHAPTER THREE

ANGOLAN ANTI-COLONIALISM

"It is important to recognize that the liberation movements are forming rather than expressing a national consciousness"¹

The formation of a colonial state and society in Angola by the Portuguese went far and deep to determine the parameters within which modern Angolan politics has been carried out. As we have seen in Chapter Two, the concept of an Angolan nation-state and the imposition of economic and authority structures that shaped political and social forces and set up conflicts between these, for example, are partly the legacy of the colonial regime. But modern Angolan nationalism was not a creation of colonialism. It emerged from the political choices taken by different groups of people, in different parts of the country, for differing reasons but with one single objective: to end Portuguese rule in Angola.

The intransigence of the Portuguese colonial regime in denying political expression and representation in Angola, was, however, intimately linked to the choices made by all three movements. It is argued that the authoritarian nature of the New State impeded the development of nationalist political parties along the lines of those that emerged in British colonialism. Suppression and repression of Angolan nationalism led to the

1. M de Lucena, A Evolução do Sistema Corporativo Português Vol 1 [1976], p.94. My translation.

narrowing of options available to anti-colonialists. Thus, the resort to clandestinity and the subsequent adoption of guerrilla warfare as the form of challenging Portuguese rule can be seen as having been inevitable choices under the circumstances. Even the ideological outlook of a movement may be influenced by the willingness of the colonial regime to accommodate its political challenge. The realization that intransigence to nationalist demands would result in a more radical anti-colonial challenge was seemingly apparent to the British. Sir Andrew Cohen believed that successful co-operation with nationalism would be the best bulwark against communism in Africa.

In the same way, the Algerian nationalists resorted to an armed challenge after France showed itself unwilling to consider independence. On the other hand, nationalists in other parts of French Africa achieved independence organized in unarmed political parties. What is argued here, is that the extremity of resorting to armed force in the early 1960s was long-lasting, to the point of partly determining the form of conflict taken in 1975. The choice of warfare as the instrument to achieve independence from the Portuguese must have been partly responsible for changing the very nature of political life in Angola, one in which the armed liberation movements (the MPLA, the FNLA and UNITA) resorted more readily to force in 1975 to achieve their aims than would otherwise have been the case had they, for example, have developed as unarmed mass parties.

This chapter will show how the general stream of

Angolan nationalism developed an anti-colonial challenge by looking at the origins of the three movements. Their composition and political outlooks will be shown while at the same time considering the internal and external influences each may have had in the early stages.

(i) The Origins of Angolan Nationalism

Colonial authority in Angola emanated fundamentally from a coastal administration, that had been extended inland, mostly during the early twentieth century. The so-called 'pacification' of the colonies sought to secure, and therefore, claim their territorial integrity and Portuguese sovereignty, meeting the 'rules' of imperialism established at the Congress of Berlin. As elsewhere, however, the colonial boundaries, cut across and included within them a number of different ethnolinguistic groups and indigenous political communities. Nevertheless, despite this fact, out of heterogeneous ethnic societies there emerged a current of Angolan nationalism, which upheld the political goal of self-determination for Angola and its people as a whole.

Partly formed by the colonial experience, the national integrity of the Angolan state, both in territorial and populational terms, was eventually accepted and espoused by all three anti-colonial movements. The MPLA programme, as published sometime in 1962 or 1963, stated that the:

"Sovereignty of the Angolan state will belong entirely and

solely to the Angolan people, without distinction as to the ethnic origin, class, sex, age, political leanings, religious beliefs or philosophical convictions."²

The FNLA emerged as a front around a group led by Holden Roberto, the Union of the Peoples of Angola (UPA)³. The UPA's motto was: "for the national, territorial and social liberation of Angola."⁴

Finally, UNITA too framed its political identity and objectives in a national idea of Angola. According to a later UNITA publication:

"The peculiar social situation of Angola calls for harmonious co-existence of all ethnic groups and races that are the components of the Angola nation."⁵

Despite the universal acceptance of an integral nation and state, the origins of these three movements are, however, set in that very 'peculiar social situation of Angola.'⁶ As will be

2. MPLA Statuts et programme Leopoldville 196? Translated and reproduced in R Chilcote Emerging Nationalism in Portuguese Africa: Documents [1972], p.229. It can be deduced that the date of publication must have been sometime between 1962 and 1963, as this was the period during which the MPLA leadership was based in Leopoldville.

3. União das Populações de Angola.

4. Statutes of the UPA reproduced in R Chilcote, *ibid.*, p.101.

5. UNITA [1984], p.61.

6. The universal acceptance of national integrity refers to the movements that contested power in 1975. Separatism was, however, not absent from Angolan politics. In the Cabindan enclave, a separatist movement, the Mouvement de Liberation de l'Enclave de Cabinda (MLEC) developed a campaign in favour of Cabindan independence from 1960 onward. In 1963, under the aegis of the

shown below, the origins of the MPLA, the FNLA and UNITA emerge not only from the political consequences of challenging colonialism but also from specific ethnic and social circumstances.

The main thrust of Portuguese colonial conquest, or 'pacification', had destroyed beyond recognition the Ndongo kingdom, the principal pre-colonial Mbundu political organisation. The Mbundu, numbering about 700,000 in the 1960s,⁷ were generally located around the Kuanza river, in an area that runs inland from Luanda to the Cassanje highlands in the northeast.⁸ The Mbundu had had the longest contact with the Portuguese, as the area they occupied was the most geographically propitious corridor linking the interior to the coast, which made it the main trading route for, principally but not exclusively, slaves.

To the north of the Mbundu area is the Bakongo

Congolese President, Fulbert Youlou, three pro-separatism groups, including MLEC, merged in Brazzaville to form the Front pour la Liberation de l'Enclave de Cabinda (FLEC) which continued to press for the independence of Cabinda. See J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, pp.172-175, and op.cit., Volume Two, pp.123-125. The FLEC resolution no. 1, drawn up at the August 1963 congress in Brazzaville, began in following manner: "The people of Cabinda, holding fast to the reaffirmation of their right to self-determination and to total, immediate and unconditional independence..." FLEC Resolutions reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., p.128.

7. D Wheeler and R Pelissier, Angola, [1971], p.8.

8. The Mbundu are also known as Kimbundu which refers specifically to the language group spoken.

homeland which extends ethnically over the border into Zaire, and to the Cabinda enclave, which is separated from Angola by Zaire.⁹ This was the area of the ancient Kongo kingdom, which, unlike the Ndongo kingdom, had retained some of its structures of authority throughout Portuguese colonial rule. A Kongo king, Dom Pedro VIII, was enthroned in 1962. These institutions were, of course, maintained under strict control by the Portuguese but remained a focus for Bakongo political life. In the 1960s, the Bakongo population numbered approximately half a million.¹⁰

The Ovimbundu, numbering over 1,700,000, are the largest ethno-linguistic group in Angola, and mainly occupy the plateau highlands, south of Luanda. Occupying the north-eastern and central parts of Angola, are the Lunda-Chokwe, who like the Ovimbundu, are primarily migratory.

These major ethno-linguistic groups in Angola are generally seen to be the main streams from which emerged the nationalist movements. Marcum's important work on the Angolan movements constructed their political constituency and historical significance from their ethno-linguistic origins.¹¹ In this approach, the MPLA was seen as primarily a Luanda-Mbundu movement in terms of its ethnic constitution, and as having

9. The Bakongo are also known as Kikongo which also refers to the language group spoken by this ethnies.

10. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Volume One, [1969], p.50.

11. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Volumes One and Two [1969 and 1978].

established links with historical Mbundu resistance against colonialism. Similarly, UPA, and later the FNLA, established itself around the modern political issues of the Kongo kingdom. While UNITA was seen, first and foremost, as representing the interests of the Ovimbundu and the Lunda-Chokwe.

But while they are undoubtedly significant in tracing the origins of each movement, the ethno-linguistic foundations of each movement need not be seen as having been overbearing in the political conflict that emerged. Certainly in other Portuguese colonies, such as Mozambique for instance, it was possible for one nationalist pan-tribal movement to emerge more powerfully than others, despite the undoubted stratification between different ethnic groups. In the case of Angola, the leader of UNITA, Jonas Savimbi, of Ovimbundu origin, was a leading member of the UPA and the FNLA before returning to the south and establishing UNITA. Similarly, Daniel Chipenda, an Ovimbundu, was a prominent military leader in the MPLA before defecting to the FNLA in 1975. Both of these examples of many such cases seem to testify against an overwhelming reliance on the ethnic determinant in Angolan politics. While undoubtedly a factor in the Angolan conflict, especially in pin-pointing the identity of the rival constituencies and when used to draw upon loyalty, ethnicity does not seem to be able to completely explain the origins of the conflict itself. That is to say, Angolan ethnicity may have been exploited by movements and personalities in their political conflicts but the latter do not

emerge solely from the differences between the ethnies.

The concurrent development of Angolan anti-colonialism and nationalism within two practically separate social and political communities, that were generally speaking the Bakongo and the Mbundu, gave rise to two well-rooted movements. But the conflict between them cannot be seen to have emerged solely or even mainly from their ethnic differences. Other equally important influences such as race, education, personality clashes and basic political choices must be looked at to understand the roots of the civil war.

The origins of modern Angolan nationalism are set in two interrelated streams of protest, one pre-colonial, the other colonial. The history of pre-colonial Angola and especially of incidences of resistance to Portuguese military conquest played an important symbolic role in the anti-colonial war. For example, the resistance of the warrior Queen Jinga in the seventeenth century and of the warriors of the Dembos became part of the military and political ethos of the MPLA guerrilla groups of that area. This historical link between the modern anti-colonialists and the African resistance to the Portuguese was referred to by the leader of the MPLA, Agostinho Neto, who set the two different eras, past and present, in the same continuous framework of resistance to colonialism:

"For Angolans, clandestine action means the resumption of a long battle against Portuguese domination. From the time of Portuguese penetration, our history has been marked by great feats of resistance."¹²

In a very different way, the restoration of the glory days of the Kongo kingdom also played an important historical role for political constitution and military ethos of the FNLA. But in this objective, however, a separatist programme can be discerned, which places itself awkwardly with subsequent claims of the FNLA to having a national programme. The restoration of the Kongo kingdom was very clearly the focus of Bakongo politics in the mid to late 1950s in which the Union of the Peoples of Northern Angola (UPNA),¹³ the precursor to the UPA (and, in turn, the FNLA), was heavily involved. In fact, the 'northern peoples' referred to in the title of the movement belies its limited scope; that is: to the Kikongo-speaking peoples. Only when Holden Roberto, the leader of the UPNA (and subsequently of the UPA and the FNLA), was allegedly convinced of the evils of tribalism and the virtues of maintaining the territorial integrity of ex-colonies,¹⁴ was the title of the movement changed to UPA in order to impart a broader appeal.

12. A Neto, 'Angola in Historical Perspective' Speech Leopoldville April 1963. Reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., p.213.

13. União das Populações do Norte de Angola.

14. Apparently this occurred at the All-African People's Conference held in Accra, December 1959, were there was, according to Marcum, an "exuberant pan-African spirit". [J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, pp.67-68.] In Ghana, Holden Roberto met, among others, Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Touré, George Padmore, Patrice Lumumba and Frantz Fanon. To these, and within pan-Africanism, tribalism and the idea of resurrecting the Kongo kingdom were not in step with the prevailing ideas of anti-colonial struggle.

As well as drawing upon references to historical resistance against Portuguese rule, the anti-colonial movements were also able to draw upon a more modern body of protest that had emerged in Angola during what Wheeler has called the "stirrings" phase of Angolan nationalism.¹⁵ During this time there developed, in Angola, a stream of political life that can be seen to be a direct precursor to the anti-colonial movements of the 1960s. This political activity covered a period that coincided with an era of (relatively) free press from the 1880s to the end of the Republic in 1925, and was expressed most emphatically by the 'assimilado' and mestiço sectors within colonial society, particularly in the urban port areas of Luanda and Benguela. These two urban and commercial centres had been the focus of colonial trade for most of the period of Portuguese presence. Despite the low numbers of white settlers in the colony as a whole, Luanda and Benguela were active metropoli due to their status as trade entrepôts. Until the early twentieth century, there had been a low level of white female immigration to Angola, a fact that had helped to create a mestiço class, one that generally tended to fill the economic space between the Portuguese and the Africans. Accorded a higher status in pre-New State colonial society, this mestiço class was often educated and formed part of the colonial administration and the trading structure with the interior, acting as

15. D L Wheeler, 'Origins of African Nationalism in Angola: Assimilado Protest Writings, 1859-1929', [1972], p.69.

intermediaries. Trading success and the benefits of colonial society gave the mestiços, along with established 'assimilado' African families a relatively significant social and economic niche in the coastal societies of Luanda and Benguela.

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this urban mestiço and assimilated class had developed modest and moderate political expression, most accentuated during the Republican interregnum, between 1910 and 1925. Associations such as the Angolan League (1912),¹⁶ among perhaps a dozen,¹⁷ and the free press environment allowed for a brief flourish of political expression during this period. According to Wheeler, the goals of the Angolan League were:

"(i) to fight for the general interests of Angola; (ii) to further African education; (iii) to defend the interests of their members and protect their rights; and (iv) to establish physical education classes."¹⁸

Although some members were more radical than others, their general approach was not anti-colonial but co-operative and pro-Republic and sought mainly to advance the 'assimilado' within colonial society. Access to white collar jobs by mestiços and 'assimilados' was being challenged by increased white immigration, and this early twentieth century political protest in the form of such associations and publishing focused on the

16. Liga Angolana.

17. D L Wheeler, op.cit., [1972], p.73.

18. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, Angola [1971], p.117.

increased frustration felt by the mestiços and `assimilados' in being displaced from the promised rewards of colonial society.¹⁹

African political activity also emerged at this time in Lisbon, predating the later anti-colonialists who met, organised and developed their challenges to colonial rule from within the heart of the regime. The African League,²⁰ established in 1919, and the African National Party (PNA),²¹ in 1921, were self-proclaimed non-violent lobby groups, with an `assimilado' membership, that sought to represent "...the progress, rights and interests of the masses of Africans..."²² in the Portuguese colonies as a whole. During this time, these groups become linked to the wider streams of pan-Africanism and pan-Negroism that were emerging at the time. W E B DuBois held the second session of the Third Pan-African Congress in Lisbon in 1923.²³

Although this `assimilado' political activity in Angola and Lisbon was generally non-confrontational,²⁴ the

19. D L Wheeler, op.cit., [1972], p.75.

20. Liga Africana.

21. Partido Nacional Africano.

22. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., [1971], p.118.

23. The African League was closer to Dubois, and was host to this part of the congress. The PNA apparently leaned more towards Marcus Garvey. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., [1971], p.119.

24. The Angolan League was provocatively called the `association of white killers', and combined with alleged reports of `assimilado' participation in revolts between 1913 and 1917, and a number of other incidents (the murder of a European clerk and

associations were rapidly snuffed out once the New State began to emerge at the end of the 1920s. These associations, and even their more sterile successors under the New State, such as the Angolan National League (LNA),²⁵ played an important role in the development of Angolan nationalism and anti-colonialism. They provided a forum for an exchange of views and an expression of dissatisfaction with colonial society and the Portuguese regime. They were built on and helped to develop a form of protest, which took as its subject and victim, the African Angolan. For example, in the protest writings of José de Fontes Pereira in the last decades of the nineteenth century and in Voz d'Angola clamando no deserto,²⁶ a collection of Luandan press articles, the issue of race and its exploitation is brought to the fore, one which is subsequently central to the political expression of the anti-colonialists in the late 1940s and 1950s.

One final stream of political activity worth mentioning relates to European opposition in Angola to mainland regimes. On the one hand, a reactionary class of settlers and traders had developed in the coastal towns which lived mainly off the commercial links established directly with Brazil. Their

the discovery of an arms cache) led to a clamp-down by the authorities in the summer of 1917. Dozens of assimilados were thrown into gaol without trial. D L Wheeler, op.cit., [1972], p.81.

25. Liga Nacional Angolana.

26. 'The voice of Angola crying in the desert'.

political complexion was often anti-metropolitan, and Angolan autonomy sometimes a goal, but were very much against African self-determination. A number of groups threatened to secede from Portugal, but were never sufficiently organized to bring this about. They expressed a mainly reactionary and poor white constituency. This stream of Angolan settler nationalism is somewhat reinforced throughout the twentieth century especially as a result of increased poor white immigration, and emerged violently against the anti-colonial movements, and Africans in general, in 1961 and later in 1974. According to Heimer, there is evidence of at least four underground organizations constituted to resist and "finish off" the nationalists.²⁷ These groups sought a 'Rhodesian solution' for Angola and were "...supported by, and recruited from, 'petty whites' and financed by less competitive Angolan capital."²⁸ The Popular Liberation Army (ELP),²⁹ a Portuguese 'counter-revolutionary' military force that joined the South African offensive in October 1975, benefited from this stream of settler nationalism.³⁰

27. These groups were: Frente de Resistência Angolana (FRA); Resistência Unida de Angola (RUA); Exército Secreto de Intervenção Nacional de Angola (ESINA) and Exército Secreto de Angola (ESA). F W Heimer, op.cit., [1979], p.42 note 165.

28. F W Heimer, ibid., p.42.

29. The Exército de Libertação Popular was the military branch of the Spínolist Movimento Democrático de Libertação Popular (MDLP) which sought to counter the MFA in Portugal.

30. The ELP "...attracted deserters from the Portuguese army...ex-PIDE men, Angolan whites who had often held sympathies

Within European colonial society, there developed also, in parallel, a radical body of opposition that derived its support from the white liberal, professional and semiprofessional classes. After the end of the Second World War, literature on fascism and Marxism was brought into Angola, especially from Brazil,³¹ and was particularly prevalent in white anti-Salazarist circles that were active in the main urban areas of Luanda and Benguela. There was a significant interaction, if not overlapping, between these circles and those of 'assimilado' and mestiço protest that were becoming increasingly radical by the end of the 1940s.

(ii) Urban Radicalism and the MPLA

By the late 1940s, small clandestine groups of opposition to colonialism had begun to form in the urban centres of Luanda and Benguela. Once again, the composition of these groups was mainly of mestiço and 'assimilado' origin: educated Angolans who had a place in colonial society. Furthermore, the issues focused by their political criticism were long-standing ones: race, exploitation and colonialism. But reform was no longer the main political objective. Increasingly, a radical anti-colonial programme was being developed, one that was

for FRA [see note above], and some Portuguese from Portugal and South Africa." F W Heimer, op.cit., [1979], p.70.

31. P McGowan Pinheiro, 'Politics of a Revolt' [1962], p.107.

couched in the political language of Marxism, and sought the end of Portuguese rule. This fact took these groups further and further away from the previous non-violent streams of Angolan nationalism (often espoused by previous generations of families of these new urban radicals) that sought to achieve a negotiated settlement of those political questions with the Portuguese. This new generation of Angolan nationalists did not differ from previous generations in their social and racial background. They continued, furthermore, the development of an Angolan African national identity, attempting to break out of the Portuguese rationalization of colonial assimilation policies. But by the early 1960s their anti-colonial challenge, expressed in the programme and policies of the MPLA, had become violent in method and revolutionary in intent.

The intellectual starting point of this new radicalism was, however, still the idea of Angola and the Angolan. The clandestine protest literature assumed and continued to stimulate a national identity. In 1948, a group of Luandans linked to an authorised association, the Regional Association of the Angolan-born (ANANGOLA),³² published a literary review called Mensagem, with the motto 'Let Us Discover Angola.' In its poetry and prose, young 'assimilados' and mestiços expressed outrage and bitterness at the submissive status of the colonized. They focused on bringing to the fore a sense of the

32. Associação Regional dos Naturais de Angola. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., [1971], p.162.

`Africanness' of Angolans. As in other colonies on the continent at the time, their literature sought to assert an identity, one that was both African in race and Angolan in nationality.

According to Marcum:

"They featured poetry that not only invoked Angola's African heritage but called upon Angolan poets to create an `Angolan language'...[editor Viriato da Cruz's] work reflected what a leading commentator on Portuguese Negro poetry, Alfredo Margarido, has termed a `new awareness of the motives behind the exclusion of the Negro from colonial society.' Such poetry produced a new internal freedom that was, Margarido predicted [in 1962], `bound to be externalised eventually by means of revolt against the established order.'"³³

Despite having only been published twice (it was banned by the colonial authorities in 1950), Mensagem is seen, particularly by the MPLA, as a formative stage in the development of modern Angolan anti-colonialism. Its young editor was Viriato da Cruz, a young mestiço intellectual who subsequently played a crucial role in the development of the Marxist tendency of Angolan nationalism in the MPLA.

Between the late 1940s and the mid-1950s a flurry of clandestine political organizing was experienced in the main urban centres. Small groups of intellectuals and students met in secret and discussed colonialism and its demise. They would exchange radical literature, produce their own, name and rename their discussion group, but little else was done. According to Van Dunem:

33. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.25.

"They believed that to fight against Portuguese colonialism all was needed was a conspiracy on the part of intellectuals. They believed that all people needed to do was get together in somebody's house one day, and, the next day, colonialism would collapse."³⁴

The most pervasive political influence during this time was undoubtedly Marxism, and, despite the following claim of Viriato da Cruz it can be concluded that Portuguese communists were an important element in its development within Luandan anti-colonialism:

"The Communist Party of Portugal has...had no appreciable influence in either the preparation or the launching of the Angolan revolutionary movement".³⁵

The PCP was the only anti-Salazarist opposition which had managed to remain intact throughout the period of the New State. According to Pelissier, the PCP had succeeded in infiltrating the authorised colonial associations, the Angolan National League (LNA) and the ANANGOLA. In 1961, a prominent MPLA leader, Mario de Andrade, in an article published in Pravda,³⁶ may have confirmed this 'penetration' when he referred to the 'revolutionary character' of the LNA, the ANANGOLA and a third group, the African Association of Southern Angola (AASA).³⁷ One

34. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1990.

35. 'Problems of the Angolan Revolution'. Article that appeared in Revolution (January 1964) reproduced in R H Chilcote, Documents, [1972], p.207.

36. 'Freedom Shall Come to Angola Too' Pravda 6 September 1961, reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., [1972], p.194.

of the first overtly Marxist groups to be constituted was the Angolan Committee of the Portuguese Communist Party, established sometime in 1948. The links between the PCP and the MPLA are clearly long-standing. Some of the members of the contemporary PCP are originally from that group of anti-Salazarist whites in Angola.³⁸

From this group of Angolan nationalists and people linked to Portuguese communists emerged the Angolan Communist Party (PCA)³⁹ in 1954. According to Van Dunem, the party was formed by "...four or five people...", Among whom was Ilídio Machado who was "...the thinker in the PCA."⁴⁰ Ilídio Machado is considered to be one of the founder members of the MPLA. Yet according to Van Dunem, Machado denied this. Even if he was not, his influence on Viriato da Cruz and others who subsequently did become members of the MPLA, makes it possible to see the PCA as a precursor to the movement. Subsequent MPLA historiography,⁴¹ however, omits references to the PCA, probably in the interests of appearing to be a broader political movement in order to appeal to a wider range of internal and external support.

37. Associação Africana do Sul de Angola.

38. Julieta Gandara, Angelo Veloso and his wife, Maria da Luz Veloso, all active in the south of Angola. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1990.

39. Partido Comunista Angolano.

40. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1990.

41. Mário Pinto de Andrade, in 1963, refers only to "other organizations". M de Andrade, 'Angolan Nationalism' [1963]

It is important to point out here that the mestiço and assimilated semi-middle classes were not homogeneously developing a Marxist challenge to Portuguese colonialism. On the contrary, the young intellectuals espousing Marxism must certainly have been a thorn in the side of the more conservative elements, many times within their own families, who had achieved a significant position of social and economic importance within Luandan and Benguelan societies and were not particularly receptive to ideologies that called for the end of private property, even if they were promising the demise of colonialism.

In parallel to the clandestine activity conducted in Luanda, Angolan nationalists were also organizing in Lisbon; the destination for those Angolans who wanted to complete university degrees. A small number of mestiço and assimilated Africans went to Portugal to study. There, they came into contact with Portuguese political opposition, mostly the PCP, as well as with students from other Portuguese colonies. Among those Angolans studying in Lisbon and Coimbra during the mid-1950s were Mário Pinto de Andrade (MPLA founder), Agostinho Neto (MPLA leader and first Angolan president), Lúcio Lara (MPLA ideologue) and Jonas Savimbi (UNITA leader). From Mozambique, there was Marcelino dos Santos (FRELIMO) and from Guinea-Bissau, Amílcar Cabral (PAIGC). Later, these contacts would become very useful to the MPLA leaders when deep in their conflict with the FNLA. Through interterritorial organizations such as the Conference of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP),⁴²

the MPLA benefited internationally from its association with the PAIGC and FRELIMO, whose own positions were uncontested.

While each pursued their own studies, they congregated in places such as the Home for Students from the Empire,⁴³ an official hall of residence for colonial students. While Mário Pinto de Andrade⁴⁴ and Lúcio Lara tended to concentrate more on the intellectual facet of the anti-colonial challenge, Agostinho Neto was more active. He was a member of MUD Juvenil (the youth section of a movement very close to the communist party), and was arrested a few times. Neto had also established close links with an association of Angolan sailors as well as with other students. The regular voyages of Angolan sailors on the merchant ships back and forth between Portugal and Angola, provided a makeshift transmission belt that informed Angolans, in Lisbon and in Luanda of what the others were doing.⁴⁵ According to Van Dunem:

reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., [1972], p.187.

42. Conferência das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas.

43. Casa dos Estudantes do Império.

44. According to Samuels, Andrade joined the PCP while in Lisbon. M A Samuels 'The Nationalist Parties' [1969], p.391.

45. André Franco de Sousa, an alleged founder of the MPLA, describes how in 1957 Lúcio Lara sent from Lisbon a home-made copier. It was transported to Luanda on board a merchant navy ship by a sailor, named Gomes. The sailor handed a package to Franco de Sousa containing the copier and many issues of PCP publications, Avante and O Militante. A Franco de Sousa, 'Mukanda ao Meu Irmão' (10 December 1990), p.6.

"The axis was, therefore: Mário Pinto de Andrade (students in Lisbon), Agostinho Neto (sailors), Ilídio Machado and Viriato da Cruz (Luanda)"⁴⁶

This axis was not so much a formal structure of organization as a network of exchange which carried news and ideas about the anti-colonial stirrings. Later, however, it formed the skeleton of the MPLA.

The clear expansion of nationalist activity, even if limited and clandestine, was rapidly picked up on by the colonial authorities. Sometime in 1957 or 1958, Lisbon decided to move to Angola a section of the regime's political police, the PIDE.⁴⁷ To all accounts the PIDE established a good underground network of informants that managed to penetrate many of the Luandan groups. In whatever way it was done, the results were spectacular. A wave of arrests in 1959,⁴⁸ decimated the

46. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1990.0d

47. Wheeler says 1958. D L Wheeler, op.cit., [1971], p.146. Andrade says 1957. M de Andrade, 'Angolan Nationalism' [1963] reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., [1972], p.188.

48. The famous Trial of Fifty resulted from these arrests on March 29 and further arrests in July, 1959. The defendants were identified by three lists of names which belied the almost complete absence of African names. Apart from foreigners such as an American, George Barnett, almost all were of European, assimilated or mestiço origin. Another interesting factor is the listing of the defendants' occupations. The mestiços, concurrent with their higher status, were mainly civil servants, bookkeepers or banking clerks. Those of African origin but of assimilado status were in less prestigious occupations, with a large number of them in the nursing profession. This occupation was open to assimilados and had travel privileges, making it a de facto transmission belt for this early period of nationalist organization. see J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, pp.33-34, and W Burchett, Southern Africa Stands Up, [1978], p.4.

nationalist clandestine network, depleting it of its most prominent leaders either by prison or by pushing them underground and into exile. Ilídio Machado and Agostinho Neto, among many others were in prison by 1960.⁴⁹ Mário Pinto de Andrade and Lúcio Lara had left Lisbon and were by this time in Paris. The regime had made it perfectly clear that it would not tolerate nationalist political activity. During 1960 the military presence of the colonial power was also significantly stepped up. In March the air force transferred a district base to Angola, marking their arrival with a bombastic air drop of troops over Luanda. A few weeks later, an extra 2,000 infantrymen reinforced the 20,000-strong army.⁵⁰

The colonial authorities' clamp-down on the nationalists was as much a reaction to the increase in local activity as it was a reflection of the New State's preoccupation

49. Mário de Andrade's brother, Father Joaquim Pinto de Andrade who was influential in catholic mestiço circles (D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., [1971], p.163) was arrested on 25 June 1959. Earlier, on 8 June, Agostinho Neto had been arrested at his medical practice, apparently by the Angolan PIDE chief, João José Lopes, in person (A M Khazanov, Agostinho Neto, [1986], p.86). Reports emerged later of deaths following a protest against his imprisonment held in his home village of Bengo. A contingent of 200 troops reportedly fired on the demonstrators killing 30 and injuring 200 (J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.39). In August, Neto was transferred from Luanda, first to Aljube in Lisbon and then later in the year to the Cape Verde islands. The colonial authorities were obviously wary of the inflammatory consequences of holding a popular figure such as Neto. His poetry and constant sojourns in prison had fomented an image of political martyrdom, particularly in European circles.

50. B Davidson, In the Eye of the Storm [1975], pp.163-4, and J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.35.

with the changing map of Africa. It was, to some extent, influenced by events in the neighbouring Belgian Congo. Perhaps encouraged by de Gaulle's offer of independence to the French Congo just across the river, anti-colonial agitation in the Belgian Congo had resulted in the announced withdrawal of the colonial power.⁵¹ The capitulation of the Belgian colonial resolve worried the Portuguese authorities.

Despite the fact that nationalist politics in Africa were about to reach a boiling point, the 1950s had been a period of relatively secure European colonial control. Before 1960, only ten African countries were independent and only two (excluding South Africa) of these were below the Sahara.⁵² It was at the turn of the decade that the full force of the decolonization process was delivered. In 1960 alone, 17 countries in sub-Saharan Africa became independent. The effects of this process in general, and of events in the Belgian Congo in particular, was to help to accentuate in the Portuguese authorities a genuine fear of a possible nationalist challenge to its continued colonial rule.

It was clear that the colonial authorities were wary

51. Riots in January 1959 had turned Leopoldville upside down. There was a massacre of Africans by Belgian police, which led to international condemnation of the colonial regime. This forced the Belgian king to announce reform measures which led to independence in 1960.

52. Ghana had emerged from the Gold Coast under the aegis of Kwame Nkrumah in 1957, and Sekou Touré had called de Gaulle's bluff on the 1958 referendum and reluctantly opted out of the French orbit.

of a nationalist challenge, but, apparently not from the urban groups. Leaked official documents which reported propaganda infiltration and armed attacks from the north of Angola, gave testimony to this fear of nationalist fervour, despite the fact that these documents were, in all probability, "instructional wargames" for the colonial authorities.⁵³ Even if they were not genuine reports, they revealed that the colonial regime clearly identified any nationalist threat as coming from infiltration from the Congo and not from an internal uprising. The ethnic commonality that linked the Bakongo across the Angola-Congo border was perceived by the Portuguese as being dangerously permeable.

Following the colonial authorities' clamp-down at the end of the 1950s, most of the urban nationalists were either in prison or abroad in exile. The intransigence and repressive efficiency of the colonial authorities had made staying in Angola an impossible option. Harassed by the PIDE, Viriato da Cruz had left Angola and joined Mário de Andrade and Lúcio Lara abroad. These three intellectuals (the first two were mestiço and Lúcio Lara, white) worked from Paris, from where they attempted to further the cause of Angolan anti-colonialism. Working under a general denomination, the Anti-Colonial Movement

53. J Marcum, op.cit. Volume One, p.35. The documents were handed to two members of the American Committee on Africa (ACOA) by Joaquim Pinto de Andrade in February 1960. The ACOA was a liberal foundation based in New York. The documents were leaked to the New York Times. J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991], p.84

(MAC),⁵⁴ they, and other leading nationalists from Portuguese colonies such as Amílcar Cabral and Marcelino dos Santos, were active in the left-wing political and literary circles of Western Europe. It was mainly from here that the MPLA emerged.

The creation of the MPLA is currently a subject of controversy.⁵⁵ At the heart of the dispute lies the question of the historical legitimacy of the movement, an issue that was to play an important role in the subsequent internationalization of the Angolan conflict. Here, the two competing versions will only be summarized.

The 'official' version, which has been written into much of the material relating to the MPLA, contends that the MPLA was founded on 10 December 1956 by Ilídio Machado (PCA), Viriato da Cruz (Mensagem), Matias Migueis, Higinio Aires and André Franco de Sousa. This version has recently been vigorously reaffirmed in an open letter by the single surviving member of this group, André Franco de Sousa.⁵⁶ According to Franco de Sousa, the founding members met in Luanda at Ilídio Machado's house where a manifesto of political action was drawn up and the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Movimento Popular para a Libertação de Angola) was established. From here, the

54. Movimento Anti-Colonial.

55. See, in particular, articles in Expresso (Lisbon) 'MPLA: a Controversia da Fundação', 1 December 1990, p.B7, and 2 February 1991, pp.8R-15R.

56. A Franco de Sousa Mukanda ao Meu Irmão Angolano 10 December 1990.

MPLA expanded inside the country only to fall foul of the colonial backlash at the end of the 1950s. Still according to this version, the MPLA then moved abroad, first to Guinea and later to Leopoldville (Kinshasa). Then on 4 February 1961, the remaining activists that were not either in prison or in exile, mounted an attack on the gaols of Luanda, that, although unsuccessful, was considered the start of the MPLA's anti-colonial war against the Portuguese.

But this account of the foundation of the MPLA is now openly challenged by a number of people, including Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, the brother of Mário Pinto de Andrade and a so-called honorary president of the MPLA. According to him there was no constituted movement known as the MPLA at this time. He told Expresso that "before 1960 there was no document that referred to the MPLA."⁵⁷ Joaquim Pinto de Andrade claims that in 1956 he had read a manifesto drawn up by Viriato da Cruz but stresses that it had only been a declaration of intent to form a movement and not the actual foundation itself. During this period, he states:

"...there were countless groups of 3-4 people [in Luanda] that would emit pamphlets abroad, to seem like many. There was the PLUA, MIA, MINA, MNA⁵⁸....But these were all acronyms without programmes, without founders."⁵⁹

57. Expresso (Lisbon) 1 December 1990.

58. Partido da Luta Unida [dos Africanos?] de Angola. Movimento para a Independência de Angola. Movimento para a Independência Nacional de Angola.

59. Expresso 1 December 1990.

But those who stick to the original version maintain that the MPLA was not known nor referred to at this time because it was secret. According to André Franco de Sousa, after the foundation of the MPLA, it was decided that this acronym would be kept secret and reserved for later use. In the meantime, they would call themselves the Movement for the Independence of Angola (MIA).⁶⁰ Joaquim Pinto de Andrade rejects this outright:

"`...at the time, the MPLA did not exist, even secretly.'
If it had existed, he went on, he would have known of it, since he was active in MIA, the very same cell in which André Franco de Sousa was."⁶¹

The revised history of the foundation of the MPLA, as defended by Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, an unnamed source in the Expresso article, and others,⁶² can be summarized in the following manner. Having left Luanda under pressure, Viriato da Cruz joined Mário Pinto de Andrade and Lúcio Lara in Paris in 1957. In Angola, small cells remained which were active but dispersed. The exiles discussed the need for one broad movement, and, according to one source,⁶³ it was only at the end of 1958 at the All-African Conference held in Accra that this core in exile

60. Movimento para a Independência de Angola.

61. Expresso (1 December 1990).

62. See interviews with Manuel Santos Lima and João Van Dunem in Appendix.

63. Unnamed in Expresso (1 December 1990).

decided to create the MPLA. Subsequently, Viriato da Cruz drew up the statutes and programme of the movement allegedly based on those of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front (NLF). The movement was to be named according to a phrase with which Viriato da Cruz had ended his 1956 document appealing for the creation of a broad popular movement.⁶⁴ Establishing themselves in Conakry,⁶⁵ sometime in 1959 or 1960, the MPLA had yet to act but now had a structure of leadership. The Directing Committee was made up of Mário Pinto de Andrade (president), Viriato da Cruz (secretary-general), Lúcio Lara, Azevêdo júnior, Matías Migueis, Eduardo dos Santos and Hugo de Menêzes.⁶⁶ This revisionist version claims that far from being inspired by the MPLA, the attack on 4 February 1961 was a spontaneous, somewhat suicidal (although necessary) action carried out by elements at the time unconnected to the MPLA. What then occurred was the claiming of the attack by the newly-constituted MPLA in exile. According to the words of Mário de Andrade, conveyed by his brother:

"I arrived at the MPLA office and I come across Lúcio Lara, who was permanently listening for news, and he told me that there had been an uprising in Luanda. I was amazed; I considered it for a while and then I turned to Viriato Cruz

64. "... a criação de um amplo movimento popular para a libertação de Angola."

65. According to Samuels, the Soviet ambassador to Guinea, Daniel Semenovich Solod, was very active in promoting Conakry as a centre for African liberation movements. M A Samuels 'The Nationalist Parties' [1969], p.391.

66. Expresso 1 December 1990.

and told him: 'Viriato. Write! We have to claim that act!' And so he wrote: 'On the morning of 4 February, the Angolan patriots, led by the MPLA...'⁶⁷

According to Lima:

"...when the attack on the prisons takes place, the exiles have to admit that the people are moving faster than they are. We were intellectuals, students, moving in environments outside the country, while inside the country, people felt the necessity to turn to action. In order not to be left behind, it was necessary to transform that spontaneous movement and give it a voice, and a direction."⁶⁸

Subsequently, the movement backdated its origins in order to situate its birth earlier, in 1956, and inside the country. This was done in order to legitimize its constitution. If this was indeed the case, the MPLA must have feared that any movement led by mestiços in exile and hurriedly exposed after a suicidal attack on Luandan gaols which had left many dead, would not have been accepted, either externally or, more importantly, internally.

If this new version is indeed accurate, then the establishment of the MPLA may well have taken place outside Angola and not inside, and three maybe four years after it has hitherto been claimed. In fact, a press report of statements made in July 1962 by Jonas Savimbi in London, while still a UPA leader seem to support this revised version of the MPLA's origins:

67. Expresso 2 February 1991.

68. Interview with Manuel Santos Lima, Lisbon, 14 January 1991.

"The MPLA are a party of students and intellectuals in exile: their movement was started in Paris."⁶⁹

This revision of its origins contests the legitimacy of the MPLA's claims to having launched the anti-colonial war, when it was the heroic but unorganized act of desperate nationalists. According to Mendes de Carvalho, who was one of the prisoners they sought to release, the men who attacked the prison knew nothing of the MPLA and were shouting the name of its rival: "UPA...UPA!",⁷⁰ at the time the most prominent Angolan movement, and the precursor to the FNLA.

What this reveals is that already at the birth of the MPLA, the competitive pressures of legitimization wielded an overwhelming influence. These pressures to endow the movement with an internal and external validity are also the driving-force behind the subsequent alliances made by the movement, not only to help fight colonialism, but also to legitimize their identity vis-a-vis their rivals.

Although this controversy has emerged and it becomes important to document the origins of the MPLA as accurately as

69. West Africa 14 July 1962. Reproduced in Africa Digest Volume X No.1, p.29.

70. Expresso 2 February 1991. The principal motivator of the action on 4 February was Canon Manuel das Neves. Although allegedly unconnected to either the MPLA or UPA, Canon Manuel das Neves was linked to the Protestant Church that looked in turn to Leopoldville, where Holden Roberto and UPA held sway. Later in 1962, when the FNLA(UPA) forms the GRAE, a 'Mgr. Manuel das Neves' is listed as the 2nd Vice Prime Minister of the government-in-exile. R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.112.

possible, the fact is that by claiming the act of 4 February for itself and by giving it the symbolic value it has hitherto maintained, the MPLA has, in effect accrued the responsibility of the act to itself, even if it did have nothing to do with it. It signified that Neto could claim in 1964 that:

"Incontestably, that date marked the first phase of armed fighting against Portuguese colonialism."⁷¹

Despite the fact that the existence of the MPLA proper in 1956 has been contested in this way, those now credited with its foundation formed the political and manpower structure that would subsequently constitute the movement. This means that the basic composition and ideological orientation of the MPLA remains constant despite the discrepancies of dates and locations in its origins.

An attempt to pin-point the ideological influences of the MPLA results in two influential currents being identified: nationalism and Marxism. The issue of Angolan nationalism has already been referred to above in general terms. The important aspect to note is that the idea of Angolan nationality was part of the literature and political lexicon utilised by the MPLA and its precursors. The issue of Marxism in the MPLA takes on a similar hue as it does in other anti-colonial wars, where revolutionary Marxism was allied with anti-colonial nationalism.

71. A Neto 'Angola in Historical Perspective' (April 1963) in R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.215.

Marcum points out that it may have been a natural consequence of their mestiço origins that a political prism such as Marxism was favoured by the leaders of the MPLA, as it was an ideology that focused on class, rather than racial, conflict.⁷² The Ottaways support this conclusion:

"[The racial] characteristics of the MPLA help explain why Marxism held a special appeal for its leaders. By stressing class conflict over all others, it provided the urban mestiços and 'assimilados' with an ideology that transcended race and allowed co-operation between them and the black workers and lumpenproletariat of the musseques."⁷³

Such a conclusion would apply equally to the case of assimilated Africans, caught socially and culturally between two worlds. But it is not solely orthodox Marxism, as a theory of class struggle, that forms the ideological constitution of the MPLA before 1975 but the doctrine and practice known as National Liberation.

Anti-colonialism in the Third World emerged as the dominant political objective of the post-war era. The politics of the end of colonial rule and the self-determination of national sovereignty swept the European overseas dominions for a number of reasons derived from the course of the Second World War. The war against 'fascism' and for 'freedom' had left an indelible mark on the subject peoples who felt that this struggle for ideals also applied to their situation.

72. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.20.

73. D and M Ottaway, Afrocommunism [1986], p.99-100.

Furthermore, the European defeats at the hands of the Japanese had helped to crack the myth of the invincibility of the white man. Finally, post-war international politics had developed with two superpowers at opposing poles, and both the US and the Soviet Union defended anti-colonial positions, albeit from different perspectives. The effect of these factors, among others, helped to impel nationalists throughout Africa to make anti-colonialism an, eventually, overwhelmingly pervasive political objective.

Despite these external factors, however, self-determination emerged principally from the reaction of the colonized. According to an MPLA leader: "We are humiliated as individuals and as a people."⁷⁴ The desire to constitute an independent political entity became the common denominator of anti-colonial movements throughout the continent. This was the main political objective of the 'first wave' of decolonization, although some did defend a more radical approach than merely the achievement of independence.⁷⁵ Independence on its own was insufficient for the critics of this search for an African

74. M de Andrade in "Angolan Nationalism" (1963) in R H Chilcote, [1972], p.188.

75. The ideological nature of many of these newly-independent states was known as African Socialism. Resulting from broadly-based mass parties and embodying a nationalist coalition, radical regimes such as that of Sekou Touré in Guinea, Leopold Senghor in Senegal, Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia, Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, and to a certain extent that of Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, all imposed a form of socialist society in a post-independence state.

Socialism.

The search for political independence was merely the launching-pad for the doctrine of National Liberation. This is where Marxism, as an interpretive and political instrument, enters the anti-colonial stream, as a much broader definition of colonial domination is considered. One of the most influential factors on the development of revolutionary anti-colonialism was the experience of the Chinese Communist Party, although it occurred in a semi-colonial country. In fact, the doctrine of Maoism can be seen to be the core of National Liberation. In this case, what Maoism and the Chinese Revolution helped to foment was the concept of economic independence as well as that of political self-determination. The introduction of a Marxist analysis to anti-colonialism is what distinguishes National Liberation from anti-colonialism (as it is anti-colonial nationalism that distinguishes National Liberation from Marxism-Leninism). No longer was the end of the colonial authority a sufficient objective; the economic structure must also be overturned, or else colonial control would not be terminated. What had to be confronted, the Maoists claimed, was "...the double-edged sword of imperialism."⁷⁶ In its declarations the MPLA clearly used a similar prism:

"The MPLA is a revolutionary movement. The MPLA plan aims at the complete destruction of the colonial machinery and of all forms of domination."⁷⁷

76. S N Macfarlane, Superpower Rivalry and Third World Radicalism: The Idea of National Liberation, [1985] pp.45-46.

Thus, in the Third World, Marxism "...had... march[ed] from a theory of the self emancipation of the industrial working class to a voluntaristic recipe for rural insurrection followed by state planning and capital accumulation".⁷⁸ Liberation movements adopted the revolutionary transformation to socialism as a model of development, ignoring the succession of historical stages determined by orthodox Marxism.⁷⁹ National Liberation "...has become a vehicle for radical nationalism in non-industrial societies."⁸⁰

National Liberation was, however, much more than a modified Marxist doctrine of development. The experience of those movements that adhered to National Liberation created a world-wide stream of revolutionary anti-colonialism, to which the MPLA, like other movements, turned and felt part of:⁸¹

"We know that victory in the righteous struggle of our people is not far off now...Guaranteeing this is the unswerving desire of the Angolan people for freedom, the powerful national liberation movement (and) the support of all

77. MPLA Program of Action (December 1962) in R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.258.

78. I Roxborough, Theories of Underdevelopment, [1979], p.134.

79. see G White, 'Revolutionary Socialist Development in the Third World: an Overview', [1983]: "In consequence, rather than being an historical successor to capitalism, socialism has become an historical substitute." p.3.

80. G White, *ibid.*

81. See G Therborn, 'From Petrograd to Saigon' in New Left Review, 48.

progressive humanity."⁸²

During the course of the anti-colonial war in Angola, and particularly in the late-1960s, it was with the body of National Liberation that the MPLA most closely identified with. The experience of other so-called national liberation wars, such as those in Algeria and Vietnam, were held up as examples to emulate. According to Lúcio Lara, the principal ideologue of the MPLA:

"The Vietnamese armed struggle was very human, a blend of political and military action which became our model. In drawing up our MPLA programme, we were strongly influenced by the Vietnamese experience. Obviously we also studied their military tactics, their concepts of people's war."⁸³

The purpose of this summary of the doctrinal core of National Liberation and of its relevance to the MPLA is to situate the ideological co-ordinates of the movement in the stream of post-war anti-colonialism. In the intransigence of the colonial regime, there was undoubtedly an internal motivation for the radicalization of the movement, by foregoing other forms of achieving a negotiated settlement with the colonial power when turning to warfare. It is, however, impossible to ignore the ideological outlook of the MPLA as it was almost certainly a

82. M de Andrade, 'Freedom Shall Come to Angola Too' in R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.195.

83. September 1976. Cited by Kevin Brown 'Angolan Socialism' in C G Rosberg and T M Callaghy (eds.), Socialism in Sub-Saharan Africa: A New Assessment, [1979], p.301.

conditioning factor in the external links the movement established, in particular with the Soviet Union and Cuba. In ideological terms, despite doctrinal differences, the MPLA stood clearly in the Socialist camp.

(iii) Holden Roberto and Bakongo Nationalism

A particularity of modern Angolan politics is the role played by Angolan nationalists who operated principally from neighbouring Congo-Leopoldville. As has already been discussed, the Kikongo-speaking ethnic communality that straddles the border between the two countries is an important factor in the development of one strand of Angolan nationalism, and eventually in the development of one of the strongest anti-colonial movements, the FNLA, that in 1975 made a bid for power against the MPLA. The FNLA has often been subject to criticism which assumes that its tribal nature casts doubt on the legitimacy of its bid to represent Angola and not just one part of it. It was, however, one of the signatories to the Alvor accords which recognized three movements as being the legitimate representatives of the Angolan people. Furthermore, the FNLA itself disclaimed any separatist objectives and claimed to act within a nation-wide scope. The movement, led by Holden Roberto, acted under a number of constraints, mostly connected to Congolese (Zairean) factors, the nature of which will emerge when the origins of the FNLA are considered.

In the 1960s, after the independence of the Belgian

Congo, there were as many as 58 Angolan nationalist organizations in Leopoldville (Kinshasa).⁸⁴ They strove for political representation amongst the Angolan expatriate population, manoeuvred for official Congolese backing and eventually paraded for continental African support. Amongst these was the movement that later formed the core of the FNLA. The União das Populações de Angola (UPA), was the most powerful movement representing the Kikongo-speaking peoples, and its leader, Holden Roberto, was for long the only face of Angolan nationalism. In 1961, when the anti-colonial war against the Portuguese began, the UPA was the leading champion of Angolan self-determination.

Despite having been born in Angola, Holden Roberto was raised in Leopoldville and was, according to all accounts, much more at home in that city's political scene. His rise to prominence in the UPA occurred under the protective wing of his uncle, Barros Necaca. Originally, the association was known as the União das Populações do Norte de Angola (UPNA), and Barros Necaca was its president. Their political constituency were the Baxikongo tribe, whose leaders were Baptists and Kongo royalists.⁸⁵

84. As well as 26 associations of a social or trade union character. These numbers include all movements monitored from the beginning of nationalist activity to 1967. In D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., [1971], p.220.

85. In the conflict over the succession of the Kongo throne, based in São Salvador do Congo over the border in Angola, in 1955 and in 1957, the UPNA fielded a Protestant candidate for the crown. These moves were predictably blocked by the

The UPNA organised around their professed aim of restoring the ancient kingdom of the Kongo to full independence. The hypothetical result of such an aim would have been the constitution of a separate Bakongo state, which would have changed Angolan borders. On 20 May 1956, Roberto was one of the young Baxikongo who co-signed a letter to a visiting US State Department official, in which the separate nature of the Kongo was emphasised, and called for the end of Portuguese rule, but only with regard to the Kongo. A year later, a letter appealed to the UN Secretary-General for the restoration of the independent Kongo kingdom.⁸⁶ The formative influence of this early political objective on the FNLA and Roberto should not be overestimated, yet it does reveal the limited scope of their political constituency.

As his ascendancy within UPNA prevailed, Roberto was chosen to carry out a mission to Accra, Ghana to attend the first All-African conference held in December of 1958. It was at this conference (where Roberto established contacts with nationalists such as Patrice Lumumba, Kenneth Kaunda and Franz Fanon) that the separatist nature of the UPNA was cast aside in favour of a total Angolan identity. According to reports, Roberto was convinced in meeting leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah and Sekou Touré, and Pan-Africanists such as George Padmore, that the organization should be modernized and should drop the

Portuguese who did not want anyone but a Catholic on this figure-head throne.

"tribal anachronism" of its restorational aims.⁸⁷ Thus, a manifesto in the name of UPA calling for the liberation of all Angola made its first appearance at the Accra conference.

In the following two years, Roberto toured international circles and published damning articles on Portuguese colonialism, steadily increasing the profile of his own movement. He visited Accra, Conakry, Brazzaville, Tunis, Monrovia and New York. In August of 1959, he attended a foreign minister's Conference of Independent African States held in Monrovia. In September 1959, while associated to the Guinean mission at the United Nations, Roberto put the case in favour of assigning Portugal's African territories to UN jurisdiction. While in New York, he established a wide range of American contacts with the help of the American Committee on Africa (ACOA). Also reinforcing his prominence among African leaders, Roberto took part as an observer at the second Conference of Independent African States which was held in Addis Ababa in June 1960.⁸⁸ By the end of the 1950s, while the leadership of the MPLA was dispersed and barely constituted, Roberto was a well-known figure in the African political arena and had already established good links with groups in the US.

It is important to note that this activity was partly political strategy but also partly enforced. The Belgian

86. J Marcum, *op.cit.*, Volume One, [1969], pp.62-63.

87. J Marcum, *ibid.*, p.67.

colonial authorities had clamped down hard on Angolan nationalists following the Bakongo-led riots in Leopoldville of January 1959. The arrest of several hundred Angolans by the Belgian police was partly a result of Portuguese pressure to come down hard on Angolan nationalist activity, as well as their own belief that Angolan emigrés had participated in the rioting. However, the result of the arrests was the repatriation of the alleged nationalists, which may have had a negative effect, at least from the perspective of the Portuguese colonial regime. The reintegration of ex-emigrés who transmitted nationalist ideas as well as talking of higher wages over the border was not what the Portuguese had wanted. The UPA later claimed these extraditions enabled the infiltration of the colony by 'cells' that would prepare the groundwork for the March 15 uprising.⁸⁹

By July 1960, Roberto had returned to Leopoldville where he was warmly received. His international prestige had helped to make this a period of expansion in the fortunes of the UPA. It was also the time in which Roberto began to consolidate his own dominance of the movement. In the heady summer months of Lumumba's rule, Roberto disseminated the cause of the UPA and challenged, in writings and broadcasts, the Portuguese colonial administration. He was already working with those that would form his very personalized structure of command. Most prominent among these were José Manuel Peterson and Johnny Edouard, son of

88. J Marcum, op.cit., p.84.

Eduardo Pinock, a veteran of the Protestant challenge to the Kongo succession.

Roberto's rising star was momentarily eclipsed, however, by the dismissal of Patrice Lumumba by President Kasavubu, in September 1960. His past association with Lumumba allowed his political opponents to accuse him of being a communist. Roberto fled to Ghana (where he was spurned by Nkrumah's government and accused of being "...in the pay of America."⁹⁰), and from there to New York where he attended the 15th UN General Assembly. While he was in New York, there developed a situation that might have marked the end of his rise to prominence within the UPA, and consequently changed the course of Angolan politics.

While Roberto was in the United States, the UPA Steering-Committee remaining in Leopoldville had committed the movement to a loose coalition of Angolan parties, known as the Common Front of the Political Parties of Angola.⁹¹ The other parties involved were: a local MPLA committee led by a Bakongo, António Josias; ALIAZO, an association representing the Bazombo tribes; and a Cabindan group, the AREC.⁹² The UPA representatives that had committed themselves to the Front were apparently 'moderates' that were attempting to challenge

89. J Marcum, *ibid.*, p.71.

90. J Marcum, *ibid.*, p.96.

91. Front Commun des Parties Politiques de l'Angola. J Marcum, *ibid.*, p.95.

Roberto's predominance.⁹³

This challenge to Roberto's leadership was written off as a conservative reaction to his tendency to increasingly move away from non-violence towards direct action against colonialism. On the other hand, it may also have represented the first of what were to be many dissensions from Roberto's allegedly autocratic style of leadership. What was later revealed through the many abandonments of the FNLA was that Roberto was unwilling to dilute his own power at the head of the movement. Linking up with other Angolan nationalist groups, unless they were dissolved into his structure of authority, represented an unacceptable threat to Roberto. According to the US State Department, Roberto was "...inflexible, resolute, anti-communist and incapable of delegating authority."⁹⁴

Willing to defend his position, Roberto hastened back from New York to see the challenge off. The ensuing power struggle resulted in a major split: 17 resignations out of the 20 members of the UPA Steering-Committee, including Roberto's uncle and initial patron, Barros Necaca. From this point onwards, Holden Roberto became the uncontested leader of the UPA. His first act was to withdraw the UPA from the Front, the latter subsequently collapsing.⁹⁵

92. Association des Ressortissants de l'Enclave de Cabinda.

93. The 'moderates' had planned to hold elections for the leadership in November while Roberto was away in New York.

94. J Freire Antunes, Kennedy e Salazar: o Leão e a Raposa [1991], p.86.

By the beginning of 1961, Roberto was very much in control of the UPA. He had firmly established himself at the centre of power and placed members of his own tribe and family in the most important executive posts. Hitherto, the political activity of the movement had been to develop a public campaign against Portuguese colonialism:

"Today, the UPA, aware of the responsibilities it is assuming toward the Angolan people, toward Africa and toward history, makes a solemn appeal to the Portuguese government and people to agree to negotiate as soon as possible on ending the colonial regime and recognizing national Angolan sovereignty."⁹⁶

The movement's internal and external profile was relatively pronounced, and it may be claimed that it was, at this time, the best known Angolan nationalist group. In fact, judging by the aforementioned Portuguese 'wargames' documents, an attack by the UPA into northern Angola from the Congo was the nationalist challenge most feared by the colonial regime. Furthermore, as has been testified by participants in the 4 February 1961 attack in Luanda, the UPA was, at this time, considered to be the main Angolan nationalist movement even in the capital which

95. The Front continued as a coalition between the MPLA committee and ALIAZO until February 1961. The Conakry office of the MPLA, however, sent two officials that declared that the local committee had exceeded its authority in committing itself to the Front, an act which thereby undermined the legitimacy of the local committee and its leader, António Josias. J Marcum, *ibid.*, p.99.

96. Holden Roberto Press Conference 10 June 1960. Reproduced in R H Chilcote, *op.cit.*, p.66.

eventually, it can be said, became MPLA `territory'.

At the beginning of 1960, the second All-African People's Conference was held in Tunis, which seems to mark a watershed in the choice of strategy of the Angolan nationalist movements. The search for a negotiated decolonization, as experienced elsewhere on the continent, had hitherto been the objective of Angolan nationalists, as can be seen in the UPA appeal cited above.

The MPLA had also been appealing for a negotiated settlement. The nucleus in exile had been busy making contacts and putting across the case against the colonization of Angola. A war of communiqués and newspaper replies marked the confrontation with the Portuguese colonial authorities. A process of peaceful self-determination was, however, increasingly put in doubt as the Portuguese press transmitted the determination of the Salazar regime to refuse even the discussion of self-government. In reply the nationalists warned of the responsibility the Portuguese government would bear for the "bloody conflict" that would ensue from this intransigence.⁹⁷ But even as late as 1960, the resort to armed action was not an obvious development. According to the first MPLA military leader:

"...Mário de Andrade himself hesitated considerably before taking the option of armed struggle. When this was talked about in terms of political speculation, I remember Mário de Andrade until 1960, Mário was very hesitant."⁹⁸

97. J Marcum, *op.cit.*, Volume One, p.44.

According to one interpretation,⁹⁹ this began to change at the All-African meeting in Tunis, where both the MPLA and the UPA were present. With the Algerian war of independence in full flow, Franz Fanon cast an authoritative shadow over the workings of the conference. Among others, he called for the peaceful option to be cast aside in favour of direct action. What was being called for was the launching of the Angolan war of independence. This vision was contested by Mário de Andrade who held that war was not necessarily essential for the anti-colonial process.¹⁰⁰ This resistance by the MPLA to Fanon's calls for a war may explain the support then given to the Holden Roberto's UPA by the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN).¹⁰¹

By 1961 then, the MPLA and the UPA seemed to be going in opposite directions. The latter, internally cohesive, was considering the launching of direct military action against Portuguese colonialism, while the former was still attempting to consolidate its organization. For this reason, the MPLA can be seen to be somewhat fortunate to have been credited with the

98. Interview with Manuel Santos Lima, Lisbon, 14 January 1991.

99. J Marcum, op.cit.

100. see A M Khazanov, Agostinho Neto (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1986), p.83.

101. Front de Liberation National. B Davidson, In the Eye of the Storm, [1974], p.201.

initiation of anti-colonial war on 4 February 1961. As displayed above, the attacks in Luanda in February seem to have forced the movement's hand in opting for a military strategy. By claiming a role in the beginning of armed conflict against the Portuguese, the MPLA made an important move placing it somewhat on a par with the UPA, when the latter unleashed the attacks of 15 March 1961.

The combined impact of the February and March anti-colonial violence propelled Angolan nationalism towards a significantly increased level of international attention. The sheer violence of the UPA attacks and of the colonial backlash marked a new phase in nationalist anti-colonialism.¹⁰² Furthermore, the attacks had been timed to coincide with a UN Security Council debate on Portuguese colonialism. The announcement that a revolt had begun in Angola sharpened the debate and helped to produce a report critical of the Portuguese. During the course of 1961, both the desperate bid for self-determination and the intransigent nature of the colonial regime were revealed.¹⁰³

102. The eight month-long uprising resulted in thousands of deaths: various sources placed the numbers at 8,000, 25,000, and 50,000. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op. cit., p.191. Marcum quotes figures advanced by Ralph E Dodge in November 1961. African deaths: 45,000; European deaths: 250 to 1000. in J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.150. Davidson quotes the figure advanced by the British Baptist Missionary Society: 20,000. in op.cit., p.191. See also Africa Digest Volume VIII No.6, p.248.

103. As well as military reprisals, the colonial authorities carried out further arrests, specifically targeted at educated and 'assimilado' people. Africa Digest Volume IX, No.1, p.26.

At first, Roberto denied that the UPA had been responsible for the attacks.¹⁰⁴ Subsequently, however, the attacks have entered the historiography of the FNLA, and even Angolan nationalism as a whole, as the beginning of the end of Portuguese colonialism. Considering Roberto's belief that Portuguese colonialism would become diplomatically isolated if there was an Angolan uprising,¹⁰⁵ it can be concluded that the intention behind the attacks was to create a situation of extreme terror and violence which would provoke a negative international reaction to Portuguese colonialism. This would, in turn, lead Lisbon to consider renouncing sovereignty while the violence would impel the European settler population to give up and leave Angola. This scenario seems to have been modelled closely on what occurred in the Belgian Congo, and it does not seem far-fetched to claim that Roberto believed that this experience could be repeated in Angola. The differences between Portuguese and Belgian colonialism, however, produced another result altogether.

The 1961 anti-colonial actions did not manage to drive away Portuguese colonialism. Instead, the regime in Lisbon sent troops¹⁰⁶ and proclaimed its determination in holding on to

104. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., p.181.

105. "Portugal will have no support, for its colonial system is known for being one of the most retrograde." Cited in J Marcum, op/cit., Volume One, p.69.

106. 17,000 by July 1961. Observer 2 July 1961.

colonial control. Even diplomatic isolation did not seem to bother the Portuguese regime. When, it had become clear that the Kennedy administration was taking an anti-Portuguese position in the United Nations, the United States embassy in Lisbon was stoned.¹⁰⁷ When the US approved a UN Security Council resolution that condemned the Portuguese colonial authorities' repression of the nationalist actions in Angola,¹⁰⁸ all this seemed to do was to reinforce the regime's resolve to resist change. While the Portuguese representative at the UN inferred that the US was merely courting the Third World vote, Salazar told the National Assembly:

"The United States is pursuing in Africa, although with other intentions, a policy which is parallel to that of Russia...[one that is] incompatible with what she is trying to achieve through the North Atlantic Treaty."¹⁰⁹

As has been shown in Chapter Two, it was also at this time that the effects of 'late colonialism' were beginning to emerge, while colonial development policies were implemented that envisaged an even greater fusion of Angola with metropolitan Portugal. Despite this, the 1961 actions, in particular those of the UPA in the north of the country, marked the launch of armed conflict against the Portuguese.

Shortly following the March action, Roberto and the

107. Africa Digest Volume VIII, No.6, p.247.

108. S/4835. Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council 1961.

109. The Times 1 July 1961.

UPA's privileged position in Leopoldville became momentarily threatened. Congolese fears of Portuguese retaliation led President Kasavubu to consider expelling Roberto and his movement from Leopoldville. Kasavubu was a leader of the Congolese Abako party, which was in direct competition with the UPA in the Bakongo constituency. By putting pressure on Roberto to please the Portuguese, the Congolese president would have been killing two birds with one stone.¹¹⁰ However, by the summer, and despite the continuing rivalry with Abako and even outright antipathy from Kasavubu in the presidency, the Congolese political climate changed significantly in favour of Roberto. In July 1962, his old friend and fellow footballer, Cyrille Adoula, was appointed as Prime Minister; an appointment that gave the UPA a very secure political presence in Leopoldville. The Adoula-Roberto link, like the Mobutu-Roberto axis that followed it, provided the UPA (and later the FNLA) with a secure base across the border from Angola, to which the movement had privileged access. Furthermore, Adoula favoured the UPA in its bids to gain the allegiance of the Angolan emigrés of Leopoldville, the numbers of which had swollen considerably after the 1961 violence.¹¹¹

110. The UPA's difficulties with Abako were testified to by the Abako leadership of the Lower Congo's ban on Roberto's entry to that province.

111. According to D L Wheeler and R Pelissier (op.cit., p.190), some 300,000 had abandoned the northern area of Angola after the 1961 attacks and colonial backlash, most of which streamed over the border to Leopoldville. "...a stream of refugees that was to pour 150,000 uprooted Angolans into the Congo before the end of

In early 1962, the UPA was a founder member of a front that in effect replaced it as the vehicle for Holden Roberto's political power. On 27 March 1962, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) was formally established. Despite the fact that the FNLA's political structure became, in effect, dominated by Roberto's own personal power network, it was based on a genuine political union: an alliance between the UPA and another large Kikongo-speaking movement, the Aliazo. Essentially a tribal association to further the interests of the Bazombo, Aliazo had protest roots in the religious activity of an anti-colonial but somewhat obscurantist group in 1949-1950: the Simao Toco sect. Like the UPNA before it, Aliazo broadened its political horizon and renamed itself the Democratic Party of Angola (PDA).¹¹² Its main constituency was, like all other Angolan parties in the Congo, in the emigré community of Leopoldville. Within the FNLA decision-making structure, the PDA retained the power of veto. This was, however, meaningless as Roberto avoided using FNLA institutions and processes in order to wield almost complete power.¹¹³

The creation of the FNLA sought a very clear objective. While being able to maintain predominance within his political

[1961]." J Marcum, *op.cit.*, Volume One, p.145. By December 1963, the refugee population in the Congo reached 300,000. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Volume Two, p.355, note 80.

112. Partido Democrático de Angola.

113. J Marcum, *op.cit.*, Volume Two, p.38.

constituency, the creation of a front, of more than one movement or party, permitted Roberto to claim that that it represented an attempt to unite anti-colonial Angolans, and therefore, spurn increasing pressures to unite with the MPLA. The following are the first two decisions of the creators of the FNLA:

- "1) To unite our forces in one national liberation front to hasten the independence of the country.
- 2) To group in an Angolan national liberation front, all organisations truly representative of the Angolan people who accept the general policies of the front."¹¹⁴

With the creation of the FNLA, Roberto almost certainly sought to capture the support of international and continental backing for his movement's armed challenge to Portuguese colonialism, as it became increasingly apparent that the issue of rivalry for legitimacy to represent Angolan nationalism and the resulting attempts and failures to constitute a common front was going to dominate the anti-colonial war.

Earlier, during 1961, the UPA had attempted to expand beyond its Bakongo base with the appointment of Jonas Savimbi as secretary-general of the party. The appointment of Savimbi, of Ovimbundu origin, was an influential factor in leading other Angolan students in Europe to join the UPA. Earlier, the inclusion of Rosario Neto, a Luanda-Mbundu, in the UPA leadership was also an attempt by the party to transcend its

114. Establishment of the FNLA 27 March 1962. R H Chilcote, op.cit., pp.103-104.

Bakongo image. To all appearances, after the psychological success¹¹⁵ of the March attacks (militarily they were quite unsuccessful), the party was attempting to throw off its tribal image and expand into a all-encompassing Angolan nationalist force. It was these political and military actions that provided the UPA with the opportunity to grow larger, and helped to bring the PDA to join it in an alliance. The prestigious military actions and the broadening of the ethnic make-up of the UPA leadership, established the strength of the party and of Roberto which was at the core of the FNLA.

On 5 April 1962, after barely a week in existence, the FNLA formed a self-proclaimed Angolan government-in-exile (GRAE).¹¹⁶ The rationale behind the government-in-exile seemed to be a concerted effort by Roberto's leadership to proclaim its predominant role in Angolan nationalism. Undoubtedly taking inspiration from the success of the Algerian FLN's experience with its own government-in-exile, the establishment of the GRAE seemed to be as much a political and diplomatic weapon to fight for primacy among Angolan nationalists, as it was a strategy for

115. The violent actions against Portuguese colonialism were politically legitimizing for the nationalist movements. Those associated with direct action against colonialism (the FNLA and eventually the MPLA), went far ahead in the field of Angolan political groupings.

116. The government was initially known as the Governo da República de Angola no Exílio but was later changed to read Governo Revolucionário de Angola no Exílio. Its make-up was as follows: President, Holden Roberto; Vice-President, E Kunzika (PDA leader); Foreign Minister, Jonas Savimbi.

fighting the Portuguese colonial system. The Algerian government-in-exile had bestowed authority and legitimacy on the FLN and it must be concluded that this was what was being sought in the creation of the GRAE. By the time the MPLA was beginning its first major phase of political existence in Leopoldville at the end of 1962, Angolan nationalism was primarily expressed in the activity of Holden Roberto and the UPA/FNLA/GRAE. Any attempts to challenge this predominance made some form of conflict inevitable.

An assessment of the ideological orientation of Holden Roberto and the FNLA is not an easy task. In the early stages of the anti-colonial war, the predominant political currents were anti-communism and African nationalism. Like the MPLA, and as already referred above, the FNLA claimed as its objective the liberation of the Angolan land and people from colonialism. But unlike the MPLA, it also peppered its public pronouncements with liberal amounts of anti-communism.¹¹⁷

"It is common, on the other, hand, for some colonists to try to prove to the African people that nationalism and the fight for dignity are identified with Communism. They even went so far as to make this convincing to certain Africans, who thus let themselves be seduced by Marxist and Communist ideology.

In some places, many of those brother Africans say they would prefer this to colonialism. But the great majority of those who fight for the liberty of their country have no ideology save that of human dignity. It is universally accepted that Africa is imprisoned by its land and its religion, whatever it may be. It knows no other ideology other than patriotism--and it is this which the West calls

117. According to Savimbi, Roberto "...took a persistent anti-Communist line..." F Bridgland, op.cit., p.45.

nationalism.

Let all who want to safeguard their friendship with the peoples of Africa--with the people of Angola--know that we are determined to be not only Africans but also masters of our destinies and lands, and that we will not allow ourselves to be seduced by any foreign propaganda."¹¹⁸

While carefully placing itself outside the socialist bloc, the FNLA attempted nevertheless to place itself within the prevailing strain of African anticolonialism. It referred often to the national liberation struggle, and even ventured to propose a somewhat progressive programme although this was suitably vague. The declaration of the FNLA's constitution claimed that "agrarian reform" and "a planned economy" would be instituted by the "democratic regime" that would replace colonialism.¹¹⁹ In the early 1960s it can be argued that Roberto and the FNLA tried to stand, as much as possible, in the anti-colonial camp without, however, compromising its appeal to anti-communist circles, particularly in the US.¹²⁰

Of course, like all anti-colonial movements, the FNLA's survival was a predominant objective which led it sometimes to compromise its ideological posture. This resulted, on occasions, in a shift of allegiance. In early 1964, Roberto announced that the GRAE would "...accept aid from Communist

118. UPA newspaper, A Voz da Nação Angolana 30 September 1960. R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.145.

119. Establishment of the FNLA. R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.104.

120. See Chapter Seven.

China and `other Communist countries." According to Roberto:

"Until now we have kept out of the cold war and within the framework of African politics (but) we are now at a point where a radical change of policy is imperative for us to make headway in our struggle."¹²¹

By this time, the benevolence shown by the Kennedy regime had waned and it had become clear that Portugal's membership of NATO was going to provide it with a certain amount of security. This approach to the socialist bloc also came after the recognition of the GRAE by the OAU (see Chapter Five). With this, the GRAE(FNLA) may have been trying to capitalize on this advantage over the MPLA, the latter seeming close to extinction, and garner the support of the socialist countries. According to one report, Roberto stated that he envisaged a one-party state for Angola after the rebel war.¹²²

In early 1962, Roberto's movement, now the FNLA, was acting as a government-in-exile, and had been carrying out a year of guerrilla warfare against the Portuguese colonial regime. It had a pronounced international profile and was the Angolan nationalist movement most favoured by the Leopoldville government. At the time, it would have been difficult to avoid giving a positive assessment of its future.

121. West Africa 11 January 1964. Africa Digest Volume XI No.4, p.114

122. Daily Nation 27 December 1963. Africa Digest Volume XI No.4, p.115.

(iv) Savimbi and UNITA: the Third Force

Although UNITA was established later than the MPLA and the FNLA, and was a smaller military and organizational unit, it sought to represent the largest ethnic constituency of Angola: the Ovimbundu. The fact was that in the mid-1960s, after the anti-colonial war against the Portuguese had commenced, only the Kikongo- and Kimbundu-speaking peoples felt that their nationalism was being expressed. Despite the fact that both the FNLA and the MPLA espoused a total Angolan nationalism and that the MPLA was led by detribalized mestiços, both movements did have a very particular geographical and ethnic implantation. Outside the urban centres and the northern part of the country, it is true to say that there was no anti-colonial representation. Furthermore, the Ovimbundu had been singled out as an ethnic group that co-operated with Portuguese colonialism. Ovimbundu labourers were brought to the north especially to work on the coffee plantations. During the March 1961 attacks, Ovimbundus were singled out as collaborators and victimized by the UPA.¹²³ In 1966, UNITA came to fill this gap in leadership among the Ovimbundu and draw this largest ethnic group into the stream of Angolan anti-colonialism.

The leadership of UNITA and the FNLA shared a characteristic by being based around a very personalized power

123. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., [1971], p.178.

structure. In the case of UNITA, this revolved around Jonas Savimbi. By origin an Ovimbundu from the Huambo area (along the Benguela railway), Savimbi had what Marcum has called a "...latent political appeal among Angolans from central and southern areas."¹²⁴ This commonality gave Savimbi an opportunity to organize and gather support in these areas. According to Bridgland, "...Savimbi used his fluent traditional Umbundu to court and win chiefs and elders."¹²⁵

In 1958, Savimbi managed to obtain a scholarship to continue his studies in Portugal where, like other Angolans he rapidly came into contact with anti-colonial nationalists and anti-Salazarist communists. According to his own testimony, Savimbi arrived in Lisbon after reading "...books on Marxism and by Marcus Garvey..."¹²⁶ After coming to the attention of the PIDE due to some clandestine political activity, Savimbi was smuggled out of Portugal. But not before he had met Neto, who was by the late 1950s one of the most prominent Angolan nationalists. Savimbi's admiration of Neto was, however, tempered. According to Bridgland:

"...Neto made a mistake which would contribute to an eventual estrangement from the young Ovimbundu and grow into an epic enmity. The assumption of many Kimbundu people, like Neto, from Luanda and its hinterland was that the Africans of central and southern Angola were comparatively backward:

124. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.164.

125. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.29.

126. Ibid., p.35.

they also regarded them as collaborators with the Portuguese because the Ovimbundu formed the majority of contract labourers on the coffee plantations of the north. When Savimbi said he came from near Nova Lisboa, Neto said it was impossible that a militant as bright and brave as he could have emerged from the south: surely his family originally came from the north? Savimbi was hurt by these remarks of Neto..."¹²⁷

According to the same account, however, in the early 1960s Savimbi's sympathies were with the MPLA. Initially unimpressed by Roberto, he stated that he found the MPLA's "...philosophy attractive and saw nothing in it to support Roberto's allegation that the MPLA were Communists."¹²⁸

Despite invitations Savimbi did not join the MPLA. Instead, putting aside his reservations over the ideological vacuum of Roberto's movement, he joined the UPA, apparently after some urging on the part of the Kenyans, Tom Mboya and Jomo Kenyatta. Savimbi recalled Mboya's argument:

"The MPLA are mestiços and Communists, so you cannot play any useful role there; the UPA is the organisation for black people, so that's the one you should join."¹²⁹

A meeting with Kenyatta reinforced this inclination towards the UPA:

"I protested that Roberto had no programme and seemed to be a very ignorant man. 'OK,' Kenyatta said, 'that's one very good reason to join because you have ideas and can produce a programme.' That's when I decide to join the UPA. That's how it was."¹³⁰

127. F Bridgland, op.cit., p.41.

128. F Bridgland, op.cit., p.46.

129. F Bridgland, ibid., p.49.

In February 1961, one month before the unleashing of the March attacks against the Portuguese, Savimbi flew to Leopoldville where he joined the UPA. Appointed secretary-general of the movement, he was responsible for the reorganization of its administration.

According to his testimony, Savimbi believed that the March armed revolt against Portuguese colonialism was sufficiently important to put aside the fact that the attacks had also resulted in the killing of Ovimbundu people by the UPA. Allegedly instrumental in the creation of the FNLA, Savimbi argued, however, against the establishment of the GRAE (although he did accept the post of 'foreign affairs minister') because, states Bridgland, "...he thought it important first to step up the fighting and begin moving leaders into Angola rather than take on the trappings of government in a foreign land."¹³¹ Relations between Roberto and Savimbi deteriorated and the latter began to distance himself from both the FNLA and GRAE. Using to his advantage the OAU heads-of-state summit in Cairo, Savimbi announced his resignation from the GRAE and the FNLA on 16 July 1964.

In a resignation speech that emphasized the need for unity among Angolan nationalists, Savimbi chastised the ineffectiveness of the GRAE.¹³² Subsequently, Savimbi provided

131. F Bridgland, op.cit., p.56.

132. Resignation Statement 16 July 1964. Reproduced in R H

an explanation of his reasons for leaving the FNLA, which ranged from charges of "American imperialism within the UPA and the GRAE" to the military failures of the FNLA to the nepotism and despotism of Roberto's leadership.¹³³

Following his dramatic resignation in Cairo, Savimbi then either flew directly from Cairo to Brazzaville to see Neto and the MPLA, and then undertook a "journey in support of international support,"¹³⁴ or, according to Marcum, first visited Algeria, China, North Vietnam, North Korea and Eastern Europe before then going to Brazzaville in the autumn of that year.¹³⁵ Whichever the case, the 'Far East' tour achieved little of substance. It was largely unsuccessful as a fundraiser as it was in obtaining firm support for the new Angolan nationalist movement which Savimbi later claimed he already had in mind. Peking did agree to train him and a small number of his supporters in the art of guerrilla warfare.

Despite later denials,¹³⁶ it seems likely that Savimbi

Chilcote, op.cit., p.154.

133. Where is the Angolan Revolution? October 1964. Reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., pp.155-161. Interestingly, both this document and the aforementioned statement of resignation were published in 1964 by the MPLA in Algiers, movement to which Savimbi turned after leaving the FNLA.

134. According to Bridgland, Neto offered Savimbi the post of Secretary of Foreign Affairs, but the latter did not accept. F Bridgland, op.cit., p.64. The MPLA leader responsible for Foreign Affairs had been Mário de Andrade who had left the movement in July 1962 and did not rejoin until October 1964.

135. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, pp.160-161.

136. "To tell the truth I never intended to belong to that

did consider joining the MPLA at this stage. The ineffectiveness of the FNLA and the rather despotic leadership of Roberto had made the GRAE an unviable option for Savimbi and his supporters. On the other hand, the MPLA in Brazzaville had helped a number of Savimbi's supporters, who had followed him out of the FNLA, escape across the river from Leopoldville, and co-operation ensued between these. Furthermore, the MPLA had by the end of 1964 begun its recovery from near-extinction (see Chapters Four and Five) and must have been seen as a possibility for Savimbi and his followers. From here the choice became either joining the MPLA or forming a third movement. But adding another rival to the already fratricidal divisions in the Angolan nationalist camp required some justification, if only to convince external supporters that UNITA was not simply a vehicle for Savimbi's personal ambitions. This was explained by pointing to the stagnation in the military challenge of both the MPLA and the FNLA. The former had not managed to progress very far in its campaign in Cabinda (see Chapters Four and Five), while the latter had been carrying out a rather ineffective border war, and was riddled with problems of discipline. According to Bridgland, Savimbi had visited the MPLA base at Dolisie in 1964, and returned disillusioned with their military capacity:

"The MPLA had only 30 men there, and between five and ten of them might go into Cabinda at a time...There was no real fighting going on and Daniel Chipenda was drinking too much and so were all his men."¹³⁷

movement." J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.161, footnote 218.

Invoking the example of George Washington, Savimbi defended the return from exile as the only positive action then open to Angolan nationalists.¹³⁸

By early 1966, with a small military cadre known as the 'Chinese Eleven' already being trained at the Nanking Academy, Savimbi felt ready to launch his own Angolan liberation movement. By 1966 he had brought together in Lusaka the following three strands of supporters that formed UNITA.

After Zambian independence, Roberto had attempted to establish a GRAE delegation in Lusaka. However, this operation had subsequently collapsed under the centrifugal pressure applied by the FNLA leader from Leopoldville. According to one observer, Roberto's style of leadership ignored all other potential sources of authority to the point of estrangement.¹³⁹ The GRAE office in Lusaka was consistently spurned by the leadership in Leopoldville until its frustration with Roberto worked in Savimbi's favour to provide the latter with one of the pillars of the new movement. The other two pillars were made up of Savimbi's supporters in Brazzaville,¹⁴⁰ and among students

137. F Bridgland, op.cit., p.65.

138. F Bridgland, op.cit., p.67. More recent UNITA material also refers to this invocation. UNITA [1984], p.5.

139. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.164. This seems to have been the common reason for the countless defections from the FNLA, among whom was Savimbi.

140. These had grouped together under the acronym AMANGOLA

abroad, especially in the National Union of Angolan Students (UNEA)¹⁴¹ which he had established while secretary-general of the UPA. The leader of UNEA, Jorge Valentim, joined Savimbi and others in Zambia, where the Preparatory Committee for Direct Action (CPAD),¹⁴² was formed in January 1966.

The function of the CPAD was to prepare and carry out the formal foundation of UNITA inside Angola. This occurred on 15 March 1966, at Muangai, 250 kilometres inside the country.¹⁴³ Barely functioning and still without a major military force,¹⁴⁴ UNITA was nevertheless inside Angola where it intended to develop an armed challenge to Portuguese colonialism.

A crucial factor in the creation of UNITA was the implicit benevolence of Zambia that had become independent in 1964. The initial Zambian policy of prohibiting the use of its territory for guerrilla operations against neighbouring countries, gave Savimbi an opportunity to make a virtue out of a

(Amigos do Manifesto Angolano): Friends of the Angolan Manifesto. They co-operated with the MPLA for a short time, but resisted the MPLA's demands that they join the movement. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, pp.161-162.

141. União Nacional dos Estudantes Angolanos.

142. Comité Preparatório da Acção Directa.

143. According to Bridgland, Savimbi himself was not present at the foundation and did not enter Angola until 26 October 1966 (F Bridgland, op.cit., p.70). An official UNITA publication claims, however, that he entered Angola in March and carried out the foundation himself (UNITA [1984], p.5) as does J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.166.

144. The 'Chinese Eleven' were unable to enter Angola until October 1966.

necessity and spurn the luxury of exile in favour of the austerity and risk of an internal base. Possibly by virtue of alleged friendships with governmental ministers,¹⁴⁵ Zambia allowed Savimbi to prepare for the launch of UNITA. But its extreme economic dependence on export routes, such as the Benguela Railway to the Angolan coast, led Zambia to act reticently over Savimbi's attempts to bring his Nanking-trained guerrillas into the country,¹⁴⁶ until in October 1966 Lusaka finally lifted its restriction on the operation of liberation movements in its territory.

At the end of 1966, Savimbi went into Angola where he remained for a few months. The new UNITA mounted a number of attacks, at Cassamba and Teixeira de Sousa, on the eastern border with Zaire, and along the Benguela railway. Although largely unsuccessful they were a measure of the determination of the movement to break the mould of Angolan nationalist politics:

"John Edlin of the Zambia News cited Savimbi as an example to those freedom fighters in Lusaka who did `little else than produce dozens of pamphlets condemning the regimes of Portugal, South Africa or Rhodesia.' He told them: `Go into your country and see for yourself what is happening. Then fight. Others will follow.'"¹⁴⁷

What the operation of UNITA inside Angola did was to change the

145. F Bridgland, op.cit., p.69.

146. One was arrested as an attempt was made to smuggle them through Zambia from Tanzania.

147. J Marcum 'Three Revolutions' [1967], p.13.

priorities of all the Angolan nationalist movements. It hastened the rush to change the character of a movement from that of a political exile group to that of a guerrilla movement, working inside the country. Two months after UNITA's foundation, the MPLA moved to establish its presence inside eastern Angola.¹⁴⁸

But Zambian benevolence did not last. When Savimbi emerged from the Angolan underground in February 1967, UNITA's profile had been enhanced by its internal activity but the Zambian government was preoccupied with the effects of UNITA's raids on the Benguela railway. It could ill afford the disruption of the transportation route of its copper exports. Although Savimbi had agreed to comply with Lusaka's request to refrain from disrupting the railway, the line was attacked twice by UNITA during his absence.¹⁴⁹ When Savimbi returned to the Zambian capital in July 1967, he was arrested and UNITA was banned. After six days, the leader of the new Angolan movement, having extolled the virtues of internal bases, was on his way to Cairo for another stint of exile. Returning to Angola in June 1968, Savimbi proceeded to build on the core of the movement that had survived. With more emphasis on internal than external

148. The eastern region became the MPLA's third front. The resistance of those groups in the Dembos, outside Luanda and its activity in Cabinda, from a base in the Congo (Brazzaville), constituted the other two fronts. The FNLA was active mainly in the northern areas adjacent to the border with Zaire, where it was based.

149. Savimbi was in Cairo to attend a meeting of 'progressive' African leaders. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Volume Two, p.192.

structures, UNITA developed into the third force of Angolan anti-colonialism.

The issue of race in Angolan nationalism has already been touched upon, particularly the antagonism raised by the mestiço-assimilado domination of the MPLA. This was emphasized by both Roberto and Savimbi, and it is reasonable to assume that this issue was used in the consolidation of internal support for their respective movements. The reference to race must have been used as an instrument of political mobilization. In this respect, UNITA differs little from the FNLA and much from the MPLA, that emphasized a multiracial view of Angolan nationalism.

Clearly, UNITA was also exploiting the ethnic commonality of its leaders and the Ovimbundu in the central and southern areas of Angola, hitherto somewhat unrepresented. Nevertheless, UNITA emphasized that it sought a national expression and, like the FNLA and the MPLA, did not challenge the territorial definition of colonial Angola. Furthermore, it tried to dispel its regional identification by giving prominent posts to non-Ovimbundus, such as Miguel N'Zau Puna, a Cabindan, who was secretary-general of UNITA and the 'general political commissar' of its military forces.¹⁵⁰

The ideological characteristics of UNITA are hard to assess but seem to have been developed within a context of the Sino-Soviet dispute of the 1960s. In terms of external

150. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.194.

support, Savimbi and UNITA had a number of sympathetic ears but no firm source of hard military or financial contributions. The fund-raising route to the two major poles of the East-West conflict was travelled by UNITA's rivals; while in Africa, this pattern tended to be repeated. To maintain an identity and seek external support, UNITA had to tread a thin, ambiguous line that divided nationalist politics into two camps. On the one hand UNITA claimed to be an anti-communist movement, but the realities of anti-colonial politics in the mid-1960s made some radicalism necessary. On the other, the appeal to China by Savimbi was an attempt to take advantage of any motivations Peking might have had in wanting to support a rival of Moscow's Angolan movement.

While railing against the 'revisionism' and 'social imperialism' of the Soviet Union, and placing itself in a somewhat anti-communist posture, it praised, on the other hand, the virtues of Maoism, the teachings of which UNITA claimed to be applying directly, only in an Angolan context. Rather deftly, Savimbi turned the reality of UNITA's rather isolated position into a defiant image wherein UNITA was seen to be implementing a doctrine of self-reliance. Far more than the other two movements, UNITA focused its political programme on the peasantry, which according to it would have to be mobilized against colonialism and would form the basis of a future independent Angola. Furthermore, on these basic postures, the movement used a loose mixture of terms such as 'socialism',

`liberation' and `freedom' that betrayed a rather broad ideological scope, somewhat lacking in cohesiveness.

By the early 1970s, UNITA had had a significant military impact on the anti-colonial war to have been singled out as one of three major Angolan nationalist movements. Its ethnic implantation was far too great to be ignored. Although its diplomatic recognition was long in coming, by the time of the Portuguese coup UNITA considered itself equal in stature to the FNLA and the MPLA. More than the other movements it favoured a unification of the anti-colonial forces which, if carried out in accordance to its national appeal, might have resulted in a significant role for Savimbi and UNITA. Similarly, after the Portuguese coup, UNITA's preference for general elections rather than a civil war to sort out the divisions among the movements betrayed a confidence, perhaps misplaced, in this proportional domination of UNITA.

Despite its declared preference for peaceful political processes, UNITA entered the civil war in 1975. Its major contribution to the conflict was its co-operation with the South African invasion. This alliance with a regime that was a political liability in African politics may reflect a general trend within UNITA which places a greater value on the achievement of its aims than on the means by which these are achieved. Earlier, during the anti-colonial war, UNITA had been widely accused of collaboration with the Portuguese colonial forces. The so-called `Operation Timber' affair alleges that

Savimbi and the Portuguese military regularly came to tacit and not-so-tacit cease-fire agreements, during which the spoiling of MPLA operations by both sides was prevalent. A leading Portuguese military figure, General Costa Gomes supports these allegations.¹⁵¹ In an interview given in 1988, Costa Gomes claims that before the Portuguese coup Savimbi had let it be known that he did not want to be targeted.¹⁵² Considering that "at that time the danger did not come from UNITA's forces but from those of the MPLA," the Portuguese Army struck a 'non-hostility' accord with Savimbi.¹⁵³ In return Savimbi, according to Costa Gomes, provided information on the movements of MPLA squads.¹⁵⁴ These allegations are denied by Savimbi and UNITA.

By the mid 1960s, Angolan nationalism had crystallized into three rival movements. They all shared common values of previous anti-colonial expressions, and also emerged out of a common reaction to Portuguese colonialism. The intransigence of

151. Francisco Costa Gomes was Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces (Chefe do Estado Maior das Forças Armadas) immediately before the 25 April coup. He was pushed out along with Spínola. He was a major figure in the regime, close to Botelho Moniz, the Minister of Defence who had tried to oust Salazar in 1961. Costa Gomes was then known as pro-American. After the April 1974 coup, he was President of the Republic during the most radical period of the MFA until 25 November 1975. During this time he was considered to be pro-Moscow.

152. Interview in Expresso (Lisbon) 8 October 1988.

153. Ibid.

154. Ibid. Costa Gomes alleges also that Savimbi's father was released after an accord.

the Salazarist regime had helped to influence the political choices of the anti-colonialists by restricting the expression of self-determination to that of a violent challenge. But the origins of each movement are also based on the development of a particular dynamic wherein personalities and political choices played a very important role. The movements worked to express, in their respective political prisms, their particular view of Angolan nationalism. A view that ultimately did not consider the possibility of power-sharing. Furthermore, the violence of over a decade of anti-colonial war could not have failed to exacerbate the political conflict in Angola.

PART THREE

CONTINENTAL POLITICS AND ANGOLAN RIVALRY 1961-1968

CHAPTER FOUR

EXILE POLITICS IN THE CONGO 1962-1963

It can be argued that the Angolan civil war of 1975 began in Leopoldville in 1962. Already at that time, two of the protagonists of that war, the MPLA and the FNLA, were engaged in a political rivalry that was often expressed with violence. By the end of 1961, the MPLA had decided to move closer to Angola by establishing itself in the Congolese capital. The proximity of the Angolan border and the presence of a large Angolan refugee community in Leopoldville,¹ made it the logical choice for the MPLA to establish an external base from which to launch its own armed anti-colonial challenge. But from the very beginning the movement ran up against difficulties that resulted from the fact that the FNLA was already far better rooted in Leopoldville's political circles.

The MPLA established itself in Leopoldville some time in late 1961 or early 1962.² After Mário de Andrade had established the Directing Committee in Conakry, and had claimed

1. According to Red Cross estimates there were over 200,000 Angolan refugees in Congo Leopoldville in 1962. Expresso (Lisbon) 2 February 1991.

2. A contemporary account claims that "...the MPLA's headquarters were officially transferred to Leopoldville..." on 30 October 1961. P McGowan Pinheiro 'Politics of a Revolt' [1962], p.113.

the 4 February attack for the MPLA, the movement was ready to enter into action. The political leadership moved to Leopoldville to establish its first major headquarters. There, the MPLA received its first military force which had been organized by Manuel Santos Lima and trained in Morocco.³

According to one account, there had already been attempts to promote a pro-Luanda group in Leopoldville before this. In June 1960, Mário de Andrade had apparently approached Rosário Neto, a prominent Mbundu that had been active in Leopoldville, with a view to joining the MPLA. But Rosário Neto turned down the offer of association and joined the UPA leadership instead. One local group, led by a Kikongo-speaker, António Josias, did have links with the MPLA intellectuals. The ethnic origin of Josias helped this group to gain access to the mainly Bakongo community in Leopoldville. This established an important foothold for the MPLA among the Angolan refugees. However, when the MPLA leadership came to Leopoldville, Josias was cast aside and the local structure was taken over.⁴

The MPLA's move to Leopoldville was made after having consolidated a certain amount of international support,

3. Interview with Manuel Santos Lima, Lisbon, 14 January 1991.

4. Also displaced by the incoming leadership was José Bernardo Domingos, the vice president of the group. The Aliazo (soon to be the PDA) took this attitude by the MPLA (in dislodging a respected figure) to be evidence of the need to doubt the good faith of the movement. This may have affected the PDA's decision to merge with UPA. see J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution, Volume One, [1969], pp.204-5.

particularly in Western Europe, but also in some African capitals, such as Conakry and Accra. Mário de Andrade's links to French intellectual and political circles helped give the MPLA an authoritative profile as representatives of a progressive Angolan nationalism. At the same time, groups of pro-MPLA students, in countries including the UK, Brazil, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, the Scandinavian countries and West and East Germany,⁵ campaigned for the cause of Angolan anti-colonialism, as personified by the MPLA. In Africa, the MPLA leaders found sympathy generally in those countries known as the Casablanca group: Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco and the United Arab Republic. The MPLA also found favour in Senegal, due to a personal relationship between Mário de Andrade and Leopold Senghor, that had its origins in the work both had done in Paris for the publication Presence Africaine.

The central core that established the MPLA consisted of Mário de Andrade, Lúcio Lara and Viriato da Cruz. But by May 1962, Viriato da Cruz had been ousted from his post of secretary-general, and by December, Mário de Andrade had ceded the presidency of the movement to Agostinho Neto. At the heart of this change in the leadership was a dispute related to an internal power struggle; but it also derived from an attempt by the movement to overcome what it perceived to be shortcomings in its external image.

5. J Marcum, *ibid.*, Volume One, pp.200-202.

The MPLA had already been characterized by this time as a Marxist movement. The links made by Mário de Andrade, Lúcio Lara and Viriato da Cruz with both the Portuguese and the French communist parties, were well-known. During this period up to 1964 (the time when a concrete link was established with Moscow), the MPLA tried to play down its radical nature in order to appeal to a broad international audience. Well known as a Marxist,⁶ Viriato da Cruz may have been a victim of these attempts to recreate the image of a non-"pro-communist" MPLA.⁷ In 1963, the US State Department considered Viriato to be one of the "genuine communists in the MPLA."⁸ When he was expelled from the movement, Washington seemed to have been sufficiently impressed by this act to give the benefit of the doubt to the professed neutrality of the MPLA. US embassies in Africa were instructed not to spurn this movement.⁹

But recent testimony has attributed Viriato's

6. "Dr Cruz has been regarded as a member of the extremist wing of the MPLA." West Africa (9 May 1964) in Africa Digest [1964], p.188.

7. In an interview given during a trip to the US in late 1961, Mário de Andrade stated that his group was not "pro-communist" (Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.220). These attempts to present a neutral position, outside a cold war context, were projected by the MPLA, in particular, to the US and the UN during this time. Mário de Andrade's trip to Moscow to address the World Congress for General Disarmament and Peace on 12 June 1962 seems to have been an exception. J Marcum, *ibid.*, p.255.

8. J Freire Antunes, Kennedy e Salazar: o Leão e a Raposa [1991], p.87.

9. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution, Volume Two, [1978], p.16.

marginalization to a conscious decision to dispel accusations levelled at the movement concerning its mestiço-dominated leadership.¹⁰ Mário de Andrade and Viriato da Cruz were both mestiço, and so it was decided that the leadership of the movement would be reserved for an African; for somebody that could repel the racial allegations, as well as fit more appropriately as the leader of an African nationalist movement; for somebody like Agostinho Neto. According to Van Dunem:

"So [Neto] came to the front of the movement. Viriato da Cruz's handicap was that he was a 'mulato' (mestiço), and Neto was black."¹¹

There can be little doubt that when Neto took over the movement, this caused a split in the original leadership. He had not had any links to the movement per se until he escaped from prison in 1962.¹² He was, however, one of the best known Angolan nationalists. Mário de Andrade was intent on having Neto as the MPLA's leader. His stints in prison and his poetry had created a mythological figure that was popular among Angolans as well as

10. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1990.

11. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1990.

12. In July 1962, Neto returned to Leopoldville having escaped prison in Portugal. His escape across the straits to Morocco was apparently achieved in part by the assistance given by elements of the Portuguese democratic opposition that were based, at that time, in Algiers. These ranged from supporters of General Humberto Delgado (opposition presidential candidate in 1958, later murdered in 1965, allegedly by the PIDE) to the highly disciplined Portuguese Communist Party, and were (temporarily) united in a front in exile. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, Angola, [1971], p.213.

among international sympathizers.¹³ Neto's return to Leopoldville was apparently held in great expectation by many other Angolans. Many felt that it would signal the unification of all Angolan nationalists.¹⁴

Despite this optimism, however, Neto's initial form at the head of the movement was apparently more noticeable for its lack of experience than for its vision. According to Van Dunem, Neto constantly, but covertly, sought the aid of Viriato da Cruz in the day-to-day running of the movement.¹⁵

The distancing of Viriato da Cruz (and the subsequent resignation of another prominent MPLA activist, Graça da Silva Tavares), despite its diplomatically useful consequence in giving the MPLA a less radical image, led to the first of a number of splits in the MPLA. The very public exposure of differences in the movement gave a negative counter-image of disunity at a time when the MPLA was attempting to launch a serious anti-colonial challenge; an image that Neto and Andrade wanted to avoid, especially when courting sensitive Western sources. At the same time, in March 1962, the UPA had merged to create the FNLA and the GRAE and seemed to be going from strength to strength. It became imperative for the MPLA to act or else it would lose the race at the starting line.

13. A petition for the release of Neto had been signed by the cream of French left-wing political and literary circles.

14. J Marcum, op.cit. Volume One, [1969], p.264.

15. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October, 1991.

What resulted from these internal and external pressures was a constitutive conference held by the MPLA during the first three days of December 1962. The main outcome of the conference was the consolidation of Agostinho Neto's leadership of the movement. Viriato da Cruz considered that the MPLA had been taken over:

"The representatives of the new arguments and tactics finally took over the effective domination of the organisation, seizing the funds of the MPLA and legalising their new situations at the national conference held in Leopoldville in December 1962."¹⁶

The leadership of the movement now lay in the overlapping Steering and Politico-Military committees. The Steering Committee numbered ten members.¹⁷ A larger 70-man council of delegates was formed for the purposes of the conference but was to never meet again. The MPLA was now effectively under Neto's leadership.

The new era in the MPLA was begun by an attempt at

16. V da Cruz 'Problems of the Angolan Revolution' (1964). Reproduced in R H Chilcote, Documents, [1972], p.210. In this document, Viriato da Cruz gives his view of the failures of the MPLA and what led him to leave the movement.

17. Agostinho Neto (president), Matias Migueis (vice-president), Rev. Domingos da Silva (vice-president), Manuel Santos Lina (war), Mário de Andrade (external relations), Lúcio Lara (organization and training of cadres), Aníbal de Melo (UPA defector, information), Deolinda Rodrigues de Almeida (social affairs), Desidério da Graça (finance and economy) and Henrique (Ikc) Carreira (security). Those underlined made up the Politico-Military Committee which formed the inner core of the leadership. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, pp.29-30, footnote 130.

establishing a cathartic break with the past and laying down the maxims for the future priorities of the movement. Although this was mostly an exercise in establishing the ideological character of the movement, this process of 'restructuring' addressed, somewhat ironically, some of the very problems that would subsequently emerge from Angolan rivalry in exile.¹⁸

In his conference speech, Neto stressed that the movement should now hold as a major priority the establishment of military action in the interior of the country over and above the previously predominant activity of garnering external support. This was one of the MPLA's major problems: the weakness of its military operations which, on a number of occasions, led to it being cast aside in favour of its rivals, most notably in mid-1963 when the OAU recognized the GRAE as the sole representative of Angolan nationalism (see Chapter Five). In accordance with this new priority, the newly-formed military wing of the movement, the Popular Army of the Liberation of Angola (EPLA),¹⁹ with a core of about 300 soldiers trained in Ghana and in Morocco on Algerian bases,²⁰ was given the task of opening and operating a military front in the Cabindan

18. The First National Conference of the MPLA is the first document which attempts a comprehensive definition of the constitution, ideology and objectives of the MPLA. Reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., pp.251-265.

19. Exército Popular de Libertação de Angola.

20. J Marcum, op.cit. Volume One, [1969], p.302. Interview with Manuel Santos Lima, Lisbon, 14 January 1991.

enclave.²¹

However, despite this emphasis on the importance of armed action within Angola, the first few months of 1963 saw Neto undertake a tour of the United States, North Africa and Europe. The ostensible aims of this tour were to disseminate the cause of the new MPLA under Neto. In the US, the main objective of visits to New York and Washington seemed to have been to counter the charges of being a pro-communist movement. Despite the ideological leanings of the MPLA, the US was viewed as a potentially important source of anti-colonial support. Criticized for propping up the Salazar regime through NATO structures, Washington was nevertheless a major stop-over for the nationalist movements when touring the globe for support. At this time, anti-colonial movements found that when asking for official or institutional US assistance, one credential above all others was required: anti-communism. As with other movements, the MPLA considered that the needs of the anti-colonial conflict required some flexibility, even if this implied concealing its ideological nature.

The US was, however, Roberto's constituency. Since

21. Militarily, the MPLA were never very successful in Cabinda. Despite the advantages given by the terrain (the mountains and thick forests protected MPLA units from Portuguese retaliation), they never achieved a significant military gain in the enclave. One reason for this may be related to Cabindan separatist claims which diverted support away from the MPLA. Another may have been the poor military calibre of the EPLA, whose commander, Manuel Santos Lima, left the MPLA in 1963 and was replaced by Daniel Chipenda.

1959, yearly visits by the UPA leader had given the American public and press a face for Angolan nationalism. It was difficult for Neto to break this familiarity. Roberto's links within the US administration,²² and some private organizations²³ favoured the UPA (see Chapter Seven). To all these sources of support, Roberto's attraction was undoubtedly his strong anti-communist stance.

Despite this distinct advantage held by the UPA leader, Neto's 1963 trip to the US was reasonably successful. The purge of Viriato da Cruz had apparently impressed the US State Department, as is shown by the following memorandum circulated in July setting down US policy on Angolan movements:

"US has been under impression GRAE and Roberto represented a pro-Western stand in resistance movement...MPLA has received Communist support and has some Communist sympathisers in it. However in the last ten months, some extreme leftists have been removed. Recent expulsion da Cruz and Migueis and Neto visit US and Western Europe last year indicate MPLA seeking contacts with West. US policy is rpt (sic) not to discourage MPLA (Neto-Andrade faction) move toward West and not to choose between these movements."²⁴

22. A M Khazanov, (Agostinho Neto, [1986], p.63), claims the CIA supported Roberto from 1962 onwards. W Burchett, (Southern Africa Stands Up, [1978], p.26), claims the CIA supported Roberto from 1961, providing a monthly retainer of US\$ 10,000. J Stockwell (In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story, [1978], p.64. calls the CIA's relationship with Roberto 'historic.'

23. In the US, Roberto was supported by: the American Committee on Africa and the Baptist Church (D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., p.169); the Ford Foundation; and the AFL-CIO, the US trade union federation (M A Samuels, 'The Nationalist Parties', [1969], p.392). The AFL-CIO was apparently used by the CIA to infiltrate labour groups in Western Europe. J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991], p.100.

24. S Weissman 'The CIA and US Policy in Zaire and Angola' in R

After addressing the UN General Assembly, Neto travelled to Washington accompanied by a Methodist bishop, Ralph Dodge, who gave Neto access to Protestant circles where he fund-raised for Angolan refugees.²⁵ During this tour, Neto also stopped off at some European capitals to reinforce his links of authority with pro-MPLA student groups in these cities.²⁶

From Europe, Neto then proceeded to Algeria to open an MPLA office there and attempt to swing official allegiances towards the MPLA. During the Algerian war, the National Liberation Front (FLN) had been a guest of both the Moroccan and Tunisian governments. The FLN had pledged assistance to both the MPLA and to the UPA, both diplomatically and by providing military training for the officer groups of both movements. The UPA had been trained by the Boumedienne-led group in Tunisia while Ben Bella's faction had trained the MPLA cadres in Morocco. The matrix of Angolan rivalry was therefore placed on an Algerian one. When Algeria became independent in July 1962, competition between the two Angolan movements was stepped up in

Lemarchand (ed.) American Policy in Southern Africa: The Stakes and the Stance, [1978], p.400.

25. A M Khazanov, op.cit., p.143.

26. Pro-MPLA student groups were active in the Netherlands, France, West Germany, Belgium, Italy and Sweden. Many Angolans in the UK were also sympathetic to its cause. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], pp.14,15.

order to gain exclusive favour with the new regime in Algiers. Mário de Andrade's close links with Ben Bella, the new leader of independent Algeria, seemed to favour the MPLA. At this time, however, the advantage held by the MPLA was small. The rivalry between the Angolan nationalists was rapidly becoming a continental political issue and Algerian policy was one of placing pressure on the MPLA and the FNLA to form a common front.

There were attempts to unite the MPLA and FNLA at this time. In a press conference, Mário de Andrade stressed the MPLA's commitment to forming a united front.²⁷ But judging by the exchange of personal letters between Roberto and Neto, a peaceful merger of the two movements under their leadership would have been out of the question. In August 1962, Roberto answered Neto:

"It is regrettable that one day after contact had been made between the FNLA and your party, the MPLA, a letter in directly taking up again the serious, calumnious and biased accusations that have always kept us apart should come to me, thus destroying the hope that had arisen from our first meeting, in which it had been decided to establish a committee to study the eventual collaboration of our respective parties...in the light of the insulting terms of your letter, allow me to tell you that the invitation you sent to me is, at the very least, inopportune for the time being."²⁸

At this stage, it is difficult to apportion

27. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, [1969], p.204.

28. H Roberto 'Letter to Neto' 9 August 1962. Reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.80.

responsibility for the failure to form a common front. The MPLA almost certainly did not consider diluting its organization in the FNLA under Roberto's leadership. Similarly, the FNLA was well-placed in Leopoldville and saw no reason to doubt that it could survive or even succeed without the MPLA. Furthermore, despite the attempts by the MPLA to lower its radical profile, ideology remained an important factor in the MPLA-FNLA rivalry. In an article published on 5 February 1962, a PDA leader, Matumona, charged that the UPA had been receiving nearly all its material and financial support from the American Committee on Africa and that a condition for this support was that it should in no way ally itself with the 'pro-communist' MPLA.²⁹ The MPLA accused the UPA of using blocking tactics to avoid forming a common front, and criticized Roberto's personal ambition. The MPLA's criticisms focused on the fact that Roberto was not really an Angolan, a charge that the Portuguese had often levelled.³⁰

Up to this point, the dispute between the FNLA and the MPLA had been essentially political. As their rivalry became more assiduous, however, the expression of differences became more violent. For the most part, these differences dwelt on the question of race. The MPLA characterized the UPA as being a racist organization because of the latter's criticism of it as

29. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.250.

30. J Marcum, op.cit. Volume One, [1969], p.249.

a movement dominated by mestiços. In return, the MPLA would chastise the UPA for being uni-racialist (pro-Bakongo) and therefore unrepresentative. As 1962 progressed it became clear that a common front was out of the question. The unreconciliability of the MPLA and the FNLA should have been apparent. Yet if the MPLA wanted to operate a serious military challenge against the Portuguese at this stage, it was important for it to come to terms with the FNLA. The reason for this was the very favourable conditions under which the FNLA operated in Leopoldville.

The FNLA was very well connected within Congolese political circles. It was fundamentally a Leopoldville movement, far more at home (and influenced by its politics) in the Congolese capital than in Angola. Furthermore, as has been emphasized, the origins of the movement lay in the Bakongo constituency, an ethnic group that straddles the border and plays an important political role in the Congo. In August 1962, the Congolese government placed at the FNLA's disposal a military training camp at Kinkuzu, south of Leopoldville on the way to the Angolan border.³¹ It was manned by a new officer cadre, trained in Tunisia by the Algerians, which had returned to Leopoldville in June. These FLN-trained guerrillas formed the core of the Army of the National Liberation of Angola (ELNA),³²

31. According to one account, this base had been granted in exchange for Roberto's promise to President Kasavubu that the UPA was about to form a front with the MPLA. W Burchett, Southern Africa Stands Up [1978], p.16.

which, according to claims, blossomed into a 25,000-strong military arm of the FNLA.³³

Additionally, Roberto was politically favoured by the Congolese government, as a result of the personal friendship between him and the prime minister, Cyrille Adoula. According to most accounts they played football together and had had a long-standing association. One of the main consequences of this favour was the FNLA being granted an all-important unfettered access to the Angolan border. Through this access, the movement could infiltrate its units into Angola, support focuses of resistance and claim to the world that it was engaged in an anti-colonial military uprising against the Portuguese. The FNLA's claims that it operated inside Angola were followed up with well-publicized trips to selected bases.³⁴ The MPLA could not do the same and had difficulty in disseminating its image as a military movement.

When the MPLA did attempt to conduct military

32. Exército de Libertação Nacional de Angola.

33. For all the claims about the strength and loyalty of the ELNA, the history of this army is riddled with incidents of revolt, mutiny, desertions and allegations of poor fighting capacity. Commenting on the fact that ELNA elements were only paid after having raided Angola, Savimbi declared that it was not, therefore, very surprising that the units never strayed very far across the border for fear of not being able to return for their pay, becoming, in effect, no more than a border army. W Burchett, op.cit., p.31. Other observers have commented on the ELNA's distinct preference for parades over hard military operations. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., p.206.

34. Unfortunately, as reports about these bases emerged in the press, the Portuguese would systematically utilize them to help locate and militarily neutralize such bases. D Wheeler and R

operations, the likelihood of failure was increased by the multiple risks its units had to take. They had to contend with an unfriendly Congolese army, outrightly hostile UPA units as well as, of course, the Portuguese army. During this period there were a number of incidents between rival partisans inside Angola that became central to the rivalry between the MPLA and the FNLA. Direct fighting between MPLA and UPA units was common and their political rivalry developed into outright aggression.

One such incident, in late 1961, involved the alleged interception, imprisonment and execution of a twenty-man MPLA squad by the UPA. The MPLA unit was led by Tomás Ferreira which had been sent into Angola to reinforce the pro-MPLA leadership of a resistance group in the Dembos.³⁵ According to one analysis of the incident cited by Marcum, the presence of mestiços in the MPLA unit had been the provocative factor for the Africans in the UPA squad.³⁶ When accused of the interception and the killings the UPA denied any involvement in the incident, but added condescendingly that it had been foolish of the MPLA to

Pelissier, op.cit., p.203.

35. The colonial backlash against the February and March attacks had led to the escape of activists from the cities into the forest areas. Attempts were made by pro-MPLA Luandans to organize and operate groups in the Dembos area around Nambuanguo. The MPLA's common origins in Luanda were the bases for its attempts to link up with these groups, being able to claim that it maintained an active military force within Angola. But these groups were in direct competition with FNLA units in the area, and were anxious to provide evidence to the local population that they had access to both material and moral support from the MPLA. The Ferreira mission was intended to meet these needs.

have sent a unit unannounced into a zone of military action in the first place. Typically the UPA made much of its advantageous access to Angolan territory and tended to publicly treat the Angolan war as an exclusively UPA operation. It was later revealed, however, that the author of the above denial, Rosário Neto, had not been aware that the UPA had, in fact, been responsible for the elimination of the Ferreira mission. The UPA chief-of-staff, Marcos Kassanga, on his resignation on 3 March 1962, added to accusations that Roberto had personally ordered the extermination of MPLA units.³⁷ Later, Roberto indeed confirmed that instructions had been given for the interception and destruction of MPLA units.³⁸

In some ways, the Ferreira incident characterized the military and political facets of the Angolan nationalists' shared exile in Leopoldville: the FNLA's advantage in access to Angola and the irreconciliability of the FNLA-MPLA rivalry that was increasingly expressed with violence.

Notwithstanding the Congolese authorities' distinct favouritism of the FNLA, the MPLA was not completely without friends. The lower Congo province was administered by members

36. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.218.

37. To these accusations Kassanga added the charge of the murder, earlier that year, of João Baptista, the UPA field commander, by Bakongo tribalists (Baptista was a southerner, a Ganguela). Kassanga held Roberto responsible for inspiring tribalism. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., p.204.

38. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.214. Roberto claimed that the Ferreira mission was undertaken in order to construct an

of the Congolese Bakongo party, ABAKO. Because of their common ethnic constituency, the ABAKO and the FNLA were rivals. Consequently, when able to choose, ABAKO favoured the MPLA. In return, the MPLA extended its refugee relief service to the pro-ABAKO community.³⁹ Another MPLA success was being granted the Angolan broadcasts on Radio Leopoldville, a privilege plucked from the expectant FNLA (while Roberto was outside the country) by exploiting differences within the Congolese government.⁴⁰

The formation of the GRAE in 1962 was, politically, the single-most damaging event for the MPLA during its time in Leopoldville. Furthermore, the 'government-in-exile' was formed by the FNLA, which unlike the MPLA, was an organization that was made up of more than one party. Despite the fact that the failure to unite the MPLA and the FNLA in a common front was as much the responsibility of one as the other, it was the MPLA that was suddenly left on the sidelines with the creation of the FNLA and the GRAE. Roberto was able, for some time, to use the mixed constitution of the FNLA as evidence to back his resistance to the MPLA's appeals for the creation of, what he considered to be, another united front. The UPA leader's replies always stressed the fact that the Angolan common front already existed, in the FNLA. It was, therefore, up to the MPLA to join it. From here on, even among sympathetic ears, the logic of the

airfield for the delivery of arms.

39. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.67.

MPLA's calls for a common front was severely weakened.

The MPLA did try to react to the creation of the GRAE. The movement circulated an 18-page memorandum to African states setting out the MPLA's case against the what it considered to be an unrepresentative, personalized, political vehicle for tribalist interests.⁴¹ In this document, the MPLA referred to the short-lived front created by it in April 1961, while Roberto was in New York (see Chapter Three), as an example of its commitment to unity, and demanded that the GRAE declaration be considered as no more than "...a diversionary manoeuvre..." that threatened Angolan anti-colonialism.⁴² But this protest did not lead anywhere.

By early 1963, barely twelve months after having established in Leopoldville its first base in exile, the MPLA was heading for its first major confrontation with the FNLA. From the moment the MPLA came to the Congo, there developed a personal, political and even violent rivalry between these two movements. With two separate constitutional origins, both the MPLA and the FNLA were convinced of their own place at the head of Angolan anti-colonialism. Furthermore, by the time Neto had taken over the MPLA, both movements were now led by leaders whose somewhat authoritarian style determined the character of

40. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, p.207.

41. Memorandum to the African Governments on the Formation of the So-called Provisional Government of Angola 15 April 1962. Reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., pp.239-243.

their organizations for years to come.

In 1963, this rivalry was conditioned by one factor of overwhelming importance: that is, the favour the FNLA was held in by the Congolese government. This bias was instrumental in providing the FNLA with military and political advantages, which were already in themselves prejudicial to the MPLA, but also proved to be crucial in the making of the first major crisis of the movement which brought it to the brink of extinction. This crisis is one of the focuses of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE OAU AND THE ANGOLAN NATIONALISTS 1963-1976:

CONFLICT AND RECOGNITION

(i) From 1963 to 1971

In August 1963, the African Liberation Committee (ALC) of the Organization of African Unity recommended to the assembled Council of Ministers in Dakar that the GRAE(FNLA)¹ be recognized as the sole legitimate organization fighting for Angolan national self-determination, and that all funds destined for the support of the nationalist movements in Angola be directed exclusively towards Holden Roberto's 'government-in-exile'. The ALC² based its recommendation on the conclusions reached by a fact-finding mission made to Leopoldville earlier in July, which had met with all the concerned parties, including the GRAE and the MPLA. Initially unexpected, this wholehearted backing of the GRAE proffered by the newly-formed OAU,³ was a

1. During this period, the GRAE and the FNLA were one and the same, and are thus used interchangeably throughout the text.

2. The ALC was constituted by representatives from Algeria, Guinea, the UAR, Uganda, Congo-Leopoldville, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal and Tanganyika.

3. In Addis Ababa, May 22-25, 1963.

violent blow to the fortunes of the MPLA, both in its anti-colonial campaign against the Portuguese and in its rivalry with the FNLA. Although the ALC's decision was intended to force the MPLA to join the GRAE, the result so favoured the FNLA, without provoking the capitulation of the MPLA, that it altered the course of the political rivalry between the two movements. The recognition of the GRAE by the OAU in 1963 marked the beginning of the worst period the MPLA was to experience. By November, it had been chased out of Leopoldville, towards an expected oblivion.

By 1967, another committee of the OAU, the Conciliation Committee, had recommended that the organization withdraw its recognition from the GRAE. Despite its decision in 1963, the ALC had, by 1964, accepted the MPLA as a legitimate movement and from 1966 onwards was giving it preferential aid.⁴

4. By 1972, the MPLA seemed to be the most favoured Angolan movement in the ALC. At its 19th session, the ALC earmarked # 10,000 for the movement, while the FNLA was not even represented (M Wolfers Politics in the Organization of African Unity [1976] p.190.). A significant factor, that is discernible at this session, is the importance of the movements in the other Portuguese colonies in helping to bring the MPLA international credibility. Unlike Angola, the anti-colonial struggle in Mozambique and especially Guinea-Bissau had managed to produce one dominant movement. The PAIGC of Guinea-Bissau was a particularly successful movement in political and military terms, leading General António de Spínola, the Portuguese commander there, to confess that the war against the nationalists could not be won. Furthermore, the leader of the PAIGC, Amílcar Cabral, was much respected and venerated in, among others, African circles. The alliance made between the MPLA, the PAIGC and Mozambique's FRELIMO in the Congress of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP) became an important factor in influencing opinion in favour of the MPLA, by association, as it were. At the above mentioned session the ALC also gave # 20,000 to the PAIGC and another #

In 1968, the OAU had cut off all aid to the FNLA and the OAU Secretary-General, Diallo Telli, held Roberto responsible for continuing Angolan disunity.⁵ In 1971, Roberto's movement had reached such a low point that the OAU withdrew its recognition of GRAE, although not of the FNLA. During this period between 1964 and 1971, the OAU had shifted its support, implicitly and explicitly, from the FNLA to the MPLA.

These disputes over OAU recognition reflected the course of Angolan rivalry that eventually resulted in the civil war of 1975. It further reflected how the search for external legitimacy became essential not only in the anti-colonial war but particularly in the antagonism between the rival movements. It demonstrated how external factors were drawn into the internal Angolan conflict and changed its course.

During two separate periods, the OAU favoured the FNLA and then the MPLA, providing each movement with a significant diplomatic and material boost. The importance of the OAU recognition lay in the fact that this organization was entrusted with the channeling of all continental and international support for the anti-colonial wars in Africa.⁶ But in this recognition also lay implicit legitimacy, internal and external. It is this latter collateral that was being sought by both the FNLA and the

10,000 to FRELIMO.

5. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Volume Two, [1978], p.227.

6. The ALC was the principal conduit of aid and military assistance from donors that wished to support national self-determination in the colonies and white-minority regimes in

MPLA. While this legitimacy had undoubted external benefits, its greatest capitalization lay in the effect that this had on the political rivalry between the movements. Thus, although the OAU would have argued that its acts of recognition actually sought to ameliorate this dispute, in fact these had the opposite effect, conferring an advantage on each of the movements which was mostly utilized in their dispute. It will be argued here that these acts of recognition by the OAU were drawn in by the Angolan nationalists to specifically affect the political rivalry between the MPLA and the FNLA rather than to benefit their respective anti-colonial colonial challenges.

From the very beginning of its existence, the OAU was used by the Angolan movements as a legitimizing factor in their political rivalry. The frantic behaviour of the MPLA and the FNLA in a scramble to be recognized by the ALC in the summer of 1963 was the first expression of this competition for continental political legitimacy. For political and material benefits, the Angolan movements sought to frame their political legitimacy in OAU recognition. Emanating from this recognition was international, and perhaps even national, legitimacy. As an African liberation movement recognized by the OAU, the MPLA or the FNLA could count on assistance from Africa, Western Europe and elsewhere.

The OAU often sought to bring the rival movements together in a common front, which it believed would best further the anti-colonial war. In this, the OAU seemed to be

pursuing a reasonably consistent policy with regard to Angolan rivalry. Both the FNLA and the MPLA responded to the initiatives but allowed them to disintegrate shortly afterwards. Neither movement wanted to be seen as the difficult party and thereby attract criticism. But a common front was never achieved, partly because each movement was able to count on an external source of support even when somewhat ostracized by the OAU. Thus, without the means to enforce the creation of a common front, the OAU's policy became redundant in the face of continuing Angolan rivalry and continuing access to external means of supporting this competition, and served only to accentuate their differences. Furthermore, the OAU seemed to have two identities. While, on the one hand, its organizational structure seemed to pursue a common front policy with regard to the Angolan nationalists, on the other, the prevailing tendency in its body of member-states came to politicize the important initiatives with regard to these movements. The OAU could never act beyond the sum of its parts.

The background to the recognition of the GRAE by the OAU in August 1963 reveals firstly how the advantages held by the FNLA in the Congo were capitalized upon to shift the balance of power even further away from the MPLA and towards Roberto's movement. Secondly, the consequences for the MPLA of this act of recognition reveal the impact of the OAU's action on the course of Angolan rivalry.

The ALC mission to Leopoldville which recommended the recognition of the GRAE as the sole Angolan movement, came to its conclusions in an environment that was singularly disadvantageous for the MPLA. Despite having representatives on the mission from countries that would theoretically have supported the MPLA, and despite the fact that the MPLA itself was the greater proponent of a common-front policy, a number of incidents and conditions that occurred almost on the day itself, swung the ALC in favour of the GRAE. These factors were of varied origins but combined to give a negative image of the MPLA, and, conversely, gave a very favourable impression of the GRAE.

The rivalry between the FNLA and the MPLA had reached a high point during the first months of 1963. According to reports,⁷ an MPLA support unit was attacked in March, and 13 of its number were killed by FNLA forces. Despite MPLA protests over this attack, and a subsequent incident in April on the Loge River, the FNLA remained adamant that no MPLA forces were in fact active inside Angola and, therefore, it followed logically that the attacks on the MPLA could not have taken place. Intermovement rivalry continued, however, as did the FNLA's advantages emanating from Roberto's links with the Adoula government in Leopoldville.

This 'Congolese factor', which can be said to have

Africa.

7. Cited in J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Volume One, [1969],

given the FNLA a 'home advantage', was crucial in leading the ALC to favour the GRAE. Firstly, it provided the assets which made the FNLA seem a more effective organization, and secondly, it delivered the Congo's strong diplomatic backing for the GRAE which the MPLA could not equal. On 29 June, the Congolese government officially recognized the GRAE as the legitimate representative of Angolan nationalism. This diplomatic act was crucial and formed the basis for the decision of the ALC which was taken after its visit, only a couple of weeks after the Congolese government had decided to formalize its patronage of the FNLA.

Despite the Congolese act of recognition of the GRAE this did not, on the face of it, appear to give the FNLA/GRAE a clear-cut diplomatic advantage. In fact, the MPLA's professed aim of forming a common front seemed to coincide with the ALC's policy of promoting a unified anti-colonial movement. Furthermore, if an assessment was made of which movement each member represented on the ALC would have been likely to support, it could have been concluded that the MPLA held a slight advantage. There were nine African states represented on the ALC, and with Algeria,⁸ it could be said that the MPLA could count on the support of five of these: Guinea, Tanzania and the UAR (Egypt) shared the MPLA's more radical postures, while

p.45.

8. Through the close association of Ben Bella and Mário de Andrade, the MPLA seemed to have a formidable supporter in

Leopold Senghor's personal relationship with Mário de Andrade seemed to make Senegal fall into the camp of MPLA supporters. The other four members of the ALC, the Congo (Leopoldville), Ethiopia, Nigeria and Uganda would have been expected to support the FNLA. A number of circumstances changed this initial correlation.

The MPLA was not completely a victim of circumstance. In the course of the events that led to the OAU recognition of GRAE there were also internal factors to the movement that played an equally determinant role in these developments. The MPLA suffered its first major split at the same time as it was placed under the glaring lights of public scrutiny. The schism between Neto and Viriato da Cruz severely handicapped the movement at a time when it should have been showing itself as an internally cohesive and organizationally effective body. It did neither.

The restructuring of the leadership at the December Conference in favour of Neto had effectively cast aside Viriato da Cruz from the central hub of the MPLA, which he had been instrumental in creating. It seems likely that personal, and perhaps political, differences with Neto may have been prevalent. When Viriato da Cruz returned from abroad to Leopoldville,⁹ he conspired with Matias Migueis,¹⁰ Manuel Santos

Algeria.

9. Viriato da Cruz returned after having taken part in a conference in Indonesia, sponsored by China. It is possible that here, Viriato da Cruz established the backing that he required

Lima and about 50 other disaffected members of the MPLA, to undermine the Neto leadership and carry the rump of the movement, and its name, into the FNLA and GRAE. Two days after the defection of Viriato da Cruz on 5 July, fighting broke out between his supporters and those of the MPLA Steering Committee (the Neto leadership). Viriato da Cruz had proposed a leadership contest but Neto challenged the legitimacy of this and the meeting was broken up. The Congolese police intervened. According to Van Dunem, Neto would have been defeated had he stood in a contest.¹¹ At the same time, between 50 and 60 soldiers of the MPLA's army (EPLA) are said to have turned against their officers in sympathy with the dissidents.¹² It was a major split in the movement, with five ex-members of the Steering Committee exiting with Viriato da Cruz, and, more importantly, it occurred just three days before the ALC mission was due to arrive in Leopoldville.

The rationale behind the defection of Viriato da Cruz is unclear but its consideration provides a number of possible patterns which seem to run consistently through the history of Angolan rivalry. Certainly, at the time, he could not have known that the ALC would vote in favour of the GRAE. If it was

to split from the Neto leadership. M A Samuels, 'The Nationalist Parties', [1969], p.393.

10. Vice-president of the MPLA close to Viriato da Cruz.
11. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1990.
12. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.87.

ambition for personal power that drove him, then the last thing he should have done was to seek admission to the personalized political movement that was the FNLA under Roberto. In a document published after his defection, Viriato da Cruz set out the reasons for his abandonment of the movement he created.¹³ His principal criticisms focused on the 'disintegration' of the MPLA as a result of the internal conflicts between different 'social' blocs within the movement.¹⁴ Marcum considers the split to have been an expression of the already mentioned black/populist versus mestiço/intellectual split in Angolan politics, one that also seems to have been at the root of the wider FNLA-MPLA schism.¹⁵ This conclusion is drawn from Viriato da Cruz's own words about the "panic" of the MPLA's intellectual-student stratum in the face of the "racist excesses" of the UPA. Marcum considers that this split reflected an African nationalist challenge to the mestiço leadership. But if we consider the fact that Viriato da Cruz was himself a mestiço intellectual who earlier had been alienated from the MPLA most likely due to the fact that his colour was inappropriate for the leadership of an African movement and due to the fact that his Marxist prism was too extreme for the image

13. V da Cruz, Problems of the Angolan Revolution January 1964. Document reproduced in R H Chilcote, Emerging Nationalism in Portuguese Africa: Documents [1972], pp.204-213.

14. Ibid.

15. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, pp.90-91.

of the MPLA, it must be concluded that Marcum's assessment of this is not exact.

Another explanation for Viriato da Cruz's split from the MPLA Directing Committee is given in ideological terms. Manuel dos Santos Lima¹⁶ considers that the split was a "...reflection of the ideological cleavage between China and the Soviet Union."¹⁷ Certainly, Viriato da Cruz's proximity to China was subsequently revealed in his support for Maoist strategy and by following a pro-Peking line (see Chapter Seven), but it is difficult to assess how important this was over other considerations in the split. This interpretation of the schism in the MPLA as a reflection of the emerging Sino-Soviet split is challenged by an unnamed 'founder' of the MPLA cited by Expresso:

"The Directing Committee was influenced by the struggle against the cult of personality of the XXth Congress of the CPSU and abolished the position of secretary-general. Viriato resisted and there came the rupture. There were no problems of ideology but of methods."¹⁸

So rather than being solely the result of racial conflict or ideological differences, the clash between the Viriato 'bloc' and the central Neto core may also be explained

16. The first commander-in-chief of the EPLA who abandoned the MPLA with Viriato da Cruz.

17. Interview in Africa (Lisbon) 17 August 1988. My translation.

18. 'MPLA: uma história de crises' in Expresso (Lisbon) 8 December 1990.

as having been the result of an increasing frustration with the ineffectiveness of the movement. The almost exclusive military advantage held by the FNLA in the Congo was clearly enviable, and, despite the activation of a military front in Cabinda in January that year, the MPLA was simply not getting to the action. Viriato da Cruz was aware of the clearly preferential treatment of the GRAE by the Congolese authorities, which included unhindered access to the border and a well-equipped military base at Kinkuzu, and may have compared this to the feebleness of the MPLA military operations that seemed to be mostly in danger of attack by FNLA units, rather than from the Portuguese army, their enemies. Viriato da Cruz may have been predisposed to dilute his 'bloc' in the FNLA as long as it implied a better chance at striking a harder anti-colonial challenge against the Portuguese.

As well as providing an unwelcome picture of disunity, which lessened even further the credibility of the MPLA-Neto's case when it came before the ALC, the defection of Viriato da Cruz also resulted in embarrassing counter-claims with regard to the MPLA's military strength that were made public at that time. The ALC was looking to bestow favour on a militarily effective movement as well as one that seemed to be representative of Angolan nationalism. When Viriato da Cruz defected he rubbished the MPLA's claims of having a 10,000-strong army,¹⁹ and placed the real figure at an embarrassingly

19. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.71.

low 250.²⁰ Viriato da Cruz exposed these exaggerations as being the result of a conscious policy designed to draw attention, especially from the West, to the somewhat absent military strengths of the MPLA.²¹ The result of this overpropagandizing by the MPLA, was the dissemination of an image of a feeble movement with little or no military activity.

The discrediting of the MPLA was further enhanced by a poorly calculated political manoeuvre on its part. The MPLA had announced, at the beginning of July, that it was joining a number of other movements in exile to form a common front, the Democratic Front of the Liberation of Angola (FDLA).²² According to the MPLA, the FDLA was to form the core of all Angolan nationalists and eventually unite all anti-colonial forces. Leopoldville abounded with an array of political, cultural and ethnic associations vying to carve out a place for themselves in the pantheon of Angolan anti-colonialism.²³ By

20. J Marcum, *ibid.*, p.95 and D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, *Angola*, [1971], p.215.

21. V da Cruz, Problems of the Angolan Revolution. Document reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., Documents [1972], p.210.

22. Frente Democrática de Libertação de Angola.

23. According to Marcum, there were as many as 58 Angolan movements striving for political power amongst the large community of Angolan expatriates in Leopoldville and manoeuvring for official Congolese backing. As with the MPLA and the FNLA, the rivalry between Angolans often took precedence over the fight against the Portuguese. To some of these much smaller (and poorer) groups, these realities signified that sometimes even making arrangements with the Portuguese was a necessity. One such group was the Movement for the Defence of the Interests of Angola (Mouvement de Defense des Interets de l'Angola-MDIA) based in the Bakongo constituency, and, therefore, a rival of

forming a somewhat paper front with an array of movements, including those that sought to represent the Bakongo community, the MPLA hoped to challenge the legitimacy of the FNLA and limit the damage done by the creation of the GRAE and its recognition by the Congolese government.

Behind the FDLA initiative was the Congo (Brazzaville) regime of President Fulbert Youlou, whose backing for the MPLA's front almost certainly intended to deal himself into the game of influence among the Angolan exiles. The rivalry between the two Congolese regimes cannot but be seen as reflected in this case.²⁴ But the FDLA lacked credibility from the very start. Rather than giving an image of broad representativity and ethnic appeal, the FDLA smacked of MPLA domination, accentuated by the close affiliation of a labour organization, the UNTA, with the movement. On the other hand, the suspected collaborationist nature of two of the parties,²⁵ did little to inspire confidence in the front and only served to discredit the MPLA. In what was

the FNLA. It was, however, believed that the MDIA was infiltrated by Portuguese agents. The MDIA was one of the partners with which the MPLA formed the FDLA. The other constituent partners were: the Angolan National Movement (Movimento Nacional Angolano-MNA), the Ngwizako (also considered a collaborationist movement according to a contemporary account by a leader of the PDA: A Matumona, 'Angolan Disunity' in Angola: a Symposium, [1962], p.124), and a pro-MPLA labour movement, the National Union of the Workers of Angola (União Nacional dos Trabalhadores de Angola-UNTA).

24. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.81.

25. The MDIA and the Ngwizako. See footnote above.

apparently a reaction of protest at the creation of the FDLA, Mário de Andrade, founder and first president of the MPLA, resigned from the movement at this time, an act which reinforced the negative reception of the creation of this front.

When the ALC mission arrived in Leopoldville on 10 July the MPLA had been, barely within a week, torn apart internally by a major split in the leadership, discredited by Viriato da Cruz's parting shots which put its military activity in a very poor light, and to top it all off, had formed a totally unconvincing front with groups suspected of collaboration with the Portuguese. It was not the best of pictures to give to the incoming ALC mission that was seeking to unite effective and cohesive Angolan organizations.

In opposition to the internal disarray of the MPLA, a number of factors had combined to give a very favourable image of the FNLA at the Committee hearings. From the start, the host country's favour was very valuable, especially since the Committee had determined that the evaluation and opinion of the adjacent country's hosting anti-colonial movements, was, above all others, a clear guide to the strengths and weaknesses of these movements. The fact that the Leopoldville government had diplomatically recognized the FNLA's government-in-exile was a clear indication of its position vis-a-vis the Angolan movements.

Another result of the FNLA's close ties with the Congolese government was the privileged access its units had to

the border with Angola. The well-trumpeted military operations that had arisen from this advantage gave a strong picture of military activity, cemented by a visit to the obviously impressive, relative to what the MPLA could show, Kinkuzu base.²⁶ On the other hand, the MPLA had little to show in the military sphere. Without direct links to its partisans and the consistent denials on the part of the FNLA that insisted that no other movement was militarily active in Angola, the MPLA gave an image of military ineffectiveness, further maligned by Viriato da Cruz's revelations of the existence of a policy of overpropagandization.

The ALC was also given a contrasting picture of the internal organization of each movement. The FNLA was, at least during this period, a cohesive group under Roberto's leadership.²⁷ The fact that the FNLA was already a front, which united Roberto's UPA and the PDA, gave added weight to its claims that it was up to the MPLA to join them and not the other way around. Furthermore, the prominence of the GRAE's foreign minister, Jonas Savimbi, allowed the FNLA to deny MPLA allegations that it was merely a tribalist vehicle for the

26. M A Samuels, op.cit., p.394. Marcum state that the ALC Committee did not visit Kinkuzu. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.97.

27. The defection from the UPA by Kassanga, who formed, with André Kassinda, the Angolan National Union (União Nacional Angolana-UNA) had defied Roberto's leadership, but since its challenge had been carried outside the FNLA, the UNA became just another movement in exile. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., pp.206-7.

secessionist ambitions of the Bakongo, as well as including in its fold one of the more popular and active of Angolan nationalists.

In contrast, the MPLA gave a picture of internal division and contested leadership. The Viriato-Neto split was characterized by violence and public disputations, and, to make matters even worse, the Viriato faction had applied for membership of the FNLA which only served to further enhance the legitimacy of Roberto's movement, while the MPLA continued to peddle its rival common front, the discredited FDLA. Allegations of collaboration with the Portuguese colonial authorities did the movement no good whatsoever, and the resignation of Mário de Andrade, one of the strongest political and intellectual figures in the Neto faction, had also damaged the external image of the MPLA.

To further the MPLA's misery, the committee hearings, chaired by Jaja Wachuku, the Nigerian foreign minister,²⁸ were very positive for the FNLA. The Neto faction, essentially on the defensive from the start, was unable to present a credible picture of military activity. Furthermore, confirming the movement's essential exile character:

"Neto himself was brought to agree that the MPLA had no political structure inside Angola."²⁹

28. Marcum stresses that Wachuku was a close friend of Roberto and that this fact cannot be discounted as having significantly influenced the course of the hearings. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, pp.94-97.

29. Africa Digest Volume XI No.4, p.11.

Reportedly, Neto's request to plead his case in Portuguese was refused by Wachuku. And when Neto placed a request for a second hearing in order to better build the MPLA's case, he was denied and instead Viriato da Cruz was heard. The defector chastised the leadership, poured scorn on its claims of military strength and activity and proclaimed his faction's intent of joining the FNLA and the GRAE. Viriato da Cruz's defection was in itself a blow for the MPLA, but when it was used against Neto in the ALC mission hearings, it proved to be crushing.

The Committee of Nine terminated their hearings and left Leopoldville. Despite the initial political predisposition, to vote in favour of the MPLA, as described above, the ALC mission had unanimously decided that due to the FNLA's superior fighting force, its 'effective' leadership of the Angolan anti-colonial struggle should continue and be supported by the OAU.³⁰ The chairman's report stressed that in making its decision, the mission had relied "...heavily on the local 'knowledge and experience' of contiguous states,"³¹ that is to say, on the advice of the Congolese government. The results of the ALC mission were reported to the OAU Council of Ministers meeting held in Dakar in August. The Council accepted the Committee's recommendation and officially recognized the GRAE as the sole

30. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, pp.96-97.

31. J Marcum, ibid., p.97.

Angolan nationalist movement. The GRAE then became entitled to all funds destined for the national self-determination of Angola, while states were requested not to support any other Angolan movement. Most member states then proceeded to bilaterally recognize the GRAE, Algeria being one of the first to do so.

Clearly, the ALC decision had been heavily influenced not only by the counsel of the Congolese government in favour of the FNLA but also by the advantages derived from its relationship with this government, which gave this movement had the ability to present itself as an attractive option. Militarily it was able to come across strongly because of its exclusive access to the Angolan border and the concession of a training base at Kinkuzu. Furthermore, the *de jure* recognition of the GRAE by the Leopoldville government gave the former an enviable and unequallable status vis-a-vis the MPLA. Despite the very real weaknesses of the MPLA, the FNLA's access to the Congo's political patronage influenced the ALC's decision and thus the OAU's recognition beyond what would have been a simple evaluation of the strengths of each movement. The use of this external link (Congo) by the FNLA to gain international legitimacy (OAU) is indicative of the consistent process by which Angolan rivalry was internationalized.

The OAU recognition dealt a massive blow to the already reeling MPLA. Internally debilitated, the movement was then forced to contend with the thought of complete alienation

from the mainstream of African international politics. Marked by an unhelpful and fratricidal rivalry, the year of activity in the Congo-Leopoldville had threatened to stamp out the MPLA politically, if not physically. In November, supported by the OAU decision, the pro-Roberto Adoula government ordered the closure of the MPLA offices in the capital. The leadership and its remaining supporters were literally run out of town. By the end of 1963 nothing remained of the MPLA in Leopoldville.

Conversely, the GRAE was riding high on its new exclusivity. After the OAU recognition, Roberto's movement looked forward to a monopolistic control of the anti-colonial war, well entrenched in Leopoldville with the seal of approval of the OAU. Diplomatic recognition of the GRAE by most African and Arab states ensued, beginning with Algeria, previously an MPLA backer. These states did seem to have their best intentions in mind. With one, albeit cruel, blow, they hoped to banish divisive rivalry from Angolan nationalism. Press reports at the time reflected this confidence in the unification of Angolan anti-colonialism.³² For the MPLA, however, it was a policy that came devastatingly close to bringing about its extinction.

The MPLA seemed to have reached a low point as to begin to be thought of as a spent force in Angolan politics. Observers could be forgiven for sounding its death knell. Basil Davidson, an enthusiastic supporter of the MPLA, prematurely

32. Africa Digest (London) Vol. XI, No. 4, Covering events to January 19, 1964. p.11.

discounted the survival of this movement:

"`Initially the more influential of the two big nationalist movements, the MPLA has fractured, split and reduced it self to a nullity. With Roberto Holden's (sic) UPA steadily gathering strength and allies, the MPLA has ceased to count.' The judgement was my own, writing in *West Africa* for 14 December 1963, and it was singularly wrong. But that is what things looked like at the time."³³

The MPLA did survive, however, and by 1971 it was considered the strongest and most effective Angolan movement fighting the Portuguese. Conversely, the GRAE, although not the FNLA, had had its official recognition withdrawn by the OAU in that same year. From 1966 onwards, the MPLA was receiving the greater share of the OAU funds destined for the Angolan nationalists while the FNLA had managed to all but alienate itself from continental political support. An almost mirror reflection of what had occurred in 1963 began to occur once the MPLA was able to give an image of being an effective military organization, based in a friendly African state and able to count on an array of external diplomatic support. The ability to benefit from political friendships was now present in the second OAU process of recognition, only this time it was available to Neto's movement. The diplomatic advantage that the MPLA did not have in 1963, it subsequently gained, through its relationship with Congo (Brazzaville) and as a result of the firm commitment to stand in the socialist camp it had finally made after 1964.

33. B Davidson, *In the Eye of the Storm*, [1974], p.207.

The reasons behind the MPLA's recovery are multiple. Firstly, the Neto faction had successfully reorganized and consolidated its leadership and organization in their safe haven in Brazzaville after having left Leopoldville rather hurriedly. Secondly, an array of new external backers helped the movement to mount a military challenge in Angola which differed significantly from its previous attempts. Thirdly, a tireless diplomatic campaign, based on these new external backers, brought the 'new' MPLA to African political circles. The MPLA's recovery was even further accentuated by the dramatic decline of its rival, the FNLA. Roberto's movement had not managed to capitalize on the OAU recognition and bolster its initial advantages, allowing its image to deteriorate in these same political circles.

For reasons which cannot be unconnected from a sense of rivalry between the Leopoldville and Brazzaville regimes, the MPLA-Neto had already found sympathy in the Fulbert Youlou government. But by the time the remains of the MPLA had crossed the river that separates the two capitals, the Youlou government had fallen and had been replaced by that of Massemba-Debat, who proceeded to establish a radical Marxist regime. From 1964 onwards, the MPLA also began to assume a far more Marxist posture, which broke with its past attempts to appeal to a broader political spectrum of external support. This ideological proximity converged with an almost inherent competitive stance of the Brazzaville government vis-a-vis its neighbour, to create

a very friendly environment for the MPLA. It is possible to claim that, for different reasons and to a different degree, the MPLA had an advantageous status in Brazzaville comparable to that which the FNLA had had in Leopoldville.

In Brazzaville, Neto was able to establish an uncontested structure of leadership which set about the task of reconstituting the organizational and military capacity of the movement. Without Mário de Andrade and Viriato da Cruz, Neto was, however, loyally supported by the hard ideological work done by Lucio Lara, who created an authority structure for the movement based on the political domination of its military forces. The movement's new structure and programme was established and implemented at a conference of all activists (Conferência de Quadros) held in Brazzaville in January 1964.³⁴

It was on the military front that things changed most for the MPLA. Following its clearly catastrophic attempts to run military sorties into Angola from Leopoldville, the movement now had unrestricted access to the Congolese border with the Angolan enclave of Cabinda, and was authorized to establish a military base at Dolisie. Starting with small guerrilla strikes, the movement managed to claim a certain amount of military activity.³⁵ Since its poor military record had been one of the MPLA's major shortcomings revealed by the ALC hearings, the

34. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.121.

35. Radio Brazzaville reports an MPLA strike in October 1964 that left 10 dead. Africa Research Bulletin (London) 18 October 1964.

operation of a military front, however small, significantly raised the political stock of the movement. Reported by The Times as early as November 1963,³⁶ increasing military activity in the Cabindan enclave became an important factor in the MPLA's recovery.

By October 1964, barely a year after the MPLA had been run out of Leopoldville, it was reported that Mário de Andrade had returned to the movement.³⁷ He had been in Rabat since leaving the MPLA in mid-1963, an act that seemed to reflect the internal collapse of the movement and the impending external blow. Equally, his return in 1964 mirrored the changing fortunes of the MPLA.

The recovery of the MPLA based on its internal consolidation and the operation of a military front was made possible by the sympathetic environment it found in Brazzaville. This status allowed the MPLA to concentrate on the task of reconstruction by allowing it to accumulate the material tools it required. In July 1964, the Brazzaville government authorized the delivery of a shipment of arms to the movement.³⁸ The favourable relationship with the Masmamba-Debat regime was also instrumental in the establishment of the MPLA's principal

36. Africa Digest (London) Vol.XI, No.4. Covering events to January 19, 1964. p.11.

37. Africa Digest (London) Vol. XII, No. 3. Covering events to November 16, 1964. p.87.

38. D L Wheeler and R Pelissier, op.cit., p.215.

sources of external support that would help it re-emerge as a major Angolan anti-colonial organization and that would, in 1975, provide the MPLA with the necessary military power during the civil war. It was during this period of calm that the MPLA was able to establish strong links with both the Soviet Union and Cuba. In parallel to this, the MPLA also began to take a much more committed posture with regard to its Marxist outlook and, from 1964 onwards, placed itself firmly in the anti-Western bloc of the cold war conflict.

Contact between members of the MPLA and Moscow had been established before 1964. Allegedly, there had been contact between the Luanda Marxists (including elements of the Portuguese communist party) and a member of the KGB, active in the Angolan capital in the 1950s.³⁹ The main forum for links with the Soviet Union had been through the Portuguese communists (see Chapter Three), and in 1964 this continued to be so. Whilst in Lisbon, Neto had been close to the PCP,⁴⁰ and these links are said to have helped him escape from Portugal in 1962. But it was from 1964 that the relationship between the MPLA and Moscow became strongly established. Allegedly through the person of Alvaro Cunhal, the secretary-general of the PCP, Neto went to Moscow in 1964.⁴¹ Marcum claims that after this trip, Soviet

39. See Chapter Seven.

40. Some sources cite him as being a member of the PCP.

41. G Golan The Soviet Union and National Liberation Movements in the Third World [1988], p.269. and J Valenta 'The Soviet-Cuban Intervention in Angola 1975' [1978], p.5.

support was resumed after having been cut off in August 1963.⁴² It seems unlikely, however, that before 1964 this aid was of a significant level.

During his trip to Moscow, Neto managed to convince the Kremlin that he was in control of the MPLA and that it offered a fighting chance of surviving an anti-colonial war and becoming influential in post-independence Angolan political life. By proclaiming support for the cause of the MPLA in December 1964 the Soviet press may have revealed that such an act of persuasion might indeed have taken place.⁴³ In August 1965, Pravda published an article by an unnamed leading MPLA figure that praised the Soviet Union's support for that movement.⁴⁴ Other reports seem to reveal that in 1964 there occurred a noticeable coming together of the MPLA and Moscow. In December in New York, an unknown group calling itself the Movement of Free Angola (Mouvement de l'Angola Libre) declared that the Soviet Union was intervening in the internal affairs of Africa by supporting Agostinho Neto.⁴⁵

42. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.171.

43. M A Samuels, op.cit., [1969], p.395.

44. Africa Research Bulletin (London) August 1965.

45. Africa Research Bulletin 22 December 1964. That same month a somewhat cryptic statement by GRAE seems related to this approximation between Moscow and the MPLA. The GRAE declaration dismissed reports in Pravda that had announced the cessation of Soviet aid to GRAE. This, claimed GRAE, was pure propaganda as the GRAE had never received any Soviet assistance. This incident may be linked to the FNLA's desire to emphasize its anti-Communist credentials but may also reveal the beginning of Soviet support for the MPLA through what may have been an

According to Golan, significant Soviet aid for the MPLA began after Neto's visit to Moscow in 1964.⁴⁶ The total Soviet aid for the MPLA in the period between 1960 and March 1975 (before the significant military input of 1975) is cited as being worth about US\$ 54 million. Even if it is assumed that half of this total was provided in 1973-1975 (despite the interruption in 1974), the remaining amount would total US\$ 3 million a year from 1964, a not insignificant amount by the standards of anti-colonial movements. Soviet assistance was not solely material. Apart from the diplomatic and political support that Moscow began to provide internationally, the MPLA also benefited from the training and education of a number of its cadres in the Soviet Union from 1965 onwards.⁴⁷

The MPLA's relationship with Cuba allegedly began during Che Guevara's African tour in 1964-1965. The revolutionary visited practically every radical country on the continent, a few where anti-colonial movements were based. While visiting Congo (Brazzaville) where an anti-Leopoldville movement of Lumumbists was based, Guevara also met Neto and leaders of movements in the other Portuguese colonies, united with the MPLA

attempt to bring the latter in from the cold by maligning the GRAE.

46. G Golan, op.cit., pp.269-270.

47. Later in Czechoslovakia, East Germany and Bulgaria. Soviet (and North Korean) military advisors trained MPLA guerrilla units in Algeria, in Congo (Brazzaville) and in Egypt.

in the inter-territorial CONCP. In these meetings, the subsequently long association between the MPLA and Cuba is said to have been established.⁴⁸ Within one year of the Brazzaville meeting, Cuba was supplying CONCP members with arms and instructors.⁴⁹ According to later revelations, Che Guevara secretly returned to Brazzaville in April 1965 to lead a unit of 200 'international fighters' against the Congo (Leopoldville) rule of Moise Tshombe. However, disillusioned by the political rivalry among the Congolese rebels, and asked to rescind the effort by the Brazzaville government after the Mobutu take-over in Leopoldville, Guevara left Africa for Bolivia, leaving behind his fighters in Brazzaville and Conakry to help train the MPLA and the Guinean PAIGC respectively. In early 1966, Cuban presence in Brazzaville was said to number 1,000,⁵⁰ providing not only training for the anti-colonial movements but also support for the incumbent Brazzaville government.

The new support of the Soviet Union and Cuba began to give the MPLA a markedly different international profile. At the

48. It is interesting to note that Jonas Savimbi reports a meeting he had with Guevara after the latter's visit to Brazzaville, where he claims Guevara told him: "I went to Brazzaville to see the MPLA, and nothing is happening. They are just bourgeois. From now on you are my friend. I am going to Fidel to make a report on you, and he will give you assistance through our friend Ben Bella in Algeria." cited in F Bridgland, Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa [1986], p.77.

49. W Leogrande 'Cuban-Soviet Relations and Cuban Policy in Africa' [1982], p.18.

50. W Leogrande, op.cit., p.19.

'Tricontinental' conference held in Havana in January 1966,⁵¹ Neto and the MPLA were the sole representatives of Angolan nationalism. This international forum was an important cornerstone in the movement's recovery. Having resolved, for the time being, its internal disputes,⁵² and having begun to operate a military front in Cabinda, the MPLA began to establish a more radical international posture that would bring it important political and material benefits. It did this by identifying effectively with the radical stream of National Liberation. Its relationship with Moscow helped to reinforce this radicalization. The Soviet Union had become the more credible of the superpowers in the Third World and was increasingly associated with in anti-colonial wars. By contrast, the United States, which had attempted to court anti-colonial forces in the early 1960s, had increasingly become identified as part of the neo-colonial threat, by virtue of among other factors, its political, economic and military association with Western Europe. The MPLA that emerged from Brazzaville in 1964 was much more clearly oriented towards the socialist bloc and the stream of National Liberation movements in the Third World. This much less ambiguous association, among other things, helped the movement to gain a more prominent international profile. By associating unambiguously with the socialist bloc, the MPLA had

51. By the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO).

52. The breakaway Viriato da Cruz faction was absorbed by the FNLA in April 1964.

discovered a niche from where it could translate international influence into domestic political advantage and vice versa.

An important factor that had helped to bring the MPLA this greater attention was its activity within the interterritorial CONCP, that brought together the anti-colonial organizations of the Portuguese colonies. Derived from earlier coalitions, it included the MPLA and the leading movements in Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and São Tomé and Príncipe. Contrary to what had occurred in Angola, the anti-colonial nationalists in these colonies had congregated around one single radical movement. As a result of the personal contacts established when student companions in Lisbon, the leaders of these movements were very close, both ideologically and politically. For example, Mário de Andrade, Amílcar Cabral (PAIGC) and Marcelino Santos (FRELIMO) all knew each other very well. The advantages for the MPLA of this association came from being identified with the other movements. Thus, as FRELIMO and especially the PAIGC, were well established in international circles as the sole representatives of the anti-colonial wars in their respective countries, the MPLA, by virtue of its association with these in the CONCP, began to receive a similar level of attention. From the mid-1960s, through the CONCP, the AAPSO conferences and ceaseless campaigning in regional and international fora, the MPLA began to emerge as the radical voice of Angolan nationalism, a role it had not occupied before as unambiguously as it did from hereon.

Once again, the external image of the movement was mostly based on its internal structure and activity. Thus, in 1963 the internal disarray of the MPLA was in part responsible for what had occurred at the ALC hearings. Similarly, after 1964 the internal reinforcement of the movement and the relatively successful operation of a military front was partly the basis for its recovery. But this internal strengthening largely occurred as a result of the very favourable relationship established with the Brazzaville regime. Furthermore, this relationship helped to lead the MPLA to establish very important links with the Soviet Union and Cuba. Similarly, the MPLA's relationship with the latter, the Congo (Brazzaville) and the other CONCP members helped it to emerge with a prominent international status within the socialist bloc and the National Liberation camp. The dynamic interplay of both internal and external factors seems to have been responsible for the recovery of the MPLA after 1964.

Another important factor in the MPLA's recovery was a concurrent decline of favour for the FNLA, as a result of the revelation of a number of the FNLA's weaknesses. Unable to capitalize on the diplomatic windfall that had resulted from the OAU recognition, Roberto's movement dithered as it suffered from military inertia and internal political conflicts. Seeming to repeat the misfortunes of the MPLA in 1963, the FNLA's weaknesses were exposed one by one.

Comparable in effect to the defection of Viriato da

Cruz from the MPLA in 1963 was Jonas Savimbi's dramatic resignation from the post of GRAE Foreign Minister at the 1964 OAU summit in Cairo,⁵³ the same meeting that had been petitioned by the MPLA with a view to overturning the ALC recognition of GRAE. When Savimbi abandoned the GRAE, like Viriato da Cruz, he gave negative testimony, on a very public stage, of the military inefficiency of the movement. At the same time he cited Roberto's inflexible leadership as the main cause for his abandonment of the movement. Already an important figure in Angolan nationalism, Savimbi's exit did much to discredit Roberto.

From Leopoldville, the reports on the GRAE's activity were not much better. Various revolts within the undisciplined ELNA army cast a disappointing light over the previous year's enthusiasm for the military effectiveness of the GRAE. Even the Congolese government, hitherto its strongest card and responsible for much of the FNLA's advantages, was from July 1964 in the hands of Moise Tshombe, who was not sympathetic towards Roberto. In place of the benevolence of the Adoula government, Roberto began to feel pressure from Tshombe as the international profile of the FNLA began to decline. Tshombe allowed two FNLA defectors to establish their rival organization (UNA) in Leopoldville.⁵⁴ Divisions within the movement also

53. See Chapter Three.

54. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.145.

began to show. Defection followed defection and, at one point, an attempted coup sought to topple Roberto.⁵⁵ This internal break-up, the fall of Adoula and the consequent decline of the FNLA's international prestige threatened to extinguish the movement just as a similar debacle had threatened the MPLA barely more than a year before. The FNLA's passage into oblivion was largely avoided by the take-over of the Congolese regime in Leopoldville, on 24 November 1965, by a close friend of Roberto, the army strongman, Lieutenant-General Joseph Desiré Mobutu.

As the MPLA began to re-emerge, it delivered a petition to the OAU summit in Cairo on 16 July 1964 appealing for the reversal of the sole recognition of GRAE. The document stressed that, among other things, the MPLA's "truly national origin" made it essential for the OAU to give it the freedom to act. The MPLA did not forget to pay homage to its new patron:

"...because of the understanding of the people and of the government of the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), the MPLA has been able to endure all these difficulties and continue to maintain itself as a nationalist movement committed to the attainment of national liberation."⁵⁶

The summit did not reverse its decision but did establish a committee with the task of seeking the conciliation of the

55. The so-called Taty putsch. Alexandre Taty, a Cabindan, attempted to oust Roberto, allegedly supported by, among others, the Portuguese. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, pp.148-9.

56. Memorandum to the Conference of Heads of State and of Governments of the OAU 17 July 1964. Document reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.282.

Angolan movements. For the MPLA, barely a year after the ALC mission, this was tantamount to recognition. The Conciliation Committee⁵⁷ visited the MPLA at its new base and returned with very favourable testimony:

"The MPLA is a serious movement, active and capable of leading an effective campaign. Therefore, it deserves aid and assistance from the Committee of Co-Ordination [ALC]"⁵⁸

From here on, the MPLA began to gain ground in the OAU. It was the movement itself that announced enthusiastically that it had been recognized at the November 1964 meeting of the ALC and was receiving material and technical support from the Committee.⁵⁹ By the time the next OAU summit was held in 1965, the MPLA was being allocated a third of ALC funds destined for Angola.⁶⁰ Subsequently, the MPLA became the most favoured movement of the ALC. By 1968, the FNLA was no longer receiving any funds from the ALC and in 1971, the OAU summit withdrew its recognition of the GRAE, although it continued to recognize the legitimacy of the FNLA.

With regard to UNITA, the OAU did nothing throughout

57. The Committee of Three was made up of Congo (Brazzaville), the UAR and Ghana, all countries at least friendly with the MPLA.

58. Report of the Committee of Conciliation between GRAE and MPLA Reprinted by the MPLA in Brazzaville 1964. Document reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.292.

59. Radio Brazzaville, 30 December 1964, in Africa Research Bulletin (London) December 1964.

60. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.171.

the anti-colonial period. Despite its active existence from 1966 onwards, UNITA was not recognized by the OAU as a legitimate Angolan nationalist movement until after the April 1974 coup in Portugal. As the ALC believed that it was trying to promote a unified nationalist movement, and as it already had its hands full with the rivalry between the MPLA and the FNLA, it decided not to support UNITA.

According to the OAU its recognitions with regard to the Angolan movements were justified as they were no more than a reflection of reality. In 1963, the OAU saw the FNLA as the most powerful movement and thus chose to recognize the GRAE. Likewise, from 1964, the OAU began to see the MPLA as an increasingly important force, and conversely, considered the GRAE to have wasted its opportunities. Therefore, believed the OAU, its acts merely reflected these situations. But if the evaluation missions on which the OAU decisions were based, are looked at more carefully, a certain basic incompetence is revealed. That is to say, the evaluation of the movements' strengths by the OAU was, at the very least, incomplete if not actually heavily biased by the prevailing political environment.

The 1963 ALC mission to Leopoldville was fundamentally flawed not so much by considering the MPLA's weaknesses, which were apparent, but by not considering realistically the strengths of the FNLA, the failings of which were, subsequently, very quickly revealed. As Marcum puts it:

"The Leopoldville hearings had followed an easy course,

concentrating upon the evident disarray of one movement without making a serious effort to plummet the real strengths and weaknesses of its opponents."⁶¹

Similarly, the Conciliation Committee, that was so impressed by the MPLA in 1965, seems to have been easily swayed by the new picture it was presented by the MPLA. The Committee wrote in its report that:

"It visited one of the bases closest to the frontier [with Cabinda]. The commission was invited to visit the more distant bases and even to go into the interior of Cabinda. Convinced of the seriousness of the MPLA activities, the commission did not feel it was necessary, in spite of the insistence of the MPLA 'maquisards', to exhaustively investigate the other bases."⁶²

Considering the negative assessment of the same MPLA base made by Savimbi that same year,⁶³ it is possible that a more exhaustive investigation would have given a clearer picture of the MPLA's strengths and weaknesses. This is all the more likely since the MPLA's military activity in Cabinda never really amounted to very much. From 1964, the favourable situation in which the MPLA found itself in the Congo (Brazzaville) gave this movement, as a similar situation in Leopoldville had given the FNLA, the benefit of the doubt. Thus, the OAU decisions seem to have been far more influenced by whatever favourable

61. J Marcum, op,cit., Volume Two, p.98.

62. Report of the Committee of Conciliation between GRAE and MPLA 1964. Document reproduced in R H Chilcote, op.cit., p.291.

63. See Chapter Three.

relationship of political patronage each movement had been able to establish than by a competent evaluation of their capacities and potentialities.

Of course, in their early life in exile, the MPLA and the FNLA could not avoid utilizing external factors. The rigours and necessities of their anti-colonial campaigns required the benevolence of the government of a contiguous state from where each could operate a military challenge. Furthermore, the financial requirements of their struggles had to have been met by international fund-raising among those sympathetic to their cause. But the establishment of a close relationship between the FNLA and the Adoula regime in Leopoldville on the one hand and the MPLA and Massemba-Debat in Brazzaville far exceeded the fulfilment of these basic requirements. These close associations delivered important dividends that were not so much utilized in the anti-colonial challenge as principally directed towards the rivalry between them. From 1962, the root of conflict between the FNLA and the MPLA had been established and from that time also each movement sought to place their rivalry on the matrix of another political competition, in this case, that between the two Congos. This close patronage, achieved for different reasons by each movement, then became crucial, for the FNLA and later the MPLA, to attain internal and external legitimacy. Part and parcel of this process of legitimization were the recognitions conceded by the OAU. In this way, OAU recognition was drawn in to legitimize each movement's cause and the African organization

became intimately involved, from the very beginning, in the conflict between the MPLA and the FNLA that led to the civil war in 1975.

(ii) From 1972 to the Civil War

The primacy that the MPLA had established in the OAU from the mid-1960s until 1971 did not last once the FNLA was able to mount a serious diplomatic offensive. After its 1963 golden moment, the FNLA had entered a period of decline that lasted almost a decade. Like the MPLA it had essentially been unable to develop an effective military campaign against the Portuguese, but unlike the MPLA, it had also been unable to maintain a prestigious international image comparable to the one it had had in 1963 when the GRAE was recognized by most African states. But from 1972, the FNLA began to recover this lost territory, again through a process of internal consolidation based on the active patronage of the host government of President Mobutu Sese Seko, in the Congo (Leopoldville) that had in 1965 become Zaire.

From 1972, the FNLA was re-launched internationally by Mobutu and Roberto, this time without the GRAE fictional government-in-exile. This coincided with a period of relative decline of the MPLA as a result of military reverses suffered at the hands of the Portuguese. The start of the recovery of the FNLA can be dated in July 1972. It was marked by Roberto's visit to Algeria, nominally an MPLA supporter, to take part in a

celebration of this country's ten years of independence.⁶⁴

The principal vehicle for the FNLA's continental political recovery seems to have been the informal alliance made by Mobutu and the presidents of Tanzania and Zambia, Julius Nyerere and Kenneth Kaunda. These three, and Marien Ngouabi of the Congo (Brazzaville), had been mandated by the OAU summit of 1971 (the same summit that had de-recognized the GRAE) to achieve the OAU's policy of uniting all Angolan nationalists in one movement. The efforts of this VIP mission seemed to have paid off when a reconciliation agreement between Neto and Roberto was formally signed in Kinshasa (ex-Leopoldville), in December 1972.⁶⁵ But without the creation of the necessary conditions for unity (the MPLA continued to be denied military access to Zaire and UNITA was excluded from the reconciliation), this agreement did not last long.

However, the conciliatory aim of this mission did not last long. Despite these attempts to forge a common front, Nyerere and Kaunda, until then supporters of the MPLA, were beginning to lose confidence in this movement and were again coming round to the FNLA. This turn-around was in part achieved by a spate of dedicated diplomatic work by the Mobutu-sponsored Roberto. The following account of the FNLA leader's foreign

64. J Marcum, op.cit., p.227.

65. The agreement called for the creation of a Supreme Council of the Liberation of Angola (Conselho Supremo da Libertação de Angola-CSLA) designed to co-ordinate a unified military command and a political council. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, p.210.

travels in 1973, reveals somewhat the process of building up support for the movement in Tanzania and Zambia. In May, he flew to Dar es Salaam with Nyerere as they returned from the OAU summit in Addis Ababa. Roberto then flew on to Zambia where he met with Kaunda, Nyerere and Mobutu. In July, the 'triumvirate' again met with Roberto, this time in Lubumbashi, before the FNLA leader then returned to Dar es Salaam where an FNLA office was subsequently opened in this African capital where previously only the MPLA had been active.⁶⁶

The immediate result of all this diplomatic activity was the resumption of ALC aid to the FNLA and the return of the movement to a prominent diplomatic status within the OAU. By working itself into the favours of Zambia and Tanzania, on the coat-tails of the Zairean president, the FNLA was able to recover its international position. This time, however, although it had come in from the cold, the FNLA never completely dominated the support for Angolan nationalists. The swings of favour in the OAU from one movement to the other that had characterized the previous decade, had been replaced by the formation of two more committed camps of support within the organization. The political outlook of the two movements had increasingly begun to define their respective supporters and, as shall be seen below, the OAU was roughly divided down the middle as to which movement to support, a division that also reflected

66. Details in J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, pp.227-228.

the ideological bipolarity of the East-West rivalry that had come to dominate continental politics.

An important consequence of the closer ties between the FNLA and Tanzania was the former's establishment of links with China, in the wake of Mobutu's own overtures to Peking. President Nyerere's access to the Chinese is said to have been the conduit for both Mobutu's and Roberto's approximation to Peking.⁶⁷ At the time before the April coup, China became an important source of military support for the FNLA.

By the end of 1973, the internal divisions of the MPLA had resurfaced, this time in the form of the Eastern Revolt of Daniel Chipenda,⁶⁸ which had combined with the failures of its military forces to accentuate the relative decline in the international stature of Neto's organization. This was the time when even the Soviet Union had, according to reports, withdrawn its support from the MPLA.⁶⁹ While the MPLA did maintain an array of committed backers in Africa, the more conservative members of the OAU began to plump for Roberto and from a situation of relative isolation, by the time the Caetano regime in Portugal was toppled in April 1974, the FNLA had managed to return the two movements to a near balance of continental political support.

67. See Chapter Seven.

68. See Chapter One.

69. See Chapter Seven.

The role of the OAU in the Angolan civil war was far more significant *post facto* than in moulding the actual course of events. The organization could not stop the fighting, nor could it enforce a united coalition, nor prevent the intervention of non-African powers. Furthermore, the organization was not consistent in its posture towards Angola. In January 1975, the OAU attempted to establish a framework for the succession of power, one that was based on the implementation of the transitional accords including the holding of general elections. But one year later the OAU had placed this framework aside and, in recognizing the MPLA's state, legitimized the outcome of the civil war.

In the civil war of 1975, the OAU, as the expression of continental African politics, was unable to replace the international and global pressures that had been recruited to battle out the political conflict in Angola. In its proclaimed objectives of finding an African solution for African conflicts, the OAU failed. However, if the pattern of political cleavage that existed in continental politics is considered, it is possible to understand how and why the OAU acted in Angola, and consequently why it could not have succeeded in imposing its own 'African' solution to the Angolan civil war.

After Portugal had agreed to withdraw from its colonial possessions, the OAU continued to adhere to its 12 year policy of uniting the Angolan movements in a common front; by this time one that included UNITA. The government of national

unity that the OAU endorsed in January 1975 formed the basis for the Alvor accords signed later that month by all three movements with Portugal. The transitional coalition government and the principle of territorial integrity (which included the Cabinda enclave), was supported in all of the OAU's initiatives to find a peaceful solution in Angola throughout that year, as the fighting between the movements grew worse.

When fighting first broke out in Luanda in the spring, the OAU, represented by Jomo Kenyatta, brought the three movements together again in Nakuru and a temporary truce was agreed. But, as it turned out, the Nakuru agreement was to the movements, certainly to the MPLA, a purely tactical manoeuvre.⁷⁰ A working commission was then established with the aim of achieving a coalition government in Angola by independence day, on 11 November. By this time, however, the war was raging and the political rivals had become open adversaries. The complex array of alliances that each had established were in place and the struggle for power had become absolute. The OAU was unable to be anything more than a despairing observer.

The question remains, however, of whether or not this was completely the case. Could the OAU have done more to have influenced the escalation of war in Angola? Six days before independence, the OAU Defence Commission was convened, where the

70. José Van Dunem, one of the four MPLA delegates at Nakuru, admitted this on the return from the summit. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991.

option of sending an African peace-keeping force to Angola was discussed. But the members of the Commission considered that the OAU should "...create the necessary favourable atmosphere for a possible political solution of the problem of Angola."⁷¹ The military option was thus cast aside but the 'favourable atmosphere' never materialized. It is argued here that rather than in the policy itself, the OAU's failure in Angola resided in the fact that its policy was never implemented. Framed in the Alvor accords, OAU policy towards Angola, like Portuguese responsibilities,⁷² disintegrated once this agreement was discarded by the Angolans.

Legum has claimed that the failure of the OAU to influence the course of the war and impose a political solution was partly the result of Idi Amin's chairmanship of the OAU from July 1975 which was at a crucial stage in the Angolan conflict.⁷³ This allegation is centred on the view, shared by the MPLA, that the Ugandan leader was Mobutu's ally and thus acted either in favour of the FNLA, or, at the very least did not implement impartially the OAU's policy. While chairman of the OAU and despite abstaining from voting, Amin defended the conservative line on Angola which was against the recognition of the MPLA. The full recognition of the MPLA by the OAU was being

71. C Legum, After Angola: The War Over Southern Africa, [1978], p.29.

72. See Chapter One.

73. C Legum, *ibid.*, p.28.

urged by Moscow. Amin took a stand against this recognition placing Uganda in a position of hostility towards the Soviet Union. The dependence of the Ugandan armed forces on Soviet arms had made Moscow understandably confident of its ability to persuade Amin to recognize the MPLA. But this confidence had been misplaced. The Ugandan leader refused to tow the Soviet line and claimed that his country would stand by the OAU policy of insisting on a coalition government of all three Angolan movements. This divergence with Moscow led to a six-day rupture in Soviet-Ugandan relations.⁷⁴

While Amin insisted on unity he did little to help achieve it, and his pronouncements lacked the impact to influence the course of the war especially at a stage when the arms race between the MPLA, the FNLA and UNITA was well under way. Furthermore, Amin was not trusted by the MPLA as he was seen to be very close to Mobutu, the FNLA's backer and whose troops entered Angola on the side of the anti-MPLA forces. The MPLA did not attend a meeting with the FNLA and UNITA convened by Amin in Kampala on 5 November. Legum cannot conclude what was behind the Mobutu-Amin alliance, but infers that, had there been in the chair a leader more amenable to the MPLA, or at least not pro-FNLA, then the OAU might have been able to play a more active role in bringing the movements together before

74. C Legum, *ibid.*, p.17. This incident reflected the conflicting priorities for African states of continental African politics and global alignment.

independence. But there is little to support such a conjecture. Certainly there may have been more talking, but a markedly pro-MPLA chairman would not necessarily have insisted on a coalition solution and might possibly have moved for an early recognition of the MPLA as suggested by the Soviet Union. Indeed, once it had become apparent that the MPLA was militarily able to secure its position (when the FNLA forces were routed outside Luanda in the weeks after independence), there certainly would have been no pressure on the MPLA to attempt to form a government of national unity. Quite the opposite was the case. After Nakuru, the OAU had become irrelevant to the MPLA.⁷⁵ Confident of its own capacity to win power, the movement did not see the need to accommodate negotiated settlements. Therefore, Legum's criticism of Idi Amin's chairmanship seems to rest on the assumption that the OAU should have given its full and sole support to the establishment of an MPLA government. Whereas it can be argued that Amin's failure was in allowing the military conflict to rage outside the aegis of the OAU, while at the same time, failing to create the 'favourable atmosphere for a possible political solution.'

If indeed the OAU's failure in Angola was its incapacity to impose its 'African' solution then the next consideration is to suggest why this was the case. At the root of the OAU's failure in Angola was the political divide that

75. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August 1991.

split the continent into two camps of 'radicals' and 'moderates'. As one analysis has concluded, there was a pattern to continental politics:

"The split vote [over Angola] exemplified a recurrent feature of the inter-African system...Although changes of government have sometimes altered national affiliations, the general pattern has been quite durable because it reflects two persistent alternative visions of African development."⁷⁶

At the heart of the OAU's incapacity to influence events in Angola was a divergence between its member-states on which movement to support; a choice which reflected the dilemma each African state faced in combining its external alignments, its own developmental strategies and its position in continental politics.

In January 1976, the OAU met in an emergency session to decide what to do about the violent civil conflict in Angola between the MPLA and an alliance of the FNLA and UNITA, that pitted South African and US-backed Zairean forces against Soviet-backed Cuban troops. At that time, the situation in Angola was military, nevertheless, the resolutions of the OAU were important to politically legitimize whatever resulted from the conflict. And in fact, political factors were dramatically influential in determining the result.

But the OAU session did not achieve an immediate consensus. The split in the voting on Angola, which can be seen

76. N Chazan et al., Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa, [1988], p.343.

in Table 8, seems to have been a replay of a previous divergence in continental politics, between the 'Casablanca' and 'Monrovia' groups of the early 1960s, a divergence which the establishment of the OAU was meant to replace.

TABLE 8

Voting on Angola at OAU Emergency Session 10-13 January 1976

Resolution calling for the withdrawal of all African and non-African forces from Angola and the implementation of a cease-fire and a government of national unity.	Resolution calling for military aid for the MPLA "in the face of..incontrovertible evidence about the blatant interference of imperialist forces seeking to dictate to Africa."
Supported by:	Supported by:
Senegal	Algeria
Ivory Coast	Tanzania
Upper Volta	Libya
Togo	Guinea
Cameroon	Ghana
Gabon	Mali
Central African Republic	Benin
Zaire	Congo
Rwanda	Burundi
Tunisia	Madagascar
Morocco	Guinea-Bissau
Mauritania	Cape Verde
Egypt	São Tomé and Príncipe
Gambia	Mozambique
Sierra Leone	Equatorial Guinea
Liberia	Mauritius
Botswana	Comoro Islands
Lesotho	Sudan
Swaziland	Somalia
Malawi	Chad
Kenya	Niger
Zambia	Nigeria
Abstentions: Ethiopia and Uganda	

Most of the states that had voted for the continuation of the

`unity' policy, that is, in favour of the FNLA/UNITA coalition (since at this time the MPLA was in a militarily more favourable position), had some sort of alignment with a Western power.⁷⁷ The MPLA supporters leaned towards the socialist bloc and were considered radical in their choice of political system. Furthermore, the MPLA now gleaned another advantage from its early association within the CONCP. The nationalist movements in the other ex-Portuguese colonies were now independent governments and an important source of support for the MPLA. But there were also a number of contingent voters, such as Nigeria, which supported the MPLA although it would normally have voted in the other `camp'. One advantage the MPLA did have which the forces arrayed it did not was the declaration of independence made on 11 November in Luanda and the subsequent diplomatic recognition of the People's Republic of Angola by a number of African states.⁷⁸ By the time the emergency session was held in January, 21 of the OAU's 46 member-states had recognized the MPLA as the government of an independent Angola.

This show of support for the MPLA, in direct contradiction to OAU policy, emerged for a number of reasons, as many certainly as there were states. The Soviet Union was able to apply some pressure on a number of states to show support for

77. For example, the francophone states and their allies, those close to Britain and the southern African dependencies.

78. Algeria, Congo, Guinea, Somalia and all the governments of the ex-Portuguese colonies.

the MPLA. While others were simply sympathetic to its outlook. This was certainly not the case with relatively conservative Nigeria. The Nigerian government is said to have acted in favour of the MPLA, as eventually others did, for one very political reason: the military aggression of South Africa. The role of the Soviet Union in backing the MPLA in Angola, was strongly criticized by the Nigerian Foreign Minister at the time of independence. But only a few months later, the same Soviet interference was held up by General Murtala Mohammed, the Nigerian head of state, as being "heroic", while warning against the attempts of the "...inhuman and obnoxious apartheid regime in Pretoria trying to frustrate the will of a people..."⁷⁹ There were other reasons for Nigeria's reversal, most notably those said to relate to a domestic power struggle, which led to one side seeking to disparage the US and its association with the anti-MPLA forces which included South Africa. But the fact is that, for many African states, South African intervention, ended up by justifying the legitimacy of the MPLA government and the intervention of Soviet-armed Cuban troops in an African war. The military, political and diplomatic success of this joint operation, almost certainly helped to influence another Soviet-Cuban intervention later in Ethiopia. The all-important Nigerian volte-face was said to have been sufficient to break the deadlock. On 11 February, the OAU Council of Ministers

79. C Legum, op.cit., p.30.

voted, by a simple majority, to recognize the legitimacy of the MPLA government.

Of course, the OAU cannot be held solely or even mainly responsible for the course of Angolan rivalry, nor for the civil war in 1975. But the Angolan search for legitimacy and the dynamics of continental politics allowed the OAU to play a role in influencing both. Benefiting from the patronage of the regimes in Kinshasa and Brazzaville, the FNLA and the MPLA were able to project themselves onto a wider stage of continental politics where an internal and external legitimacy was sought vis-a-vis each other, allowing their rivalry to be perpetuated and eventually to explode in the conflict of 1975. It is not blame that is being investigated here, so much as the complex dynamic of internal and external politics that was at the heart of the Angolan civil war.

PART FOUR

THE GLOBALIZATION OF ANGOLAN CONFLICT 1960-1975

CHAPTER SIX

THE INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

(i) Cuba and Angola 1965-1975: Internationalism and Intervention

Cuba became the most heavily involved international actor in the Angolan civil war, at least in terms of sheer manpower. By the end of the war, in the spring of 1976, there were at least 10,000 Cuban troops actively deployed in Angola on the side of the MPLA. The role of these troops in the success of Neto's movement was crucial if not central. Considering the role of Cuban troops in defending the MPLA's stronghold in the capital, Luanda, against the combined assaults of the FNLA from the north and UNITA from the south, it is difficult to conceive of a possible MPLA victory without the intervention of Cuban troops. In terms of effect, Cuban intervention was very much a major factor of influence in the Angolan conflict.

In terms of its own motivations, Cuban involvement in Angola has often been subjected to the question of whether or not Havana was acting independently, as they claim, or whether they acted as a proxy army for the Soviet Union, as other observers have contended. The truth is probably somewhere in between. It is

argued that a long and uninterrupted relationship with the Neto faction of the MPLA supports the view that the Cuban intervention in 1975 was partly a natural progression of its policy of support for the MPLA as well as of its long-standing internationalist foreign policy. On the other hand, it is unlikely that Cuba would have become so deeply involved if it could not have counted on the Soviet Union's strategic and logistical support. The deployment of Cuban troops, it is argued, was partially motivated by Havana's own policy considerations but could not have occurred, despite a previous example of this in Algeria (see below), without coordinating with Moscow. In this way, an independent Cuban policy in Angola converged with that of the Soviet Union.

Before the Portuguese Coup

According to one source, concrete Cuban military support for the MPLA may even have begun in September 1963 in Algeria. The independence of Algeria in October 1962 had precipitated close relations between Cuba and the North African country, and:

"An undisclosed number of Cuban military, political and medical advisors flocked to the recently independent state...By September about one thousand guerrillas from Angola, Mozambique and Namibia received training from Algerians and Cubans in Algeria."¹

1. N Valdes, 'Revolutionary Solidarity in Angola' [1979], p.91. This source claims that the MPLA's links with Cuba date to 1961. Valdes claims that in 1962, at least 15 Cuban doctors were active in MPLA-liberated territory (p.95). However, the extent of the MPLA's activities in 1962 were certainly insufficient to sustain credibly this contention.

The close links between Cuba and Algeria will be the subject of attention later as they are also revealing with regard to Cuban foreign policy. Relevant here is the fact that Cuban military instruction of Angolan nationalists, undertaken characteristically in a third country, may have been underway by the end of 1963.

As we have seen, the major links between the MPLA and Cuba were established a year or so later in Brazzaville, where the Neto faction had established its base at the end of 1963 after the debacle in Leopoldville. The date of the establishment of links differs in the accounts, but initial contacts eventually led to a meeting with Che Guevara either in 1964 or early 1965. The following is the testimony of Jorge Risquet, a member of the Political Bureau of the Cuban Communist Party:

"Fidel sent Che in early 1965 to meet with the MPLA leadership in Brazzaville. He offered revolutionary Cuba's solidarity to Agostinho Neto. Soon after, Cuban soldiers began arriving in Cabinda to train the MPLA guerrilla front. At Comrade Neto's request, Cuba took charge of arming and training a guerrilla column that was to cross Zaire into Angola."²

During this period, the whereabouts of Guevara were shrouded in mystery, and it was only much later that his presence in Congo (Brazzaville) was officially acknowledged.³ During his

2. Quoted by J Dominguez To Make a World Safe For Revolution: Cuba's Foreign Policy [1989], p.131.

3. This occurred in January 1977, in a Castro-approved account of the Angolan intervention cited in M Halperin 'The Cuban Role in Southern Africa', [1981], p.31.

African tour which began in December 1964 and ran until early March 1965, Guevara visited most of the radical African states which roughly made up the 'Casablanca' group. He also visited Brazzaville where he pledged the training of a presidential guard for Massemba-Debat. It was in Brazzaville that Guevara is said to have made contact with the MPLA in a meeting with CONCP, the inter-territorial conference of the nationalist organizations of Portuguese Africa.

The revolutionary credentials of CONCP were already strong despite the then recent beginnings of the wars in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. The popularity of Amilcar Cabral, and the proximity of MPLA leaders⁴ to leading African radicals such as Ben Bella and Kwame Nkrumah, might possibly have been important to Guevara. According to the Ottaways, however, the MPLA did not impress Guevara, at least not immediately. The revolutionary leader felt that the organization had "not much to show" but nevertheless promised to provide instructors.⁵ It is interesting to note that Jonas Savimbi reports a meeting that he allegedly had with Guevara after the latter's visit to Brazzaville, when he claims Guevara told him:

"I went to Brazzaville to see the MPLA, and nothing is happening. They are just bourgeois. From now on you are my friend. I am going to Fidel to make a report on you, and he

4. In particular, Mário de Andrade, who in 1964 had returned to the fold after abandoning the movement in 1963, and was co-ordinating the CONCP in Algiers.

5. D and M Ottaway, Afrocommunism [1981], p.101.

will give you assistance through our friend Ben Bella in Algeria."⁶

This claim is somewhat supported by Dominguez who notes that Cuba also offered some support to UNITA in the late 1960s.⁷

The new commitment of the reconstituted and strengthened MPLA to operate an effective military front in the Cabinda enclave must have played a part in helping to attract Cuba's pledge to supply the movement with arms and military instructors. Within a year of the Brazzaville meeting, Cuba was supplying CONCP members, including the MPLA, with arms and instructors.⁸ According to Dominguez, "Cuba had been training MPLA 'revolutionary and military cadres' since 1965."⁹ Over 100 MPLA fighters may have been trained by Cuba at this time. As well as military training, Cuba also offered technical studies and other educational courses to a number of MPLA cadres, most of whom would return to occupy high-ranking places in the MPLA hierarchy. This marked the beginning of an uninterrupted alliance that provided the MPLA with political, financial and military support.

As has been referred above, Che Guevara secretly

6. Quoted by F Bridgland, Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa [1986], p.77.

7. J Dominguez, op.cit. [1989], p.131.

8. W Leogrande 'Cuban-Soviet Relations and Cuban Policy in Africa', [1982], p.18.

9. J Dominguez, op.cit., [1989], p.131. According to Khazanov, MPLA cadres were trained in Cuba from October 1966 onwards. A Khazanov, Agostinho Neto [1986], p.172.

returned to Brazzaville in April 1965 with a unit of 100 or 200 'international fighters' to aid a Lumumbist insurgency (led by Gaston Soumaliot) against the Moise Tshombe government in Leopoldville. During this period, according to Khazanov, Guevara visited 'the second politico-military district in Angola [Cabinda]', where he is said to have met the legendary MPLA guerrilla, Hoji ia Henda.¹⁰ However, disillusioned by the political rivalry among the allegedly inept Congolese rebels, and asked to rescind the effort by the Brazzaville government after the Mobutu take-over in Leopoldville, Guevara left Africa for Bolivia, but left behind his fighters, in Brazzaville and Conakry, to help train the MPLA and the PAIGC, respectively.¹¹ Despite eventually admitting its occurrence, at the time the Cuban government never mentioned this episode in early Cuban revolutionary policy. The very failure of Guevara's initiative is one reason for this omission, but another was the fact that the Cubans were aiding insurgents in a challenge to a legally constituted government and not an anti-colonial war.

According to Valdes, the failure of this African adventure made Havana opt instead for a more moderate dual policy of internationalist solidarity on the continent; a policy of which the objectives were:

"...to help consolidate revolutionary governments already in power, and to give assistance to African guerrillas without

10. A Khazanov, op.cit., [1986], p.173.

11. W Leogrande, op.cit., [1982], p.19.

the deployment of regular forces. If some men were assigned to the guerrillas, they were to provide training, rather than engage in actual fighting."¹²

The military training of the MPLA by Cuban instructors was co-ordinated with that of the Brazzaville regime. In early 1966, the Cuban presence in Brazzaville is said to have numbered up to 1,000 men;¹³ a force that provided not only training for the movements but also support for the incumbent government, thus conforming to the above delineation of the Cuban 'internationalist' foreign policy. For Brazzaville, the association with Havana had an early pay-off. In June 1966, the crack troops trained by the Cubans, and some of the latter, saw off an attempted coup against Masmamba-Debat;¹⁴ an incident that was almost certainly witnessed by the MPLA leadership and could not have failed to impress upon them the benefits of Cuban military force.¹⁵

Cuban support in the mid-1960s clearly helped the MPLA-Neto recover from its brush with extinction. With the military training and weapons provided by Havana, the MPLA was able to

12. N Valdes, op.cit., [1979], p.92.

13. W Durch, 'The Cuban Military in Africa and the Middle East: From Algeria to Angola', [1978], p.35.

14. M Halperin, op.cit., [1981], p.33.

15. The role played by Cuban troops in putting down the attempted coup of Nito Alves in May 1977 and securing Neto's leadership was not unlike that which they played in defending Masmamba-Debat in 1966.

raise its political profile by operating militarily in Cabinda, albeit with limited success. Furthermore, by July 1966, thanks to Cuban training, the MPLA was finally able to realize one of its major strategic objectives: making contact with guerrilla groups within Angola that leaned towards its authority. In late 1966 and early 1967, several hundred-strong MPLA columns of heavily armed guerrillas managed to cross hostile Zairean territory and infiltrate Angola.¹⁶ Their task, which was accomplished, was to reach the guerrilla groups in the Dembos forest area north-east of Luanda and establish lines of communication and therefore consolidate allegiance to the Neto leadership.¹⁷ From hereon, with the continuing activity in Cabinda, the MPLA-Neto could claim that it had two guerrilla fronts against the Portuguese. And in May 1966, a third front was opened in the east, after Zambian independence had allowed the MPLA to establish a presence in Lusaka from where it could sustain military operations into Angola. One source indicates that in the late 1960s, there had been reports of Cuban advisors on the spot in Angola, entering and leaving the country with reinforcement columns,¹⁸ but these reports have not been confirmed elsewhere.

There is little doubt, that the liason established with Cuba in the mid-1960s was an important part of the military

16. B Davidson In the Eye of the Storm, [1975], p.214.

17. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution, Volume Two, [1978], p.176.

18. G Golan The Soviet Union and National Liberation Movements in the Third World, [1988], p.269.

recovery of the MPLA. This process of recovery helped to foster, and was in turn further reinforced by, the improvement of MPLA's image in international fora. In January 1966, the Cuban capital was the site of the newly constituted 'Tricontinental' organization. Bringing together the broadly anti-Western states of the Third World, the conference also invited National Liberation movements to attend. Representing Angola was the MPLA, and Neto himself came to Havana where he met Castro. The AAPSO conference of 1965,¹⁹ held in Ghana, had extended full recognition to the MPLA after expelling the GRAE. Clearly benefiting from its association with the organizations in the other Portuguese colonies, the MPLA had returned from oblivion and had increasingly become the most prestigious organization at least in the anti-Western camp. In 1968, the secretariat of the Tricontinental, based in Havana, included an MPLA member, Paulo Jorge, who later became Neto's foreign minister.²⁰ In diplomatic terms as well, Cuba participated in the MPLA's resurgence in the mid- to late-1960s.

From this period until the Portuguese coup, Cuban policy towards Angola amounted to a uninterrupted provision of a wide range of assistance for the MPLA, but always fell short of direct deployment of significant military resources in the fight against the Portuguese. Thus, and again in conformity with their

19. The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) was a precursor to the Tricontinental.

20. J Dominguez, op.cit., [1989], p.131.

internationalist policy of remaining within an international legal framework, Havana provided the Neto faction of the MPLA with weapons, military training, political and technical education, and diplomatic and financial support. During this time, however, Cuba did not `export' revolution in the form of officially-sanctioned fighters as Guevara might have preferred. Nevertheless, a close and consistent relationship between the MPLA and the Cuban regime was established and maintained right up to the April 1974 coup in Portugal.

Bases for Cuba's Angolan Policy

This close association between Cuba and the MPLA conformed characteristically to Havana's internationalist foreign policy. This can be seen by considering some of the bases that underlay Cuba's policy in Angola in 1975. In general terms, it is argued that Cuba's intervention in Angola conformed to both the theory and the practice of Cuban foreign policy. After the general failure of the drive to `export' revolution to Latin America, Cuba developed a high-profile policy of international revolutionary solidarity, otherwise known as internationalism; although committed in theory to stepping in anywhere around the world wherever `socialism' was threatened by `imperialism', Cuban internationalism had self-imposed limits. In the defence of socialism, Cuba would only deploy military personnel with the

consent of the legally-constituted government. It would also provide training and other types of assistance to National Liberation movements but only to those based in friendly states. However, within this historically consistent framework, Cuba's intervention on behalf of the MPLA in 1975 can be seen as only a slight variation on this policy, or rather as an escalation on its bases. In 1975, Havana claimed to have been supporting the MPLA which it considered to be the legal government of Angola. In adapting the facts of its intervention to fit this interpretation, Cuba revealed that it wanted its intervention in Angola to be seen as the consistent continuation of its internationalist foreign policy.

After coming to power, the Castro regime, and particularly Guevara, sought to 'export' revolution to Latin America. This essentially comprised of supporting guerrilla and urban revolutionary groups on the South American continent with some material support but mainly with the active participation of Cuban fighters. The early to mid-1960s were Cuba's most idealistic years. During this time, and especially after 1962, the regime attempted to launch a socialist development programme at home, the ambition and idealism of which was reflected in its foreign policy of support for revolution abroad.

Havana sought to play a high-profile role in international affairs. It concentrated on elevating its prestige in two overlapping fora, among the socialist states and among the Third World states: that is, broadly speaking, the anti-Western

camp. The inordinately difficult relationship the Cuban regime has had with Washington was generally speaking, counterbalanced by its relations with the Soviet Union. But Cuba also sought to operate an active and independent leading role in Third World politics. Much more than other socialist states, Cuba espoused an active doctrine of support for revolution around the globe. Its far broader interpretation of Marxism led it to support many different revolutionary groups which might have been considered bourgeois by the Soviet Union. Moscow's preference for Communist parties as the vehicle for socialist transformation was implicitly rejected by Cuba. But the push to support revolutionary challenges and the proclamations of socialist solidarity that peppered Cuban foreign policy were not solely motivated by ideological concerns. The declared goal was to create 'many Vietnams' in order to spread thinly the 'forces of imperialism'. There were clear advantages in promoting the cohesion of a far wider anti-Western camp; the dictum of security in numbers is one that seems to apply to the foreign policy of small revolutionary states, such as Cuba.

However, Cuba's internationalist policy was not mere rhetoric. The early dynamism of the Cuban regime contrasted with the far more cautious activity of the Soviet Union, as can be seen in Havana's offer to send troops to Vietnam. Although the initiative was turned down by the Vietnamese NLF, the Cuban offer may have been an indirect influence on the motivation that led Peking to make a similar offer.²¹ In another example (this time in

21. N Valdes, op.cit., [1979], p.88.

Africa where it dispatched most of its internationalist assistance), Cuba provided support for the FLN in Algeria and established a military mission there until the overthrow of Ben Bella in 1965. Before Cuba's exit, however, there occurred an incident which is particularly relevant, and quite similar to Cuba's military intervention in the Angolan civil war in 1975. When fighting broke out on the Algerian border with Morocco in October 1963, Cuba dispatched shiploads of men and arms to aid Algeria. Three ships carrying 40 Soviet tanks, 4 jet fighters and 800 tonnes of light arms, ammunition and artillery sailed for Algeria.²² Additionally, Cuban troops are said to have been flown in to Oran on an Air Cubana flight.²³ However, a truce between Morocco and Algeria was signed within the week and, apparently, the Cuban contingent did not see much action.²⁴ In a speech delivered two years later, Castro revealed that this international adventure had taken place, and attempted to establish the independent and internationalist nature of that Cuban operation:

"At a moment of crisis for Algeria, for the Algerian Revolution when they needed our help, men and arms from our country, crossing the Atlantic in record time, arrived in Algeria ready to fight side by side with the Algerian revolutionaries!...Nor did distance prevent us from being the first to arrive. Proletarian internationalism in fact, with deeds and not the mouthing of cheap words! Small country that we are, constantly threatened by the imperialists, we gave part of our most

22. D and M Ottaway, Algeria: The Politics of a Socialist Revolution, [1970], p.166.

23. W J Durch, op.cit., [1978], p.44.

24. Cuban casualties are said to have been suffered during artillery duels. W J Durch, op.cit.

important weapons and sent them to the Algerian people."²⁵

If this 1965 Castro speech had been delivered in 1975 and Algeria replaced with Angola, it is likely that little else of this would have changed.

According to Valdes, the evidence seems to indicate that the Cuban intervention in Algeria was a Cuban initiative, and the offer accepted by the Ben Bella leadership.²⁶ Whatever the case, the capacity and the will of Havana to intervene militarily across the Atlantic Ocean was clearly established, 12 years before Cuba's involvement in the Angolan civil war.

Up until the Portuguese coup, there were other occasions in which Cuba revealed the internationalist streak in its foreign policy. In November 1970, regular Cuban troops serving in Sekou Toure's presidential guard fought alongside Guinean soldiers in defence against an attack by Portuguese-backed forces.²⁷ As with the Cuban intervention in Algeria, this operation was carried out on behalf of a legitimate government. This was a characteristic that was maintained until the Angolan civil war. Previously, when acting in support of National Liberation movements or other revolutionary groups, whose

25. Speech given on 26 June 1965, quoted in M Halperin, *op.cit.*, [1981], p.29.

26. N Valdes, *op.cit.*, [1979], p.91.

27. This participation was acknowledged by the Guinean leader in a speech delivered in March 1976. N Valdes, *op.cit.*, [1979], p.93.

international legitimacy was ambiguous, Cuba would either only provide material and political assistance in Cuba itself or in a friendly, third country. On the other hand, if it was participating with fighters as in the case of Che Guevara in the Congo, Cuba would not admit to its involvement claiming that it had been a case of private Cuban citizens unsponsored by the state.

It is worth mentioning here, one more case of alleged Cuban military involvement far from the Western hemisphere, this time in the Middle East. According to Israeli intelligence sources quoted by Valdes, "...in late 1973 there were about 4,000 regular Cuban tank troops in Syria as part of an armoured brigade which even took part in the war until May 1974."²⁸ Although the number of troops is said to have been smaller,²⁹ their participation in the October War has been commented on by the Cuban leader: "It is no secret at all that at a time of danger and threats to the Syrian Republic, our men were in Syria."³⁰

In 1975, Cuba still believed that the same revolutionary solidarity that had motivated its involvement in, among other places, Algeria, Guinea and Syria was the principal factor in its

28. N Valdes, op.cit. [1979], p.94. Although the war did not continue to May 1974 it is likely that Valdes is referring to artillery exchanges.

29. Between 500 and 750. The discrepancy is said to have been the result of the smaller number of troops in Cuban tank battalions. W J Durch, op.cit., [1978], p.53.

30. In December 1975. Citation from N Valdes, op.cit., [1979], p.93.

support for the MPLA. Again, while the consistency of its ideology was undoubtedly a motivation for this, it is also the case that Havana perceived there to be concrete rewards for its display of revolutionary solidarity. At the same time as Cuban troops were disembarking at Angolan ports, Castro was addressing a meeting in Havana, predicting that in the future "the prestige of our revolution will increase" and "we will be having more influence in the international revolutionary movement".³¹

Despite the apparent continuity in Cuban foreign policy, some observers have claimed that Cuban intervention in Angola was a result of Soviet influence: the Cuban troops playing the role of 'Russian mercenaries'.³² According to Bender, some US officials and Kissinger claimed that Cuban troops, playing the part of surrogates, were deployed in Angola to pay off a debt worth US\$ 5.5 billion.³³ Clearly, Cuba was economically dependent on the Soviet Union, and it is difficult to deny that there probably were some economic benefits for Havana of its intervention in Angola. It is, however, impossible to say to what extent these economic motivations played a part in Cuba's decision to intervene in Angola over and above the same considerations that seem to have dominated Cuban foreign policy since the 1960s.

31. Radio Havana 29 September 1975. Citation in J Valenta 'The Soviet-Cuban Intervention in Angola, 1975', [1978], p.24.

32. Chinese terminology cited in J Valenta, op.cit., [1978], p.4.

33. G Bender, 'Kissinger in Angola: Anatomy of Failure', [1978], p.95.

Regardless of whether there were any material and political benefits emanating from the Soviet Union after the Cuban intervention in Angola, the history of Cuba's relationship with the MPLA, from the mid-1960s to the deployment of troops in 1975, is constant and uninterrupted, the same of which cannot be said for the Soviet Union.³⁴ Furthermore, this relationship, including the deployment of troops is consistent with both the theory and the practice of Cuban foreign policy from Algeria in 1963 to Syria in 1973. It seems possible to claim therefore, that Cuban policy in Angola had, at the very least, independent bases, separate from Soviet interests. Its foreign policy sought particular goals for Cuba. Within this conclusion, a number of studies have successfully challenged the 'surrogate' theory.³⁵ An ex-Soviet Foreign Ministry official claimed:

"[Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily] Kuznetsov told me that the idea for the large-scale military operation had originated in Havana not Moscow."³⁶

While Cuba has not always been able to operate an adventurous foreign policy, it has sought to maintain the existence of a continuity between the dynamism of its declaimed revolutionary solidarity and its actual policy. Within this

34. See Chapter Seven.

35. W R Duncan, The Soviet Union and Cuba: Interests and Influences, [1985]; P Shearman, The Soviet Union and Cuba, [1987]; J Valenta, op.cit., [1978]; W J Durch, op.cit., [1978].

36. J Dominguez, op.cit., [1989], p.132.

context, military intervention played a part in an ideologically expressed policy of internationalism, which Cuba claims it has attempted to operate consistently since the 1960s. Still within this context, Cuba sees its involvement in Angola as not so much a departure from this policy as a continuity of its basic tenets, despite some modifications. The major difference is that although Havana claimed to have acted, as before, in support of a legitimate government, the fact is that, due to the breakdown in the Angolan transitional process in 1975 and, as will be seen below, even to the timing of its intervention, Cuban support for the MPLA in these terms is of a dubious international legality.

The Decision to Intervene

One of the most disputed aspects of the Angolan civil war has been the calendar of Cuban and South African intervention. In an attempt to justify their respective military interferences, both sides have claimed that they intervened to counter the threat posed by the other. By characterizing their own intervention as having come as a response to the other, each side hoped to justify its actions as defensive and not aggressive. Furthermore, official Cuban accounts have emphasized that their military intervention in Angola was at the request of a sovereign and independent government. This justification is particularly important considering the context of Cuba's internationalist foreign policy as has just been described. Revolutionary solidarity is deemed to

be a worthy cause by Havana but only in defence of incontrovertibly legitimate governments. For what it reveals about the dynamics of the relationship between the MPLA, Havana and Moscow in 1975, the Cuban decision to intervene in Angola will now be considered.

The Cubans have always claimed that their intervention was carried out in defence of the legitimate MPLA government. For Havana, the fact that the MPLA had already claimed sovereignty before the official date of independence, is considered sufficient to justify the legality of their intervention. Nevertheless, attempts were made to localize the Cuban intervention as close as possible to the events surrounding the date of independence, in order to give it a semblance of legitimacy, despite the fact that the intervention must have been decided upon much earlier. Subsequent events, in particular the recognition of the MPLA by the OAU, have pushed this issue aside, but it is, nevertheless, worth making an attempt to establish as near as possible to an accurate time-scale of Cuban intervention if only to draw a clearer picture of Cuban and perhaps Soviet policy in Angola.

Shearman believes that in the summer of 1975, Soviet and Cuban policies towards Angola were being implemented independently of one another.³⁷ At that time, when the Cuban contingency plans for military intervention had to have been in the making, Soviet policy-makers seemed to be still considering a diplomatic solution

37. P Shearman, op.cit., [1987], p.39.

to the Angolan crisis. In the following survey of the Cuban intervention, its independence can be established vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, making it at the very least a Cuban policy option that eventually converged with Soviet interests rather than a Soviet-induced operation.

To establish the procedure of Cuban intervention, 17 relevant sources,³⁸ have been surveyed on the particular question of the time-scale of the intervention. Out of this survey emerge two essentially different accounts, whose divergence can perhaps be explained in terms of political bias. Many of the accounts have taken, as their starting point, Marquez's semi-official account of Operation Carlota. In all of these, despite some differences, the major military intervention by Cuban forces is seen as having been decided upon and implemented after the major South African invasion of 23 October. A smaller number of sources believe, however, that the Cuban intervention had to have been decided upon before this date, if only for logistical reasons underpinning the complex operation of intervening militarily across an ocean. Legum believes that it may have even been decided upon as early as May,³⁹ well before any incursions by the South African army.

Valenta is more forgiving and calculates that the Soviet and Cuban

38. G Bender [1978]; W Burchett [1978]; J Dominguez [1989]; W R Duncan [1985]; W J Durch [1978]; M Halperin [1981]; A Khazanov [1986]; Z Laidi [1990]; C Legum [1978]; W Leogrande [1982]; J Marcum [1978]; G Garcia Marquez [1977]; P Shearman [1987]; K Somerville [1986]; J Valenta [1978]; N Valdes [1979]; M Wolfers and J Bergerol [1983].

39. C Legum After Angola: The War Over Southern Africa [1978], p.21.

intervention was decided upon in late August or early September,⁴⁰ before the major SADF invasion in October, but already after some border crossings by South Africa in early August. Furthermore, the certain presence of a Cuban troops in Angola before independence also challenges the precision of the former accounts.

Without a doubt, the intervention had to have been requested by the MPLA. The Neto faction's particularly close relationship with Havana almost certainly facilitated the consideration of such an option. According to the Marquez account, Neto had a meeting with the Cuban military commander, Flavio Bravo, in Brazzaville sometime in May. This account admits that, at this meeting, the MPLA requested Cuban arms and assistance. By this time, there had already been serious fighting between the MPLA and the FNLA in Luanda. On the MPLA side, Soviet arms deliveries in March and April had signalled the commitment of its backers, while over 1,000 Zairean troops were alongside the FNLA inside northern Angola by this time. An absolute confrontation between the two movements must have seemed inevitable at this time.

Cuban military intervention in Angola was carried out in three broad phases. The first phase was probably decided upon at the Brazzaville meeting. A number of sources,⁴¹ refer to the presence of Cubans in Angola from the spring onwards. It is,

40. J Valenta, op.cit., [1978], p.13.

41. Including João Van Dunem, active in the MPLA in Luanda at this time. Interview, London, 15 April 1991.

therefore, practically impossible to deny that a number of 'official'⁴² Cubans were in Luanda in these early stages of the civil war. It is generally accepted that 230 Cuban advisors, under the command of Raul Diaz Arguelles, arrived in Luanda sometime between May and August. Those accounts more favourable to the MPLA,⁴³ have stated that they arrived only in August, while other sources⁴⁴ tend to plump for May or June.⁴⁵ Their role was a military one: to train the MPLA recruits and to instruct them in the use of the Soviet weaponry that had been received by the movement. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that even taking into account the most pro-MPLA sources (which would want to play down the presence of Cubans at such an early date), there were at least 230 Cuban military advisors in Angola by mid-summer. By June, according to Valenta, Cubans in Cabinda were already handling missiles and armoured cars, while some of their compatriots had already been involved in fighting just north of

42. Throughout the 1960s, a number of Cubans were involved in insurgent activity in a number of countries. Where their presence would have been considered subversive (ie. where they were fighting incumbent governments), Havana would renounce responsibility by claiming they were acting in their capacity of a 'private citizen'. see N Valdes, op.cit., [1979], p.94.

43. W Burchett, Southern Africa Stands Up, [1978]; M Wolfers and J Bergerol, Angola in the Frontline, [1983].

44. W Leogrande, op.cit., [1982]; J Marcum op.cit., [1978]; K Somerville, Angola: Politics, Economics and Society, [1986]; N Valdes, op.cit., [1979]; J Valenta, op.cit., [1978].

45. Durch states that they arrived in June and established training camps at Henrique de Carvalho, Salazar, Benguela and Cabinda. W J Durch, op.cit., [1978], p.64.

Luanda in Caxito at the end of May.⁴⁶ Certainly by August, the presence of Cuban instructors amongst MPLA troops had already been noticed.⁴⁷

At this stage, the Cuban role in support of the MPLA differs little from its previous record of military training for national liberation movements despite the fact that this was occurring at a time when the authority in Angola was the transitional government of the three movements and Portugal, which should certainly not have allowed the training of MPLA soldiers by Cubans in the run-up to independence day. The Soviet Union had increased its arms supplies to the MPLA in March, but little else seemed to betray the existence of a co-ordination between the MPLA, Havana and Moscow. In fact, the opposite seems to have been the case. Duncan has referred to the decidedly "chilly reception" given to Neto in June upon his visit to Moscow which was aimed at securing a deeper Soviet involvement.⁴⁸ While the MPLA was being provided with Soviet weapons at this time, Cuban intervention does not yet seem to be part of the plan. However, Durch claims that around the same time as the 'chilly' Moscow reception, contingency plans had been established between the MPLA and Cuba for the possible deployment of Cuban troops. Soviet and Cuban policies do not seem to be running in parallel at this stage.

46. J Valenta, op.cit. [1978], p.11.

47. J Marcum, 'Angola: Perilous Transition to Independence', [1982], p.191.

48. W R Duncan, op.cit., [1985], p.129.

The second phase of Cuban military intervention followed activity by South African troops inside Angolan territory.⁴⁹ Throughout September, South African troops had made a number of sorties into southern Angola against SWAPO camps. The MPLA's response to this counterinsurgency activity involved the reinforcement of the Cuban presence by something between 70 and 1,500 troops.⁵⁰ Valenta does not provide a figure of the total troop reinforcement but claims that "...in late September...Cuban ships, followed by Soviet ships and aircraft, began to deploy hundreds of Cuban soldiers."⁵¹ Leogrande speaks of "...several hundred...", in late August.⁵² But the most detailed account of this reinforcement is provided by Dominguez, which indicates that 480 military personnel, some civilian advisors, 25 mortar and anti-aircraft batteries, 115 vehicles, communication equipment and medical supplies were shipped from Cuba in late September, arriving in Angola in early October.⁵³ That the Cuban supply ships

49. After entering Angola in June through its southern border with Namibia, forces from the South African army occupied a South African-financed hydroelectric project on the Cunene River a month later, claiming its right to protect South African investments.

50. It is difficult to say exactly how many but it is likely that as many advisors as were already present in Angola were deployed, if not more. Laidi claims that before independence there were 2,000 Cubans fighting alongside the MPLA (Z Laidi, The Superpowers and Africa: The Constraints of a Rivalry 1960-1990, [1990], p.67.). Not counting the original 230, and an equal number that had probably arrived periodically from Brazzaville, that would place the reinforcement at circa 1,500 troops.

51. J Valenta, op.cit. [1978], p.13.

52. W Leogrande, op.cit. [1982], p.24.

53. J Dominguez, op.cit., [1989], p.131.

arrived is not denied. Marquez's account describes the arrival of three Cuban ships in Luanda and Huambo on 4, 7 and 11 October docking "...without anybody's permission-but also without anyone's opposition."⁵⁴

This troop reinforcement, which is said to have brought the total Cuban military presence to 1,500 by 23 October,⁵⁵ was allegedly agreed upon after the visit of a high level Cuban military delegation to Luanda in late August, resulting in the departure of the troop ships by early September. Shearman states that this MPLA-Cuban arrangement came after another MPLA visit to Moscow in August, when Soviet arms and military advisors were requested. The latter request was turned down and although it may be possibly to conjecture that the deployment of Cuban troops was instead suggested, it is equally possible to claim that this reflected the fact that, at least at this stage, Soviet and Cuban policies were not yet synchronized.

The presence of a significant Cuban military element was claimed by UNITA to the French press on 19 October.⁵⁶ The Polish journalist, Kapuscinski, cited by Laidi, pointed to the presence of Cuban military advisors in Luanda and southern Angola in October.⁵⁷ Quoting contemporary press reports, Marcum assesses

54. M Halperin, op.cit., [1981], p.35.

55. W J Durch, op.cit., [1978], p.67.

56. N Valdes, op.cit., [1979], p.101.

57. Z Laidi, op.cit., [1990], p.71.

that "by mid-October...probably eleven hundred to fifteen hundred Cuban soldiers were bolstering the MPLA".⁵⁸ Clearly, by the second week of October, a significant Cuban military contingent was in Angola alongside the MPLA. Perhaps as many as 1,000 troops may have been deployed at this time.

As far as the size of its total interventionary forces was concerned, the deployment of 1,000 Cuban troops was not a large-scale presence. This second phase was clearly not a major operation. On the other hand, this deployment may already, at the time, have been seen as the precursor to a much larger intervention by Cuban troops on behalf of the MPLA. This was the opinion of the head of the CIA's Angolan task force, who was warning in Washington, during this second phase of Cuban intervention, that an escalation of US involvement in Angola would result in the deployment of "large numbers of Cuban troops, 10-15,000."⁵⁹ This remarkably accurate prediction indicates that at the latest by mid-October, but still before the outright South African invasion, the option of a full-scale Cuban intervention was not an outlandish idea.

The third and definitive phase of Cuban intervention in Angola was called, by Havana, Operation Carlota. On 4 November, according to the official version of events, the MPLA, under pressure from the rapidly advancing South African invasion,

58. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.273.

59. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.273.

requested the intervention of Cuban troops to help secure its control of Luanda and most of the provincial centres. The following day, a hastily convened meeting of the central committee of the Cuban communist party agreed to the MPLA's request and ordered the immediate dispatch of an airborne battalion of the Ministry of the Interior. The first flight left Havana on 7 November and transported 82 of the elite troops, that soon totalled 650 in Angola within that week.

The battalion of crack Cuban troops performed its function and held the capital for the MPLA allowing it to proclaim its sovereign government and Angolan independence on 11 November. After this, Cuban reinforcements and Soviet military equipment poured in to assist the MPLA. Valdes advances the following calendar of Cuban troop strengths in Angola, culled from Western intelligence sources:

TABLE 9

Cuban Troop Strengths in Angola 1975-1976

1975	November 15	2,000
-	November 20	3,000
-	November 30	5,000
1976	January 6	9,500
-	February 3	14,000

(Source: Valdes [1979].)⁶⁰

Heavy weapons were delivered to the MPLA from the Soviet bloc, including T34 and T54 tanks, PT-76 amphibious tanks, MiG-21J jet

60. N Valdes, op.cit. [1979], p.106.

fighter bombers, MiG-17s, helicopters, rocket launchers and numerous armoured vehicles.⁶¹

Within a month of the arrival of the Cuban airborne battalion, after having come close to defeat, the MPLA had had its fortunes reversed. The advancing FNLA and Zairean troops, which had reached a point not more than 9 miles from Luanda, fled before the greater firepower of the combined MPLA-Cuban forces. While in the south, the combined South African-UNITA column, although superior according to some accounts,⁶² was sufficiently delayed by the new airpower of the MPLA forces for the political defeat at the hands of the OAU to take effect.

There can be little question as to the outcome of this particular set of events. It is likely that the Cubans did most of the fighting. Certainly, the deciding military operations were carried out by the Cubans, and, according to Marquez:

"Castro himself `was keeping up to date on the smallest details of the war ...in constant contact with the battlefield high command,' and at times issuing tactical orders."⁶³

What can be questioned, however, is the time-scale of the decision-making. As it has been pointed out above, it seems very unlikely that the decision to airlift a crack battalion was taken and implemented all within two or three days. It is much

61. N Valdes, op.cit., [1979], p.105.

62. See ahead.

63. Quoted in M Halperin, op.cit., [1981], p.36.

more likely that the decision to intervene had already been taken, or prepared for as a contingency plan, needing only the final go-ahead at the given time. The infrastructure for the rapid deployment of Cuban troops and Soviet and East European war materiel was almost certainly well in place before the Cubans claim they had decided to accept the MPLA's request for assistance. If this was the case, then the Cuban military intervention in Angola was decided upon at least in the early half of the year, and subsequently prepared for as a contingency plan should the MPLA's position have ever become threatened.

One source has noted that the Cuban army undertook manoeuvres in July which trained the deployment of forces over a large area, a military operation that would have been concurrent with what was required in Angola.⁶⁴ This assessment is also shared by Dominguez:

"Sometime between August 20 and September 5 1975, the [Cuban] Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the chiefs of the three armies and of the airforce, and other vice ministers of the Armed Forces Ministry were temporarily relieved of their posts."⁶⁵

This was an unexplained interruption and these senior officers were soon returned to their posts. Dominguez believes that during this period, they were assigned to prepare and oversee the Angolan

64. N Valdes, op.cit., [1979], p.99.

65. Cited in B D Porter, The USSR in Third World Conflicts: Soviet Arms and Diplomacy in Local Wars 1945-1980, [1984], p.166.

operation. Considering a number of facts, this belief may not be misplaced, at least in principle: the MPLA received, as early as the spring, deliveries of sophisticated weaponry it could not operate; all Soviet weaponry was current issue in the Cuban armed forces; a large number of Cuban advisors were already in Angola, overseeing the training and implementation of MPLA military operations. Additionally, according to Durch, regular units in Cuba were canvassed in mid-August for volunteers for Angola.⁶⁶ A number of complementary factors seem to indicate that Cuban military intervention in Angola was a strategic policy possibility for Havana being planned for with the MPLA, by the summer of 1975, four to five months before the operation itself, and during a time when the transitional accord was still in force and civil war theoretically avoidable.

There are a number of other indications that support the assessment that Cuban intervention must have been decided quite early on in the conflict. These signs are also a reflection of the part played by political factors in Portugal in the developments in Angola as described in Chapter One. The support given to the MPLA by some elements of the Armed Forces Movement (MFA), and the subsequent stagnation of power in Portugal has to be held responsible for the reasonable ease with which the MPLA was able to establish Cuban-manned training camps in Angola in the spring of 1975. Consequently, Cuba could operate its policy of support

66. W J Durch, op.cit., [1978], p.65.

for the MPLA largely unhindered by the nominally sovereign power in Angola, that is Portugal. Had Portugal been able to enforce its authority, Cuban intervention, at all three phases would have been significantly affected.

During the summer of 1975, certain contacts between the MFA and Cuba seem to indicate that preparations for a Cuban intervention were underway. On 21 July, Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho visited Havana. During this visit, according to Valdes, Otelo toured military installations with Commander Senen Casas, chief of the Cuban General Staff, who later "...had direct command over the Cuban forces in Angola."⁶⁷ It seems perfectly natural that the top military leader in Portugal should liaise with the top Cuban military when visiting Havana. Nevertheless, the possibility that this encounter held more significance in terms of Cuba's subsequent intervention in Angola cannot be completely ruled out. In late August, Rosa Coutinho, also during a visit to Cuba, publicly praised the MPLA. The contention is that an axis clearly existed, linking the MPLA, the Portuguese hard left and Cuba; this was an alliance that prepared for, and succeeded in ensuring, the MPLA's accession to power in Angola.

The above consideration of Cuban intervention has focused on the fact that there is sufficient evidence to claim that it was the result of an independent policy determined by Havana and the MPLA, within the context of long-standing and

67. N Valdes, op.cit., [1979], p.99.

consistent Cuban support for that movement. This was in itself consistent with the theory and practice of Havana's internationalist foreign policy.

Convergence

It has been argued that Cuba's intervention in Angola was merely an escalation of its long-standing support for the MPLA. In this way, the partly independent origin of Havana's Angolan policy can be determined. Eventually, however, Cuban and Soviet policy do converge, both in their aims and in their implementation. The Soviet Union's capacity to project military power was crucial to provide the weaponry for the airlifted Cuban battalions. Furthermore, Soviet Antonov aircraft were used in the transportation of troops. But the more important aspect of Cuban-Soviet policy in Angola is the convergence of goals. In fact, what is argued is that Cuba's close association with the MPLA is also influential in 'bringing in' the Soviets.

Cuba's military support of the MPLA provided the Soviet Union with an option for a flexible response in its own Angolan policy. While Moscow's commitment to the MPLA can be seen to have been less than totally dedicated,⁶⁸ Cuba's was not. A high-profile Soviet military support for the MPLA during the summer of 1975 would have threatened detente with the United States. Havana had

68. See Chapter Seven.

far more freedom to act. In this way, the Soviets managed to maintain a stake in Angola without actually incurring the risks of operating a more committed policy of support for the MPLA. And when it had become clear that the United States was unable to act further because of Congressional restraint in the wake of revelations about its covert operations in Angola,⁶⁹ Moscow could thus escalate its support and score an important foreign policy success. Moscow had its cake and ate it.

It is true to say that Cuba and the MPLA were dependent on Soviet weapons for the former's intervention in Angola, and certainly Cuba expected to be supported by Moscow in its internationalist duty. But it may be equally true to say that had the MPLA and Cuba not established their association in the 1960s, and consequently had Cuban intervention not been a policy option in 1975, then the Soviet Union might have been more circumspect in its own policy towards Angola especially if it had decided to maintain detente as a foreign policy priority. That is to say, Soviet support for the MPLA was partly a function of the latter's relationship with Cuba. In this way, this association, became crucial to the MPLA's political and military victory, in ways that exceeded the fact of Cuban intervention itself.

A major factor, that sets apart Cuba's involvement in the Angolan civil war from its previous adventures, was the fact that in this case its role converged with that of the USSR. Before

69. See Chapter Seven

1975, this had not always been the case. Cuban foreign policy seemed to be far more coherent in its willingness to support all revolutionary anti-Western manifestations as opposed to the Soviet Union's rather more dogmatic policy of support for communist parties only. In Angola, Shearman believes that:

"It was Moscow, not Havana which moderated its behaviour, and Moscow which after initial doubts came round to accepting Havana's strategy in Angola - not the other way around."⁷⁰

It has already been shown, that an analysis of Cuba's role in Angola as a Soviet surrogate does not hold easily. But it is also equally true that total independence of action cannot be claimed. Had the Soviet Union opposed the intervention, as Cuba's arms supplier it could have pressured Havana to keep out of the conflict altogether. Cuba's economic and military dependence on the Soviet Union makes it difficult to state categorically the independence of its foreign policy. But one analysis of Soviet-Cuban relations has centred on a view of influence in which it is moving in both directions: from Moscow to Havana, and vice versa, a matrix which may be appropriate in the case of Angola.⁷¹ While Cuban troop deployment in Angola was almost certainly an indirect influence in Moscow's policy of support for the MPLA and while there may even have been direct influences in the form of requests from Havana to Moscow, Duncan argues that Cuba also acted under a

70. P Shearman, op.cit., [1987], p.37.

71. W R Duncan, op.cit., [1985].

number of assumptions: a) the Soviets would not oppose the build-up of troops in Angola, b) that Moscow would support Cuba if necessary and c) that the convergence of Cuba's policy with Moscow's interests would bring the former rewards.⁷² In this view of dynamic influences and interests, Soviet and Cuban action in Angola converged, rather in the manner of two allies, as Valenta has described their actions.⁷³ This assesment is apparently shared by General Vernon Walters, the CIA Deputy Director at the time, who said in 1985:

"I believe that...Castro was pursuing his own aims-which happened to be, in large part, convergent with those of Moscow."⁷⁴

In concrete terms, the convergence of policy objectives also brought benefits of an operational nature. It has often been pointed out that Cuban troops were all the more essential to the MPLA due to the fact that the majority of the movement's guerrilla units were unable to operate the sophisticated military equipment that the Soviet Union had provided. As most of the weaponry was standard issue in the Cuban armed forces, there ensued a double advantage: initially, the MPLA could be trained in the use of the weapons by the Cubans, while at a later stage the arms shipments would constitute an arsenal compatible with the airlifted Cuban

72. W R Duncan, *ibid.*, p.130.

73. J Valenta, *op.cit.*, [1978], p.25.

74. J Dominguez, *op.cit.*, [1979], p.132.

battalions. Again, this constitutes another reason for claiming that without Cuban intervention, the MPLA would almost certainly not have received the necessary military force to resist attack as Moscow would not have deployed Soviet troops.

It is argued here that the MPLA established a very close relationship with the Cuban regime, one that remained unbroken from its establishment in the mid-1960s up to the intervention of Cuban troops in the Angolan civil war. It is further argued that this relationship conformed broadly to the general bases of Cuban foreign policy of support for revolutionary socialism. In this way, the MPLA secured the support of an external backer that not only provided it with the necessary military forces to resist its adversaries, but can also be seen to have been instrumental in securing the commitment of the Soviet Union as the civil war became caught up in the superpower conflict. In 1975, the MPLA, Cuba and the Soviet Union converged in their policy aims.

(ii) South Africa in Angola: Regional Power Politics

The major international forces that confronted each other directly in Angola were those of Cuba and South Africa. There is little exact information about the battles between the Cuban expeditionary force and the South African Defence Force (SADF) that took place between November 1975 and the withdrawal of the latter starting from January 1976. Certain accounts have claimed that in their few encounters, the SADF showed itself to be

militarily superior to the Cuban forces.⁷⁵ It can be pointed out, however, that despite their inferiority the Cuban-MPLA forces did manage to hold up the SADF-led column outside Luanda, allowing the MPLA's claims to sovereignty to gather credence especially after independence day.

The overwhelming significance of the intervention of South African forces in the Angolan civil war is not military but political. There can be little doubt that Operation Savannah, the intervention of South Africa on the side of the anti-MPLA coalition, had the negative effect of discrediting the latter, while at the same time diverting the negative political impact of the Cuban intervention. Certainly to most African states, even the most conservative ones, the airlift of Cuban troops onto to Angolan soil comes a distant second to South African intervention on a list of reprehensible acts. As Coker points out:

"...Nigeria's decision to recognise the MPLA 15 days after the transfer of power and within days of the arrival of Cuban troops should have warned [Kissinger] that the Africans were not prepared to fight communism with Pretoria as an ally."⁷⁶

75. J Seiler, 'South Africa's Regional Role', [1981], p.107. According to Bridgland who cites South African claims, the SADF took on an entire battalion of 1,000 Cuban troops at the 'Battle of Bridge 14' during three days from 9 to 12 December, losing only 4 South Africans and killing 200 Cubans, including the commander of the Cuban expeditionary force, Raul Diaz Arguelles. F Bridgland, Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa [1986], pp.149-150. This version of events is supported by Durch: "Cuban and South African forces clashed...in what has come to be known as the Battle of Bridge 14. By all accounts, the Cuban forces were severely mauled." in W J Durch, 'The Cuban Military in Africa and the Middle East: From Algeria to Angola' [1978], p.68.

76. C Coker, NATO, the Warsaw Pact and Africa, [1985], p.240.

Even sectors within the South African regime, such as the state security organ, BOSS,⁷⁷ and the Foreign Affairs Department, recognized this political factor and argued that:

"this military intervention was being used against South Africa and alienating many African and Western governments that earlier had not been particularly sympathetic to MPLA or a Cuban presence in Africa."⁷⁸

It may be possible to go so far as to say that the outcome of the conflict in Angola might have been altogether different had South Africa not sent in its army. In 1975, the decision-makers in Pretoria may have ingenuously chosen exactly the opposite policy to that which might have achieved their implicit objective of denying the MPLA power. Conversely, the MPLA's success may lie partly in this unsuccessful intervention, and more particularly in its adverse political consequences.

It is argued that South Africa did not have a cohesive policy toward Angola in 1975, one which was defended unanimously within the power structure, and, consequently, its intervention was ill-defined and only implemented half-heartedly. This led to the creation of a certain number of misperceptions with regard to the Angolan conflict: namely the strength of the commitment of the United States in Angola and the negative political impact of the

77. Bureau of State Security.

78. K Grundy, The Militarization of South African Politics, [1986], p.90.

SADF intervention on the course of the civil war.

The background of South African foreign policy will be looked at briefly here in order to place its Angolan intervention in context. The foundations and strategies of South Africa's foreign policy will be traced and will be seen to be inexorably linked to the unique structure of the white minority regime in South Africa. In this way, the motivations behind South African intervention in Angola in 1975 may be seen more clearly. Of more direct relevance to this thesis are, however, the consequences of this intervention on the political and military struggle between the rival Angolan movements. The South African intervention helped to redefine the political parameters of this struggle, shifting the relative strengths of the MPLA and its rivals, and, consequently affecting the outcome of the civil war far beyond whatever military influence the intervention itself may have had.

South African Foreign Policy: Objectives, Bases and Strategies

The security of the white minority regime in South Africa has been the predominant priority of Pretoria's foreign policy. Accordingly, the defence of South Africa has been inextricably linked to its domestic policies of maintaining white power. This, claims Geldenhuys, is one of the first and foremost characteristics of Pretoria's search for security.⁷⁹ A second

79. D Geldenhuys, South Africa's Search for Security since the Second World War, [1978], p.1.

characteristic of South African post-war policy has been the search for allies in the fulfilment of this task, a search that has been more accentuated here than in other states by virtue of South Africa's physical and, more importantly, political isolation. Since 1948, Pretoria had sought to frame South Africa's very particular interests as being closely tied to those of the West, in particular, to those of NATO. At the very beginning of the age of modern African nationalism and anti-colonialism, South Africa's rulers were aware of the threat that their structure of authority faced from self-determination. They attempted thus to equate nationalism in Africa with communism in order that they might express their resistance to self-determination as the resistance to communism. For the Nationalists, then in power, communism was the multi-threat, both internal and external. By attempting to stand with the West against the Soviet Union in a wider context, Pretoria was transposing the Cold War between East and West onto its own domestic power struggle to retain white minority rule.

"...this perception of international politics as essentially a communist - anti-communist struggle would remain fundamental to South African thinking."⁸⁰

Consequently, the Malan (1948-1954) and Strijdom (1954-1958) National Party governments developed a defence strategy that was predicated on this linkage with the East-West conflict: firstly,

80. D Geldenhuys, op.cit., [1978], p.3.

tackle communism as far away from South Africa as possible; secondly, attempt to associate South Africa with a formal Western defence alliance; and finally, land the West's commitment to South Africa's defence.⁸¹ In this way, the government in Pretoria hoped to tie the West to the survival of the white minority regime. These defence and diplomatic policies sought somewhat to expand on, but also to transcend, South Africa's strategic ties with Britain that had been developed by the pro-British Smuts.

In 1955, Britain and South Africa signed a bilateral agreement on naval co-operation around the previously British Simonstown base. According to the terms of the agreement, Britain and its NATO allies would have access to the base, and, in return, promised the supply of vital arms.⁸² But the greater significance of this agreement seems to be almost psychological. Geldenhuys claims that to the South African strategists the agreement implied Britain's acceptance of Pretoria's own assessment of its strategic importance to the West. The corner-stone of this alleged strategic value was the Cape route, crucial to the shipping of oil to the West. But despite this obvious importance, especially in the face of unpredictable access to the Suez Canal, the British Labour government in 1967 distanced itself from naval co-operation with South Africa implying that it no longer considered the Cape route important;⁸³ or at least that it seemed less important than to be

81. L Mangasarian, 'Influences on South African Strategic Thinking' unpublished paper.

82. D Geldenhuys, op.cit., [1978], p.5.

seen to be loosening ties with South Africa, especially military ones. For in the intervening period, South Africa had entered its period of increasing political and diplomatic isolation.

The Sharpeville massacre of 1960 had propelled the apartheid regime to international infamy and set in motion the long campaign to isolate South Africa. The clear intention of the regime not to reform was demonstrated by the efficient suppression of what had been its most serious internal challenge to date. When in 1964 the US and Britain subscribed to the UN 1963 embargo on the sale of arms to South Africa, any real possibility of South Africa ever forming part of the Western defence alliance was effectively put aside. But at the time, this was not immediately apparent, and at the end of the 1960s, NATO's reawakened interest in the Cape route raised unwarranted expectations in the South African regime.

Under Joseph Luns, the Atlantic Alliance began to consider the possibility of including the Cape route in the organization's defence perimeter despite the recognized fact that military co-operation with South Africa was increasingly difficult in the prevailing negative political climate.⁸⁴ But the strategic importance of the Cape route (the recognition of this importance by the West was in itself a South African objective) seemed to be obvious. The sheer quantity of daily oil tonnage and other trade,⁸⁵ that was shipped around the Cape pointed overwhelmingly

83. C Coker, op.cit. [1985], p.76.

84. C Coker, op.cit., [1985], p.83.

to its importance and, therefore, to its vulnerability if faced with a Soviet threat. According to Coker, delegates at a NATO conference in October 1969 were told that the Soviet navy could inflict severe and possibly fatal damage to allied shipping in the area within a matter of hours.⁸⁶ In an attempt to tie NATO to the defence of South Africa, Pretoria argued that to counter this Soviet threat, a massive Western air and naval presence in the Indian Ocean was required, which would inevitably lead South Africa, it was hoped, to some form of association with NATO. As it happened, the political pressure against any form of military co-operation with South Africa, even if it had been in the interests of the Alliance, was just too strong to resist. To do so would have risked alienating countless governments in Africa and Asia. This constraint on Western governments was perhaps not understood by South Africa, but whatever the case did not please Pretoria:

"An important underlying reason for South Africa's disgust at Wilson's actions [stopping the sale of arms] was that it was perhaps reflecting a downgrading of the Cape route's strategic importance and a devaluation of South Africa's role in the Western defence system - two notions very dear to South African strategists and politicians."⁸⁷

To South Africa it had slowly become clear that its foreign policy strategies would have to change. Its isolation had also become

85. Half a million tonnes of oil every day: roughly, 3,300 fully-laden tankers. The route accounted for approximately 25 % of all trade with northwestern Europe. C Coker, op.cit., [1985], p.82.

86. C Coker, op.cit., [1985], p.82.

87. D Geldenhuys, op.cit. [1978], p.6.

painfully clear to policy-makers. They continued, however, to place South Africa's objectives and interests firmly with those of the West, expressing them almost in terms of a moral crusade:

"South Africa was determined to defend itself and the free world to the utmost of its ability, even if the free world should continue denying South Africans the arms to do so."

B J Vorster 1973⁸⁸

"If the non-communist world would not support South Africa as a strategic ally, it would have to defend the Cape route alone, for its own and the free world's sake, whatever the sacrifices."

P W Botha 1968⁸⁹

In parallel with this, the attention of policy-makers in Pretoria also concentrated on developing South Africa's regional role. The white minority regime in South Africa became wary of the colonial powers apparent weakness of resolve to remain in Africa in the face of what it saw to be a communist threat and not the expression of national self-determination. As they saw it South Africa had to stem this threat, and as far away from the country as possible. This because the non-white South African population was considered to be "...a very fertile field for communist propaganda and agitation."⁹⁰ The strategy which was developed sought to establish a cordon sanitaire, forming a buffer zone that would separate South Africa from the nefarious influences of communist-inspired change.⁹¹ In accordance with this strategy,

88. D Geldenhuys, op.cit. [1978], p.7.

89. D Geldenhuys, op.cit., [1978], p.7.

90. D Geldenhuys, op.cit., [1978], p.3.

Pretoria sought, from the mid-1960s onward, to strengthen its relations with the white regimes in Rhodesia and Portuguese Angola and Mozambique to form an alliance designed to insulate itself against the onslaught of international communism and African nationalism, which were promoted as being one and the same. These regimes co-operated to a large extent in various sectors, including security and military operations. The South African army operated freely in southern Angola as it searched for SWAPO targets, while, in return for this freedom to roam, it would also strike against the Angolan anti-colonial movements it came across in the region.⁹² To the regime in Pretoria, it was all part of the same fight:

"I know of no terrorism in southern Africa which, in the final analysis, is not directed against South Africa...The ultimate aim of all terrorists is to take South Africa away from us."
Vorster, September 1970.⁹³

As it strengthened its regional role, the regime in Pretoria began to simultaneously develop its military power. After the implementation of the UN arms embargo, this had become a priority for the white regime. A 1960 defence review had concluded that the state had a "a practically obsolete defence force."⁹⁴ This led to the implementation of a very successful programme for

91. D Geldenhuys, op.cit., [1978], p.8.

92. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Volume Two, [1978], p.266.

93. Citation in J Barber and J Barratt South Africa's Foreign Policy: The Search for Status and Security 1945-1988, [1990], p.139.

military modernization. Within four years, the Minister of Defence, J J Fouche, could arrogantly cast aside any potential external threat to South Africa, claiming that all of its military requirements could be met.⁹⁵

This militarization was carried out during a period of strong economic growth in the country between 1961 and 1965. The South African economy had already reached an advanced stage of industrialization, one that had gone beyond simple import-substitution and was beginning export-led growth. But despite being in this advanced industrial phase, the South African economy also tended to occupy a role similar to that of a colony in international trade. That is, a role characterized by the export of raw materials, principally minerals, in exchange for manufactured goods. But this economic structure became threatened by South Africa's political isolation, which placed markets out of reach, both for the sale of raw materials and the purchase of manufactured goods.⁹⁶ Furthermore, the non-white population did not provide a market sufficient for the needs of the South African economy. The material benefits of industrialization were not passed on as a result of deliberate policy to enforce segregation. In this way, and in detrimental terms to the South African economy, apartheid became a constraint on domestic demand. For these reasons, and combined with negative world economic

94. D Geldenhuys, op.cit. [1978], p.5.

95. J Barber and J Barratt, op.cit., [1990], p.103.

96. T Shaw 'South Africa, Southern Africa and the World System',

conditions, the South African economy had to search for markets elsewhere. Eventually, other pariah states did form trading partnerships with South Africa. But it was the Southern African region, however, that represented the best means with which to satisfy these requirements. Both at the level of diplomatic and strategic needs as well as at that of economic reason, Southern Africa became a priority in South Africa's external policies.

South Africa invested heavily in tying the region to its own economy. Co-operation with the Portuguese colonial regime in regional development led to the establishment of substantial stakes in the hydroelectric project on the Cunene river in Angola, and in the huge Cabora Bassa dam in Mozambique. The long-standing flow of labour, for mineral extraction and other labour intensive work, from Mozambique and other countries in the region to South Africa, further reinforced the latter's role as the economic motor of Southern Africa. In this way, an extremely rigid and longlasting structure of economic dependence was established. This form of regional co-operation with Portugal and the outlaw Smith regime in Rhodesia, allayed South Africa's greatest fears of being confronted with hostile 'communist' forces along its borders. Fearful of internal challenges to the white minority regime, Pretoria attempted to maintain directly along its borders, a boundary of politically benevolent states, that would in their view, sterilize the internal South African conflict by excluding external (read 'communist') instigation. Pretoria's illegal government in Namibia was part and parcel of this strategy.

But the peace of mind offered by this buffer zone was shattered when the Portuguese regime was overthrown by the army in April 1974. As Barber and Barratt put it: "...the outlook for Pretoria had become threatening."⁹⁷ When, in the course of that year, it had become clear that Portugal would eventually leave Africa, South Africa's strategic ring was broken. But even more threateningly, it appeared that this ring would, according to Prime Minister Vorster, be replaced by "...a string of Marxist states across Africa from Angola to Tanzania."⁹⁸ The deployment of the Soviet Navy off the coast of Guinea in 1970 had raised the spectre of Soviet presence in Africa. Not that South Africa feared an outright invasion by the Soviet Red Army, but Pretoria understood that radical regimes on its border would threaten its own survival. The South African military believed that if external (Soviet) assistance to (nationalist) insurgency were denied, then the internal South African conflict could be won. Radical regimes along its border would make the infiltration of guerrillas and a full support for a challenge to white supremacy from a contiguous state a very real possibility.

The first challenge to Pretoria was Mozambique. The FRELIMO-dominated transitional government established in September 1974 could certainly have been perceived to have been a security threat to South Africa as well as to neighbouring Rhodesia, which

[1983], p.54.

97. J Barber and J Barratt, *op.cit.*, [1990], p.176.

was heavily dependent on Mozambique's ports. The collapse of Portuguese power in Mozambique was received optimistically by anti-apartheid opposition in South Africa, while the certain advent of the Marxist FRELIMO represented the encroachment of the Soviet Union in the region and announced the possibility of ANC bases not far from South Africa's border. But FRELIMO voiced realism, aware of its own dependence on South Africa and Rhodesian traffic through its ports. In the case of Mozambique, Vorster's government decided on non-intervention, despite insistence from P W Botha and the security apparatus.⁹⁹ Angola was altogether a different matter.

Intervention in Angola

Officially, Pretoria justified initial small-scale military intervention in Angola throughout the summer of 1975 in terms of protecting its investments in the Cunene River hydroelectric project, and of deflecting "...the effects of the Angolan civil war from the northern border of South West Africa."¹⁰⁰ Eventually it was revealed, that South Africa had intervened much more extensively in the Angolan conflict with the objective of supporting the FNLA-UNITA coalition in its war against the MPLA.¹⁰¹ South Africa's intervention was a small-scale

98. C Legum After Angola: The War over Southern Africa, [1978], p.37.

99. J Barber and J Barratt, op.cit., [1990], p.180.

operation, with only a couple of hundred or so SADF officers and NCOs leading the circa 2,000-strong 'Zulu' column of motorized armour that joined the UNITA-FNLA offensive in the west of Angola on 23 October 1975.

The objective of this first major offensive operation seems unclear.¹⁰² Had the SADF wanted to drive north to Luanda before the stipulated date of independence, they would almost certainly have employed a stronger force backed by airpower. Initially, therefore, it seems that the purpose of the intervention was only to bolster UNITA's positions on the battlefield. According to a report in the Sunday Telegraph in February 1977, the original South African 'directive' had been for the SADF columns to take back as much UNITA territory as possible before the date of independence and then withdraw.¹⁰³ The objective was then to strengthen UNITA's position when the time came to negotiate a coalition government. Either because negotiations seemed unlikely, or for another reason connected to a re-evaluation of what they could achieve, South African strategy changed during the course of the intervention. According to claims

100. D Geldenhuys, op.cit., [1978], p.10.

101. In The Washington Post 22 November, 1975, Bridgland 'names' South Africa as the origin of the 'white soldiers' that had intervened in Angola. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.142.

102. The 'Zulu' column advanced up the coast and met an inland column, 'Foxbat', after taking Novo Redondo, 275 kilometres south of Luanda. Another column, 'X-Ray', advanced toward Luso (where the 'gendarmes' from Katanga were hitting UNITA hard), which it eventually took in December. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.144.

made by Bridgland, Savimbi 'found out', on a trip to Pretoria on 10 November when he talked to Vorster for the first time, that South Africa had reversed its original plan of withdrawing by 11 November and was at the time pushing towards Luanda to support the US- and Zaire-backed FNLA's challenge from the north.¹⁰⁴ These allegations, of a South African-United States plan to install the FNLA in Luanda by independence, implied that UNITA would have played at most a minor role in a Roberto-dominated regime. A South African academic has concluded that there was "...no co-ordinated South African-American plan to capture Luanda."¹⁰⁵

What emerges from a look at South Africa's intervention in Angola is a sense that Pretoria did not have a consistent policy from the start. Essentially it acted in response to perceived opportunities as the conflict in Angola escalated. This view is supported by a look at the South African intervention in phases. Firstly, it acted to exploit whatever advantages it could gain vis-a-vis SWAPO as a result of the chaos that was being unleashed inside Angola. Then, during a second phase, it acted to support UNITA's consolidation of territory in the south. Finally, it faced the Cuban-backed MPLA in an attempt to take Luanda for the FNLA. This 'stagist' look at South Africa's strategy in Angola must lead to the conclusion that the regime in Pretoria did not have a calculated and co-ordinated policy to achieve its

103. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.145.

104. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.145.

105. D Geldenhuys, The Diplomacy of Isolation: South African

aims there, and, it is in this fact that partly lies the responsibility for failing to avoid the result Pretoria most feared: an independent, Moscow-backed MPLA government in Luanda.

According to one analyst of South African policy, the white regime hoped to help "...produce a moderate government in Angola which, in turn, might deny SWAPO bases and retain Angola as part of the *cordon sanitaire*."¹⁰⁶ This seems to have been one of the principal motivations behind intervention in Angola. The means of achieving of this were, however, not as clear. According to Grundy, "Pretoria did not appear to know what it wanted to do largely because no clear-cut policy direction was established."¹⁰⁷

Apparently, the Department of Foreign Affairs did not know about the first major SADF offensive into Angola until the South African embassy in Lisbon was handed a note of protest from the Portuguese government. This seems, at the very least, to suggest that intervention in Angola was not deemed to be an incontrovertible policy option, if it does not infer the possibility that there was a division within the white regime over the merits of this policy.

Grundy has claimed that were it possible to identify this divergence over Angola so clearly, the Department of Defence, -----
Foreign Policy Making, [1984], p.77.

106. D Geldenhuys, op.cit., [1978], p.10. Simpson has concluded that Pretoria believed that a UNITA-FNLA coalition in Luanda would not provide bases for SWAPO, as a result of Savimbi's comments wherein he considered an armed struggle in Namibia to be unnecessary. M Simpson, The Soviet Union and Afro-Marxist Regimes: The Path to the Treaties of Friendship and Cooperation [1989], p.205.

led by its minister, P W Botha, and the SADF itself, would be considered 'hawks', while the security organ, BOSS, and the Department of Foreign Affairs, for separate reasons, took the 'dovish' line.¹⁰⁸ The Foreign Affairs Department was principally concerned about what intervention in Angola might do to South Africa's already fragile international position, while BOSS favoured a clandestine operation (which it would implement) rather than a direct military intervention. These different postures served to delay Vorster's decision in favour of one cohesive policy for Angola.¹⁰⁹ This debate was, however, only carried out "...within a restricted government circle while the Cabinet was not kept informed of what was happening and was not involved in the decisions."¹¹⁰ According to Grundy, the two principal decision-makers in South Africa's Angolan policy were B J Vorster and P W Botha.

According to this same source, the SADF prepared a policy paper on Angola outlining the options available to South Africa, which it delivered to Vorster via Botha in June 1975.¹¹¹ No decision to act was taken until October,¹¹² and yet in July, the SADF forces positioned along Namibia's border with Angola

107. K Grundy, op.cit., [1986], p.89.

108. K Grundy, op.cit., [1986], p.89.

109. J Barber and J Barratt, op.cit., [1990], pp.192-193.

110. J Barber and J Barratt, ibid., p.192.

111. K Grundy, op.cit., [1986], p.89.

entered the country where they clashed with MPLA and, apparently, UNITA forces.¹¹³ The purpose of these raids seems to have been to search and destroy SWAPO guerrilla units in Angolan territory. The fact that these offensive actions did take place at this time is somewhat confirmed by Botha himself in parliament when he gave details of South African casualties in Angola as having been suffered between 14 July 1975 and 23 January 1976.¹¹⁴ In August, SADF forces moved into Angola and occupied the installations of the dam project on the Cunene River, an act that was held up to be the protection of South African investments. It seems likely that the objective of deploying the SADF along the northern border of Namibia and in southern Angola in the summer of 1975 was in order to exploit the situation in Angola to move against SWAPO. According to Barber and Barratt:

"...there is no evidence that Pretoria had specifically authorised the military to do more than protect the Cunene project and take necessary action against SWAPO."¹¹⁵

If this was the case, then the South African military's intervention on behalf of the anti-MPLA alliance; was initially unintended. In the absence of a concrete policy, P W Botha, after consulting with Vorster, had instructed the SADF forces in northern Namibia and southern Angola to drive off MPLA forces if

112. J Barber and J Barratt, op.cit., [1990], p.193.

113. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.36.

114. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.36. Savimbi also claimed that South African raids had taken place in July.

attacked, in what amounted to, as Geldenhuys has put it, a political decision that opened the door to offensive military operations in Angola.¹¹⁶ Despite the fact that no policy had reportedly been decided upon, the SADF was already acting in Angola, an indication of the possible confusion that existed at the heart of Pretoria's Angolan policy. While the political considerations had not yet been completely evaluated, the fact that the military was already on the ground may have provided an impetus that eventually determined South Africa's action without a proper input as to the political consequences of its intervention which eventually led to its failure in Angola.

The background motivations for South African intervention in Angola were clearly based around the objective of denying power to the Soviet-backed MPLA. Fears that an MPLA-governed Angola would represent a direct threat to South Africa's position in Namibia, and indirectly, to the security of the white regime in South Africa itself, were expressed, and undoubtedly experienced, by policy-makers in Pretoria. At the time, what South Africans feared most from a possible MPLA success was, they claimed, the strategic threat that a Soviet presence represented to Western interests. According to P W Botha:

"South Africa is playing a limited role in Angola because Russia is involved in a campaign of militaristic imperialism in that country...We were prepared to leave it to the people of Angola to solve their own problems, but the Russians interfered because they want to control the sea route around

115. J Barber and J Barratt, op.cit., [1990], p.191.

the Cape of Good Hope and because they want to exploit the wealth of Angola."¹¹⁷

While this may well have been the case, Pretoria's fear of Moscow seems to be less related to the world-wide struggle against communism than to its fears of the effects of a strong, unfriendly actor in its hitherto sole sphere of influence. The independence that Moscow's backing would confer to an MPLA government and the consequences of this on Pretoria's own security, would signify for it a loss of relative power in the southern African region. Independence would have (and has) signified a drastic reduction in Pretoria's leverage leaving the South African government powerless should the radical Angolan government have decided to support challenges to the white minority regime in both Namibia and South Africa, through its support for SWAPO and the ANC respectively. In addition to this external support, the independence of an anti-South African regime in Luanda would also be drawn from oil revenues. Not only would a radical regime in Luanda be free to act independently of Pretoria but as a rival pole of attraction, it might have weakened the state of dependence of the rest of southern African on the South African economy. This factor of independence of action may partly explain why South Africa chose to intervene in Angola but not in Mozambique. The latter had very little scope for escaping dependence on South Africa.

As it turned out, Pretoria's fears were not unfounded.

116. D Geldenhuys, op.cit., [1984], p.79.

Therefore, it is not unreasonable to claim that these may have been part of the motivation for its decision to intervene. The white minority regime in South Africa had almost always shown itself to be aware of what threatened its regional hegemony.

South Africa has claimed that it acted in Angola only after a number of governments had urged it do so, and after UNITA had, in turn, requested an escalation to Pretoria's support for its challenge in the south. As stated above, the initial South African escalation was intended to help UNITA. Savimbi, the movement's leader, eventually admitted that he had decided to "...seek South African assistance at the end of September when he realised UNITA needed help against the Cubans."¹¹⁸ According to Savimbi:

"If you are a drowning man in a crocodile-infested river and you've just gone under for the third time you don't question who is pulling you to the bank until you are safely on it."¹¹⁹

It is not clear when South Africa began to support UNITA. According to one source, a request for aid made by Savimbi in March 1975 was turned down by Pretoria.¹²⁰ Marcum states that Savimbi "...had already met with South African officials..." before early May.¹²¹ It is, therefore, not unreasonable to assume

117. Cited by C Legum, op.cit., p.37.

118. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.36.

119. Citation in F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.142.

120. Moss in Die Burger (Cape Town), 8 February 1977. J Barber and J Barratt, op.cit., [1990], p.190.

that some contact with the South Africans had been established before the summer of 1975. The rebel MPLA leader, Daniel Chipenda, (who had in the meantime joined the FNLA) visited Windhoek in May and July 1975. In the Namibian capital he met the head of BOSS, General van den Bergh. As the situation developed, the possibility of South African support must have been discussed at these meetings. In late August, the SADF established a training camp for UNITA and one for Chipenda's FNLA forces.¹²² At the end of September, a team of 18 South African instructors led by a SADF officer and a small consignment of arms were sent to UNITA.¹²³ By the beginning of October, these military advisors were participating in clashes between UNITA and the MPLA.¹²⁴ At this time also, the CIA's covert operation of support for the FNLA and UNITA was gathering pace.

For South Africa, UNITA represented an appropriate recipient of its favour. The fact that its political roots were in the south signified that a pro-South African UNITA would provide a buffer between Namibia and a hostile Angolan government.¹²⁵ Furthermore, when the Americans also turned to UNITA in June, Pretoria must have believed it to be in line with Washington's Angolan policy. Decades of longing to stand in the Western camp

121. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.268.

122. J Barber and J Barratt, op.cit., [1990], p.190. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.269.

123. D Geldenhuys, op.cit., [1984], p.76.

124. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.269.

left a blinding legacy in Pretoria. One additional benefit of supporting UNITA, according to US intelligence sources cited by Marcum, was that in return for South African help, Savimbi provided information on the location of SWAPO bases.¹²⁶

A number of sources have claimed that South Africa's intervention in Angola was motivated in part by the encouragement given by certain African governments, namely those of Mobutu in Zaire and Kaunda in Zambia, as well as those of other leaders such as Houphouet-Boigny, Senghor and Nyerere. According to Barber and Barratt: "The position of these African leaders significantly influenced Pretoria's approach to the Angolan War."¹²⁷ Both Zambia and Zaire were included in Pretoria's diplomatic strategy of 'dialogue' which sought to establish closer relations with African governments. According to this interpretation, Pretoria acted in Angola in such a manner as to oblige its 'dialogue' partners. It is claimed that both Kaunda and Mobutu were concerned over an MPLA take-over in Angola; one which might threaten the access of their vital copper exports to the Atlantic coast ports via the Benguela railway. These leaders must not have relished the thought of becoming dependent on a Moscow-backed MPLA government which would have been able to affect the flow of their principal foreign revenue earner. This may certainly explain part of the motivation behind Zaire's direct support for the FNLA and that of Zambia for

125. J Barber and J Barratt, op.cit., [1990], p.191.

126. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.271.

UNITA. But the contention arises when it is suggested that these leaders encouraged Pretoria to intervene in order to help displace the MPLA. Surely they must have been aware of the probable consequences of South African intervention in an African conflict. Possibly, they hoped the presence of the SADF in Angola could have been kept secret, although this was certainly an unrealistic expectation. According to Heimer, the SADF was, after its initial incursion, ordered to hold back until 11 November in order to maintain their identity secret.¹²⁸

It still remains uncertain at what stage of South African intervention this Zambian-Zairean encouragement was given. Some sources¹²⁹ have inferred that this occurred before their military commitment had been made, possibly leading Pretoria to believe that it had the support of some African governments. Claims have been made by Savimbi that seek to excuse Pretoria's intervention, by saying that South Africa had acted with "painful correctness", and which also emphasized that South Africa had acted with the approval of African governments "...such as Zaire, Zambia and the Ivory Coast."¹³⁰

In other accounts,¹³¹ it has been suggested that secret Zairean and Zambian overtures on Pretoria came only after the SADF

127. J Barber and J Barratt, op.cit., [1990], pp.188-189.

128. F W Heimer, The Decolonization Conflict in Angola, [1979], p.77.

129. Seiler states it categorically: "...both Zambia and Zaire asked the South African government to intervene against the MPLA." J Seiler, op.cit., [1981], p.104.

had intervened in Angola to secure territory for UNITA in support of its claims for a share in a possible coalition government. In this interpretation, the Zairean and Zambian governments make known their approval, tacitly or directly, of South African military operations that were already being carried out against the MPLA. The difference between the two possible scenarios being that were the latter to be the case, Pretoria could not claim that it had been spurred into action by requests from Zaire and Zambia. If approval came afterwards, it cannot be considered to have an input into the decision-making process.

The principal motivating factor behind its intervention, claimed Pretoria, was the United States. An unanswered question in the Angolan civil war is the extent of US collusion with South Africa against the MPLA. The South African government has claimed that Washington encouraged, if not incited, Pretoria into intervening:

"To the question of whether Washington had `solicited' South African involvement, Prime Minister Vorster subsequently responded that he would not call anyone who said that a `liar'."132

According to Vorster:

"...South Africa would never have intervened had it not been assured that its forces would be resupplied if they encountered major opposition...it had only intervened at all on the express understanding that the US would continue to arm the SADF if it suffered heavy losses."133

130. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.38.

131. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.145

.132. Newsweek 17 May 1976. Citation in J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.271.

For its part, the US denies having given any such guarantees to Pretoria:

"Some charge that we have acted in collusion with South Africa,' [Kissinger] said before the Senate Africa Subcommittee. 'This is untrue, We had no foreknowledge of South Africa's intentions and in no way co-operated with it militarily.'"¹³⁴

The US had been unwilling to admit to any form of partnership with Pretoria, especially with regard to anything so sensitive as supplying arms to South African troops fighting in Angola.

"As a [US] government official¹³⁵ told Congress, no American government could undertake to resupply South African forces during a conflict in which its own forces were not directly engaged. He even underlined the fact by reminding it that the US had scrupulously adhered to the arms embargo throughout the conflict."¹³⁶

Clearly, the South African government had been aware of the clandestine support Washington had been giving the FNLA through Zaire. According to John Stockwell, the CIA operative responsible for the US covert operation in Angola, the South African regime was kept informed through "...voluminous intelligence reports and detailed briefings..." offered by the agency's station in Pretoria.¹³⁷ On this information, it is possible to infer that the

133. New York Times 5 and 7 February 1976. Citation in C Coker, op.cit., [1985], p.96.

134. A Gavshon, Crisis in Africa: Battleground of East and West, [1981], p.243.

135. John Reed, the Director of the Africa Regional Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defence.

South Africans may have taken for granted the US commitment to the anti-MPLA forces and decided to 'help out' in the fight. In this way, "...South Africa hoped to demonstrate its commitment to the free world against communist expansionism. Angola seemed the ideal opportunity to do so."¹³⁸

When it joined the US in the ranks of the FNLA's and UNITA's external backers, it is possible that Pretoria believed that by identifying the nature of the intervention as 'anti-communist', this would prevail over any negative political consequences of its own involvement. Overconfident of its own identity, the South African regime may have been unable to correctly calculate what effect its support for UNITA and the FNLA would have on the political conflict of these movements with the MPLA. When it eventually discovered that its support represented the 'kiss of death' for the anti-MPLA coalition, the regime turned on Washington for what it believed to be the Americans' lack of resolve in seeing through the fight against the 'communists'. Pretoria had obviously different reasons than Washington for being in Angola. Their objectives, the denial of power to the MPLA, did coincide, but even the nature of their intervention was different. Furthermore, South Africa's political and military objectives did not match. The SADF's military operations on the ground ended up by compromising an efficient evaluation of South Africa's political objectives. It can be said that the South Africans were

136. C Coker, op.cit., [1985], p.96.

blaming Washington for what had essentially been their own miscalculations, both in relation to their own intervention as well as with regard to overestimating American willingness to enter the Angolan conflict overtly, something which, incidentally, the Soviet Union seemed to have managed to evaluate correctly.¹³⁹

The revelation of the presence of the SADF on Angolan soil represented the beginning of the end of the civil war. Despite the fact that others had also been involved, and somewhat incomprehensibly to itself, South African intervention largely became the most reviled act of the civil war. Allegedly in response to the intervention of South Africa, Nigeria, hitherto a UNITA sympathizer revised its posture on the Angolan civil war in support of the MPLA, both financially and diplomatically. Legum suggests, however, that there may have been another reason behind this reversal, one that had more to do with Nigerian domestic politics and the United States, than with Pretoria's intervention in Angola.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, international public opinion raged against the South African intervention far more than the criticism that was directed against the Cuban intervention. Eventually, it was Pretoria's involvement in the conflict, that pushed the OAU and then the UN to recognize the legitimacy of the MPLA and in this way put an end to the civil war of 1975.

It has been shown that South African intervention in

137. J Stockwell In Search of Enemies, [1978], p.181.

138. D Geldenhuys, *op.cit.*, [1978], p.10.

Angola was intimately tied to its strategy of regional hegemony. The threat of a radical regime in Angola independent of its pressures led South Africa to risk a military operation that sought to deny victory to the MPLA. These were the motivations behind its involvement. But South Africa was also drawn into the conflict. The convergence of South Africa's interests with those of the FNLA and UNITA, who as 'drowning men' sought a saviour to pull them ashore, became the entry point for South African military intervention in the civil war. Again, the dynamics of external and internal politics were mixed, and created an effect that exceeded the purely military nature of the intervention.

(iii) Zaire and Angola: The Search for Influence

The role played by the Zairean regime of President Mobutu Sese Seko in the Angolan civil war was of an important if not determinant nature. Apart from those of South Africa and Cuba, it was the only other government to send its own troops into Angola to intervene directly in the civil war. The influence of Congolese/Zairean politics on the Angolan conflict had already been long-standing by 1975. The Adoula government's sponsorship of the GRAE in 1963 taken up by Mobutu in 1965 resulting in the intervention of 1975, can be seen to have been an expression of the same policy of support for Roberto's movement. This commitment to the FNLA could be said to parallel, in terms of effect although perhaps not of nature, that of Cuba's association with the MPLA. From this point of view, the FNLA's very close relationship with

Mobutu led not only to the latter's intervention in the movement's favour but also to the support provided to the FNLA by the United States; to a point where the question may be raised as to whether Washington's behaviour during the civil war might have been altogether different had Zaire not provided one of the lenses through which the United States viewed the conflict.

The Mobutu regime seems to have played the part of linch-pin, holding together the anti-MPLA coalition with its external backers. This was certainly the case with the United States. It is argued that not only did Zaire provide the conduit for the US covert assistance to the FNLA but also influenced the determination of US policy towards the Angolan conflict. This was also the case with China. As the Mobutu regime warmed to Peking in 1973, the FNLA, based in Zaire, gleaned the rewards in terms of arms and instructors. As one of the major African states, Zaire's overtures to South Africa, which are said to have incited Pretoria's intervention, would in all probability have been used as a political justification, however miscalculated, for the 'hawkish' policy pursued by the South Africans. Had the Mobutu regime not played such a prominent role in its support of the FNLA it is conceivable that the level of the internationalization of the Angolan conflict would have been significantly affected.

The principal pillar of Zaire's association with the FNLA seems to have been the personal relationship between Mobutu and Holden Roberto. This association was also predicated on a Zairean domestic political consideration: the importance of the

large Bakongo-speaking community, in which the FNLA was based, which straddled both Angola and Zaire. From almost the very beginning of the FNLA's existence to its eventual dissolution, its fortunes were intimately tied to Zairean power, and especially to that of President Mobutu.¹⁴¹ It may be argued that the FNLA showed itself to have been completely dependent on Zaire. Mobutu's regime provided the FNLA with finance and weapons, a military base at Kinkuzu, diplomatic support and an operational advantage by denying the MPLA access to Angola along its long border. Even in its internal workings, the FNLA, or rather Roberto, seemed to rely on the Zairean government. When Roberto's leadership was challenged from within, it was the Zairean army that came to his rescue, putting down an ELNA¹⁴² mutiny in 1973.¹⁴³ Perhaps because of this close association, Legum talks of the 'inevitability' of Mobutu's regime being drawn into the Angolan conflict once the FNLA had made its challenge for power.¹⁴⁴

When the FNLA believed it to be possible to challenge the MPLA, its association with Mobutu was undoubtedly called upon. However, in its intervention in Angola in 1975, Zaire was actively pursuing its own agenda. Specifically, Zaire's objective in Angola

139. See Chapter Seven.

140. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.35.

141. During Tshombe's government in 1964, Roberto and the FNLA had not been favoured. See Chapter Five.

142. The FNLA's army. The Army of the National Liberation of Angola (Exército de Libertação Nacional de Angola).

143. S Weissman, 'The CIA and US Policy in Zaire and Angola',

in an attempt to influence the succession of Portuguese colonialism was to establish a favorably-disposed government in Angola. The range of acceptable alternatives for Zaire seem to have run from, at an early stage, the participation of the FNLA in a coalition government to, eventually, the total take-over by the FNLA. In achieving any of these objectives, Zaire failed completely and in February 1976 the Mobutu regime 'normalized' relations with the MPLA.

What were Zaire's objectives in Angola in 1975? According to Legum, Zaire was "...pursuing particularist interests...".¹⁴⁵ The desire to avoid the establishment of a leftist regime in Luanda seems to have stemmed from a number of considerations made by Mobutu's regime, of a strategic, economic and political nature. An independent and hostile government in neighbouring Angola would have threatened an array of perceived interests. In general terms, these interests can be linked to Mobutu's desire to carve out a role for Zaire as a regional hegemon in central Africa and as a continent-wide leader.

In 1973, strong world prices for its abundant mineral resources and an increasingly prominent role in continental politics had made Zaire an influential actor in the area. This despite the negative image given as a result of the close association of Mobutu's regime with the US; a result of the alleged role played by the CIA in the rise and consolidation of

[1978], p.403.

Mobutu's power and the strong presence of Western investments in the Zairean economy, especially in its copper production. Furthermore, this negative association had been considerably offset by the development of close relations with China from the end of 1972 which served to bolster Zaire's image in the Third World generally.¹⁴⁶ Domestically, Mobutu was unchallenged and had attempted to ameliorate the charges levelled at him regarding the prominent position of Western capital in the Zairean economy by implementing a partial programme of nationalization. The apparently rising international prestige of Zaire was part of the most golden period of Mobutu's regime. It did not, however, last long.

According to Young,¹⁴⁷ the regime's relationship with the United States had, in 1975, reached its lowest point as a result of a number of issues which had led to friction between the two countries. The United States had not been pleased with Mobutu's diplomatic coup against Israel nor with his increasingly good relations with China. In mid-1974, the new US ambassador to Zaire was appointed after a clearly reproachful period of delay, and never really managed to gain favour with Mobutu. Furthermore,

144. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.32.

145. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.10.

146. Mobutu's regime also gained much respect, particularly in the Arab world, with its bold, anticipatory and preemptive break with Israel two days before the 1973 October war."Once the October War began, many African states followed suit, but the Zairian initiative brilliantly outmanoeuvred them - especially Nigeria, a major rival for African leadership." C Young, 'The Portuguese Coup and Zaire's Southern Africa Policy' [1980],

the Zairean authorities had seized the distribution and retail facilities of a number of Western oil companies, causing further irritation in Washington. The deterioration in US-Zairean relations reached its culmination in June 1975, when the CIA was accused by Kinshasa of having conspired to overthrow Mobutu. The reasons behind this alleged plot relate to the investigations being made in the US by the Church Senate committee into the activities of the CIA. With the alleged plot dominating the press, Mobutu may have hoped to distract attention from any damning revelations made by the Senate investigation. Despite the possibility that this may have been a tactical manoeuvre by Mobutu, US-Zairean relations were sufficiently cool in mid-1975 for there to have been a perceived need to revive the partnership or risk diverging from Washington. For this and other reasons, Mobutu began to project Zaire as standing in Africa as Washington's champion against communism and the Soviet Union. Challenging the Moscow-backed MPLA in Angola would have clearly conveyed Zaire's allegiance to Washington.

The desire to regain Washington's favour was but one of the considerations that underlied Zaire's intervention in Angola. Foremost among the other reasons was Zaire's testy relations with the Congo (Brazzaville). Relations between Kinshasa and Brazzaville, across the river, had been difficult ever since the radicalization of the Congolese regime under Massemba-Debat from 1963. The new Brazzaville regime made clear its posture vis-a-vis Kinshasa by giving haven to and supporting the Zairean leftists in

the National Liberation Committee (CNL).¹⁴⁸ By giving support to the CNL, which fought initially for the overthrow of Tshombe, and subsequently Mobutu, Brazzaville was effectively alienating itself from Kinshasa. Congolese support had also been extended to the MPLA after its expulsion from Zaire by Adoula in 1963. The FNLA's operations had provided a counter to both the activity of the CNL and the MPLA, a fact which had allegedly won Kinshasa valuable aid from the Portuguese.¹⁴⁹

It is argued that this rivalry between US-backed Kinshasa and Moscow-backed Brazzaville was yet another external matrix that was superimposed on the internal Angolan conflict, as was apparent in the mid-1960s in the competition between the MPLA and the GRAE, and emerged once again during the Angolan civil war. Thus, Brazzaville provided a basing point for the MPLA and served as a conduit for the flow of Soviet weapons to the movement as well as forming a crucial communications link between the Angolans, the Cubans and the Soviets. Against this, in an inescapably quasi-symmetrical way, Kinshasa deployed troops on the side of the FNLA and served as a channel for the flow of US weapons to Roberto's movement while at the same time linking the FNLA to its external backers. While inevitably conforming to the global competition between the superpowers that paralleled the

p.201.

147. C Young, op.cit., [1980], p.208.

148. Comité National de Liberation.

Brazzaville-Kinshasa rivalry, and while partly providing the means with which each movement was able to externalize their internal conflict, the Congo-Zaire rivalry was itself also expressed in the Angolan civil war.

One facet of this regional competition was the issue of the oil-rich Angolan enclave of Cabinda. The territory is separated from Angola by Zaire in the south and is bordered by the Congo in the north. While the separatist tendencies in the enclave met with little success, they became tied to both Congolese and Zairean politics as rival wings found support in the rival capitals. In mid-1975, while Cabinda was under effective MPLA control, the Luis Franque faction of the Cabindan separatists, based in Kinshasa, declared the independence of Cabinda in August 1975, while the N'Zita Tiago wing of FLEC that had formed a 'Provisional Revolutionary Government' was temporarily supported by Brazzaville.¹⁵⁰ Momentarily in 1975, the strange situation was created wherein Brazzaville supported both the anti-separatist MPLA and FLEC, while Kinshasa supported both the equally anti-separatist FNLA and the anti-Brazzaville faction of FLEC. This was a complex system of alliances that illustrates the presence of the Congo-Zaire rivalry in the course of the Angolan civil war. It also reveals how the enemies of a potential ally seem to be far more significant in determining an association than other considerations.

149. According to Lúcio Lara cited in C K Ebinger, 'External Intervention in Internal War: The Politics and Diplomacy of the Angolan Civil War', [1976], p.674.

The annexation of Cabinda has been identified as an aim of both the Kinshasa and Brazzaville regimes,¹⁵¹ providing one of the major reasons for their involvement in the Angolan civil war. The overriding objective for both regimes seemed to be to either gain influence in Cabinda or to deny their rival from achieving any advantage here. An executively independent Cabinda, economically dependent on Zaire was, according to many observers,¹⁵² the policy option preferred by Mobutu. Accordingly, he encouraged self-determination in the enclave and established contact with one wing of the separatist FLEC. The Zairean government declared that it believed that a referendum in Cabinda should determine its future. Mobutu's foreign minister drew an analogy between Cabinda and Bangladesh,¹⁵³ with Zaire clearly wanting to play the role of India. In late November 1975, while the conflict raged on the mainland of Angola, Zaire supported an attempted invasion of Cabinda by FLEC.¹⁵⁴

As well as the Kinshasa-Brazzaville rivalry, Zaire's intervention in Angola was also motivated by other factors. In economic terms, mid-1974 had seen a deterioration in Zaire's previously expansive situation. The benefits of its vast mineral

150. Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1975-1976, [1976], pp.B427-428.

151. "Youlou supported FLEC [Front de Liberation de l'Enclave de Cabinda] as part of his design to eventually annex Cabinda onto Congo-Brazzaville." C K Ebinger, op.cit., [1976], p.676.

152. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], and C Young, op.cit. [1980].

153. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.33.

resources were being rapidly eroded with the drop in world copper prices in April which only a year before had brought in roughly half of the government's revenue.¹⁵⁵ The 1973 oil crisis had brought further misfortune to the already mismanaged Zairean economy. Increasingly, this negative economic picture began to feed internal resentment against the regime. Young concludes that Mobutu had to act in some way to alleviate a tense social situation. In this way, intervention in Angola acted as a diversionary political act that sought the reinforcement of domestic Zairean authority.

There were also economic reasons for intervention in Angola. Over half of Zairean copper exports¹⁵⁶ left the country through the Angolan ports on the Atlantic via the Benguela railway. Highly accentuated during a period of recession, a threat to this transportation route would have weakened the government's position even further. This consideration (similar to the one shared by the Zambian leadership) may have led the Zairean regime to believe that a radical and independent MPLA regime in Luanda would have threatened its copper exports route.

Finally, two other factors played an important role in motivating Mobutu to intervene more heavily in the Angolan conflict. The Katangan separatist force of gendarmes, supportive of Moise Tshombe, had been maintained in Angola by the Portuguese

154. C K Ebinger, *op.cit.*, [1976], p.691.

155. C Young, *op.cit.*, [1980], p.200.

colonial authorities as a form of pressure on Kinshasa since the defeat of Tshombe's attempted secession in the mid-1960s. In 1975, this force became active on the side of the MPLA in the south against UNITA and the FNLA-Chipenda forces. It was in Mobutu's interest to neutralize this armed force which was consistently threatening to his own authority in Zaire. Secondly, Mobutu had to consider the presence of a large, potentially explosive, expatriate Angolan community in Zaire, which had swelled to nearly a million with the refugees that had abandoned Angola after the beginning of the civil war in 1975. For all these reasons, intervention in Angola may have been unavoidable.

Having established a number of possible motivations for Zaire's intervention in Angola, and having already pin-pointed the association between Mobutu and Roberto's FNLA as the conduit for Zairean interference, it is essential to identify the direction of influence. According to Ebinger:

"[Mobutu]...used the FNLA as an effective instrument of foreign policy in relation to (1) his growing ideological dispute with the Brazzaville...and (2) his desire for a wide range of options vis-a-vis Angola and Cabinda."¹⁵⁷

While the FNLA may well have represented such an instrument to Mobutu's regime, it must be stressed that Zaire can be viewed equally as an instrument of the FNLA in the sense that the Mobutu regime gave the Roberto the necessary opportunities for his anti-MPLA challenge. Thus, the FNLA drew Zaire into the conflict to

156. C Young, op.cit., [1980], p.201.

support its challenge; while Zaire pursued its own interests, it also linked the FNLA with its two major external backers, the US and China; at all times expressing the Angolan civil war as a wider ideological struggle while keeping its own very particularist interests in sight.

Concretely, Zaire provided the principal channel for US covert involvement in Angola in 1975; and as will be seen later, it is also more than likely that Zaire was one of the major influences in the formulation of US policy in Angola in 1975.¹⁵⁸ Aside from being the main influence on Kissinger's Angolan policy, the CIA in Zaire was used to implement US covert support for the FNLA. As the civil war developed, concrete objectives, now specific to Angola, did replace US strategic interests in Zaire as the bone marrow of Washington's policy of support for the FNLA. Zaire then became important for logistical reasons. The overriding need to maintain US involvement secret led to Zaire's increasing importance as a conduit for the flow of arms to the anti-MPLA forces. Although some of the shipments of US arms were provided directly to the FNLA, the rest were provided to Kinshasa as

157. C K Ebinger, op.cit., [1976], p.674.

158. Despite the presence of American diplomats in Luanda, the intelligence assessment of the situation in Angola was carried out principally by the CIA station in Kinshasa. The account of the CIA's involvement in Angola given by Stockwell has portrayed the Kinshasa station, via the agency, as being the main, if not sole, source for the decision of the Forty Committee to reactivate US covert funds to the FNLA. According to an official on the Forty Committee, the approval given for funds for the FNLA in January 1975 was predicated on the "basic concern" to demonstrate support for Zaire, rather than directly linked to the internal Angolan situation (S Weissman, 'The CIA and US

replacement to arms supplied by Zaire (and, to a lesser extent, Zambia): "We are only sending arms to Kinshasa to replace equipment Mobutu is sending into Angola from his own stocks."¹⁵⁹ In this way, the role of the US as the main arms supplier of the anti-MPLA challenge might be shielded.¹⁶⁰

The effect that the US covert policy of support for the FNLA and UNITA might have had on Zaire's own intervention must also be referred to. Comparable to what Pretoria may have gleaned from US support for the FNLA, Kinshasa's own participation in the Angolan civil war may have been psychologically bolstered by this US posture. It may be possible to consider Zaire as having, like South Africa, fallen victim to a sense of overconfidence in the global hegemony of the United States, and thus unable to predict the constraints, self-imposed or otherwise, that defeated the US in Angola.

Policy in Zaire and Angola', [1978], p.404).

159. CIA official quoted in J Stockwell, In Search of Enemies, [1978], p.37.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE GLOBAL ACTORS

(i) The United States and Angola before the Portuguese Coup

Countering Soviet influence was the central focus of American policy in Angola. This is true of US post-war policy elsewhere, but it is a remarkably consistent characteristic of its involvement in this country. Washington's postures towards Angola were inserted into a wider context of how best to contain and roll back Moscow's influence in Africa. But before the April coup in Portugal, Washington's Angolan policy was also influenced by its relations with Lisbon, which were, in turn, carried out within a NATO context and therefore also part of a wider policy of American containment. In its first relevant phase of Angolan policy, roughly between the beginning of the anti-colonial challenge in 1961 practically to the very day of the April coup in 1974, Washington seemed to believe that both Salazar's and Caetano's regimes were firmly established both within Portugal and in its colonial territories. This led American policy-makers to conclude that, in general, good bilateral relations with Lisbon would best prevent Soviet inroads in Africa.

Before Kissinger

Clearly, US policy-makers did not fear a communist take-over in Angola in the 1960s. The intransigence of Portuguese colonialism seemed to place the possibility of a radical government in Angola out of the question. For the most part, from the Kennedy administration to that of Nixon, US policy towards all Portuguese African territories, was dominated by ties with Lisbon. Relations with Portugal were, in turn, primarily determined by US military interests on the Azores islands.

The Lajes base was described by Dean Acheson as "the single most important we have anywhere".¹ In 1949, a CIA report prepared for Truman pointed out that:

"The use of the air and naval facilities on the Azores would be extremely desirable in case of war with the Soviet Union."²

The logistical importance for the military traffic between the United States and Europe of the airbases on these mid-Atlantic islands was crucial. Their importance had been demonstrated during the Berlin crisis in 1961 when a rapid deployment of troops was required. The primary and back-up airbases on the Terceira (Lajes) and Santa Maria islands respectively, handled

1. Citation in C Coker, Nato, the Warsaw Pact and Africa, [1985], p.63.

2. J Freire Antunes, Kennedy e Salazar: o Leão e a Raposa, [1991], p.31.

14,000 departures in 1961 (more than 40 flights a day). This weight of traffic underlined the bases' importance in a general airlift of US troops.³ Furthermore, the US facilities on the strategically located island chain enabled the tracking of submarines within a radius of 1,000 miles. The Pentagon saw this facility as essential to counter the burgeoning Soviet navy. The Azores also provided the United States with a useful naval base, midpoint between the Sixth Fleet stationed in the Mediterranean and its major supply depots on the American eastern coastline.⁴ According to a memorandum sent by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the State Department in 1963:

"Loss of the Azores would seriously degrade the responsiveness, reliability and control of major US forces."⁵

With such a clearly established value to the US military, the Azores bases were used by Portugal to press Washington for concessions. As Freire Antunes has concluded, the Azores bases acted as "a sort of security belt for the New State within a cold war context, and [which] guaranteed Portugal automatic American protection."⁶ Until 1971, the lease for the bases was only renewed on a yearly basis, which effectively

3. C Coker, op.cit., [1985], p.63.

4. C Coker, op.cit., [1985], p.63.

5. Citation in C Coker, op.cit., [1985], p.64.

6. J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991], p.31.

provided Lisbon with an inordinate amount of political leverage with the United States and consequently, within NATO. At a time when Portugal was growing increasingly isolated as a result of its colonial intransigence, the United States helped Portugal to remain in NATO,⁷ largely as a result, it can be assumed, of the military value of the Azores bases. From these US interests, Lisbon was also able to withdraw other economic and political benefits. Perhaps reluctantly, Washington was encumbered with an unwanted ally.

In the early 1960s, however, these policy constraints came up against other wider American diplomatic interests. Somewhat aware of the new world that was taking shape, the United States wanted to establish its influence among the new African nations that were emerging from European colonialism. This general initiative was somewhat compromised by the US's association with Portugal, that stubbornly refused to even consider the possibility of the independence of its territories. But, recognizing the growing political importance of the Afro-Asian group of states, both in the United Nations and in the East-West struggle for influence, Washington decided to place a priority on establishing its role in the Third World. The Kennedy administration took a strong stand in support of self-determination. This US president wrote in 1960: "We cannot

7. Towards the end of the 1960s, the expulsion of Portugal from NATO was often called for and was a topic of discussion in Europe, Canada and the US. C Coker, op.cit., [1985], Chapter 3.

continue to think of Africa solely in terms of Europe."⁸ Mostly in the United Nations, Washington attempted to play the part of the benevolent, pro-nationalist, but liberal superpower.

Lisbon refused to comply with the liberal stands of the West and hunkered down, especially with regard to its colonial empire. Increasingly from the 1950s onward, Portugal headed for the international pariah status that was also occupied for many years by South Africa. Because of US interests in the Azores and especially because of Portugal's membership of NATO, the United States was somewhat tainted by this association. If Washington wanted to befriend the more moderate states of Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia, it had to take a stand against Portugal. This it did.

In April 1961, in the wake of the anti-colonial uprising and the colonial backlash in Angola, the United States voted in favour of a General Assembly resolution [1603(XV)]⁹ that called upon Portugal to establish the right of its dependent territories to self-determination. At the time, the US vote was rather surprising when compared to its record during the Eisenhower administration which had abstained on all resolutions concerning colonial independence. In December of that same year, the United States had approved a resolution

8. J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991], p.51.

9. The voting records cited are drawn from P Wohlgenuth, 'The Portuguese Territories and the United Nations', [1963]], pp.60-66.

[1699(XVI)] that condemned Portugal's non-compliance with the terms of Chapter Eleven of the United Nations Charter.¹⁰ In the Security Council, the United States approved in June 1961, a resolution [S/4835]¹¹ that condemned Portugal's repression of the February-March uprisings in Angola. Here was Washington publicly criticizing Portugal, a fellow NATO member.

The United States went beyond criticism. The Kennedy administration wanted to stand for the new nationalism. During the 1960 presidential election campaign, the victorious candidate had set out his view of the "wind of change":

"...I defend an Africa where countries are free to choose their own national trajectory without outside pressures or coercions."¹²

According to a US congressman travelling through Africa, a great enthusiasm for the young president had been whipped up on the continent.¹³

The Kennedy administration decided to act beyond the

10. This Chapter relates to obligations incurred by states' administrations of non-self-governing territories, and the obligation to inform the UN of conditions in such territories. Resolution 1699(XVI) reproduced in R Chilcote Emerging Nationalism in Portuguese Africa: Documents, [1972], p.539.

11. Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council 1961 (New York, NY: UN Official Records).

12. J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991], p.57.

13. "Whenever our presence was noted, anxious crowds would call out 'Kennedy, Kennedy'...For the first time, our country was being identified with legitimate African aspirations." Frank Church. Cited in J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991], p.58.

fora of the United Nations assemblies. The US government wanted to support an anti-colonial movement against the Portuguese. Robert Kennedy considered that Angolan independence was "just and inevitable" and supported the establishment of direct links with the nationalists.¹⁴ Holden Roberto, the FNLA leader, had by the end of the 1950s, established a wide range of contacts in the United States. Furthermore, in 1961, due to its northern uprising, the UPA (FNLA) was the Angolan nationalist movement with the most international exposure. Washington decided to back its anti-colonial posturing with acts and authorized the CIA to extend support to Roberto and UPA. The exact substance of this support is unclear. One source has indicated that it consisted of "several million dollars" of military and financial support.¹⁵ On the other hand, Morris has reported that the CIA financed Roberto "...during most of the 1960s at the paltry rate of US\$ 10,000-US\$ 20,000 a year...".¹⁶ Still another source has claimed, without attributing the information however, that the FNLA received US\$ 1 million a year.¹⁷ Whatever the amount of money Roberto may have received from Washington during this period, it was, however, insufficient to be decisive in the

14. J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991], p.132.

15. H Jackson, From the Congo to Soweto: US Foreign Policy Toward Africa Since 1960, [1982], p.58.

16. R Morris, 'The Proxy War in Angola: the Pathology of a Blunder', [1976], p.20.

17. Z Laidi, The Superpowers and Africa: The Constraints of a Rivalry 1960-1990, [1990], p.61.

political and military anti-colonial campaign of the FNLA.

How long this support for the FNLA lasted is equally unclear. One source has cited US Congress investigators that claimed the possibility that Roberto may have received small payments from the CIA throughout the whole period between 1961 and 1975.¹⁸ Another source, however, claimed that aid to the FNLA was halted in 1969.¹⁹ Morris believes the money was stopped by the Nixon administration in 1970 as a gesture to Portugal.²⁰

Roberto's response to this transformation in American policy did not hide his satisfaction. At a press conference held in Tunisia after the US voted against Portugal in the Security Council in reaction to the March violence in Angola, the leader of UPA, declared:

"We wish to take this opportunity to pay a ringing tribute to the new American administration and its young and dynamic chief, John Kennedy. Our country will be proud to have helped solidify the sharp change in American policy concerning Africa and decolonisation".²¹

The Portuguese response to Kennedy's pro-nationalism was markedly different. Anti-American demonstrations broke out in Lisbon and Luanda, while Salazar waited until a ministerial

18. C Legum, After Angola: The War Over Southern Africa, [1978], p.10.

19. G Bender, 'Kissinger in Angola: Anatomy of Failure', [1978], p.69.

20. R Morris, *op.cit.*, [1976], p.20.

21. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution, Volume One, [1969], p.182.

meeting of NATO was held in Oslo on 8 May 1961 to express Portugal's wrath. According to Marcum, Lisbon privately threatened to leave the alliance.²²

The United States was, however, unmoved. It further complemented its anti-Portuguese diplomatic posturing and covert support for the FNLA with other measures:²³ it created a scholarship programme for African students from the Portuguese colonies; it reviewed that year's US military assistance programme for Portugal, cutting back from the originally intended US\$ 25 million, and delivered only US\$ 3 million-worth; it imposed a ban on commercial sales of arms to Portugal, a ban activated in mid-1961; and it supported the prohibition on the use of NATO war materiel in Africa. These measures were not extensive nor very effective. The ban on the use of NATO weaponry in Angola (and later in the other colonies), was impossible to verify and anyway clearly flouted by Lisbon. But they nevertheless reflected the attempts made by Washington to tread a thin line between supporting the aspirations of the colonized while, at the same time, meeting the requirements of the NATO alliance. Marcum's term to describe US policy toward Portugal at this time: "benevolent neutrality"²⁴ is a pertinent one.

22. J Marcum, op.cit., [1969], p.183.

23. J Marcum, op.cit., [1969], p.184.

24. J Marcum, op.cit., [1969], p.184.

But the Kennedy administration's posturing against Lisbon did not last long. The regime in Lisbon successfully used the expiry of the American lease for its Azores' bases in December 1962 to reel Washington back in. The President reportedly sent a memorandum to the State Department in July 1963 notifying that all anti-Portuguese initiatives by the US government were to be called off. Already by the end of 1962, the US had revealed its new priorities when in December it had voted against a General Assembly Resolution [1807(XVII)] that condemned Portugal.²⁵ The military and political considerations of the Azores bases and Portugal's membership of NATO, had evidently prevailed over the desire to push for influence within the anti-colonial camp. There is evidence that the US military had pressured the Secretary of Defence in July 1963 to protect American-Portuguese relations. In a memorandum sent by the Joint Chiefs of Staff,²⁶ it was stated that, should concessions have to be made to African opinion, it was preferable to sacrifice American interests in South Africa rather than threaten US interests in the Azores. Despite Kennedy's alleged determination to resist ceding to Portuguese pressure, Washington returned to a close relationship with Lisbon.²⁷ Despite adhering to UN

25. J Marcum, op.cit., [1969], p.268.

26. Referred to in Z Laidi, op.cit., [1990], p.18.

27. According to one of his advisors, Kennedy would rather have given up the Azores bases altogether than to have allowed Portugal to dictate his African policy. T Sorenson, Kennedy (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1965), p.538. note 3.

resolutions concerning the arms embargo on Portugal and providing some support for the FNLA for its anti-colonial war, the US essentially reverted to conveying to Lisbon economic, diplomatic and, reluctantly perhaps, moral support.

When it gave in to Lisbon, the United States effectively lost part of its credibility as a pro-decolonization power. From 1963 onwards, rather than as a champion of self-determination, the US played only a cold war role in Angola. Just over a year before the US's return to Portugal's side, in a letter to a Republican critic, Roberto defended the US vote against Portugal which had placed Washington and Moscow side by side on the Security Council, and asked:

"Why then cannot the issue [of Angolan nationalism] be isolated from the Cold War and judged on its merits?".²⁸

A year later, the US and NATO, began to be seen in Angola as the essential support for Portuguese colonial authority. Cold war considerations had eventually outweighed the issue of Angolan nationalism.

As US military interests prevailed in Washington, Lisbon simultaneously attempted to show, much as South Africa had done, that the West's interests, particularly in Africa, were tied to those of Portugal. The Salazarist regime consistently held itself up to be not only the defender of Western interests in Africa but also the upholder of its values.

28. J Marcum, op.cit., [1969], p.183.

According to Lisbon, the nationalist challenges in the colonies were part of an international conspiracy, directed by 'Communist Russia', that planned to gain footholds in Africa from where the Soviets would destroy Portugal and get to Europe through its 'soft underbelly'.²⁹ Because of this, argued Lisbon, its own resistance to anti-colonialism, or as the regime might have put it, its fight against the communist conspiracy in Angola, would be tantamount to aiding the global containment of Soviet power.

This campaign extolling the anti-communist virtues of Portugal was carried to the United States itself. The work of the pro-Lisbon Portuguese-American Committee for Foreign Affairs did not tire in describing what was happening in Angola as a communist-organized and instigated insurgency. Apparently well-funded,³⁰ the Committee, working through a New York public relations firm, Selvage and Lee, targeted the Press, the White House, Congress and the State Department in an effort to sully the nationalists' cause and restore favour for Portugal in Washington. The Committee was based in the substantial Portuguese-American communities in Massachusetts and thus targeted that state's representatives on Capitol Hill appealing to, among other things, their vote-collecting nature. On 4 and 5 October, twelve Massachusetts congressmen (including the Speaker

29. J Marcum, The Angolan Revolution Volume Two, [1978], p.21.

30. In 1962, over US\$ 200,000 was spent by Selvage and Lee on a campaign to disseminate the image of "the communist invasion of Angola". J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.272.

and a former Speaker of the House) made speeches in the House of Representatives praising Portugal as a faithful and indispensable NATO ally, and condemning Angolan nationalist insurgency as communist-inspired terrorism.³¹

The ideological conflict between East and West was creeping into the struggle for independence in Angola via relations with Portugal. Whereas in the early 1960s the US had been considered a source for anti-colonial support, as was demonstrated by the MPLA's clear attempts to conceal its ideological leanings before 1964, after the United States was perceived as having nailed its colours to the Portuguese mast, Washington became less and less a stop-over point on fund-raising tours carried out by the Angolan nationalists.

The FNLA and the United States before 1975

In a letter to Kennedy in 1962, Roberto praised the inspiration that he had received when they had met in Washington in 1959:

"The vivid memory of the ideas to which you exposed me allowed me to transmit to my people the certainty of your understanding and sympathy for our struggle."³²

In an interview with Freire Antunes in 1991, Roberto spoke less formally about that meeting with Kennedy:

31. J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.272.

32. J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991], p.52.

"I spent two hours explaining to Kennedy the meaning of our struggle in Angola. He told me that the United States had an anti-colonial tradition and could not continue to support the regime of slavery in Angola. We agreed that it was necessary to do something to stop the communists taking over the liberation movement in Angola."³³

In public speeches, Holden Roberto, tended not to refer to the United States directly or to its assistance for his movement. He would generally outline the case against Portugal and then appeal to "...democratically minded people of the whole world...to help end the oppression of 4.5 million people."³⁴ Until 1964, Roberto's speeches had appealed for the implementation of the UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions pertaining to the self-determination of Angola. But after the United States had returned to supporting Portugal as a rule, the FNLA leader did not conceal his criticisms of Washington. In a speech delivered in Leopoldville on 27 March 1964,³⁵ Roberto revealed his disappointments. After paying homage to the support of the Congolese (Leopoldville) government, Roberto addressed the failure of the UN to unanimously condemn Portugal. He then turned on the American ambassador in Lisbon who "...dared to say that Angola is `an

33. J Freire Antunes, *ibid.*

34. Press Statement distributed in English by the American Committee on Africa in New York, dated 15 March 1961. Reproduced in R Chilcote Emerging Nationalism in Portuguese Africa: Documents, [1972], pp.70-73.

35. `On the Third Anniversary of the Revolution'. Document reproduced in R Chilcote, *op.cit.*, [1972], pp.87-89.

oasis of peace'". Characterizing the ambassador's declarations as "a defiance of African opinion", Roberto said, however, that he would like to believe that this was a personal position "...which in no way bind(s) the attitude of the United States."³⁶

In this same speech, Roberto also referred to NATO. Earlier, in a statement delivered in Libreville in 1962,³⁷ Roberto had drawn attention to the conclusions of the UN Special Committee on Territories under Portuguese Administration, according to which a large part of the arms and equipment used by the Portuguese in Africa was supplied by NATO countries. Emphasizing that the use of NATO equipment had broken Portuguese promises, Roberto appealed for the attention of "...the Atlantic Pact members, particularly the United States, to this serious situation...". In his Leopoldville speech in 1964 referred to above, the FNLA leader declared that he hoped that those countries that had "...voluntarily or involuntarily armed Portugal..." were revising their policies. Claiming that he was not threatening these countries with blackmail, he said, however, that:

"...the situation could become seriously complicated... We are Angolans and Africans and nothing else. We want to be free...We will not overlook any opportunity: we will even ally ourselves with the devil, if necessary..."³⁸

36. Ibid.

37. Memorandum to UAM September 1962. Document reproduced in R Chilcote, *op.cit.*, [1972], pp.146-149.

38. 'On the Third Anniversary of the Revolution'. Document

It is not exactly clear to what Roberto is referring. The statutes of the UPA and the FNLA both state that the movement may obtain "...without compromise, all the moral and material aid that the fight for liberation requires."³⁹ It is conceivable, therefore, that, here, Roberto was threatening the West that unless they showed greater enthusiasm for his nationalist struggle in Angola, he would approach the Soviet Union, or indeed China, for backing. After it had become apparent that US policy was reverting back towards Portugal, Roberto felt the need to seek other, which may have included communist, sources of aid. The FNLA made certain that the US would hear of Roberto's disappointment. The US embassy in Leopoldville informed Washington of what one of Roberto's advisors had stated to it:

"Since Roberto's recent return from New York he had found him [a] changed man...completely disillusioned with western, and specifically US policy on Angola. He was convinced that the US would never jeopardise its military ties with Portugal and that...it was US military aid to [the] Portuguese that enables them to hold Angola".⁴⁰

The life of an anti-colonial movement depended

reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., [1972], pp.87-89.

39. Statutes of the UPA. Document reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., p.101.

40. US Embassy in Leopoldville to State Department, 30 December 1963, quoted in S Weissman, op.cit., [1978], p.401

primarily on funds. Once the US commitment to the FNLA had begun to weaken, necessity dictated the procurement of support elsewhere. Despite his previous proclamations of anti-communism, Roberto sought aid for the FNLA from Moscow and, eventually with success, from Peking. But despite the fact that for the FNLA, funds may have been funds, regardless of where they came from, it is more than likely that Roberto emphasized at all times the anti-communist nature of the FNLA. This must surely have been a necessary condition of the CIA's interest in the movement. As Stockwell has suggested, Roberto may have been:

"...wise enough to know that competition between his 'conservative' movement and the ominously Marxist MPLA would gain him sympathy in the United States."⁴¹

After Jonas Savimbi's resignation from GRAE in Cairo in July 1964, the FNLA began to lose its continental support. One of the principal charges that Savimbi had levelled against Roberto is that of being closely tied to the United States. In October, Savimbi explained his resignation.⁴² He claimed that "American imperialism" within UPA and GRAE had been partly to blame for the incapacity of the movement and his consequent resignation. In the 'explanation', the future leader of UNITA listed Roberto's ties to the United States: Roberto "hired Mr

41. J Stockwell, op.cit., [1978], p.116.

42. In a document printed by the MPLA in Algiers, 'Ou en est la Revoltion Angolaise'. Document reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., [1971], pp.155-161.

Muller, an American citizen and in charge of public relations in the Adoula government, as a personal advisor"; "likewise took as a personal advisor, John Marcum...advisor to Averill Harriman on the question of Portuguese colonies"; "participated, late in 1963, in meetings organised by Adoula and also attended by Averill Harriman and Bahri (of Tunisia)"; "had eleven Angolans, who will soon create his personal security guard, trained by the counter-espionage service of Israel"; "hired Bernhardt Manhertz, in April of 1964, to lead the ELNA [FNLA army]. This officer served in South Vietnam in the American army". There was also "the creation of a section, at the American Embassy in Leopoldville, charged with the Angolan question and directed by Messr. Heatter and Devnis...due not to change but to these men's personal contacts with Holden Roberto."⁴³

The charges made by Savimbi seem to reveal already in 1964, the close association between a number of Americans in Leopoldville, linked to the US embassy and the CIA, Holden Roberto and Congolese political circles. This triangle, as shall be seen, emerged again later on in 1975 when Kissinger decided, upon CIA recommendations, to provide covert support for the FNLA.

Aware of the damage a close association with the United States may have caused, particularly among African states, the FNLA denied that such a link existed. A GRAE

43. 'Ou en est la Revoltion Angolaise'. Document reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., [1971], pp.155-161.

document of 1965, in an attempt to counter Ghanaian claims that the FNLA "was an instrument of the Americans", suggested ironically that "the Americans, true masters of Angola, would hardly need four, five or six years (or more) of armed fighting against themselves to substitute Angolan puppets for Portuguese fascists".⁴⁴

The Kissinger Era

When Henry Kissinger joined the American administration in the late 1960s, he commissioned a major review of US policy toward Southern Africa. This review, the National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) 39,⁴⁵ he presented to President Nixon in early January 1970, along with his recommendation that the US adopt a policy based on 'Option Two'.⁴⁶ This 'option' recommended that the US establish a dual policy of public opposition to racial repression on the one hand while quietly relaxing the political and economic isolation of the white states (Portugal and South Africa) in Africa on the other. The conclusion favoured by Kissinger was that "the whites were here to stay".⁴⁷ It was, therefore, in Washington's interest to work

44. La revolution angolaise dans le contexte africain et extra-africain Leopoldville, 15 March 1965. Document reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., [1971], pp.165-170.

45. Reproduced in full in The Kissinger Study on Southern Africa, [1975].

46. The Kissinger..., [1975], pp.66-69.

47. The Kissinger..., [1975], p.66.

for constructive change in the region through these minority regimes, while paying lip service to international opposition to South African apartheid, Rhodesian minority rule and Portuguese colonialism.

It is important to mention NSSM 39 because, under Kissinger, it formed the basis for US policy toward Angola in the early 1970s until the Portuguese coup. The assessments made in the study: that Portugal in Africa, as a 'white state', was stable; that the anti-colonial movements were unrealistic alternatives; and that "a black victory at any stage" was impossible,⁴⁸ were essentially faulty. They led, however, to the formulation of a policy that was, at least unprepared if not, unable to deal with the crisis in Angola when it erupted.

By the end of the 1960s, US policy towards Portugal was even more orientated towards its repercussions within a cold war context than before. Thus, the formulation of policy options such as those in NSSM 39 reflected much more the desired state of affairs within Washington's global strategy than the reality of the situation in Portugal and Africa. Certainly, the conclusion that the "whites were here to stay" in 1970 contrasted sharply with the considered opinion of the US Ambassador to Lisbon in 1960:

"Portugal clearly does not have sufficient power to maintain these vast territories."⁴⁹

48. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.69.

49. J Freire Antunes, op.cit., [1991], p.37.

The immediate result of the more relaxed US approach to Portugal was an accord over the Azores bases, replacing the ad hoc process renewal that had been in practice since 1962. In December 1971, Portugal extended base rights to the US right through until 1973. The regime in Lisbon (Marcello Caetano having succeeded Salazar in 1968) felt that the United States and Portugal were "...allies once again".⁵⁰ The strategic importance of the bases was again demonstrated during the Arab-Israeli war in October 1973. Portugal had authorized the use of the bases in the US operation to supply Israel; other Western European states had refused to allow the American aircraft to refuel on their territory. Without these other facilities, the Azores became crucial to support the long-range reach of US airpower. In return for conceding the ever more important military facilities on the Azores, Portugal was offered a US aid packet.⁵¹

Despite the fact that Washington was, on the face of it, still adhering to the UN arms embargo, Portugal benefited from the United States in other forms of military assistance: supplies of heavy transport vehicles, jeeps and helicopters. All

50. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.236.

51. This included US\$ 30 million in agricultural commodities, drawing rights on up to US\$ 5 million worth of non-military equipment and eligibility for US\$ 400 million financing at the Export-Import Bank. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.236.

of which was equipment that clearly had a dual purpose, both military and civilian.⁵² Furthermore, Portuguese officers and pilots benefited from training at US military facilities in West Germany and Panama,⁵³ while an estimated 100 were being trained in the United States at any given time. In early 1971, Nixon authorized the sale of four Boeing 707 jet transporters directly to TAP, the Portuguese state airline, whose promise to limit their use to commercial flights was shown up by the ferrying of troops to and from Africa aboard the same 707s.⁵⁴ Not covered by the embargo was the sale of defoliants and herbicides which was made to the Portuguese who used them in Africa in counterinsurgency warfare. If the April 1974 coup had not intervened, the US would even have illegally supplied arms to Portugal. According to reports, during a visit in December 1973, Kissinger thanked Lisbon for conceding the use of the Azores during the October war and agreed (apparently unaware of the embargo)⁵⁵ to meet Portuguese requests for arms.⁵⁶

In addition to these financial and military benefits, Portugal also earned revenue from the United States in other

52. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.70.

53. Reportedly, a group of Portuguese officers underwent counterinsurgency training at the US Army Jungle Warfare School at Fort Gulick, Panama Canal Zone. in T Szulc, 'Lisbon and Washington: Behind the Portuguese Revolution', [1975], p.21.

54. T Szulc, op.cit., [1975], p.21.

55. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.71.

56. J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.236.

forms. By 1972, the American Gulf Oil Corporation, having discovered oil off the coast of Cabinda in the late 1950s was contributing more than US\$ 60 million each year to the Angolan treasury, this before the soar in oil prices in 1973. Further American contributions to the Portuguese treasury were made annually in: tourism (US\$ 80 million); Azores' base operations (US\$ 13 million); and coffee imports from Angola (US\$ 100 million).⁵⁷

Marcum argues that, in this way, the United States played some part in keeping Portugal fighting in Africa. Marcum sets a total of just under US\$ 400 million in US contributions to Portugal's receipts in 1973 against Portugal's yearly military-security budget: just over US\$ 400 million.⁵⁸ In the face of this equation, Marcum, and others,⁵⁹ believe that it is difficult to refute the claim that the United States was effectively important in maintaining the means for Portugal to continue waging its colonial wars, and was certainly perceived to be so by opponents of Portuguese colonialism.

The overthrow of the Caetano regime on 25 April 1974, apparently caught the Americans by surprise. Seemingly unable to

57. J Marcum, op.cit., [1978], p.237.

58. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.237.

59. Laidi concluded that from the increased proportions of Angolan contributions (swollen by Gulf Oil Corporation fees) to the Portuguese war budget, it is possible that "...Gulf Oil backed sixty per cent of the Portuguese war effort in Angola on the eve of decolonisation." Z Laidi, op.cit., [1990], p.52.

imagine the collapse of a clearly anachronistic power structure drained by costly overseas wars, Washington had not foreseen the need for a change to its policy towards Portugal, and, consequently, towards Angola. Subsequently, the instability that reigned in Portugal after the coup, dominated Washington's approach. Kissinger feared a communist take-over which he believed would seriously imbalance the US-Soviet power ratio in Europe.

Towards Africa, however, Washington, or rather Kissinger, initially did nothing. When Donald Easum, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, attempted to change US policy in order to court the future independent governments in the ex-Portuguese territories, he was cast aside. Despite having engineered a meeting with FRELIMO, the radical Mozambican movement, and established a favourable position for American influence, Easum's maverick initiatives displeased Kissinger. The Secretary of State fired Easum barely two days after his return from Africa.⁶⁰

In the immediate aftermath of the coup, US policy towards Angola seemed to be a 'hands off' one. Between April 1974 and January 1975, Washington did not intervene in any significant way in Angolan political affairs. The State Department's view was that the forces in Angola (the MPLA, the FNLA and UNITA) were balanced. Furthermore, it was known that

60. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.71.

the Soviet Union had suspended its support for the MPLA just before the coup in Lisbon, following the evidently negative report of Victor Lewin to Moscow on the chaotic internal dissarray of the MPLA.⁶¹

In mid-January 1975, at roughly the same time as the Alvor accords were signed between Portugal and the three Angolan movements, a secret meeting took place in Washington that changed the direction of US policy toward Angola. At the meeting of the Forty Committee (convened by Kissinger to discuss US covert activities) the CIA proposed the reactivation of its assistance programme for the FNLA, largely interrupted since the late-1960s apart from a retainer of US\$ 10,000 annually for "intelligence collection".⁶² According to Stockwell, however, the CIA had already been funding Roberto secretly since July 1974 without Forty Committee approval:

"...small amounts at first, but enough for word to get around that the CIA was dealing itself into the race".⁶³

The amount proposed by the CIA at the meeting with Kissinger was US\$ 300,000; sufficient, the agency argued, to signal to the FNLA's principal backer, Mobutu, that Washington was sympathetic to Zaire's position.⁶⁴ Despite the movement's record of military

61. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.69.

62. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.237.

63. J Stockwell In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story, [1978], p.67.

64. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.75.

incapacity and political corruption, the CIA argued that the FNLA would provide the "most stable and reliable government".⁶⁵ Kissinger accepted the CIA's arguments and "routinely approved" the CIA's request to fund the FNLA with the relatively small sum of US\$ 300,000.⁶⁶ With this decision, the United States had, perhaps unknowingly, entered the Angolan civil war.

Bases for US Policy Toward Angola before 1975

The rationale behind American involvement in Angola is not uncomplicated. There is reason apparent in three separate but overlapping motivations. Firstly, the US intervened in Angola to counter perceived Soviet influence. This mattered not so much because of Angola itself but because Washington believed a Soviet advantage would have wider repercussions in US-Soviet relations, particularly after Vietnam and Watergate. Secondly, the US also viewed Angola through a prism of its relations with Zaire, its principal black African ally. This perspective allowed the CIA's Kinshasa view to significantly dominate initial US policy. Lastly, there is evidence that US policymakers made a linkage between the Angola and events in Portugal,

65. R Morris, op.cit., [1976], p.20.

66. The CIA's request to grant US\$ 100,000 to UNITA, was turned by the Forty Committee. S Weissman, 'The CIA and US Policy in Zaire and Angola', [1978], p.404.

a NATO country that was apparently 'going' communist.

These foreign policy motivations were formulated under a series of domestic political factors. Firstly, after the debacle of Watergate, the US administration wanted to reassert the power of the Presidency vis-a-vis Congress. Secondly, after the failures in Vietnam, there was a desire to restore American, or, more precisely, governmental confidence in foreign policy, particularly with regard to the global superpower competition with the Soviet Union. Finally, in the wake of negative revelations about its foreign and domestic covert activities, the CIA wanted to regain the initiative and win a policy success.

It is argued that this set of domestic factors and foreign policy motivations 'explain', to a certain degree, US involvement in Angola. That is to say, how and why Washington entered the conflict.

But 'whose' policy was it? Considering that US policy toward Angola during the civil war was at all times covert, the number of policy-makers was reduced primarily to the administration: the CIA, the African Bureau of the State Department and Henry Kissinger, the Secretary of State. At this time, Kissinger's control of American foreign policy was at its peak, ironically when policy successes were thinning. As demonstrated by the dismissal of Donald Easum in November 1974, Kissinger did not readily accept a separate policy stance on the part of the African Bureau in the State Department. This section of the State Department had a poor opinion of Holden Roberto and

the FNLA, and, according to Bender,⁶⁷ tended to consider the US position on the African continent as a whole, rather than from the point of view of the East-West conflict, as Kissinger saw things, or than from the perspective of whichever CIA station-chief happened to gain favour. The State Department position was demonstrated in June 1975, before the major escalation, when it recommended that the US stay out of Angola. Eventually, the State Department's lack of influence in the policy-making process led to the resignation of Nathaniel Davis (the 'scoundrel of Chile' who had replaced Donald Easum as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs). Davis disagreed completely with Kissinger over US policy towards Angola.⁶⁸ As the Africa Bureau could not impose its view, this left Henry Kissinger and the CIA as the principal US policy-makers towards Angola. But according to Brenda MacElhinney, the CIA Angola Desk Officer in 1975 who had reopened the Luanda station for the Agency:

"...don't put all the blame on Kissinger, the CIA led the United States into the Angolan mess".⁶⁹

What the CIA was able to do was to frame US policy choices in Angola in terms of competition with Moscow. The

67. G J Bender, op.cit., [1978].

68. Davis did not resign noisely. He took a post in Switzerland and only much later did he explain why he had resigned: N Davis 'The Angola Decision of 1975: A Personal Memoir', [1978].

69. J Stockwell, op.cit., p.67.

decision to support Roberto was taken under the belief that the Soviet Union was attempting to further its influence in Angola by helping the MPLA come to power. When the case was made before Kissinger in January 1975, the Soviet Union had resumed its flow of aid to Neto's movement.

At this time, US-Soviet relations were at the tail-end of its phase of detente. In 1972, the Nixon administration's policy of detente had been consolidated by an arms agreements with the Soviet Union reached at in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I). A new era of diplomacy between the superpowers had been announced, wherein conflict would be avoided rather than sought as a result of the potential catastrophe of a nuclear war. But what the SALT agreement also implied was that the Soviet Union was on a par with the United States. The treaty was between equals. This effectively and very publicly gave the Soviet Union superpower rank. After the perceived humiliation of the Cuban missile crisis, the Kremlin had embarked on a rapid weapons development programme in order to reach parity with the United States. The SALT agreement confirmed that this had been achieved.

In 1973, according to Laidi,⁷⁰ other sources of authority in Washington did not perceive a high level of Soviet involvement, nor indeed interest, in Africa. An American congressional mission sent to evaluate Moscow's African policy,

70. Z Laidi, *op.cit.*, [1990], p.49.

concluded that Soviet aid to liberation movements was limited to maintaining open lines of communication, and that even more substantial links, such as military aid or training programmes, did not amount to a significant level of commitment on the part of Moscow.⁷¹

But by the time the Forty Committee took the decision to reactivate the FNLA in January 1975, there was some evidence that the Soviet Union was intent on supporting the MPLA. Moscow had resumed its support for Neto by the autumn of 1974,⁷² albeit at approximately similar levels to those before the Portuguese coup. Like the CIA's own support for the FNLA, it can be argued that while this payment was intended to ensure that the US retained influence regardless of later developments in Angola, it also acted as a signal, particularly intended for Moscow, that Washington was 'dealing itself in'. Macfarlane believes that Kissinger was acting under a fear that believed the Soviet Union was intent on exploiting American weaknesses in the post-Vietnam era.⁷³

Even within the narrow parameters that led to the decision to support the FNLA, this choice was made more as a result of a 'historic relationship' between the movement and the US, as referred to during the Johnson administration, rather

71. Z Laidi, *ibid.*

72. In October or November. G Bender, *op.cit.*, [1978], p.76.

73. S N Macfarlane, Intervention and Regional Security [198.], p.12

than by an evaluation of its potential.⁷⁴ Certainly, the FNLA was, in internal political terms, the weakest of the movements. As Marcum puts it, the Forty Committee decision was apparently motivated by "...an irrepressible habit of thinking in terms of `our team' and `theirs'..."⁷⁵

While it cannot be said that Kissinger's decision to fund the FNLA was a substantial act in itself, it did set the US on a policy track from which it did not later withdraw and eventually led nowhere. It can be argued that that relatively minor grant of US\$ 300,000 to the FNLA was the first step of the same single policy that was pouring US arms into Zaire for the FNLA by the end of the summer of 1975. This policy was designed to set up a mechanism to set US power against Moscow. As Kissinger told a Senate subcommittee:

"The Soviet Union must not be given any opportunity to use military forces for aggressive purposes without running the risk of conflict with us."⁷⁶

According to a contemporary report, the Forty Committee payment to the FNLA in January provoked a reaction in Angola almost immediately:

"American officials deny rumors, now very prevalent in Luanda, of heavy continuing CIA support for the FNLA."⁷⁷

74. S Weissman, op.cit., [1978], p.402.

75. J Marcum, `Lessons of Angola', [1976], p.414.

76. Testimony of Secretary of State before the Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on Foreign Affairs, US Senate 29 January 1976. Citation in J Marcum, op.cit., [1976], p.408.

It may be possible to argue that, despite the covert nature of the aid, it was intended to send a signal to Moscow.

Laidi believes that the US\$ 300,000 had a much more concrete objective in helping the FNLA "...reach its primary objective: to dislodge the MPLA from the capital city before the pivotal date of November 11, 1975".⁷⁸ However, at that stage of the conflict, when the transitional government was still sitting, it seems unlikely that this was the objective of the fund. It was a sum that fell well short of what would eventually have become necessary for the FNLA's military requirements. Kissinger argued perhaps more convincingly than he intended, that the January aid to the FNLA was good only "...to buy bicycles, paper clips etc...", and that it was essentially not for military purposes.⁷⁹ But as Bender has pointed out, and perhaps this may have been the intended effect, the aid established the United States' commitment to the FNLA at a time when the movements were acting within the structure of coalition of the transitional accords.⁸⁰

It is worth noting that US policy in Angola seems to have been hardly motivated by an interest in countering Chinese

77. K Adelman 'Report from Angola' [1975], p.568.

78. Z Laidi, op.cit., [1990], p.66.

79. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.76.

80. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], pp.76-77.

involvement. Peking's involvement in Zaire, both with Mobutu and the FNLA did little to dissuade US interest, and may have in fact helped to strengthen the CIA's case when it proposed funding Roberto's movement to Kissinger. The FNLA's military predominance at the beginning of 1975 was certainly a factor in its favour in Washington. This strength had been achieved, as will be seen, in great part due to Chinese training and arms supplies that ensued to the FNLA after the Zairean president visited Peking in 1973.

While the prime motivation for Kissinger's decision to reactivate Roberto and the FNLA in January 1975 has been shown to have been a desire to rival the Soviet Union, the formulation of this decision was influenced primarily by CIA interests in Zaire. From the evidence, it seems clear that the CIA managed to express US policy options in Angola almost exclusively in terms of US relations with Zaire. Of course, Zaire was at the time, strategically more important than Angola and it was the US's principal ally in central and southern Africa. American economic and political interests there far outweighed those in any other African country. Furthermore, there was a historical precedent. Washington's success in helping to repress the Lumumbist tendency in the anti-Kinshasa CNL, which had been supported by the Soviet Union and Cuba, had left a legacy of covert intervention in Zaire. As Jackson has concluded:

"...the assistance to the FNLA confirmed Washington's intention of repeating its alliance-seeking strategy which had produced such success during the Congo crisis."⁸¹

Almost without a doubt, Colonel Mobutu's coup in 1965 was carried out with the aid of American intelligence agents if not actual support.⁸² Mobutu's rule in Zaire depended almost exclusively on American patronage, and, conversely, the US depended on Mobutu "...to protect and maintain American interests in his country".⁸³ This patronage also extended beyond Zaire's borders. According to Weissman, "...Kissinger was reportedly banking on Mobutu 'to oppose Moscow's interests' in Africa generally...".⁸⁴ Substantial US economic interests⁸⁵ in Zaire added to its strategic value, making the stability of Mobutu's regime a foreign policy objective of the US.

For a number of reasons, Mobutu wanted Roberto in Luanda and this relationship was extended to Washington. According to Bender, the CIA argued before Kissinger that the

81. H Jackson, op.cit., [1982], p.66.

82. "According to three informed individuals--a US official then in Washington, a Western diplomatic Congo specialist, and an American businessman who talked with the...CIA man Devlin--the CIA was involved in the second Mobutu coup of November...1965." S Weissman, op.cit., [1978], p.394.

83. H Jackson, op.cit., [1982], p.44. American investments in Zaire totalled approximately US\$ 800 million. J Marcum, op.cit. Volume Two, [1978], p.262.

84. S Weissman, op.cit., [1978], p.395.

85. "...Three-quarters of a billion dollars in US investments, loans... and our access on favorable terms to Zaire's mineral resources." in S Weissman, op.cit., [1978], p.395.

aid to the FNLA:

"...would signal to President Mobutu...that Washington was sympathetic to his position...Zaire was always a primary consideration in all American decisions concerning covert aid to the FNLA".⁸⁶

It can be argued that when presenting the case for conceding US covert funds for the FNLA, the CIA was able to draw upon these significant Zairean factors to further influence Kissinger in the direction of a positive response. The Agency had wanted to regain favour in the wake of the revelations being made by Congressional investigations. The CIA wanted a success and, when the Kinshasa station suggested the financing of the FNLA, for all the reasons that made it "compelling"⁸⁷ to Kissinger, the Agency took on and defended the option of a covert intervention programme. Clearly, the CIA perspective was heavily influenced by the view in the Kinshasa station, close to Roberto, which was working in the context of Zairean interests in Angola. Therefore, it may be argued that the interests of the very close ties between the Mobutu regime, CIA officials in Kinshasa and Roberto himself, may have been behind the CIA's proposal to the Forty Committee in January, rather than an evaluation of the situation in Angola as a whole.⁸⁸

86. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.75.

87. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.76.

88. Stockwell, the CIA task officer in charge of the Angola programme, argues as much in his book. J Stockwell, op.cit., [1978].

Another factor that was said to have influenced US policy in Angola was the situation in Portugal after the overthrow of Caetano. Testifying before a Senate subcommittee,⁸⁹ Kissinger claimed what had provoked US involvement. The:

"overthrow of the Portuguese government in April 1974, and the growing strength of the Portuguese Communist Party, apparently convinced Moscow that a revolutionary situation was developing in Angola. The Soviet Union began to exploit this situation in the fall of 1974 through the shipment of arms and equipment to the MPLA".⁹⁰

As well as laying the blame at Moscow's door, the Secretary of State also seemed to be linking the volatile situation in Portugal with the political succession in Angola. Kissinger feared that a radical government in Lisbon, capital city of a NATO member, could assist in the MPLA's challenge for power in Angola. In a sense, Kissinger wanted to invert this and proposed to counter Soviet influence in Angola, an act that would, he seemed to believe, help to stem the advance of the left in Portugal.

As was mentioned above at the start of this section, Washington's Angolan policy was formulated under a series of domestic political constraints. This was at a time when, despite having decided to extricate the US from Vietnam, the administration could not dissolve the sense of defeat that was

89. US Congress Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Angola: Hearings before the Subcommittee on African Affairs 94th Congress, 2nd Session.

90. Citation in H Jackson, op.cit., [1982], p.64.

felt in relation to this conflict. While Kissinger's policy strategy seemed to be based almost solely on how best to balance the superpowers and tended to subsume all relevant factors the conflict of interests between Moscow and Washington, the general conclusion that the US's Southeast Asian policy had been a 'lost cause' could not be avoided. After Vietnam, there was a yearning from within the administration for some sort of foreign policy success. Furthermore, conservative critics of Kissinger were beginning to gain credence in their disparaging of detente. Unwilling to accept the superpower parity that was implied in the consolidation of detente, they claimed that it allowed the Soviets to take advantages in certain situations that under other circumstances would have been resisted by the US. Eventually, Kissinger himself seemed to express this view. The possibility of scoring a policy success against the Soviets in Angola must have been tempting to Kissinger. Bender believes that this critical domestic environment was frustrating for Kissinger who:

"...was almost desperate to demonstrate that it was still possible to carry out a decisive and coherent foreign policy in this 'climate of recriminations'".⁹¹

At the same time, the White House was already beginning to feel Congressional attempts to curb the administration's domination in the making of foreign policy.

91. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.75.

After the Watergate scandal, Congress was able to intervene in the process with far greater ease. Investigations on Capitol Hill had revealed the extent of the CIA's activities not only in foreign destabilization campaigns, such as Chile, but also on the domestic front where it had been covertly monitoring the activities of over 10,000 American citizens.⁹² In a general climate of antagonism toward the administrative branch of American power, a source present at the January meeting of the Forty Committee believed that:

"...Kissinger saw this [Angola] as the place to find out if you could still have covert operations".⁹³

In the civil war, US policy in Angola derived from the US\$ 300,000 given to the FNLA in January 1975. After that, there was no significant change in the nature of its strategy as US funding increased and was spread to UNITA as the situation in Angola worsened and the arms race between Moscow and Washington entered into full swing. After January 1975, US policy had become essentially reactive and inflexible, responding to the stimuli of Soviet weapons deliveries and FNLA-Zairean requests for more support. Thus, the context of this first Forty Committee decision can be seen to have been the immediate origins of the Angolan policy of the United States.

By virtue of the long-standing political association

92. G Bender, op.cit., [1978], p.74.

93. R Morris, op.cit., [1976], p.21.

with the Mobutu regime and the local CIA agents, the FNLA was able to bring the United States into the conflict in such a way that precluded anything but an escalation of violence in Angola as a result of the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union.

(ii) The Soviet Union and the MPLA 1964-1974

In the decade before the Portuguese coup, Soviet policy towards Angola was almost exclusively based around a relationship of support for the MPLA. This consisted of some financial and military assistance, complemented with diplomatic support. Before the coup, however, Moscow never really provided the MPLA with the necessary means to seriously challenge the Portuguese. To have attempted to arm the MPLA to win the anti-colonial war would more than likely have led to a confrontation with the West. Portuguese membership of NATO seemed to have restricted Soviet support for the MPLA to a minimum, necessary perhaps just to maintain it alive and viable. Only when the collapse of the Portuguese regime created a fluid situation in both Angola and Portugal did Moscow venture to significantly increase its level of support, to a point where the MPLA was able to establish control of Luanda. But the Soviet Union's policy of support for the MPLA cannot be said to have only developed bilaterally. Other sources of influence played a determinant role in defining its strategy.

When Soviet policy-makers looked at Africa they saw, in the words of a Soviet academic, 'a blank sheet of paper'.⁹⁴ The Soviet Union had little or no historical ties with the continent, and yet it by the mid-1970s it had become a major international actor in Africa. Despite whatever strategic, economic and political objectives Moscow may have had, whatever real increases in its capabilities it may have benefited from and whatever advantages it may have drawn from a temporary hesitation by the US in international politics, perhaps the most overwhelmingly important factor contributing to Soviet success in Angola was that, somewhat ironically, history was on their side. It can be argued that the process of national self-determination against European colonial structures and the needs of newly independent, but weak, states in the Third World, converged coincidentally with the Soviet ability to offer military, and some economic support. For the Soviet Union, however, Africa represented an area of low priority. In fact:

"Africa is a place where the USSR's basic ends all essentially transcend the local setting...Moscow therefore deals with Africa as fundamentally an arena in which to further broad international objectives."⁹⁵

According to Albright, the general view of Soviet policy-makers

94. V Vassiliev 'Soviet Foreign Policy in the Third World' Lecture at LSE March 1991.

95. D Albright, Soviet Policy Toward Africa Revisited, [1987], p.3.

during the 1960s and 1970s, was that neither Moscow nor Washington had vital interests in Africa, only legitimate ones.⁹⁶ Without intrinsic benefits for Soviet interests, and representing a low level of risk in superpower competition, sub-Saharan Africa figured practically last in Moscow's list of geopolitical priorities; after Europe, East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and maybe even Central America. It can be considered then, that in very general terms the Soviet Union believed that whatever happened it had little to lose and much to gain from an active policy in Africa.

Generally far and away the most influential factor on Soviet foreign policy, East-West relations, and in particular the superpower rivalry, also figured predominantly in Moscow's Angolan posture. Before 1975, Moscow's policy towards Angola conformed neatly to Soviet thinking on intervention in Africa generally. While Portugal, a NATO member was in full control, Moscow provided only relatively minor levels of assistance, mostly covertly; this was intended to maintain the movement active and to give access to its influence but to avoid any potential conflict with Lisbon, which was a member of the Western Alliance. This was the case elsewhere:

"...wherever the neo-colonial influence of other European powers emerged less strongly the Soviet Union was more easily able to take advantage of the tensions and conflicts between African states and Western powers."⁹⁷

96. D Albright, op.cit., [1987], p.4.

97. Z Laidi, The Superpowers and Africa, [1990], p.7

In this way, Guinea's dramatic rupture with France in 1958, created the necessary political space for an offer of Soviet patronage.⁹⁸ On the other hand, those former colonies that retained close links with the metropolis were considered out of bounds. Despite the ideological context in which Moscow placed its relations with Guinea, and also with Ghana and Mali in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the role of the Soviet Union was only possible because they sought to break political and economic links with the West. Although this does not strictly apply in the case of Angola, the underlying general rule of not coming up against direct Western interests does. The fact that Portugal was intent on decolonizing was a necessary condition for the Soviet escalation of its support for the MPLA.

In its early phase, this support was extended within a wider context of Soviet foreign policy which support wars of National Liberation in the Third World. On 6 January 1961, practically coinciding with the start of the anti-colonial war in Angola, Khrushchev addressed a Congress of the Soviet communist party (CPSU) in Moscow, where he emphasized that support for wars of National Liberation was the main means of advancing the world communist revolution in the nuclear age.⁹⁹

98. Incidentally, Moscow's posture toward Guinea may have been influenced by Sekou Touré's links with the French Communist Party (PCF). Another example perhaps of the route that took African Marxists to Moscow via the metropolitan communist parties.

99. R Falk 'Intervention and National Liberation', [1984],

After Krushchev, however, Soviet policy towards Africa became far more pragmatic. Unwilling to face losing influence as immediately as it did when the radical leaders of its African allies were overthrown in the mid-1960s, Moscow began to streamline its policy. It was to consist of concrete relations with African regimes, relations that were not solely based on ideological affinities. After the Cuban missile crisis, Soviet policy was faced with the choice between activism in the Third World, or the pursuit of strategic parity with the United States. The latter was seen to be the priority and, it was argued, was also seen to be necessary to achieve successes in the former. The Soviet Union's failure to militarily support its allies in the Congo in the period 1960-1962, and the climbdown by Krushchev over the missiles in Cuba, helped to convince the Kremlin leadership,¹⁰⁰ that strategic parity with the US in terms of nuclear inter-continental (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles was necessary in order to back Soviet global influence. To be able to project this influence, it required the necessary military capacity.

During this period of strategic build-up, support for National Liberation, the third basic task of Soviet foreign policy,¹⁰¹ was a relatively low-risk strategy for the Soviet Union. Offending practically only the semi-isolated white

p.119.

100. The 'triumvirate': L Brezhnev, General-Secretary of the CPSU; A Kosygin, Prime Minister; N Podgorny, Head of State.

regimes in Africa, Moscow maintained links with National Liberation movements in Southern Africa which, as a consequence, helped to reinforce the Soviet Union's revolutionary credentials within the socialist camp, as well as within the burgeoning anti-imperialist group of states. This was particularly important during its bitter schism with Peking. China accused the Soviet Union of not being sufficiently active in the pursuit of revolutionary international communism. Moscow's relations with the MPLA between 1964 and 1972 are carried out within this wider context.

The necessary ideological credentials required by Moscow for support can be summed up in the term 'anti-Westernism'. Studies of Soviet relations with the Third World and with National Liberation movements have shown that Moscow's policy was essentially pragmatic, led mostly by whatever immediate or mid-term advantage it could gain vis-a-vis the West, and more particularly, the United States. But preferably, this advantage should be seen to be coinciding with the furthering of the interests of international communism. But if it did not, that was merely unfortunate, as, for example, the Egyptian communist movement found out. For reasons of global strategy, Moscow considered that courting Nasser was of paramount importance in its policy towards Egypt, and, therefore, turned a blind eye to Cairo's repression of the communist opposition.

In the case of Angola, the Soviet Union was not faced

with this dilemma. The MPLA was the only major movement that claimed to be Marxist, and said to have in its origins an indigenous communist party. Furthermore, both its ideological and political credentials were reinforced by the movement's close links with Portuguese communists. Despite any ideological affinities they may have shared, Soviet policy towards the MPLA did, however, reflect a semblance of pragmatism. Before the actual date of independence, Moscow did not concede to the MPLA the ideologically important official status of sole representative of the Angolan people.¹⁰²

As we have seen, the MPLA began to receive significant military and financial contributions from the Soviet Union after Agostinho Neto's visit to Moscow in 1964. After being run out of Leopoldville in the aftermath of the ALC's decision to support GRAE, the MPLA regrouped in Brazzaville. Neto had managed to maintain a core structure of the movement in the Congo (Brazzaville) which provided it with a safe haven from where he proceeded with the movement's political and military reconstruction, this time as its uncontested leader.

There had been Soviet links with the MPLA before 1964. When the OAU set up the ALC in 1963 to support anti-colonial movements in Africa, Moscow is said to have contributed some funds to the Angolan movements through this committee. Previous

101. R Edmonds Soviet Foreign Policy 1962-1973, [1975], p.53.

102. G Golan, The Soviet Union and National Liberation

to this, however, it is difficult to assess exactly what links there had been. In the mid-1950s, according to one source, Viriato da Cruz and other elements of the future MPLA, had come into contact with a Soviet in Luanda, allegedly a member of the KGB.¹⁰³ This was at a time when no overt nationalist challenge had been made and the PIDE had not yet been deployed in Angola. As with contacts made later between Moscow and the MPLA, this link with the alleged KGB agent is said to have been made through the Portuguese Communist Party. Portuguese communists, such as Angelo Veloso, active in the Angolan Communist Party (ACP) and the Angolan Committee of the PCP, bridged the gap between the metropolitan communists and the Luandan nationalists. But it is unlikely that these links at this time led to anything more than the provision of reading material and incentives on organization along communist party lines.

While studying in Portugal, Neto had established himself within the PCP. Imprisoned a number of times for activism in the MUDJ (a youth group comprising PCP members), he was allegedly helped to escape Portuguese prison through Morocco by the PCP. At that time, the PCP was clearly the better organized of the anti-Salazarist groups. The strong links Neto had established with the clandestine PCP in the late 1950s, were

Movements in the Third World, [1988], p.308.

103. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1990. Possibly referring to the same Soviet, Marcum cites Portuguese sources that indicated "...that as early as 1952, an effort was made by a Soviet agent, one Feld Matvin, to unite these diverse organisations into a Conselho de Libertação de Angola". J

the conduit through which the MPLA was later, in 1964, able to approach Moscow and garner the latter's support for it as it attempted to resuscitate itself in Brazzaville. Neto's trip to Moscow is undocumented, but is understood to have been arranged by the PCP, more specifically by its General-Secretary, Alvaro Cunhal. Cunhal's capital in Moscow was very good. Throughout his leadership, the PCP had been one of the most loyal European communist parties to the Kremlin.

After the violent explosion in Angola in February-March 1961, the MPLA leadership reconstructed its organizational history and consolidated itself into a movement. It joined the UPA in public denunciations of Portuguese colonialism and appealed for international assistance in its downfall. In June of that year, when the UN Security Council was discussing the revolt in Angola, Khrushchev expressed confidence in an ultimate MPLA victory.¹⁰⁴ This Soviet pledge is probably in response to a telegram sent to Khrushchev in March by Mário de Andrade who claimed that his movement was counting on the Soviet government's support.¹⁰⁵ It is unclear, however, whether this expression of support by the Soviet leader reflects the existence of Soviet patronage at this early stage, or whether it is merely part and parcel of general Soviet pronouncements on anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism. Furthermore, as has been

Marcum, op.cit., Volume One, [1969], p.29.

104. Pravda 16 June 1961, cited in J Valenta 'The Soviet-Cuban Intervention in Angola 1975', [1978], p.6.

discussed above, when Neto took over the MPLA in 1962, the strategy of the movement was to cast as wide a net as possible in the search for international backing. This led to the playing down of the MPLA's Marxist tendencies. Only in Brazzaville, from 1964 onwards, did the MPLA embrace the socialist bloc completely.

From 1964 onwards, Soviet material assistance consisted mainly of: small arms and other lightweight war materiel; military training and education for hundreds of MPLA cadres; and grants, used to finance the day-to-day running of the movement, such as airline tickets. The total amount of this aid is uncertain. One source is quoted as claiming that Soviet military aid to the MPLA before 1975 amounted to US\$ 54 million.¹⁰⁶ Marcum advances figures given by the American State Department that placed the total of this assistance at US\$ 63 million.¹⁰⁷ Yet another source, "...Western intelligence guestimates..." quoted by Legum, fixed the figure at UK# 27 million.¹⁰⁸ Whatever the exact total of aid conceded between the mid-1960s and 1974, it is generally seen to have been relatively low, affording minimum operations, but never providing the movement with the means to prevail against the Portuguese.

105. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.130. Footnote 28.

106. P Vanneman and M James cited in C Stevens 'The Soviet Role in Southern Africa', [1981], p.47.

107. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.229.

108. C Legum, After Angola: the War over Southern Africa,

Nevertheless, as has been argued above, Soviet assistance at this time was one of the crucial factors that allowed the MPLA to return from what at the time had already been considered its oblivion. By the mid-1960s, Moscow became the movement's principal backer. According to Davidson, Soviet sources provided 70 to 80 per cent of all MPLA arms.¹⁰⁹

It seems likely that Neto was the principal link with Moscow. The Angolan leader visited Moscow in 1964, 1966, 1967, 1970 and 1971, attending CPSU conferences, and commemorations such as the 50th Anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution and Lenin's 100th Birthday.¹¹⁰

From 1965 onwards, MPLA cadres were trained in the Soviet Union and later in other Eastern bloc countries, while it is possible that Soviet instructors were involved in MPLA training in Algeria, the Congo (Brazzaville) and Egypt.¹¹¹ For the remainder of the decade, Soviet arms and financial aid helped the MPLA to establish itself as military force inside Angola, and as the favoured 'progressive' movement among anti-Western and Socialist bloc countries. In 1966, the MPLA opened a military front in eastern Angola and headquarters in Lusaka. This internal reinforcement of the MPLA resulted in the strengthening of the movement's international profile, reflected

[1978], p.19.

109. Cited in M and D Ottaway, Afrocommunism, [1986], p.103.

110. A Klinghoffer The Angolan War: A Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World, [1980], p.17.

in the concession of ALC funds and eventually, in 1968, as has been shown, the reversal of the OAU decision to recognize the GRAE exclusively. In 1970, the International Institute for Strategic Studies considered the MPLA the liberation movement offering the most effective guerrilla resistance to the Portuguese.¹¹²

Soviet-MPLA relations were not, however, untroubled. A decade after the debacle of 1963, the MPLA was stricken once again by military ineffectiveness, internal divisions and a distancing by its main external backer as has already been referred to. The Eastern Revolt, led by the MPLA eastern commander, Daniel Chipenda, rebelled against Neto's leadership and coincided with a significant break in the MPLA's military fortunes. According to Legum, in 1973 and early 1974, the Soviet Union shifted its support to Chipenda during the schism in what is said to have been an attempt to foster a more useful movement than that of Neto.¹¹³ While it is more than likely that Moscow did reduce, if not cut off,¹¹⁴ the flow of arms to Neto during this period, it is not as certain that this support was transferred to Chipenda.

The difficulty Moscow is supposed to have had with Neto may have been overstated as the motivation for the cut in

111. G Golan, op.cit., [1988], p.269.

112. Cited by B Porter The USSR in Third World Conflicts: Soviet Arms and Diplomacy in Local Wars 1945-1980, [1984], p.148.

113. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.11.

Soviet aid, being mistaken perhaps for Moscow's pragmatism in its policy of support for the MPLA. Following the military successes of the Portuguese and the apparent political disarray in the leadership, Moscow probably decided it was not about to throw good money after bad until it could reasonably predict the development of the situation on the ground. According to the following report, this assessment may be reasonably accurate. Once it had become clear that Chipenda was not going to succeed in ousting Neto, Moscow apparently wanted to return to backing Neto, and allegedly mended bridges by informing the MPLA leader during a visit to the Soviet capital that Chipenda was planning to have him assassinated.¹¹⁵ This visit took place in January 1973. In Moscow, Neto:

"...met with Boris Ponomarev, a Central Committee secretary and candidate member of the Politburo, who assured him that 'the USSR would continue to support the MPLA against the Portuguese', meaning, no doubt, Neto's wing of the party."¹¹⁶

According to other reports, however, Moscow only resumed support for Neto in the Autumn of 1974,¹¹⁷ once his leadership had become secure.¹¹⁸ It seems likely that the Soviet Union was

114. G Golan, op.cit., [1988], p.270.

115. This information apparently led to an attempted attack on Chipenda in Lusaka. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.11.

116. B D Porter, op.cit., [1984], p.156.

117. Bender assumes October or November 1974. G Bender, op.cit., [1978a], p.76.

118. According to Van Dunem, Moscow resumed support to Neto once

merely applying caution rather than searching to undercut Neto in favour of Chipenda.

By the time the April coup in Lisbon had successfully overthrown the Caetano leadership, the MPLA had managed to lose ground to the FNLA. But once the internal leadership crisis had been resolved and Neto was able to show Moscow that his MPLA was a viable actor in the ensuing process of decolonization, the Soviet Union resumed its support.

By the end of 1974, the MPLA had benefited from approximately 10 years of support from Moscow. This included arms deliveries, financial aid, diplomatic support and political backing. It was not a massive programme of assistance, nor was it a significant one if judged on the basis of its effectiveness in the MPLA's anti-colonial war. It did, however, lay the roots of association. An association that the MPLA could turn to when it had decided to take power.

The MPLA and the Soviet Union

Before 1964, the MPLA had apparently more or less shared the FNLA's conviction that it was the aid and not the donor that mattered. According to the MPLA programme, the movement had to:

"...struggle, by all available means, for the liquidation of the Portuguese colonial domination in Angola and of all

he had succeeded in regaining control of the movement by walking out of an MPLA conference in Lusaka with the support of an internal MPLA faction (from the First Military Region) against the Revolts. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 23 August

vestiges of colonialism and imperialism..."¹¹⁹

The movement had tried to garner the widest possible array of backers, drawing attention mainly to the anti-colonial nature of its activities. In 1963, it had received, through the ALC, minor levels of support from both China and the Soviet Union. Neto's tour in 1963, attempted to court Washington by playing down the MPLA's radicalism. This attempt did not reap its rewards but did manage to influence the US perception of the movement.¹²⁰ The MPLA certainly tailored its discourse according to its audience. While it heavily curtailed its Marxist discourse when in the United States, the same cannot be said when it addressed sympathetic audiences. An article by Mário de Andrade, published in Pravda in September 1961, contained references to an "underground Marxist group" and "anti-imperialistic forces" involved in "the revolutionary struggle", that would be guaranteed by the "support of all progressive humanity", which were clearly intended to speak in Soviet ideological terms.

In its early documents, statements and articles, the MPLA does not refer to the Soviet Union directly, nor does it credit Moscow with providing the means of its support.¹²¹ Before

1991.

119. Statuts et programme in R Chilcote, op.cit., Documents, [1972], p.228.

120. As referred to in Chapter Three, in 1963, the US State Department circulated a memorandum to its African missions stipulating that the MPLA was not to be alienated. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.16.

1964, MPLA leaders continuously insisted on the movement's non-aligned posture:

"During this phase of the national liberation struggle, there is no question of pledging our policy to either of the two blocs dividing the world. The only promise we make to the two blocs is that we will honestly seek to exclude attempts at establishing a cold war climate among the Angolan nationalists and to prevent the implications of international intrigues in the Angola of tomorrow."¹²²

Practically the same words are used in a report on the MPLA's First National Conference,¹²³ which was held in December 1962, and in an appeal to the ALC,¹²⁴ signed by Neto, and published in August 1963. According to its programme, the MPLA would pursue an "independent, peaceful foreign policy" that would include "nonalignment with military blocs."¹²⁵

The situation changed after the debacle in Leopoldville. Neto's visit to Moscow in 1964, followed by the military and political strengthening of the movement marked the beginning of the very close relationship established between the MPLA and the Soviet Union. In December 1964, an article in

121. 'Freedom Shall Come to Angola, Too' Pravda September 6 1961, reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., Documents, [1972], p.195.

122. Mário de Andrade speaking at the 32nd meeting of the UN Special Committee on Territories under Portuguese Administration held in Leopoldville on May 24 1962. Reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., Documents pp.198-199.

123. Document reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., Documents, [1972], p.256.

124. 'Memorandum to the African Liberation Committee of the Organization of African Unity' August 1963 Dakar. reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., Documents p.271.

Pravda declared the USSR's support for the MPLA,¹²⁶ and in August 1965, the same newspaper published an article by a leading MPLA figure which paid tribute to Soviet support for the MPLA which, it says, "...helped expose Roberto's neo-colonialist character."¹²⁷ From here on, the USSR became the principal support for the MPLA:

"Our people, the fighters representing the vanguard of the anti-colonialist struggle in Angola, feel the friendship and support of the Soviet people. We regard the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as one of the main forces we rely upon in developing our liberation struggle."¹²⁸

After coming to power, Neto confirmed the importance of this support during his visit to the Soviet Union in October 1976:

"Soviet aid has been the key factor in our historical development, in achieving independence and in the country's reconstruction."¹²⁹

Clearly, the MPLA did have ideological affinities with the Soviet Union. A number of its leadership, including Agostinho Neto, Lúcio Lara, Mário de Andrade and Viriato da Cruz were avowedly Marxist despite their denial that the movement as a whole was such. They would insist that although they had

125. 'Statuts et programme' reproduced in R Chilcote, op.cit., Documents p.235.

126. M A Samuels, 'The Nationalist Parties', [1969], p.395.

127. Africa Research Bulletin (London) 10 August 1965.

128. Agostinho Neto at the 24TH CPSU Congress, Pravda April 7 1971. Quoted in R Ulyanovsky National Liberation: Essays on Theory and Practice (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978) p.365.

Marxist sympathies, the MPLA was a broad front that united a number of postures. For fund-raising purposes, the Marxism in the movement's ideology was, therefore, played down. Only after independence, on the proclamation of the People's Republic of Angola and the transformation of the MPLA into a Marxist-Leninist vanguard worker's party, was its ideological posture proclaimed.

Like other anti-colonial movements in the 1960s and 1970s, the ideologues of the post-1963 MPLA, principally Mário de Andrade and Lúcio Lara, held Marxism to be the political basis for their anti-colonial struggle. The resilience of the Portuguese state and its inability to accept self-determination for its colonies had made negotiated and peaceful independence impossible. For many, Marxism had "...become a vehicle for radical nationalism in non-industrial societies."¹³⁰ As one point of view has it, despite the theoretical dictates of the historical phases of orthodox Marxism, Third World nationalists wanting to break with the West, took it as a political statebuilding model.¹³¹ According to Rostow, in the struggle against the traditional order in the Third World (that is colonialism), the communists enter this struggle as "scavengers of modernisation" proposing "techniques of political

My emphasis.

129. R Ulyanovsky, op.cit, [1978], p.374. My emphasis.

130. G White 'Revolutionary Socialist Development in the Third World: an Overview', [1983], p.3.

centralisation and dictatorial control as the basis for rapid economic progress."¹³²

The MPLA activists, like other anti-colonial nationalists, also claimed to have found inspiration in the example of wars of National Liberation in China, Algeria and especially Vietnam. The successes of radical or Marxist movements in these countries were seen to be encouraging to those fighting what they considered to be the same struggle in Angola.¹³³

"The Vietnamese armed struggle was very human, a blend of political and military action which became our model. In drawing up our MPLA programme, we were strongly influenced by the Vietnamese experience. Obviously we also studied their military tactics, their concepts of people's war."¹³⁴

The MPLA believed it could draw political and ideological lessons, as well as a military example from the experience of the Vietnamese that were seen to be engaged in an unequal conflict with 'imperialism', comparable to the fight against Portuguese colonialism. Similarly, the perceived success of the FLN in Algeria had proven that a nationalist front could force a stubborn European colonizer to withdraw from Africa.

Anti-colonial ideology had become increasingly radical

131. Argument developed in J Copans 'The USSR, Alibi or Instrument for Black African States' in Z Laidi The Third World and the Soviet Union, [1988], p.25.

132. Citation in R Falk 'Intervention and National Liberation', [1984], p.121.

133. G Therborn 'From Petrograd to Saigon' in New Left Review

towards the end of the 1960s. The development of a loose body of National Liberation thought increasingly characterized the anti-colonial fight as a kind of global 'class struggle'. In this doctrine, the Third World was considered to be the 'working class' of the world, and had to fight to free itself from the ruling imperialist domination. Maoism proposed that the 'world city' had to fall to the assault of the 'world village.'¹³⁵ In January 1969, at a joint conference held in Khartoum by the CONCP movements, Agostinho Neto referred to the stubborn persistence of the Portuguese people in continuing to serve "...as cannon fodder in the defence of Portuguese and foreign monopolies."¹³⁶ An MPLA pamphlet stated that:

"...the voluminous and constant support that Imperialism provides and continues to give to fascist Portuguese colonialism, has equally placed our people in the front line of the struggle against imperialism."¹³⁷

Colonialism and capitalism were seen to be two sides of the same coin. The fight against one was considered necessarily a fight against the other. In Liberation theory, Marxism pervaded, and at the time, the tide seemed to be in favour of radical self-determination: the expulsion of both colonial and imperialist

48.

134. Lúcio Lara, MPLA ideologue, September 1976. Citation in K Brown 'Angolan Socialism', [1979], p.301.

135. R Edmonds, op.cit., [1975], Soviet Foreign Policy 1962-1973: Paradox of Superpower, [1975], p.49.

136. A Neto, A Cabral and E Mondlane 'A Voz dos Povos em Luta' Declarações a Voz da Liberdade (Algiers: FPLN Pamphlet, 1969?)

forces was deemed to be a worthy and achievable goal for nationalists in the Third World.

A socialist outlook was also linked to the MPLA's conception of an Angolan nation. The movement's ideologues often referred to the inherent dangers in tribalism and racialism, claiming that their fight was not against whites but against the "unjust colonial system."¹³⁸ As argued before, the ethnically diverse and urban leadership of the MPLA may have found in Marxism the ideal prism with which to establish their political and social objectives.

This ideological proximity precluded the MPLA turning for assistance to anywhere but the socialist bloc. The MPLA believed that the progressive brotherhood of socialist man would act in solidarity and assist its own anti-imperialist struggle in Angola. But to which pole should it have turned? To Moscow or to Peking?

While there is no firm evidence that this was the case, the MPLA may have been split by the Sino-Soviet rivalry. According to the MPLA military commander at the time,¹³⁹ Viriato da Cruz's challenge to Neto's leadership in July 1963 was made along the dividing line between Moscow and Peking. Neto's preference for a closer association with Moscow contrasted with

My translation.

137. MPLA 'Tenth Year of the Armed Struggle' in MPLA 1970 (Liberation Support Movement Pamphlet, 1970?) p.17.

138. A Neto in a speech delivered on 4 February 1970. reproduced in English in MPLA 1970 (Liberation Support Movement Pamphlet,

Viriato's admiration of the Maoist experience, which may have fed on his anxiety to increase military action. This view may be supported by the fact that Viriato's challenge was made after having returned from a Chinese-sponsored Asian-African Journalists' Conference in Indonesia.¹⁴⁰ While it is impossible to be certain, it is possible that some links were made here between Viriato and Peking. Having failed to take over the MPLA, Viriato joined the FNLA, which later became the recipient of Chinese assistance. Viriato eventually ended up in the Chinese capital, where he died embittered and far from Angola. Neto established his leadership and from 1964 onwards established strong relations with Moscow.

In 1972, during Chipenda's challenge to Neto, he is said to have looked to Peking for support.¹⁴¹ However, if this was the case, it contradicts those reports that claim that the Soviets supported Chipenda during his challenge. Repeating the experience of Viriato ten years before, after failing to displace Neto within the MPLA, Chipenda joined the FNLA, which at that time was already receiving arms and military training from China. It is difficult to claim it with certainty, but there is some indication that Peking and Moscow may have become rival poles for political competition within the MPLA. In 1968, before his split with Neto, however, Chipenda denies that this

1970?) p.12.

139. Interview with Manuel Santos Lima (MPLA National Political Council 1962), Lisbon, 14 January 1991.

was the case, albeit unconvincingly:

"When people say the ideology of the MPLA is Moscow-orientated and the ideology of UNITA is Peking-orientated, they not only help the imperialists confuse things, they are simply wrong. The divisions which have emerged within the Angolan liberation struggle have not come about because of the split between China and Russia...The Chinese continued to support the MPLA in 1962, even after...we expelled our general secretary, Viriato da Cruz, from the Steering Committee of the MPLA. It was this man who went to China and spread his poison that the MPLA was pro-Russia, anti-Chinese, and so on. That is when our difficulties with the Chinese began.¹⁴²

It can be argued that there was a definite ideological base for the relationship that the MPLA came to develop with the Soviet Union. But this was essentially only a base. Eventually, the political factors of this relationship far outweighed the ideological link. When, for the MPLA, Moscow became a means of fighting its internal rivals the ideological communality became just another political factor for the Soviet Union in its policy towards Angola.

Bases for Soviet Foreign Policy toward Angola

By the end of the 1960s, the Soviet Union was close to achieving rough numerical nuclear parity with the United States. This had been, after all, the Kremlin's major objective after Khrushchev. With strategic parity, the Kremlin believed it had the means to act globally, in the defence of its interests.

140. J Marcum, op.cit. Volume Two, [1978], p.87.

141. M Simpson, op.cit., p.191.

According to Edmonds, the defence build-up and the backing of the armed forces gave the Brezhnev leadership the necessary stability and clout which allowed it to pursue a different dialogue with the US: detente.¹⁴³ The leadership undoubtedly continued to equate Soviet gains with Western losses, but the status of superpower conceded by the recognized parity implicit in the SALT agreement, coincided with a search for a less confrontational posture with Washington. The promise of mutual massive nuclear destruction seemed paradoxically to relax relations between the superpowers, reducing tension and conflict. But this applied only to the realm of what amounted to US-Soviet bilateral relations. The Kremlin purposefully kept detente from its other spheres of foreign policy, namely the Third World. In Soviet policy towards this region, strategic parity and detente actually made Moscow more active, and less inhibited.¹⁴⁴

But confidence in its own enhanced capacity cannot surely be the sole explanation of why Moscow decided to arm the MPLA to assist this movement to take power. There had to have been a risk that the US would have called Moscow's bluff and decided to overtly back the FNLA-UNITA coalition, even including the deployment of US troops. How could Moscow have been sure that intervention in Angola would not have led to a direct

142. D Barnett and R Harvey The Revolution in Angola: MPLA, Life Histories and Documents, [1971], p.259.

143. R Edmonds, op.cit., [1975], p.43.

confrontation with the West? Some observers,¹⁴⁵ have claimed that the Kremlin shrewdly anticipated that, after Vietnam, a war-weary American people and a vindictive Congress would effectively paralyze the US administration's ability to go beyond covert operations. It, therefore, proceeded with a policy of support for the MPLA, somewhat secure in the knowledge that the US would be unable to respond. In this analysis, Soviet policy was not taking risks, and merely benefited from a correct analysis of American politics.

Somewhat within this same context, Valenta assumes that Soviet decisions to intervene in Angola were taken as part a medium-risk strategy to test the US's responsiveness after Vietnam.¹⁴⁶ But from this point of view, Soviet policy in Angola was applied in steps and responded only to the situation on the ground rather than in accordance with a larger picture which predicted a result. In this analysis, the Kremlin capitalized on its historic association with the MPLA to intervene in a political vacuum (after the withdrawal of Portugal). But had the US overtly challenged this policy, the Soviet Union would, in all likelihood, have stopped short.

Whatever the case, the MPLA presented the Soviet Union with an opportunity to gain influence in Angola. Clearly, Moscow was aware that the FNLA was being supported by the United States

144. M Bowker and P Williams, Superpower Detente: A Reappraisal, [1988], p.114.

145. M Bowker and P Williams, op.cit., [1988], p.122.

through the CIA which leaves little doubt that the Soviet policy-makers placed their action in Angola within the context of their rivalry with Washington.

A number of analysts, however, have advanced another explanation for Soviet involvement:

"The animosity between China and Russia over Angola exceeded anything either may have felt about US and other Western intervention."¹⁴⁷

Legum's thesis is that Soviet involvement in Angola sought to undermine China's influence in Africa rather than to help the MPLA for its own sake or to weaken Western influence. Accordingly, Moscow would have intervened regardless of what Washington did. Legum's analysis of intervention in the Angolan civil war has been taken up by a number of other analysts:

"What Washington failed to realise was that it had stumbled into a Sino-Soviet dispute."¹⁴⁸

By 1963, the rivalry between the two largest communist powers, had come out into the open, somewhat to the relief of many in the West who had had nightmares about a mono-polar communist bloc. This rivalry was also played out in the Third World where China challenged Moscow for the role of the major ideological and political pole of anti-Westernism. China took upon itself the task of unmasking the Soviet Union's

146. J Valenta., op.cit., [1978].

147. C Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.22.

revisionism, by, it believed, proving that Moscow's dialogue with the West disqualified it from speaking in the name of the Third World.¹⁴⁹ In 1964, Premier Chou en-lai's tour of Africa marked the beginning of Chinese policy in the Third World. But during this early period, China's Third World policy was essentially an ideological assault on the primacy of Moscow. It was within this context of ideological conflict that the Soviet Union emphasized its policy of support for the MPLA within support for National Liberation generally. Moscow sought to gain uncontested leadership of the anti-imperialist group and this was reinforced by support for anti-colonialism. In communist fora, Moscow sought to reinforce its revolutionary credentials, while Peking sought to disparage them.

By 1970, after the inward-looking period during the Cultural Revolution, Peking had returned to an active role in the Third World, this time with concrete support for its ideological challenge. Its financing of the Tanzania-Zambia railway in the order of US\$ 400 million,¹⁵⁰ showed that it could provide an alternative source of aid to both the West and the Soviet Union. With Maoism elevated to a status of parity with Marxism-Leninism, China provided an important, albeit low-budget, pole of attraction to both radical states and national liberation movements. This competition with Peking within its

148. M Bowker and P Williams, op.cit., [1988], p.118.

149. Z Laidi, op.cit., [1990], p.25.

ideological backyard is said to have been a principal motivation for Moscow's active policy in Angola which led it to accept the MPLA's requests for assistance.

The arrival of Chinese advisors at the FNLA's base in Zaire at the end of May 1974 is said to have triggered the resumption of Soviet aid for the MPLA in the autumn of that same year. But as we have already seen, the motivations behind the fluctuating Soviet commitment to Neto's leadership of the MPLA were based at least as much on the internal disarray of the movement as on any external stimulus such as Chinese support for the FNLA. Furthermore, Chinese assistance had already been in place since the previous year, and yet had not prevented Moscow from cutting back its aid for Neto in the first place. Nevertheless, despite these inconsistencies, it is difficult to state that the 'Chinese factor' was totally absent from the considerations made by the Soviet policy-makers. It is possible to argue that Peking's military assistance for the FNLA may have partly led Moscow to respond to the MPLA's solicitations for weapons in August 1974.

But according to Vassiliev, China did not in any way provide the major strategic motivation for Soviet foreign policy in the Third World.¹⁵¹ This Soviet academic's view is that the West has always been Moscow's principal adversary in the Third World and that this was also the case in Angola. Thus, while

150. R Edmonds, op.cit., [1975], p.49.

151. V Vassiliev 'Soviet Foreign Policy in the Third World'

China may have wanted to challenge Moscow by supporting the FNLA, it is probably not the case that when supporting the MPLA, the Soviet Union was primarily preoccupied with denying Peking influence in Africa. Moscow may certainly have used Angola in its ideological conflict with China, as Legum points out.¹⁵² Despite these objections, it can be argued that weakening Chinese influence may have been a partial objective, and thus a partial influence on Soviet foreign policy toward Angola.

In 1974 and 1975, the MPLA was able to convince Moscow that the Soviet Union would benefit from an escalation in its support for this Angolan movement. On this process of influence other factors were also active, as it has already been argued. The Portuguese communists, Cuba and the Congo (Brazzaville) combined to further reinforce the case for the MPLA. It was an internal political conflict that was successfully expressed in terms of a wider global competition. Clearly, the Soviet Union saw it could gain something, especially in its competition with the United States.

Lecture at LSE March 1991.

152. "Russia and China both used Angola to justify their allegations that the other was intent on world domination. C

(iii) China and the Angolan Movements

According to its own view, China behaved in a proper and correct fashion with regard to the civil war. While Peking tried to promote unity among the Angolan movements, Moscow was accused of deliberately instigating the civil war in an attempt to gain influence in the resource-rich country:

"It is the Soviet social-imperialists themselves that have kindled the flames of war in Angola but, to cover up their criminal deeds, they resort to their customary dirty trick of a thief crying 'stop thief' and cranking their propaganda machine to attack and slander China and African countries. But the Chinese people's stand of consistent, resolute support for the Angolan people's efforts to fight in unity for national independence is known to everybody."¹⁵³

Indeed, a survey of the official publication Peking Review does not reveal an expressed preference for any of the Angolan movements and seems to support this view of the conflict: that Peking helped the anti-colonial struggle in general up to the point when unity was achieved between the movements under the auspices of the OAU. It then proceeded to point to the dangers of external "meddling" especially on the part of the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁴ In Peking's view, Moscow attempted to "...fish in troubled waters."¹⁵⁵ The Soviet Union:

Legum, op.cit., [1978], p.23.

153. Peking Review 31, 1 August 1975, pp.8-9.

154. Peking Review 6, 7 February 1975, p.4.

"...took no notice of OAU's equal treatment to the three organisations and the agreement reached among themselves [Nakuru]. Instead they made a distinction between the three organisations...and with an ulterior motive, classified them into revolutionary, non-revolutionary and even 'counter-revolutionary', interfering in the Angolan people's affairs and stirring up antagonisms among them."¹⁵⁶

But does a consideration of China's involvement in the civil war stand up to this characterization?

China did not intervene very deeply in the civil war. In fact, by the time the conflict had escalated in November, Peking had withdrawn its support for the FNLA. But, its *de facto* alignment with the United States and South Africa, caused untold political damage to China's prestige in African states, despite this early withdrawal from the conflict. Furthermore, with the eventual victory of the MPLA, the Soviet Union had shown itself to be a much more capable and worthwhile backer to have. From here on, China's previously prominent presence in Africa was considerably scaled down. But why had Peking committed such a significant mistake in Angola? Certainly in its previous undertakings in Africa, China had shown itself to be an able and sensitive actor. The answer to this must lie in the fact that opposing the Soviet Union seems to have been by far and away the predominant preoccupation of Peking in its Angolan policy, even if this led to it supplying arms to the CIA-backed FNLA, an association Peking later realized it could ill-afford:

155. Peking Review 35, 29 August 1975, p.6.

"We made mistakes in Angola, perhaps because we simplified the issue, reacted blindly, without proper analysis, to the position taken by the Russians. As the Angolan civil war went on, the affair became for us more and more of a fiasco."¹⁵⁷

For Peking, its involvement in the Angolan civil war, beyond the purely ideological returns it sought, was essentially an exercise in gamesmanship.

The direct repercussions of Chinese involvement on the process and outcome of the civil war itself were very limited, aside from the concrete fact that Chinese military support for the FNLA bolstered this movement's potential. The belief maintained by the FNLA's other backers in Zaire (the CIA station and Mobutu's regime) that Roberto's movement was capable of challenging the MPLA must be seen to have been one of the serious miscalculations that were made in the Angolan civil war. The military and organizational capacity of the FNLA was vastly overrated and when the challenge for power came to a head, in the battle for Luanda, this movement's weakness gave the MPLA an advantage which the latter was able to exploit on the political and diplomatic fronts. It can be argued that the most important repercussions of China's involvement in Angola were in causing reactions in other external actors. China's support for the FNLA, from 1973 onwards, might have led Washington to believe that Peking considered the movement to have potentialities.

156. Peking Review 31, 1 August 1975, p.8.

157. Unidentified Chinese diplomat in A Gavshon, Crisis in

While forming an asset for the FNLA in this way, China, as has been referred above, was also said to have been one the major incentives for Soviet policy in support of the MPLA.

Since the mid-1960s, China had sought to play in Africa the role of anti-colonial patron. The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) ideological and historical context emphasized, in its own experience, the struggle against the imperialism of the Western powers, and held up its own revolution as a model to be emulated in the colonial Third World. Like the Soviet Union, China attempted to frame world politics in an ideological context of a struggle between socialism and capitalism, between East and West. Unlike the Soviet Union, however, the Chinese also emphasized the struggle between the developed and the underdeveloped worlds, between North and South. In this context, China placed itself squarely in world politics as the champion of the Third World.

Chinese foreign policy in Angola seems to have been, like its US counterpart, mainly motivated by one consideration: that of rivalry with the Soviet Union. This characteristic conformed to China's more general outlook to the continent, which was brought clearly to the foreground during Chou En Lai's African tour of 1963 and 1964:

"The Chinese leader made it plain that Africa would become a region of competition not only against the west but also against what Peking took to be the sacrifice of revolutionary principles by the Soviet Union for the sake of advancing its state interests."¹⁵⁸

Africa: Battleground of East and West, [1981], p.139.

Peking was not averse to advancing its own interests as a by-product of the main objective of its policy: countering Soviet influence. Certainly, Chinese involvement with Tanzania and Zambia in the mid-1960s, and later Zaire, sought to demonstrate its ability to compete with the Soviet Union in Africa. But this involvement often also had an economic facet. Short of copper itself, China's construction of the Uhuru railway, which sought to ease Zambian dependence on the Benguela railway and South African routes, secured copper sales to Peking.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, despite these and similar conditioning factors, it is clear that Sino-Soviet rivalry dominated Chinese foreign policy in Africa, and, more specifically, in Angola.

China's political interest in Africa, as elsewhere, undoubtedly helped to spur on Moscow's own pursuits. Anxious to dispel accusations of revisionism, and to see off the Chinese challenge to its leadership of the communist bloc, the Soviet Union sought, somewhat against its ideological instincts, to prove its revolutionary zeal by a more active role in the support of anti-western, but nationalist, regimes and of national liberation movements. In fact, the prominent place of national liberation movements in the socialist grouping owes much to the CCP, that developed a theory and practice of anti-colonial struggle that allowed it to form part of Marxist

158. A Gavshon, op.cit., [1981], p.130.

political ideology.

The influence of China on the Angolan nationalist movements is, curiously enough, first noted in the MPLA. The first secretary-general and leading theorist of the movement, Viriato da Cruz, is said to have become very enthusiastic about the application of Maoist guerrilla warfare to the anti-colonial war in Angola in the early 1960s. One source claims that Viriato da Cruz was an actual recipient of Chinese aid.¹⁶⁰ Further to this, during the immediate run-up to the 1963 split Viriato apparently defended a close relationship with Peking, with an idea to the latter possibly becoming the MPLA's principal backer. By then, however, the Netoists had already become very close to Moscow. This Sino-Soviet divide is said to have been largely responsible for the defection of Viriato da Cruz.¹⁶¹ Allegedly driven to despair by the MPLA's military incapacity, Viriato da Cruz moved to the FNLA with a number of his followers hoping that this movement's access to the border and its better international profile would be more successful in the fight against Portuguese colonialism. According to some reports Viriato da Cruz continued to defend a pro-Chinese line within the FNLA. In time, the FNLA also disappointed Viriato da Cruz, who eventually moved to Peking, where he died in 1973, reportedly bitter and disillusioned with the process of Angolan

159. A Gavshon, op.cit., [1981], p.134.

160. B Larkin, China and Africa 1949-1970, [1971], p.189.

161. Interview with João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1991.

national liberation.

The first major direct link made by China with an Angolan movement was with UNITA. Seeking to establish, after 1964, a rival movement to that of the MPLA and the FNLA, Jonas Savimbi required a major source of financial, military and political backing. As has been shown above, his acrimonious break with Roberto and the FNLA was made under allegations of the presence of "US imperialism" within the movement. This posture effectively excluded the West as a potential source for what was to become UNITA. Savimbi turned then to the communist bloc and, in 1964, undertook a fund-raising tour, reportedly organized by Ben Bella,¹⁶² to, among other countries, China¹⁶³

Judging by the results of this tour, it seems clear that the MPLA was well established in the Moscow camp, leading the Angolan leader to turn to its rival, Peking. According to Bridgland, Savimbi "...was received icily in Eastern Europe..."¹⁶⁴ but did achieve a measure of success in China.¹⁶⁵ According to this account, Peking promised to train UNITA elements in guerrilla warfare at the Nanking Military Academy and contributed cash funds to help Savimbi's followers who had

Interview with Manuel Santos Lima, Lisbon, 14 January 1991.

162. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.160.

163. See Chapter Three. F Bridgland, Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa [1986], p.82.

164. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.82.

165. The communication channel between China and Savimbi was held allegedly through Co Liang, a Chinese 'agent' working out

been stranded in Brazzaville after the break from Roberto. A follow-up trip to China was undertaken by Savimbi in early 1965, during which he allegedly received US\$ 15,000, the first donation received by UNITA.¹⁶⁶ Between July and November 1965, Savimbi himself received instruction in guerrilla warfare at Nanking, where he was joined by a number of commanders-to-be.¹⁶⁷ Later, in 1967, Savimbi returned to China where he is said to have had an hour-long meeting with Mao Tse Tung himself and was promised arms.¹⁶⁸ Peking did continue to provide UNITA with money and training in China but no weapons, allegedly due to difficulties in transit through Tanzania and Zambia.¹⁶⁹

With a contrasting opinion, however, Marcum believes that the Chinese "...could not trust him...", because of Savimbi's opposition to Viriato da Cruz's entry to the FNLA while the UNITA leader was still in Roberto's movement.¹⁷⁰ Savimbi had allegedly counseled Roberto against allowing Viriato da Cruz into the movement because of the ex-MPLA Secretary-General's pro-Chinese stance. Further casting doubt on this association with China are references in Stockwell to training received by UNITA at this time in North Korea and not China.¹⁷¹

of Ghana, and later Tanzania. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.74.

166. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.83.

167. Known as the 'Chinese Eleven', F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.84.

168. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.94.

169. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], pp.89,96.

Whatever the case, it seems clear that any association between China and UNITA at this stage was not substantial in terms of arms or even politically. In overall strategic terms, it was a slight relationship of little consequence.

It is, however, revealing to look at the motivations behind this relationship. It is difficult to conclude what led the Chinese to back Savimbi at a time when UNITA was not an OAU-recognized Angolan movement. Granted, the reported level of support was low-risk, and Savimbi's much-praised personality and admirable intention to move the anti-colonial fight inside Angola may have convinced the Chinese that his was a cause worth supporting. Further evidence to the irrationality of this association is the fact that there does not seem to have been a substantive ideological affinity between Peking and UNITA as there was between Moscow and the MPLA. Despite accepting many aspects of guerrilla warfare that may have been shared with the Chinese, and the use of many similar terms, Savimbi was clearly not either a Marxist or a Maoist. In fact, UNITA publications later candidly dismiss, with some flippancy perhaps, its early association with Peking:

"During the Portuguese colonial era, the movement's literature was full of revolutionary Maoist rhetoric, but this was more with a view to cultivating material assistance from Red China than a sincere reflection of UNITA's ideological beliefs - Savimbi himself would be the first to admit that during the early years of its existence UNITA sometimes had to be pragmatic in order to survive."¹⁷²

170. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.160.

With no obvious ideological affinities, it may be argued that the association between UNITA and China in the mid-1960s conformed to the pattern established by the other Angolan organizations and their respective backers. That is to say, Peking saw UNITA as a player with potential and, seeing as both the United States and the Soviet Union already had their own favourites, wanted to put in its own bid. Of course, if indeed this was the case, this consideration must not detract from UNITA's own responsibility in this association. Apart from consciously overplaying their ideological proximity, as they claim above, UNITA may also have presented itself to Peking as a clear opportunity to challenge both Moscow and Washington.

It is, however, equally possible that these early links with UNITA were more the result of a general, perhaps almost arbitrary, policy of support for national liberation movements which led to the granting of aid and training to many groups, some being more successful than others, rather than of an astute evaluation of UNITA's capabilities. The factor that does, however, emerge is Peking's liability to approaches made by competing movements in an anti-colonial war.

"With very few exceptions China's choice of movements to support, and her actions towards these and other groups, have been dictated by the need to challenge, surpass or embarrass the Soviet Union."¹⁷³

171. J Stockwell, op.cit., [1978].

The most important association made by China in Angola was with the FNLA. As it has been argued above, the establishment of these links with the FNLA were strongly influenced, if not actually determined by the latter's relationship with Zaire. From 1973, after Mobutu had established close relations with Peking, Roberto and the FNLA also moved to request and received Chinese aid, which was provided in training and the shipment of weapons. Interestingly, in Bridgland's account, Roberto was said to have been anti-Chinese,¹⁷⁴ having refused an earlier suggestion made by Savimbi to approach Peking. This contrasts with Marcum's suggestion cited above that claims it was the UNITA leader who was anti-Chinese. Nevertheless, in December 1973 an FNLA delegation visited China and secured a meeting with Deng Xiao Ping.¹⁷⁵ From this point onwards, Holden Roberto accepted Chinese aid. China provided direct military assistance to the FNLA from early 1974 until 24 October 1975, one day after the major South African military incursion into Angola.

The arrival in Zaire of Chinese advisors to train the FNLA was not kept secret. On the contrary, it was announced in a press release. According to Stockwell, 112 military advisors,

172. UNITA [1984], p.25.

173. A Hutchison, China's African Revolution, [1975], pp.232-233.

led by a Chinese army major general, arrived on 23 May 1974.¹⁷⁶ Although not in strictly contradictory terms, Bridgland states that "...the last of its 120 instructors arrived in August [1974] with 450 tonnes of weapons..."¹⁷⁷

Mobutu's close relations with Peking were without a doubt partly responsible for Chinese backing for the FNLA. Kinshasa's approval was essential for the deployment of over 100 military advisors in Zaire. Some reports have attributed China's involvement with the FNLA as being the result of an initiative by Nyerere, who had apparently requested assistance from Peking personally.¹⁷⁸ The Tanzanian leader reportedly suggested that Peking's assistance be delivered by the transfer of Chinese military instructors based in his country to the FNLA's base at Kinkuzu.¹⁷⁹

The importance of Chinese aid in bolstering the FNLA may have played a part in the movement's favour with the United States, although this could not have been one of China's motivations. Much more likely is, as Marcum suggests, that:

"...Chinese assistance for the avowedly non-socialist FNLA [was] apparently motivated by a desire to humble Leonid Brezhnev, and to please Mobutu and acquire influence as they had done in East Africa."¹⁸⁰

174. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.74.

175. E K Lawson, 'China's Policy in Ethiopia and Angola', [1980], p.174.

176. J Stockwell, op.cit., [1978], p.67.

177. F Bridgland, op.cit., [1986], p.148.

178. Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents

Although fighting between the movements had broken out by the late spring of 1975, and China continued to support the FNLA, Peking did not shut out the MPLA nor UNITA. The UNITA military commander, Samuel Chiwale, flew to Peking on 20 March, apparently to request military support.¹⁸¹ According to a subsequent report, this mission was not very successful.¹⁸² In late May, Lúcio Lara of the MPLA, a figure very close to Neto, was received in Peking at the invitation of the Chinese government.¹⁸³ While the civil war was going to pit China against the Soviet Union, this would be achieved in an indirect alliance with the United States and South Africa. Before this had become clear, Peking maintained its support for the FNLA. When in August 1975, the Peking Review alleged that:

"...the Soviet social-imperialists, under the signboard of 'support', stirred up a civil war in that area in an attempt to fish in troubled waters,"¹⁸⁴

1974-1975 [1975], p.B537. J Marcum, op.cit., Volume Two, [1978], p.228.

179. E K Lawson, op.cit., [1980], p.173.

180. J Marcum, 'Lessons Of Angola', [1976], p.413.

181. AFP report in Facts and Reports [Vol. 5, No.7, 5 April 1975], p.17.

182. Afrique-Asie 19 May 1975. Reproduced in full in Facts and Reports, op.cit.

183. El Moudjahid (Algiers) 29 May 1975. Reproduced in full in

a similar allegation could be made of China's own involvement. Despite the rhetoric, China's role in the Angolan civil war differed little from that of other external actors.

The motivations for Chinese support of the FNLA almost certainly revolved around the Sino-Soviet rivalry, as well as the search for influence in the Third World, both in relation to Moscow and Washington. Therefore, when the FNLA was able to tap Peking for weapons and military training, by virtue of its association with Zaire, it was these competitive motivations that were drawn upon. Once again, external matrices of conflict were superimposed on the internal Angolan war.

CONCLUSION

The Angolan civil war of 1975-1976 was a brutal conflict that seriously damaged the country's economic infrastructure and fragile fabric of society. It led almost immediately to another civil war between the MPLA and UNITA that was to last fifteen years. After standing as equals at Alvor in January 1975, these two movements then faced each other in a grinding war of attrition, this time as government and rebel movement. Almost continuously, Angola lived with war for 30 years. In 1991, the prospects for peace and a negotiated settlement looked good. Political differences between the adversaries had not been resolved, but they had agreed to attempt the electoral route of competition. Although there were many reasons why in 1991 the Angolan adversaries signed a peace agreement, it is difficult to avoid believing that it was related to the end of the cold war. Deprived of external rivalries to support the internal conflict, the Angolans had to find another way to compete and settle their differences. Earlier, in 1975, these external factors had permitted war to be fought. In 1991, they allowed peace to be made. In one sense at least, events in Angola in 1991 were intimately related to what had occurred in 1975.

Speaking during a seminar on decolonization in 1992, Brigadier Pezarat Correia set down his assessment of what had

occurred in 1975.¹ According to him the United States, the Soviet Union and unnamed regional African powers had been "largely responsible" for the outcome of Portuguese decolonization.² The non-fulfilment of the Alvor accords and the war in Angola were, according to Pezarat Correia, the result of "intrigues by foreign interests during the heyday of the cold war."³ As has been shown, the Angolan civil war of 1975-1976 did involve a number of external actors, including those mentioned by Pezarat Correia. There can be little doubt that the intervention of the superpowers, Cuba, South Africa, Zaire and China had an overwhelming effect on the course of the war; as did events in Portugal, especially in creating the opportunity for such intervention. But to view the Angolan civil war merely as a product of East-West rivalry or of South African attempts at regional hegemony is to misunderstand or to deny the real nature of the origins of the conflict.

The external dimensions of the civil war were undoubtedly significant in initiating, perpetuating and, eventually, ending hostilities in Angola. But these international facets were built upon an internal structure of conflict that had been erected under colonialism and defined during the anti-

1. Brigadier Pezarat Correia was a member of the MFA and was stationed in Angola as Admiral Rosa Coutinho's deputy at the end of 1974.

2. Report in Público (Lisbon) 13 February 1992.

3. Ibid.

colonial challenge. The rivalry between the Angolan movements drew in foreign interests as the nationalists looked outwards for sources of support. In this way, external rivalries and conflicts were superimposed on Angolan antagonism. The accruing of these international dimensions undoubtedly helped to determine the violent nature of the conflict in 1975. Conversely, the withdrawal of these dimensions of tension in the late 1980s, as a result of the convergence of the superpowers, encouraged the turn away from war in Angola, towards another form of political competition. Nevertheless, to consider the Angolan civil war of 1975 (as well as that of 1976-1991) solely in terms of international intervention and cold war intrigues is to omit the importance of the internal dynamics at the core of the origins of that conflict.

This thesis has located the origins of the Angolan civil war on a continuum that links international politics and internal change. It has looked at both the national and international factors that created the conditions for the war, and has been unable to draw a clear line of responsibility that separates one set from the other. In the case of the Angolan civil war, a complex dynamic of interaction between internal and external actors led to the development of hostilities. Consequently, while each intervention by an external power was but one of the inputs of the conflict, the internal rivalry at the core of the war was the necessary spark for the entire dispute. This trellis of political interaction is at the core of the An-

golan conflict of 1975-1976.

The rivalry between the Angolan nationalist movements emerged from the formative influences of both colonialism and anti-colonialism. The particularities of Portuguese colonialism had an important part to play in the development of this rivalry. Firstly, the social conditions that resulted from its colonial policies, such as the racial and educational gap between certain sectors of colonial society, went far in determining a constant state of hostility between the less-educated Africans in the FNLA and the intellectual mestiços in the MPLA. On the other hand, the privileged core of colonial society came to expect the rewards of prosperity, especially after the period of economic expansion in late colonialism. When denied, this class represented a source of support for the anti-colonial current.

Secondly, the colonial regime's intransigence towards the development of Angolan nationalism limited the options for its expression. The authoritarian regime in Portugal had been partly erected on the colonial empire, politically, economically and ideologically. Lisbon could not, therefore, decolonize; not because it could not neo-colonize but because the regime itself would expire if it did so. Thus, the development of a broad movement of nationalist expression in the colonies was put out of the question. Eventually, in 1961 only a violent opposition to Portuguese colonialism was possible. In turn, this eradication of choice was conducive to the prevailing of committed

nationalist organizations that were either radical in outlook (MPLA) or heavily personalized (FNLA).

Of course, these movements were also shaped by their own endogenous development and were also affected by conscious political choices made by their protagonists. The ideological development of the MPLA in Luanda, the micro-nationalist affirmation by the FNLA in northern Angola and Zaire, and the championing of the unrepresented south by UNITA were, although overlapping, separate streams of political expression in Angola. Their constituencies and political spheres were different, although all three movements had the same objective both in the anti-colonial as well as the civil wars: to capture the Angolan state and establish their respective structures of government.

As the three movements developed their anti-colonial challenges, they found themselves on trajectories that brought them into conflict not only with the colonial regime but with each other. The context within which movement emerged helped to influence the subsequent intransigence towards the creation of a common front, and the perpetuation of a belief that each would be able to succeed Portuguese rule. The FNLA believed that its original challenge against the Portuguese in 1961 and its legitimization by the OAU was sufficient to give it the edge. The MPLA looked to the other Portuguese colonies where friends had emerged at the head of a single unchallenged movement, wanting to repeat the pattern in Angola. Despite, or at the root of, its preference for elections, UNITA knew that it represented the

single-largest ethnic group in Angola. From the interaction between colonialism and anti-colonialism emerged also the conflict between the Angolan nationalists.

In dispute with colonialism, Angolan animosity also sought other levels of expression for their own internal conflict in order to legitimize their respective positions as the sole representative of Angolan nationalism. For each movement, the competition for backers was facilitated by appealing to the political whim of a potential benefactor. This was often achieved by not only extolling the virtue of its anti-colonial objectives but by also pointing out that the benefactor's rival (or rivals) was backing the other movement. In this way, they were able to enlarge the significance of their conflict from mere factional strife to superpower competition, once the colonial regime had fallen away in 1974. Through this transformation in the nature of the conflict, the Angolan nationalists internationalized the civil war. Rather than being mainly a case of external intervention within the context of the cold war, the Angolan civil war was primarily a domestic conflict which was internationalized with consciousness and purposefulness by the Angolan rivals.

Here, Little's 'pull theory', referred to in the Introduction, seems to apply adequately.⁴ This approach to inter-

4. R Little, Intervention: External Involvement in Civil Wars, [1975] p.3. Opposing the 'pull theory' is the 'push theory' of intervention. In the latter, only two actors are considered: the intervening and the target state. Furthermore, the intent of the intervening state is considered to be the overwhelming deter-

national intervention in internal wars interprets these situations as a complex model involving both internal and external actors. Intervention by the latter is seen as a response to the former, rather than as an active initiative independent of the internal situation. External rivalries are drawn in by the parties to a civil war in order to enlarge the latter's capacities. In this perspective, international intervention in a civil war is seen as a situation that is created by the interaction of parallel national and international levels of conflict; this is a perspective that this thesis shares with regard to the Angolan civil war.

Having established this dynamic, it is nevertheless important to keep in mind that international intervention in the Angolan civil war was also the result of specific motivations on the part of the external actors. While the opportunity for intervention was created by the deliberate appeal to do so on the part of the Angolan movements, the will and interest of the interveners was equally necessary for this to have occurred. The process by which the internal conflict was internationalized was only one of the inputs of the decision-making process of the external powers when considering intervening directly in the war. Thus, while South Africa was confident that the shared objective of anti-communism would align its interests with those of the United States, Pretoria's decision to intervene in Angola was the result of a complex interplay of strategic objectives and domestic politics. Similarly, Cuban intervention was influenced

by an internal political and ideological logic quite apart from, although converging with, Soviet interests, and from its long-standing relationship with the MPLA. While acting as the linchpin for the anti-MPLA coalition, linking the interests of the FNLA with those of the United States, Zaire also saw in the Angolan civil war an opportunity to emerge more powerfully in the region.

In the case of the global actors, the United States and the Soviet Union, and to a lesser degree, China, motivations were less the result of particularist interests than the product of the wider context of their respective rivalries. The balance of forces between East and West was a constant preoccupation of policy-makers in both Washington and Moscow. In Peking, the relative prestige of China and the Soviet Union in the communist and developing worlds was a significant factor in the elaboration of Chinese foreign policy; this was a preoccupation that was equally shared in the Kremlin. Thus, the intervention of the Soviet Union and the United States in particular, as well as China, was motivated by an assessment of what this would have signified in terms of their respective rivalries. Having established direct and indirect relationships with Angolan movements the US, the USSR and China acted with regard to each other.

The result of the drawing in of these rivalries was the accumulation of a number of layers of conflict on the foundations of the Angolan dispute between the movements. In this way, the development of the civil war reflected the clash of

left and right in post-coup Portugal, the regional rivalry between Congo and Zaire, bloc politics in the OAU, the Sino-Soviet split and the East-West conflict. For different reasons, the above external conflicts emanated outwards from the competition between the Angolan movements as the latter attempted to bolster their respective positions. For example, the relationship between the Angolan dispute, regional rivalry between Brazzaville and Kinshasa, and the superpower competition between Moscow and Washington can be arranged in the following manner:

Level of	Conflict	East - versus - West
National		MPLA - versus - FNLA/UNITA
v		v
Regional	Brazzaville - versus - Kinshasa	
v		v
Global		Moscow - versus - Washington

In this perspective, the dynamic of conflict flows simultaneously outwardly from the internal civil war to the international rivalries, as well as from one side to the other at each separate level. The communality between the allies on each side is thus determined not only in ideological terms, which in the case of Marxism on the MPLA side would join the three actors vertically, but also in terms of political competition at the horizontal level. Thus, while Brazzaville shared common values and backers with the MPLA, one motivation for its support of this Angolan movement was the fact that the MPLA's rival, the FNLA, was supported by its own rival, Leopoldville. In other

words, 'my enemy's friend is also my enemy'. In the case of the links between Portuguese politics and the Angolan dispute, a similar pattern can be invoked:

Level of Conflict	East - versus - West
National	MPLA - versus - FNLA/UNITA
v	v v
Portuguese	Radical Left - versus - Moderates
v	v v
Global	USSR - versus - USA

Of course, the wider global conflict between East and West did provide the context for this internationalization of conflict in Angola, especially with regard to the ideological expression of the civil war as a conflict between communism and anti-communism. But, in one sense, this contextualization was the result of a purposeful attempt on both sides to make it seem as if the dispute in Angola was part and parcel of a historical global conflict and not the result of an internal dynamic. Subsequently, in 1991, the East-West conflict was no longer available to be imported into local and regional conflicts that expressed themselves as part of this ideological competition. This led to the resolution of a number of these conflicts such as that of Angola.

However, internal conflicts that lead to civil wars and other violent disputes of authority did not disappear with the end of the cold war. In certain situations, they were able to

seek an electoral form of conflict, as in Angola. In others they found new expression in latent nationalisms, as in Yugoslavia for example. Thus, while the end of the cold war brought the end of certain internal conflicts, it did not eradicate war as a form of communal political competition. Having acted as an external structure of support for many internal conflicts, as in Angola, the cold war will almost certainly be substituted by other similar structures which will allow conflict to continue. These external structures may be on a different scale than that of the cold war but could be brought into internal conflicts in a similar way to the manner in which international rivalries were drawn into the Angolan civil war.

APPENDIX

EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEWS

Interview with Manuel Santos Lima [MPLA 1961-1963, War Commander]

Lisbon January 14 1991

Manuel Santos Lima was in the Portuguese Army before taking on the task of organizing the training of the first military force of the MPLA in Morocco in 1961. When the MPLA established its head-quarters in Leopoldville, he was its military commander. Manuel Santos Lima left the MPLA in 1963 in the aftermath of the split in the movement between Agostinho Neto and Viriato da Cruz. At the date of the interview, he was leader of MUDAR, a small party that intended to compete electorally in Angola.

Question:

If we could turn to the history of the MPLA as emerging from the manifesto drawn up by Viriato da Cruz in Luanda in December 1956...

Answer:

That manifesto does not exist. The origins of the MPLA, the origins of nationalism are enveloped in a fog, that due the conditions under colonial repression, there was not, in actual fact, the drawing up of the manifesto on which the launching of the political struggle was based. There existed a general dissatisfaction, while a sense of nationalism and a posture of rebellion towards the colonial authorities...this was something we learnt at home, with our parents, at the dinnertable. The injustices were daily, and so bare-faced that we assimilated our parents' sense of revolt. In Luanda, which was always a centre of a number of activities...comercial, literary, political...In Luanda under these circumstances, meetings were held at a number of residences for years, without ever producing a manifesto. Exactly as there is today a denial of the MPLA, of the current government in Angola, so it progressed amid families. Families were dissatisfied, people were dissatisfied...they talked about it, at home, in small groups of extremely trustworthy people, but they did not draw up a manifesto, living under the authority of repressive forces as they were. Under these circumstances, Viriato da Cruz was uncontestably one of the pillars of the MPLA, there were others...Ilidio de Machado, for example, António de Oliveira..Mário António...and many others. People would get together in small groups, exchange thoughts, they would talk...and for example, the attack on the jails on

the dawn of the 4th to the 5th of February [1961], cannot honestly be considered [to have been] a political action decided upon by the MPLA...it was spontaneous. People had had enough, they took up arms, later they would pick up sticks and stones...At this point, for the Angolans that were outside the country, and this is where others, particularly Mário de Andrade came in, it was a question of capitalizing on that revolt...give it a direction, and to try to achieve outside, internationally, the maximum support possible so that the revolt had political credibility. And for it to have political credibility, it was necessary to give it a political programme, a manifesto...what happened was, the MPLA claimed that revolt, that attack on the jails, a spontaneous revolt, which, incidentally, failed totally both strategically, and in terms of political and military assault. Nevertheless, based on that name, Mário de Andrade, who at that time was already based in Paris, exploited this as the first political gesture of Angolan nationalism...but that is not what it was. With a lot more political substance was the action by the FNLA, or UPA at the time, launched on 15 March [1961]...it had a tribal, racialist, regionalist etc. character, but the fact is that they obeyed a general order to unleash their massacres, and this they did. From here on, Angolan nationalism, more specifically, the MPLA, lived through a time of great political activity, always claiming that it had a clandestine presence inside Angola for obvious reasons, but outside the country, it was necessary to give maximum publicity to this nationalism. Mário de Andrade, who had a platform from where to speak (which was Preséncia Africaine in Paris), from here on as much as he can, wrote articles, alerting international public opinion to the situation in Angola, and not only Angola but also in the *Ultramar* [Portuguese overseas territories] generally. So much so that, he had as peers all those that were leaders of the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies. Amílcar Cabral, who had been a year in Lisbon, when Mário de Andrade arrived...Marcelino dos Santos, Pedro Pires, for Guinea [Bissau], and from São Tomé, there was Miguel Trovoada...Because of the necessity of inclusion in the list of liberation movements in the Portuguese territories...and at the foundation, in Rabat, of the Conference of the Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies [Conferencia das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colonias Portuguesas], CONCP, São Tomé was, naturally, represented. Trovoada became a figure of low profile, in the wake of the MPLA, and the MPLA becomes the great engine of the struggle for liberation in the Portuguese colonies. Later, Amílcar Cabral joined the conference, and we all worked together...for example, all the military plans that I would draw up for the MPLA (as I was responsible for the military affairs of the MPLA) would be duplicated, and the second copy would be for Amílcar Cabral...and later I would make three copies, one for Mandela, with whom I worked in Rabat...at that time, more precisely, in

1962, Nelson Mandela wanted to turn to armed action...we worked together because he was versed in the rural guerrilla tactics of the Chinese, but it was important to transit to urban guerrilla warfare, so he turned to us as well as the Algerians in the FLN. So, at this time we were operating in the context of the "corrected" nationalism, of Mário de Andrade, until Agostinho Neto's escape from jail, in which were involved, the English, the Portuguese Communist Party...

Q:

Which English were these?

A:

An English action group. There has always been a mystery surrounding this...the English looked for it...

Q:

Were they from the Labour Party...?

A:

Very possibly. I cannot state it categorically, but it is possible. What is certain is that the English were involved in Neto's escape.

Q:

In 1961, the attack on the jails in Luanda in February, precipitated for the exiles, the formation of a movement that could embody or represent that struggle that Mário de Andrade believed had been begun...

A:

As I see it, when the attack on the jails took place, the exiles had to admit that the people were moving faster than they were. We were intellectuals, students, moving in environments outside the country...and inside the country, people felt the necessity to turn to action. In order not to be left behind, it was necessary to transform that spontaneous movement and give it a voice, and a direction. This is what happened. It [the attack] was not launched as a result of orders...because Mário de Andrade himself hesitated considerably before taking the option of armed struggle. When this was talked about in terms of political speculation, I remember Mário de Andrade until 1960, Mário was very hesitant...because Mário himself was not a person of physical courage. For Mário picking up a weapon was a terrible thing...taking a shot...I'll tell you about an incident: our soldiers were trained by the Algerian FLN according to a programme stipulated by myself...at that time I was the only military element in the MPLA...a soldier, deserter from the Portuguese commandos, and therefore versed in counter-guerrilla techniques, and the Algerians were experienced in guerrilla warfare. The programme proscribed the Popular Army for

the Liberation of Angola [Exército Popular para a Libertação de Angola] EPLA, from which emerged the FAPLA [Forças Armadas Populares para a Libertação de Angola]. The programme was drawn up jointly, taking into account the counter-guerrilla techniques of the Portuguese and the guerrilla techniques of the Algerians and the Chinese. Our soldiers were instructed in these tactics. We were principally near Mellila, in Morocco...and on one occasion, Mário de Andrade, who was Interim President of the MPLA at that time, came to visit, to evaluate the progress made by our first 300 soldiers. And naturally since our movement was dedicated to a path of armed struggle, our young soldiers wanted our president to take some shots at a target. Mário de Andrade refused and I had to [laughs] convince him...so Mário closed his eyes, shot twice, and returned his gun, horrified...this was in 1962. Mário de Andrade was essentially a man of culture, a peaceful man, who abhorred physical violence. Therefore, Mário de Andrade could not...I do not see Mario de Andrade as having conciously subscribed to the armed struggle, saying, for example "let's go to war now", and taking up arms; in fact, neither could Agostinho Neto. If you look at the MPLA propganda pictures of the time, you see Agostinho Neto with a gun across his shoulder, holding it more like a farming implement than a weapon.

Q:

Taking into account the fact that the attack on the jails in 1961 was not a result of an MPLA plan...

A:

That is the way I see it.

Q:

Can it be concluded then, that the MPLA was not implanted in Angola, or, at least, was not operating in Angola at this time?

A:

The MPLA did not operate in Angola as the MPLA. There were a number of dissatisfied people that later accepted the designation of Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola [MPLA]; these people were, after all, well known to each other...and so when the name MPLA first appeared, and the name MPLA first appeared much later, I would say that as a designation, as a name, the MPLA, in fact, only appeared for the first time in 1961, as a response to the attacks on the jails. It was necessary to organize something...thus the MPLA. And later, in the same mould, the Popular Army [EPLA]. The EPLA was formed in 1962.

Q:

Who constituted the MPLA before the Neto presidency in 1962?

A:

Basically Mário de Andrade, brother of Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, and friends and family. This profile of Angolan nationalism is maintained until today. That is, there are about 25 families in Luanda that are involved in all that occurs, good or bad, in that country. For example, the Van Dunem family, that were slaves in the 17th century. Van Dunem came from Holland; the slaves then took the name of the master. In the 18th Century, the Van Dunems were slave traders, and slave masters. In the 19th Century, they were in the civil service, and were guides for the columns of repression in the aftermath of the Berlin Conference [1884-5] to ensure that Portugal kept its colonial territories. And in the 20th Century, the Van Dunems were in the professions during the struggles for liberation. Come independence they were in government. During the coup attempt [May 1977], there were Van Dunems who died on both sides, on the side of the plotters and on the governmental side. And today, they are in the cemeteries, they are in government, at least three in the government, they are in exile, they are in UNITA, in MUDAR [Lima's party in 1991]. Put this family, Van Dunem, and cross them with the Vieira Dias, the Mingas and so on, they end up all being related: cousins, godchildren, uncles, brothers etc. Now, from this point, it is not difficult to understand how an idea that is taken by one Van Dunem, for example, is spread throughout a group, and this group will tend to monopolize that idea...it works as a sort of fiefdom [laughs]. So they are, simultaneously, the 'power' and the 'anti-power' for this reason. José Eduardo dos Santos [Angolan President 1979-] is related to a number of people...it is difficult to determine where family ties end and political alliances begin.

Q:

Where did the Comité Director [Directing Committee], the first leadership of the MPLA, begin its operations?

A:

It began to operate in Morocco, in 1961. At that time, Mário de Andrade passed through Morocco: he was a sort of Foreign Minister. There was Reverend [Domingos da] Silva who was exiled in Leopoldville. Viriato da Cruz was in Guinea (Conakry), with Lúcio Lara. Matias Miguéis was also in Leopoldville, and I was in Rabat. The MPLA left its great supporters in Morocco and moved from Rabat to Conakry, and from there to Leopoldville. This was a victory. Because to open an office in Leopoldville [was important]. The FNLA, UPA, Holden Roberto was rooted in Leopoldville, was linked to the Congolese government, to Kasavuba, apparently he was second secretary to Lumumba. It was his territory and he had always resisted any attempts by other nationalist movements to establish a base in Leopoldville. But from 1961, towards the end of 1961, it was possible to open an office on the Rue Tambour de Tabora, number 52, I believe. We

all went down [to Leopoldville], at that time we were preparing the EPLA. I returned to Morocco to organize that army, and when Agostinho Neto escaped and reached Rabat, he witnessed the swearing in of...the first 300 soldiers of the EPLA. They were uniformed, under a military code of discipline (...during a stop-over at the airport in Tunis of fifteen hours I had a suitcase with 30 kilogrammes of explosives...), and [had a good degree of] weapons usage. Agostinho Neto was astonished. [For him], one thing had been that clandestine activity, between 1956 and 1961, and the spreading of ideas heard here and there, on the BBC, on France International, or an article published here and there, and passed on by word of mouth. Another thing was, however, being at a point of the materialization of the liberation struggle, with offices and the administration of a budget - an organization that was established. And this was all done without Agostinho Neto. Agostinho Neto returned and was floating in the MPLA without knowing exactly what to do. Mário de Andrade was the Interim President. [But] he did not want to be president, he did not like to be president. Mário felt himself to be more inclined towards contacts as a Foreign Minister. Mário de Andrade wanted to leave his presidential role in the movement in order to resume his old job. Viriato da Cruz is secretary-general, and from the very first meeting of the whole Directing Committee, in Congo Leopoldville, with Agostinho Neto already empowered as president. But it immediately became clear to all the Directing Committee that Agostinho Neto was out of his depth. He no longer was master of the situation. A serious problem presented itself to us. We had invested everything to turn Agostinho Neto into a charismatic figure. Because the liberation struggles needed a charismatic leader, martyrs and heroes; we did this also to save Agostinho Neto from possibly being eliminated by the PIDE, but, as it turned out, Agostinho Neto did not meet our expectations. The Algerian FLN had had a number of presidents, and for us also the question was the substitution of Agostinho Neto. Of all the Angolan leaders I have worked with, the one that most impressed me in terms of political leadership was Viriato da Cruz, without a shadow of a doubt he outclassed Agostinho Neto and even Mário de Andrade. Mário de Andrade was not a leader, Mário de Andrade was an intellectual in politics. But Viriato da Cruz was a political animal. And the inevitable occurred. Viriato da Cruz and Agostinho Neto were locked on a collision course--a clash of personalities. This conflict was exacerbated by another factor. Viriato da Cruz was a mestiço, Agostinho Neto was black. One of accusations levelled at the MPLA by Holden Roberto's UPA was that the MPLA was a movement of mestiços. In fact, this same allegation survives to this day and the MPLA is [still] considered [to be] a movement of mestiços. Agostinho Neto had his political ambitions, and never was a democrat, and felt that Viriato da Cruz was his enemy and that he needed to eliminate him. Very much behind the scenes, he began to campaign against

Viriato da Cruz making people believe that the latter was dispensible...Viriato da Cruz, who was a very intelligent man, decided to throw Neto a banana skin. He proposed to distance himself voluntarily from the movement in order that the UPA be unable to use the issue of race against the MPLA. In truth, Viriato da Cruz did not intend this. Viriato da Cruz was one of the great motors behind the MPLA. He had an enormous capacity for work...he was an extraordinary man. He was perfectly aware of what was going on inside the movement in a way that Agostinho Neto was not. The fool that he was, Agostinho Neto accepted Viriato's proposal. Viriato da Cruz then went to live in a room 400 metres from the MPLA headquarters. But Viriato's room turns into the MPLA's second headquarters. Before leaving the MPLA, Viriato da Cruz handed over the MPLA's briefs to a number of young men, among whom was the current president of Angola, José Eduardo dos Santos, but who were unprepared for those tasks. They were youngsters far more preoccupied with playing guitar and being well-dressed than anything else. They spent their time in a bar in front of the MPLA bureau...They led the good life...In fact, Leopoldville was city of good times. People would spend their weekends in the bar, both parents and their children, getting drunk and sleeping in the bar. Consequently they were unable to implement the briefs and a path was beaten to Viriato da Cruz's room, where they would ask: "Does Comrade Viriato know about this...or about that." Somewhat cynically, Viriato da Cruz would see those people, hand out instructions while laughing, [enjoying the fact that the situation was] demonstrating that it was not sufficient that you be black to be in a liberation movement but that you needed ability also. He felt vindicated. At the same time as he handed out instructions he would insinuate that Agostinho Neto was not a leader of sufficient stature for what was required. The conflict became so bitter that the MPLA became split in two, more so once the personality conflict was worsened by the schism in the communist world. There were the pro-Soviets and the pro-Chinese. Viriato da Cruz had been to China, and was interested in China, as is today Gentil Viana, of the Maoist faction of the party. Agostinho Neto, Mário de Andrade and the others were pro-Moscow. They had been in the Portuguese Communist Party, in the MUD Juvenil, which operated in Portugal where Maoism was known but was far away. From that point on, Viriato da Cruz began to move away from the movement. Even more so after the First National Conference in exile confirmed Agostinho Neto's leadership, and rejected, naturally, Viriato da Cruz. We were then presented with a serious dilemma. We knew that with regard to a number of things, Viriato da Cruz was right. But we knew also that the MPLA could only progress with Agostinho Neto, and that it did not have much of a future under Viriato da Cruz. Agostinho Neto was the figure in which everything had been invested. So we decided to continue to support Agostinho Neto. Even more so after a horrible act of Viriato da Cruz which to this day I have

yet to understand why he did this: How could a man of Viriato's calibre, who was an enemy of Holden Roberto, who had requested of me, in my capacity as war commander, the elaboration of plans and scenarios that sought the abduction or the physical elimination of Holden Roberto? How could Viriato da Cruz, out of enmity towards Agostinho Neto, leave the MPLA and join the FNLA? Holden Roberto thought it too good to be true and was suspicious, particularly as he had his own complexes vis-a-vis those in the MPLA whom he considered intellectuals. As both an intellectual and a mestiço, Viriato da Cruz made Roberto feel threatened. Viriato da Cruz's passage through the FNLA was short, so he ended up by sullyng himself unnecessarily. He degraded himself in our opinion.

Q:

What was the influence of Viriato's switch to the FNLA on the African Liberation Committee of the OAU that came to Leopoldville to impel the unification of Angolan nationalists?

A:

They insisted on unity. But this was not achieved. The OAU was divided, and would remain so until 1975. The OAU, and others, including the Algerians believed that it was important for a liberation movement to operate militarily in such a way that would justify its activity and the help that was proffered to it. Now, the MPLA, from 1963 onwards no longer maintained this military activity because its political organ was in crisis. I left in 1963, and without modesty, the EPLA was the MPLA organ that was best organized, both EPLA and CVAAR Corpo de Voluntários de Auxílio e Assistencia aos Refugiados [Volunteer Corps for Aid and Assistance to Refugees], of Américo Boavida. The MPLA entered a period of crisis, and immediately the FNLA took advantage of this. It appealed to the Congolese authorities for the expulsion of the MPLA from Congolese territory. They approached the Algerians who supported the MPLA and the former began to hesitate. The MPLA entered a crisis from which it does not recover until 1968. During that period between 1963 and 1968, many strange things occurred. Even Lúcio Lara was preparing himself to abandon the MPLA. He ran from the MPLA to Accra, on his way to Germany, before Hugo de Meneses (a São Tomense who was with us and had always lived in Angola) forced him to turn back, threatening to denounce him. Luís de Almeida also cut links with the MPLA. In fact a number of people left the MPLA at that time. Mário de Andrade also left at the same time as I did. In 1963 he drew away from politics, disappointed etc., but he returned later.

Q:

What happened to the EPLA during this period?

A:

Who took command of EPLA was Mendes de Carvalho, the EPLA man with most qualifications after myself--he had the 5th year of secondary school [about equivalent to 'O' Levels]. The remainder, 95 per cent of EPLA, did not even have the 'Quarta Classe' [end of primary school]. To study in Angola at that time was an enormous economic strain. Normally, blacks did not have the opportunities to do so. Where I came from, Vila Teixeira de Sousa, known today as Luau, I still remain, after 55 years, the only one with university qualifications. EPLA kept on going, under Mendes de Carvalho and then Iko Carreira. The MPLA needed to execute military actions. There was no money, however. We had many difficulties with African countries that would not help. Oh yes, they would promise us, with grand speeches extolling us in English as "freedom fighters"; the french-speakers would cry "mon frère la liberté!" etc. blah blah blah, but they were poor countries and remain so today. Morocco would help us, not so much with money, but with passports, houses etc. Holden exploited this and when the OAU committee came [to Leopoldville], he had the support of the Congolese, who had only accepted the presence of the MPLA in Leopoldville under pressure, because we threatened to denounce them publically if they did not give us the same facilities that they had given UPA. So when [the ALC] arrived, in the meantime the FNLA had mounted a series of actions. The FNLA soldiers had been trained in Tunisia. If the MPLA sent 50 lads for training, the FNLA would send 60 or 70, in order to be able to say that they had sent more. The conflict sets in between the two movements and culminates in the fratricidal war [of 1975-6]. It is the FNLA that initiated the fratricidal war, that led to the first Angolan civil war. The FNLA exploited the fact that the MPLA was clearly in crisis before the OAU committee, which leaned towards the FNLA, towards recognizing the FNLA as the sole legitimate movement representative of the Angolan people fighting against Portuguese colonialism--which was not true.

Q:

Is it possible that Viriato da Cruz might have predicted that the FNLA would be favoured by the OAU and consequently might have become the strongest if not sole Angolan nationalist movement, and thus making a switch a logical move despite the fact that he did not have political affinities with either Roberto or the FNLA?

A:

In my opinion, the single and strongest reason for Viriato's switch was revenge. We in the MPLA were all agreed that it was necessary to unite [with the FNLA]. The Algerians had always told us: achieve unity, either through peaceful means, or otherwise. This was their own experience. All the movements opposed to French colonialism in Algeria, including the Algerian

Communist Party had been smashed by the FLN. The FLN was the only representative of the armed struggle. Throughout 1962, the pressure was in favour of unity between the MPLA and the FNLA. Viriato switched out of revenge. He knew that it was not easy to create a united front. Holden Roberto had his political ambitions - he wanted to be president of Angola in the Congolese manner - and then Agostinho Neto came along, and he too wanted to be president. There was an inflation with regard to presidential candidates. I do not think that Viriato had political reasons for sacrificing himself. He returned to Peking and he died embittered, ostracized even from the Chinese. With Viriato out of the way, it became necessary for the MPLA to take military action. They requested that Mendes de Carvalho prepare a military action against Portuguese troops, to once again bring attention to the MPLA, to the fact that it continued to fight. I remember the Cubans. They said: take some men out to the bush, simulate combat, shoot away and take pictures. Publish them in Prensa Latina...everyone will believe you are in action. But we said: you cannot do this, this is a lie...we will mount a real attack. To me, a dilemma presented itself: I could have carried out a coup, and I had at my disposal all the means to do so; those soldiers followed me. I could have neutralized the whole structure of authority in the MPLA, and imposed whomever I wished. But, as a democrat, I placed this out of the question. And I retired from the scene. I presented my resignation to Agostinho Neto, who accepted it without even blinking, as this made him even stronger. After this, came the threat from Chipenda (the Eastern Revolt) who is said to have had 3,000 men, but I do not believe this, certainly not 3,000 of the same calibre as those original 300 trained by myself. This was followed by the political challenge, the Active Revolt. The MPLA always existed in this manner, in the middle of crises, almost cyclical crises.

Q:

Agostinho Neto always survived these crises. How did he do this?

A:

It is true. He always survived. He was the president. He never accepted differences of opinion. The MPLA accepted this. He was the charismatic figure, known internationally: the great poet, the great leader. To defeat Holden he resorted to a dirty manoeuvre which was the establishment of a front that only existed on paper, the FDLA (Frente Democrática de Libertação de Angola). It was established in Leopoldville in 1963, during which I was only present at one meeting, between the MPLA and the representatives of those very vulgar, reactionary movements, Ngwisako, Nto-bako, FLEC, and others who at the time were with the PIDE. It was said to be important in order to galvanize Angolan nationalism, especially since attempts at unity with the

FNLA had failed, and thus present ourselves as a front. But they were such vulgar movements that I refused to continue to have anything to do with it. This front did not survive. It was so unequal, such an intellectual difference. But Agostinho Neto said it was necessary to defeat Holden Roberto. To me, one of the victims was Mendes de Carvalho, whom they ordered to attack Portuguese barracks. Of course, most never returned, including Mendes de Carvalho himself. They made him a hero. Another victim was Deolinda Rodrigues, president of the Angolan Women's Organisation (Organização das Mulheres de Angola) that at that time existed in an embryonic phase. But Deolinda was considered a splitter, linked to Viriato da Cruz. Matias Miguéis, Graça Tavares, José Miguel all linked to Viriato da Cruz. These were considered enemies of the MPLA. Agostinho Neto pretended to forget or forgive Deolinda's association with this faction and sent her on a mission to the interior of Angola, with two other girls. They had to cross the FNLA's zone. The FNLA killed them. They were raped, tortured and killed. The same thing happened to the first EPLA unit when entering Nambuagongo, where they were attacked by the FNLA. Between 1963 and 25 April 1974, the FNLA's mission became almost exclusively the obstruction of the MPLA in its quest to reach Luanda, its natural power base.

Q:

What military operations did EPLA carry out under your command?

A:

First it was imperative to test those soldiers. An awful thing occurred. They were operational as of 1962: they had been trained and were ready for action. They went to Leopoldville...but there were no weapons! We had no guns. This despite the fact that Bulgaria had sent us, I'm not sure if 50 or 60 tonnes of weapons, that had been held up at the docks, in a warehouse in Casablanca, but we had no money to recover these weapons. I had to convince the Moroccan authorities to deliver us the weapons without paying the 15 million dinars that was owed to customs. We finally managed to do this. We packed them with tins of milk and when they arrived at Pointe Noire [Congo-Brazzaville], one of the crates fell on the ground and the weapons were confiscated.¹ So we were almost a year without

1. Later, Manuel dos Santos Lima, gave an explanation of this incident: "Moroccan aid for us was kept absolutely secret. We acted very closely with General Katani, a Moroccan general of great status. General Katani had us under his protection because according to the co-operation accords between France and Morocco, we could have been controlled by the French secret services. So, General Katani would give us strict orders which we would follow rigorously. When we arrived in Casablanca, we would wait inconspicuously for an army truck to pick us up. We

seeing any military action. So we wanted to test the capacity of our army, that had softened in the meantime in and out of bars in Leopoldville, leading that awful, easy life, it was in fact very difficult to keep it going. We had a clandestine base, underground with weapons, which we would buy from the Congolese. So we executed our first military action in Cabinda. In Cabinda we dug the first MPLA arms cache. It was there that we had our first clash with the Portuguese. We had been preparing support bases when we were betrayed by one of those scoundrels you find everywhere, who are prepared to sell themselves cheaply. He revealed that there were strangers in the area. The Portuguese came and we ended up fighting them..this was in 1963. This was one of our military actions. We lost one, and purely by chance, a lost bullet. The other operations we executed in Cuando Cubango, small actions, some shooting. During a third operation, we were caught by the Congolese. They attacked us thinking we were part of the Jeunesse Lumumbiste. They wanted to hand us over to the Portuguese. This type of trading was common. The Congolese customs authorities would go over the border to Angola and buy everything they wanted merely by signing a bill (which the traders would later cash in with the PIDE) in exchange for which the Congolese would report to the traders all the movements of people in the area. Sometimes they would hand over maybe 60 people. We also believed they wanted to eat us. Oh, yes. And don't have any doubts! The women danced around us, shouting 'kill them...kill them!'...'the jindungo, the piri-piri is ready'. No doubt about it. In fact, a UN aeroplane had fallen somewhere, a few months earlier, and when the rescue services arrived, they only found the remains of the aeroplane. Not a person in sight. And it had not been animals who had been eating. However the military operations did not continue once the MPLA's internal crisis had broken out. I then left. No one took over until 1968, when Mendes de Carvalho, under the influence of [Lúcio] Lara (a sinister man!) managed [to take control].

Q:

The MPLA's hurried exit from Leopoldville was such that the movement came close to oblivion...

A:

Oh yes. Already in 1963, exploiting the [MPLA's] crisis, the

would only travel by night. This was in 1961-62. In 1972, I was already in Canada, when the Lockheed scandal broke out, and what was my surprise when General Katani was held to be a CIA agent [laughs]. The CIA always knew what we were doing. We never suspected General Katani. So the CIA and the French secret services knew what we were up to. The crate of guns that fell on the ground in Pointe Noire was no accident [laughs].

FNLA created the GRAE, the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile, that was recognized by the Congo and a number of other countries...Including Algeria...Yes. From that point, the MPLA lost all political legitimacy, and so everyone put their money on GRAE. They were the more dynamic ones, in truth the ones that on the ground, delivered. So, for this reason, the MPLA went to Brazzaville, and then to Mayonde, Pointe Noire and there it stayed. It continued to exist but it was not a great movement. From a certain point until the 25 April [1974], the MPLA remained in this way. Both the MPLA and the FNLA were completely shaken, and on the ground. In my opinion, Portugal lost the colonial war in Guinea [Bissau], and fearing that this would spread to Angola and Mozambique, the coup d'etat [in Portugal] was executed and the situation was altered. But there were a few strange things in the Angolan process: I believe it was the only example of the colonial power that had been victorious on the ground inviting the belligerent movements to unite in order to be given independence. It is also the only case I know where brothers of the same creed, the Marxists, the Soviets and the Chinese end up forging alliances against their natures: the Chinese allied themselves to the Americans against the Soviets. Also during that war in Angola there were mercenaries: white, black and yellow...there were some strange things in that Angola [laughs]. And of course, UNITA, the creation of the Portuguese authorities as a counterbalance to the pro-American FNLA (the American Committee on Africa) and the pro-Soviet MPLA. And so a Portuguese facet was needed, and Costa Gomes who was in fact behind the birth of UNITA...it is not an alternative, nor was, or is Savimbi a democrat.

Q:

Tell me about links with communist powers and organizations. More specifically, when were the first contacts between the MPLA and Moscow?

A:

The first contacts were held in 1960. In 1960, Mário de Andrade went to a conference in Taskent [elsewhere, date of conference has been given as 1958].² From 1960, the axis of the liberation struggle in Africa ran between Rabat, Cairo, Accra and Conakry. These four countries competed for the primacy of the support for the liberation struggles in Angola and the Portuguese colonies. Firstly, with the charismatic Nkrumah in Accra. Then Nasser called us, promised us help and placed machine guns at our disposal, this in order to move this influence from Accra to Cairo. Then Hassan II also decided that Morocco could not be left behind, and called us to Rabat. Then came Sekou Touré, who believed that Guinea, as a country in black Africa should take

2. M A Samuels 'The Nationalist Parties' [1969], p.391.

the leadership, and he too called us. And behind all these progressive leaders and governments, except perhaps Morocco (which had a bad domestic policy, compensated by a good foreign policy), there was always Moscow. Because during the cold war, the Soviets exploited everything that could pester the United States and the West. Although we were not totally convinced, because the Americans were much more efficient in their aid to the FNLA. The American was much more practical: 'on such a day at such a time', and he would show up. The Soviet, with all his bureaucracy...as an example, the daughter of Amilcar Cabral had to wait two years before going to Moscow [to study]. It was at the Tashkent conference that Mário de Andrade judged that a military situation was approaching etc., and began to prepare,... once the Portuguese government had refused all dialogue, for armed struggle. On what we could count on, if they were prepared to support us...this was a constant. But then, the aid that is given to us by the Soviets is the formation of politico-military cadres in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, these two countries above all. Some went to study there, and China also offered places to a certain number. The Soviets had very good relations with the leaders of the movements of the ex-Portuguese colonies. They showed themselves to be very willing to help. At the time of the [Sino-Soviet] split, they demanded a greater commitment to the protectors and a greater degree of hostility to the Chinese. Around 1962, all the Left in Africa took their positions, aligning themselves with one or the other. But the Soviets got the better of it, because, although they were bureaucratic, they had had a longer coexistence. The Chinese were quite distant. After all China was Mao Tse Tung. After reading the book they were impenetrable...Somebody told me once about some fellows who were being trained in China, who ate badly and had poor facilities...and one day, one of them poured forth his frustrations on the wall of the urinal. The Chinese copied the phrase and went half way around the world asking for the exact translation of the graffito [laughs].

Q:

Did Neto have a special relationship with Moscow, relative to other figures in the MPLA?

A:

No. Mário de Andrade was the great architect of all the policies and all the contacts of the MPLA. Out of loyalty he never wanted to show himself as superior to Neto, the president. As far as I know, Mário de Andrade was extremely loyal to Neto, and it was Neto who stabbed him in the back. But not Mário. Mário prepared everything for Agostinho Neto. After Mário de Andrade had left the MPLA, Agostinho Neto was alone in power, and he did not accept the sharing of that power.

...Neto ruled the MPLA as a chief of his own domain. When the Soviets decided to help [in 1975], they turned to the Cubans in

order to cut a low profile. The FNLA turned to Congolese [Zaireans], that are black. If they did not open their mouths nobody would know if they were Angolans or not, and the Cubans also brought blacks, a majority of blacks in its army, to pass unnoticed. There were few whites, East German advisors, Soviets. Whites were few and not very visible.

Q:

It has been suggested that on a number of occasions (from the first crisis with Viriato da Cruz in 1963, through the 'Revoltas' of 1973-4 to the Nito Alves attempted coup in 1977) the Soviet Union considered loosening its ties with Neto, or actually did so, in an attempt to flush out a more amenable leader to them in the MPLA. Do you think this was so?

A:

I am convinced that it was not difficult to see that Neto was not...he was not a patient man, [he was] incapable of taking big decisions, he was apathetic. So much so that out of the three...Holden Roberto, a sinister man behind dark glasses, Neto, humourless, and Savimbi, a cheat, Savimbi came out on top. I think the Soviets when comparing the performance of Amilcar Cabral and the PAIGC with that of Neto in Angola, came to doubt Neto, to doubt that he was a worthwhile horse to back...but they had no other option. When Chipenda appeared during the Eastern Revolt, he also did not have the weight...he appeared as a plotter.

...With regard to 1977, I have heard contradictory versions, that the Soviets at first supported Nito, only to drop him at the last minute. In another version, its origins quite serious, eyewitnesses hold that the Soviet Union, at a crucial point when South Africa was a few days away and the FNLA and Roberto were a few kilometres from Luanda, Neto had an aeroplane ready to escape, and that it was only at this point that the Soviet Union rendered assistance on a large scale. Why? It is held that that was when the Soviet Union obtained greater guarantees [from Neto]...even during my time with him, while he was pro-Soviet, he did not demonstrate a wild enthusiasm for...he was more of a Marxist due to personal convictions than to subordination to the Soviet Union. One of his sayings used to be: "we must not sell ourselves to the United States, nor spread our legs for the Soviet Union." The aid that they provided in 1975 was in bad faith: apparently only one in five machine gun chambers was useful. So Agostinho Neto multiplied his desperate appeals for help from the Soviet Union. And when they [the anti-MPLA coalition] had reached a point 20 kilometres from Luanda, the Soviets dictated their conditions. Agostinho Neto accepted them all unconditionally...

Q:

What were these conditions?

A:

Political conditions referring to the future of Angola. They would help but Angola had to identify itself clearly as Marxist-Leninist. It seems that it was under these dramatic circumstances that there was the Soviet airlift, and on the eve of 11 November 1975, while the Portuguese were withdrawing, the Soviet ships were coming in to unload material...It seems that this was how it happened.

Interviews with João Van Dunem [Press Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces of the MPLA (FAPLA) 1975]

London October 3 1990 and April 15 1991

João Van Dunem was active in the MPLA in Luanda, and in 1975 worked in the Press Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the MPLA's army, FAPLA. In October 1975, João Van Dunem left Angola for Cuba. At the time of the following interviews, he was a journalist in the UK considering a return to Angola. His brother, José Van Dunem was the Political commissar of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during 1975 and was close to Nito Alves. After the failure of their attempted coup on 27 May 1977, José Van Dunem, Nito Alves and many others were shot.

Question:

When did the Soviet Union begin to support the MPLA?

Answer:

The Soviet Union began to support the MPLA through the PCP. The MPLA was formed, as I have told you before, at the end of 1962, or the beginning of 1963 in Accra, by a group of people that managed to stay out of gaol. This group included Mário Pinto de Andrade, Lúcio Lara, Eduardo dos Santos (Agostinho Neto's doctor), Hugo de Menezes, these were at the core. Manuel Santos Lima, was at the periphery of this group, for he was an individual of military formation, he had been an officer in the Portuguese Army, the Rangers, from which he was a deserter. He founded the EPLA. Well, as I was talking of the links between the Soviet Union and the MPLA. These links were not established with the MPLA as such, but with the Angolan Communist Party (PCA). Why was this? Soviet theory at the time stipulated that a workers' party in Europe should be linked to a liberation movement in the colonies. One front: the same struggle, to form a front against imperialism. This was the policy of the Third or Fourth International. In Angola, a group of people linked to the

PCP joined what may be called an Angolan intelligentsia and formed the PCA: The PCA was a party that was basically formed by four or five people: among them Humberto Machado, his brother Ilidio Machado, who was considered to be a founder of the MPLA, but Ilidio himself told me that he was not a founder of the MPLA, because the MPLA had been formed abroad.

Q:

And when was the PCA formed?

A:

The PCA was founded in 1954. But because of the Cold War, the PCA believed that it should adapt...its support should be made up of Angolans from all social groups to fight against Portuguese colonialism. And that it should not be known as a communist party because in fact, at the time, the bourgeoisie, low, middle and even high Angolan bourgeoisie...or semi-bourgeoisie...was naturally anti-communist. As a principle, communism implied the end of private property..the end of certain privileges that the bourgeoisie had and that the bourgeoisie wanted to hold and maintain...is that not so? And so they knew, that as communists, they would be driving away from their base of support sections of the Angolan bourgeoisie and semi-bourgeoisie. For tactical reasons, they created PLUA, the Party for the United Struggle of the Africans of Angola (Partido de Luta Unida dos Africanos de Angola), in 1956. But as well as PLUA, other small organizations were formed: MINA, Movement for the National Independence of Angola (Movimento para a Independencia Nacional de Angola). And then there was an association in the south of Angola. The core of this association were people linked to the PCP: Sócrates de...Julieta Gândara...people linked to the PCP, people linked to Angelo Veloso, who is today an important figure in the PCP. Mária da Luz Veloso, who was Angelo Veloso's wife...who were at that time in Angola, and who were linked to that group of people. There were a number of separate groups, each one of which claimed to be the leadership of, and to represent the aspirations of Angolans.

Q:

Was there an interaction between this political activity in Angola and students in Portugal?

A:

Yes there was. In Portugal there was something called the Home for Students from the Empire (Casa dos Estudantes do Imperio), and then there were the Angolan sailors [merchant navy], at the head of whom was an uncle of mine, Mário Van Dunem: he was a sailor, my uncle, my parents' brother, the so-called 'black sheep' of the family.

Q:

Were the sailors a transmission cable between Luanda and Lisbon?

A:

Yes they were...Agostinho did in fact have a place among the sailors, not surprisingly if only due to his social origins. Agostinho Neto was not part of the so-called Angolan aristocracy: he was a son of a Protestant clergyman. I am not sure if you are aware of this but a black Protestant pastor at that time was a person without status. Agostinho Neto connected with Angolan sailors, but also formed a bridge between the sailors and the students, with whom he was friendly. The axis was, therefore: Mário Pinto de Andrade (students), Agostinho Neto (sailors), Ilidio Machado and Viriato da Cruz (in Angola).

Q:

Had the PCP played a part in creating an Angolan Committee of the PCP in Angola before the PCA?

A:

It had. At that time, the communist parties defended the thesis that sections of the metropolitan party should be established in the colonies to fight against the colonial regimes. But this was a temporary state of affairs. The Angolans, namely Ilidio Machado, Américo Machado, brother of Ilidio (the latter being in fact the thinker in the PCA), who did not subordinate themselves to the PCP. There was also at this time, a Soviet in Angola, who did form a link between the CPSU and the Angolan communists...There was in fact a Soviet, somebody who was seen negatively, by the Angolan communists at the time, as being a KGB agent, but also seen positively, on the other hand, as a saviour from Portuguese colonialism.

Q:

What was the substance of the links between the PCP and the PCA? Was it solely an ideological dialogue, or was there something else? Was there, for example, a co-ordination of strategy in terms of obtaining funds from Moscow?

A:

No there was not. Initially, activity centred around the theoretical formation of the Angolan communists. At the start, this was the PCP's major concern. But there was not an exchange at that level, at the logistical level. There was only the supply of books which might provide the Angolans with the necessary theoretical tools to become communists. There was little more than this.

Q:

If I could just return to the issue of the MPLA leaders in

Portugal...Particularly their role in the MUD Juvenil?

A:

The MUD Juvenil [Movimento de Unidade Democratica (Movement of Democratic Union-Youth)] was a sort of front for the PCP, its electoral movement. Neto and Lúcio Lara were both members of MUD Juvenil. Why was this? Because being in Portugal at the time, they believed that by helping the communist struggle, the class struggle, in Portugal they would be helping in some way to advance the liberation struggle in the colonies. And so they joined the MUD Juvenil. They were in fact quite active in the MUD juvenil. Neto was arrested for distributing pamphlets.

Q:

With regard to the foundation of the MPLA, the generally accepted version is that despite divergences on the role and dating of its communist precursor, the PCA, the MPLA in itself is founded in Luanda in December of 1956. Present at this launch was Amilcar Cabral.

A:

I can tell you the following. Amilcar Cabral had been in Angola. Amilcar Cabral was a member of the PCA. [But] Amilcar Cabral's links with Neto were in the 1960s. Not during the 1950s. During the 1950s, Amilcar Cabral's great friend was Viriato da Cruz. He was Amilcar Cabral's great teacher. He was everybody's great teacher. At the age of 18, that man drew up the Angolan Communist Party's manifesto, under the aegis of Humberto Machado...They believed, according to the thesis of the Communist International, that there should be unity among the movements fighting colonialism...that the peoples of the so-called colonies should unite...and it was in Conakry in Guinea that they had the environment to act...because until 1962, the MPLA had not been formed...

Q:

The MPLA did not exist in name before 1962?

A:

The only thing that had existed was a document of the Angolan Communist Party, which then became the Party for the United Struggle of the Africans of Angola [PLUA]; a manifesto, which stated that 'the Angolans should unite in a broad movement for the popular liberation of Angola'. The 4th of February took place, undertaken by a group of people which were in fact workers, humble people, but also undertaken with the consent of others who were aware that the presence of the liner **Santa Maria** and the [anti-Salazarist] campaign of Henrique Galvão and Humberto Delgado, would result in bringing the world's attention to the Angolan problem. They asked Canon Manuel das Neves, a

tutelary figure at the time, if they should act to free the prisoners of the `trial of the 50'.

Q:

Was Viriato da Cruz not involved at this time? Or Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, Mário de Andrade, or Agostinho Neto?

A:

At the time all of these were either in prison or outside the country. In Luanda there was only Canon Manuel das Neves. When people are repressed they search for release in church...and Father Manuel das Neves was believed in because he was a figure of unity, who called people's attention to the exact moment, who appealed for common sense. People went to him and he listened. The PIDE in Luanda had made arrests because of the distribution of pamphlets that referred to the necessity of challenging Portuguese colonialism. At the time, it was Ilidio de Machado and others who had delivered, through PLUA, documents to the Portuguese government in Angola calling for the independence of Angola, calling for the discussion of Angola's autonomy in Portugal. But this had been rejected. The Intelligence Police (a precursor of PIDE), which was aware of the movements of the nationalists, arrested a number of people.

...PLUA was animated by a musical group called Ngola Ritmos, which threw parties, at the head of which was, Liceu Vieira Dias (an `historic' figure!), and played music for the Angolans. The Civil government and the Police decided that Ngola Ritmos was subversive and began to censor their material and performances. So the Ngola Ritmos had to sing their songs for the police agents before their live performances. But the agents in Luanda did not have the intellectual capacity to decipher the deeper meaning of meaningless phrases such as, I remember from one song: "Eat, and don't ask what you're eating". So they did have a good time with the police, and they played very well. They would sing songs in Kimbundu, and also Portuguese songs, which would entertain the police agents.

...People were organized in two or three groups, without unity. They believed that to fight against Portuguese colonialism all that was needed was a conspiracy on the part of intellectuals. They believed that all people needed to do was to get together in somebody's house one day, and the next day, colonialism would collapse. When in 1959 the arrests began, it became clear that this would not be the case. In 1961, after two years of imprisonment, a sense of revolt and frustration set in. The imprisonments touched everybody, the cream of the Angolans. So, in 1961, the remaining people, believing that the Santa Maria was coming, ask Canon Manuel what to do. And he replied that it was necessary to do something: grab spades, pickaxes, blades and do something to coincide with the arrival of the Santa Maria in Angola. And they attacked the prison. The attack was decimated. Those who attacked, Sottomaior, Paiva Domingos da Silva,

Imperial Santana and others, were people linked to the nursing profession, they worked in the musseques [slums] in Luanda, looked on with respect. And during the attack (and for you to have a clearer idea of the fact that nothing [of the MPLA] existed at that time), [although] PLUA and MINA were known to some intellectuals, the battle cry was: `UPA...UPA!!". The major reference for those who attacked the prisons of Luanda on the 4th of February was the UPA.

Q:

So those who led the attacks were not linked to any of the Luandan groups, such as PLUA or MINA, or the PCA, or the nucleus that would become the MPLA?

A:

Yes. But for reasons of clandestinity, groups tended to not refer to their acronyms. That is why PLUA and MINA were not known. UPA, on the other hand, was outside the country and could be referred to. Those people who participated in the attacks were people of humble origins, from the musseques, having themselves had no contact with the Angolan bourgeoisie, apart from through the nurses. They did not know anything but the UPA.

Q:

What was the relative importance of Angola's ethnic makeup on the emergence of the national movements?

A:

The UPA, as you know, certainly comes from UPNA, the association of the peoples of northern Angola: the Xikongo, the Bakongo. The Congress of Berlin did not recognize the ethnic makeup of the colonies that were divided between the European powers. The UPA's idea was in part the dream of re-establishing the ancient kingdom of the Kongo. The MPLA, and PLUA etc., were groups of intellectuals, and there were only intellectuals in the `feitorias',³ of Luanda and Benguela. And who were those from Benguela? People that have family ties in Luanda. Some are of Ovimbundu origin, but with a great influence of Kimbundu, with great family ties with people from Luanda. So PLUA and MINA were groups of intellectuals who conceived of the independence of Angola, and adhered to a principle of territorial integrity, but who, in fact, did not represent other Angolan ethno-linguistic groups. You do not see in the formation of PLUA or MINA, the presence of people of Ganguela origin or Lunda-Chokwe. They were considered to be backward. You should not say this but they were not considered able to grasp the intellectual nettle of liberation. They did not have, incidently, spokesmen. Apart from, Godfrey, who was Ovambo, and was linked to PLUA, and

3. Colonial commercial zones.

Ilidio de Machado, PCA etc.

Q:

What was the reaction of the 'exiles' to the attacks on the Fourth of February?

A:

Mário de Andrade...at the time president of the MPLA, in fact he was the MPLA: He and Lúcio Lara were two Angolans that advocated the creation of a broad liberation movement, which did not yet exist but which they wanted to create...Mário de Andrade claimed the attack for the MPLA, and showed his face, in the name of the MPLA, in the name of the attack. This he admitted in a number of interviews. Mário de Andrade was linked at the time to Presence Africaine, a much more moderate publication than say The Spark, and claimed the attack in the name of the MPLA.

Q:

It is claimed that Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, imprisoned at the time, was the MPLA's honorary president from the late 1950s onwards.

A:

This was not the case. Joaquim Pinto de Andrade was only honorary president from 1964. At the time, it was Ilidio de Machado. The MPLA did not exist. But from the moment that Mário de Andrade appeared in the press claiming the 4th of February for the 'Angolans united in a broad liberation movement'...Mário Pinto de Andrade, Viriato da Cruz, Lucio Lara, Meneses, Eduardo Santos, all asked themselves how they were going to react, how they were going to present themselves. So they decided on the acronym that was derived from the manifesto of the PLUA and the PCA, but there was no movement before that. So, in fact, the MPLA was derived from something in 1956, but that something was just a call for action. There was no movement as such until after the February 4th attack in 1961. In that year, Mário de Andrade appeared as the external relations of a movement which is at that time formed by necessity. It was important later to locate the origins of the MPLA inside the country, in Luanda, and earlier in 1956. But in fact, in 1956 there was no MPLA in Luanda. There was political activity from PLUA and MINA, and a rebel section of the Portuguese Communists in Angola, in Huambo, the Socialist Organization (Organização Socialista do Huambo). Ilidio Machado told me that should the origins of the MPLA ever be investigated it was important to focus the influence of the socialists of Huambo, he said: they meant a lot to us. In ideological terms, providing literature. A white Angolan visiting Portugal would be able to bring back books, as they were not searched: the PCP manifesto, Marx's Capital, the works of Mao Tse Tung. This went on well into the 1970s. We would pass the books on to each other. Whites would be able to do this

because the PIDE's conception of the anti-colonial war was that it was a black's struggle, so a white could pass much more easily. Ilundino Vieira, Antonio Jacinto etc. were considered black sheep, but the rest of the white population were considered pro-colonial. But there were many whites involved in the whole thing.

Q:

In an interview given in 1962, Mário de Andrade contradicts the stated origins of PLUA in 1956 by claiming this movement had existed since 1953. Is this an attempt to hide the roots of the MPLA in the Angolan Communist Party?

A:

Mário de Andrade was not a founder of PLUA. Mário was a young activist in the PCA. In the PCA at that time were, Ilidio Machado, Humberto Machado, Amilcar Cabral...who was working in Angola at the time as an agronomist. They would say: 'Amilcar is a fine fellow, an extraordinary person. But there is one thing, he is a communist'; my father and others would say this, people who due to class origins were fervent anti-communists...Mário was just a young man at the time. Mário was more of an MPLA man, which he founded, than a PLUA man, which he did not, and of the PCA, where he was only marginally. People recognized he was bright and promising, but he was not even militant. Mário's prestige emerged in Lisbon, at the Casa dos Estudantes do Imperio. And he wrote very well. But he was just a boy compared to the veteran Machado brothers. From February on, Mário de Andrade and Viriato da Cruz were organizing the MPLA. Viriato was the great organizer, and was secretary-general. Mário was the spokesman, and became president of the movement that was, only then, coming together, without any troops. They began to form their first cadres in Accra in 1962, to where they moved. They do not come from Conakry. The first group of fighters was formed by three ex-servicemen of the Portuguese Army. Manuel Santos Lima, Africano Neto and Zeca Ferreira. The movement then moved to Leopoldville, I'm not sure exactly when, but I believe in December 1962. Manuel Lima went to Accra in 1962, then moved to Leopoldville. By then Neto was out of prison. He went to Accra and he replaced Ilidio de Machado as honorary president, because he was a much-talked-about figure, and because of his links to the PCP. It was the PCP that helped Neto escape prison, and he came to Accra. Here he oversaw a military parade of about 200 MPLA fighters led by Manuel Lima. Neto saw that they were more organized than he had thought. They established contact with Leopoldville, where they had sympathizers, and decided to move there. Neto's image was launched internationally by the PCP, as a poet and doctor, making him very popular. So he came to the front of the movement. Viriato da Cruz's handicap was that he was a mulato, and Neto was black. At the first conference of the MPLA, held in the Congo-

Leopoldville in December 1962, there was Neto, coming from the PCP, and MUD juvenil, and here there was, for the first time the expression of the Sino-Soviet conflict in the movement. On the one side, there were those, like Neto, who supported Moscow claiming that China did not have the capacity. On the other, there was Viriato, who claimed that the Soviets did not understand any part of their struggle, and that only the Chinese understood, because the Angolan struggle was similar to that of the Chinese struggle. This divergence paralleled the internal struggle caused by the honorary president's (Neto) wish to occupy the leading role in the MPLA, and this wish being challenged by the secretary-general (Viriato). But Mário de Andrade, wanting to stay out of what became a personal fight, made way for Neto.

Q:

So it was Neto who brought the Moscow link to the MPLA?

A:

Yes. Neto, the PCP and MUD Juvenil. From that point, the MPLA takes a pro-Soviet line. Our links are with Moscow. China moved to UPA. The great difference between the MPLA and UPA was based on the latter's limitations in representing the north of Angola. And despite dropping that designation from their title they remained fighting solely in the north. The MPLA wanted to include all of Angola. At that time, the UPA was already supported by the United States, through the CIA. Incidentally, Ghana, at the time, had strong links with the US. Many students who left Portugal in the 1960s: John Kakumba, Augusto Bastos. They got to Accra, where they were taken, kidnapped to the US to study. Augusto Bastos, my cousin, was Roberto's personal secretary for years. He, like other Angolan students, went to Accra, considered the leading light of the African revolution, and there made contact with the US ambassador, and was given a scholarship to study in America. The Americans then imposed Bastos on Roberto as a personal assistant.

Q:

It has been said that had the Alvor accords been maintained and elections held in 1975, UNITA would have won by virtue of its large ethnic support.

A:

This would not have been the case. It is not enough to win that you have a large ethnic pool of support. You also need to be organized. And those who were organized in the interior of the country were not even the MPLA. They were people who defended and associated themselves with the MPLA (Neto) but were not a product of this organization. And who were organized from the north and the south. The victory of the MPLA came as a result of numerous groups throughout the country who claimed to be of the

MPLA. Groups which had conducted a resistance and then joined the MPLA, not knowing many times who was who in the MPLA. UNITA was handicapped by the fact that people believed it had acted with the Portuguese, as a buffer against the MPLA. There are documents provided by sources close to the Portuguese administration that testify to this collaboration. From Correia Jesuino to Rosa Coutinho. You win the war in Luanda and you win the war in the rest of the country. There was a fear at the time, that Zaire would move in the north of Angola, to recover the so-called Kongo kingdom.

...Relations between the MPLA and Cuba were not brilliant. Che Guevara, when he visited Angola had made severe criticisms of the MPLA. He asked, how can you consider yourselves to be a liberation movement, if your largest base is in Brazzaville, and not inside your country? He criticized Neto severely. Neto went to Cuba, and Fidel Castro handed him a Makarov pistol and told him to dismantle the weapon. Neto did not know how to do it. Who did dismantle it in the end was Hoji ia Henda, a symbolic hero for Angolan youth today. He dismantled and reassembled the pistol. And Castro said: "I'm glad I've seen this. The leader of the MPLA should not be you but him, who is a great guerrilla leader who can assemble that pistol. How can you expect to be a military leader." And Neto left Havana, furious with Fidel Castro from whom he had come to request support. This was in 1965. When Guevara was in Angola in 1966 he tried to deal with the MPLA on the basis of: "we know what we are doing." But Neto, a stubborn man, resisted and claimed: "no, you know nothing, we know because we are Angolan." And Guevara would criticize asking: "what type of movement did not have a base inside the country? Why don't you go into your country and fight from there? Sierra Maestra is inside Cuba, we were surrounded by sea, and yet we fought. You have this massive border, and you are fighting from the outside. What are you afraid of? Of dying? Focos need to be created inside the country." So you see, relations with Cuba in 1964, 1965, were terrible. Who did convince the Cubans to support the MPLA, were the Soviets, who could not be seen to have been overtly involved in Angola. The Soviets provided the bridge between Cuba and the MPLA. In August 1975, the Cubans arrived in Angola to form the MPLA. Moscow informed Cuba that the MPLA was interested in contacting the Cubans. And Angola then sent a delegation to Cuba to discuss details. This was in July 1975. Fidel Castro considered the request, and called an individual, whom I know, Papito Cerquera, a revolutionary commander who had obtained experience in the Algerian war, especially in the Ben Bella-Boumedienne crisis, he was Cuba's ambassador to Algeria. He is an extraordinary person, who is at the head of something called the Centro de Estudos para la Europa Occidental in Cuba. [He] told me: "Angola, we are going to bet on it." So they sent men to Angola. First to form Angolan cadres. And to provide security for a number of top MPLA

leaders, Neto etc. My brother [José Van Dunem, Political Comissar of the Joint Heads of Staff] did not use them. He was young, he felt he did not need a Cuban guard. The Cubans began to arrive. There was, at the time, a belief that there existed a co-ordinated strategy to oust the MPLA; an American strategy to remove the communists from power. And since at the time we believed we were communists we said: "this could not happen." So the Cubans were there to help. The Soviets could not show their face publically. They did send military advisors. For example, Yuri, was my brother's advisor and a high-ranking Soviet officer. He was in Angola, in October 1975. At this time he was one of no more than thirty Soviets in Angola.

...By the beginning of October (I left for Cuba on 3 October), the South Africans had entered the country, they had taken Lubango and had reached Benguela. In fact, at the time I was carrying out an investigation of the MPLA Army Chiefs in Benguela who had abandoned the city in the face of the advancing South African army and had [deliberately] exploded an arms depot, and ran away to Luanda. The South Africans came close to Benguela. I was in Benguela investigating this incident at the very beginning of October, before I left for Cuba. The South Africans entered Angola in mid-September.

Q:

Why did you go to Cuba?

A:

I was an MPLA man. The intense relations with Cuba required there be somebody in Cuba to supervise a certain number of things. Furthermore, they wanted to form a number of activists in advanced military courses. So, I was there firstly, to represent the interests of Angola and secondly to attend a course in military command and aeronautical engineering.

Interviews with João Van Dunem

London August 23 and 24 1991

Q:

A number of sources have claimed that Daniel Chipenda's split with the MPLA was motivated by the Chinese, whereas others have pointed to the fact that the Soviets interrupted their aid to Neto at that time as evidence of Moscow's support for Chipenda and displeasure with Neto. Which do you consider to have been the case?

A:

Moscow always had an ambiguous attitude towards the MPLA. On the

one hand they believed the MPLA was the movement they should support during the cold war, while the United States supported the FNLA. Moscow claimed to be the patron of the national liberation movements in the colonies. It believed that the worker's struggle should be linked to the anti-colonial struggle. For this Moscow needed an instrument and this instrument was the MPLA. But in an ambiguous manner. I remember that in 1972, when some intellectuals began to, once again, question Neto's leadership [Active Revolt], when things began to heat up. This was a very complicated period for the MPLA, known as the 'readjustment movement' (movimento de reajustamento), similar to the movement of rectification in China, wherein the leadership would descend to the grassroots to discuss problems with the grassroots. This movement was developed, based on documents of the Chinese rectification movement, by Gentil Viana. I remember that, at the time, Agostinho Neto visited a number of zones in the north of the country, the so-called 'liberated zones' of the MPLA in the north and the east. In the east, the struggle had retreated completely. The Portuguese had just undertaken an operation called 'Operation Sirocco' that had pushed the MPLA guerrillas all the way into Zambia. The leader of the MPLA in the Eastern Zone, Daniel Chipenda, was in fact the only person known in that region. He was a very charismatic chief. Neto was criticized. He was even attacked during the debates for the movement of readjustment. A peasant got up during the talking and hit him physically, saying he did not recognize Neto, did not know who he was and did not recognize his authority to be at the head of the movement. Chipenda, in effect a charismatic leader, already in the MPLA leadership and commander of the Eastern zone, and perhaps taking advantage of the fragility of the MPLA, decided to claim control. Furthermore, Chipenda was an Ovimbundu, who have always been heavily underrepresented in the MPLA. Chipenda took advantage of all this and put himself forward as a figure able to lead the Eastern Revolt. Chipenda had rural roots with a good base in the East. And despite the Portuguese victories...Chipenda, joined the general challenge to Neto's leadership and claimed that he too challenged Neto. And the Soviets supported Chipenda at this time. The Soviets believed that Agostinho Neto did not represent firstly the unity of the MPLA, and secondly, was not known in the interior of the country. The Soviets had, at the time, a man in Brazzaville by the name of Putilin, the Soviet chargé d'affaires. He was a very active man, who knew the MPLA well, and who was who. Putilin must have advised Moscow to support Chipenda. In 1974, when the MPLA was taken by surprise by the coup of April 25, it was split in three major factions.

Q:

Did the Soviets give money to Chipenda and inform Neto of their support for Chipenda?

A:

No. The Soviets did not do that. The Soviets never did that. They would never go up to a leader and say "we are now supporting your challenger." The Soviets would stimulate the dissident to claim authority and to take power. But there was a clear cut in the Soviet line. Neto and those around him gathered that the Soviets were supporting Chipenda. But they did not break radically. As Stalinists, they did not break with a superpower, which could help. But there was a cooling of relations. So there were three groups: Neto, supported by nobody outside; Chipenda, supported morally by the Soviets, I stress, morally. I do not know if he got any money. Nobody knows where he received funds from. Then there was Gentil Viana's group: Gentil Viana, Mário Pinto de Andrade. The ideologue of the group was Gentil Viana, who spent ten years in China. A man who, even today, is very close to China. He opposed Viriato da Cruz (who died in China) when he criticized the Chinese Communist Party. Gentil Viana defended the CCP, and the two men parted ways.

Q:

Did the Chinese ever support the MPLA-Neto?

A:

The Chinese were never very far away, because they knew they could win people over. For example, the small, tiny, manuals that we studied were made in China. And that resulted in many of the younger MPLA, that would later become part of the leadership, looking towards the Chinese revolution with a certain amount of respect. And the Chinese knew this. They would always stay alert to make use of any gap that was created. And the MPLA did fight with Chinese arms, with guns made in China. Although from the time of the Viriato break in 1963, the Chinese had made a clear alliance with the FNLA, and supplied them with materiel and money.

Q:

When did Cuban aid for the MPLA begin to increase from the basic levels established in the post-Guevara links in Brazzaville?

A:

I believe that early Cuban aid was in truth only symbolic. [The relationship between] Che Guevara and Angola was a disaster...with the MPLA. The only thing that Guevara gained from contacts with the MPLA was that the MPLA had intellectuals, and valid ideas. But he criticized the MPLA: 'why do you remain in Brazzaville instead of going into the heart of Angola'. He believed that the Cuban revolution, on an isolated island, had been carried out from the Sierra Maestra, inside the country. He criticized the MPLA for this. At this time, despite the fact they thought the MPLA were a group of intellectuals, and since

Guevarism and Castroism held the participation of the peasantry in the struggle to be all-important, they criticized the MPLA for not having any peasants. So they turned to Savimbi to see what he could do. They did give the MPLA some support, but I consider it to have been symbolic. They trained a few people in Cuba...Henrique Santos Onambwe, who [later] was deputy head of the state security, a member of the Politiburo of the MPLA, an historic figure and linked to the 27 of May [1977], in the vetting of people...also in Cuba studied the ex-Angolan Foreign minister, Paulo Jorge. Many of those who died in the 27 of May affair were in Cuba, Saïdy Mingas, finance minister. A significant number of Angolans did go to Cuba. But in 1975, I don't think the MPLA had had more than 50 people trained in Cuba, and I do not consider the training of 50 people to have been significant in terms of liberation movements. Many were formed in Korea, in China, like Gentil Viana, in camps in Brazzaville...It was in 1975 that everything changed. Why? Because the MPLA believed that the FNLA had a very powerful army supported by Zaire. And as you know, there was a very large Angolan community exiled in Zaire after 1961, and they speak Kikongo, they are the Ikongo, in the north of Angola. The Congress of Berlin dissolved the Kongo kingdom, but this was not recognized by the Kikongo, they did not recognize frontiers, they were in Angola, in Zaire and in Congo-Brazzaville. In my opinion, the American strategy was to install Zairean army elements in the FNLA. There are family ties between Holden Roberto and Mobutu Sese Seko. When the FNLA arrived in Luanda, armed, the spectre [of a possible strategy] was created. These fellows were powerful and [it was believed] that they might take power by force. In fact, I would like to confirm that there was a certain arrogance on the part of the FNLA people. They held the weapons and claimed to know how to fight, challenging somewhat the fragility of the MPLA which was a group of intellectuals. This is what had happened in Angola, something rather complicated: in the interior of the country, in 1974 after the 25 April coup, there were people who were thinking about a 'Rhodesian' solution [UDI]. This was supported by a number of people in society like the Portuguese taxi drivers, the 'ultras'. There then occurred a number of incidents between taxi drivers and black Angolans which created a situation of conflict. The taxi drivers armed themselves and went to the musseques to kill in revenge. They claimed to be the authority—they wanted a 'Rhodesian' solution. This led to the organization of self-defence committees by the internal groups of the MPLA in the neighbourhoods, armed with weapons, some stolen from the Portuguese army. This situation worsened and people were killed in clashes. Then at a certain point, a group of about 10,000 soldiers (NCOs, sergeants and officers) from the Portuguese army (Angolans, white, black and mestiço) in uniform demonstrated outside the military High Command in Angola saying: "from now on, we patrol the musseques." The High Command had hitherto

ordered the patrol of the musseques by military units to avoid fighting between the taxi drivers and the population, already minimally armed with stolen weapons. These patrols had been manned by troops that came from Portugal, the so-called metropolitan troops. The demonstrators demanded, however, that they Angolans wanted to patrol the musseques. Only in this way, they believed, would they be able to guarantee that the population would not be massacred, that there be no tacit accord between the army and the taxi drivers to continue to decimate our population. The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces in Angola at the time [concurred]. These Angolan soldiers in the Portuguese army did this. When the FNLA came into Angola and the spectre of a strong army was raised, these soldiers joined the MPLA en masse. And it was they that began to form cadres. So the conflict was created. There were two armies being created. At the time, UNITA had no military expression. There were two armies: one, of the FNLA with people supposedly from the Zairean army, and then this one, the FAPLA, an embryonic army, a guerrilla force, with little or no capacity. Out of the city for 20 years, FAPLA did not know Luanda, and it was essential to know the ins and outs of the city in order to make war. We had established the Luanda Operational Command (Comando Operacional de Luanda - COL). My brother [José Van Dunem] was head of COL, and we did a few things.

...After Alvor, Neto had returned to Luanda on 4 February 1975. The movements that were represented in the city were armed and they patrolled Luanda. The MPLA patrolled, as did the FNLA, and when these met there was shooting. There was no independent authority to control this fighting. The Portuguese army kept on the sidelines. It had given support to the MPLA during the time of Rosa Coutinho, this it did. Rosa Coutinho claimed he was neutral, but he told the MPLA that he was with them. After this, Silva Cardoso said that they were not there to die.

...The coexistence of these two armed forces [the MPLA and the FNLA] was impossible. Today it is impossible to reconstitute the events and determine who fired first. The shots that were fired served to define a strategy. The strategy that the MPLA defined was: "we must take power." We signed Alvor and we knew that the High Commissioner would be in Angola until the lowering of the flag [on 11 November]. We saw that the Portuguese army were not acting. In Portugal, the Left was in power, and we were left-wing.

Q:

So, there was a conscious strategy of the MPLA to take power in Angola?

A:

Yes. There was a strategy to neutralize the FNLA and UNITA

before independence.

Q:

What of Alvor, the transitional government, the elections?

A:

No. Alvor was shaky...A government of coalition was only possible if the MPLA wished it...There was an incident in April 1975: a clash during which the FNLA used weapons. There were many casualties, some dead and wounded. I was working for Angolan Television and went to cover the incident (I was cautioned by the High Commissioner for this). We used this incident as the great justification for the definition of our strategy. We had the men to take power, so let us take it. We created a number of CIR Centres for Revolutionary Instruction to prepare them politically and militarily. From here on the MPLA had a far more solid armed force than the FNLA. During clashes with the FNLA we could tell that these could be beaten. And UNITA was nothing. We knew we could win the war.

...In Nakuru, in June, an agreement was reached to return to Alvor. But I remember when I returned to Angola, my brother told me: "the agreement was tactical." [We intended to implement a strategy to take power] and on the other hand, knew that the US and Chinese aid for the FNLA had been increased...For the MPLA, the OAU was irrelevant, a group of corrupt heads of state, whose quaint Third World ideas were outdated.

Q:

So the MPLA requested Cuba's aid?

A:

[Before mid-October], solely for the training of cadres...When it had become clear that it was a war between two armies: the South Africans and the Angolans...the MPLA requested Cuban aid directly from Havana. Havana suggested that there be a co-ordination with the Soviets, initially in logistical terms but after this there arrived Soviet military advisors for the Joint Chiefs of Staff [of the MPLA]...Before independence there were no more than 5 Soviets based in Angola.

Q:

Was the MPLA strategy co-ordinated with the Soviets and the Cubans?

A:

No it was not.

Q:

Where were the weapons to come from?

A:

The weapons all came from Soviet and Cuban ships.

Q:

Did you in the MPLA tell the Soviets that you were going to take power?

A:

It was not said. It was insinuated. The Soviets wanted us to take power.

Q:

Who were the military leaders of the MPLA at this time?

A:

The Minister of Defence, Iko Carreira, who was lazy and never did anything, never showed up for meetings, except for those of the Political Bureau. There was João Luís Neto...Head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. There was my brother, José Van Dunem [political commissar]. There was Monstro Imortal (Jacob Caetano), Vice-head of the JCS. Bula Natari, head of logistics, and Veríssimo da Costa, head of military intelligence. And Agostinho Neto.

...In the meantime, the Cubans had begun to arrive. They arrived from the end of June, beginning of July onward. They stayed at Corimba, an area of beaches in Luanda. They were mestiços, a group of about 20, and joined those that were providing military training for the MPLA.

...The initiative to bring the Cubans came in from the MPLA.

...Immediately before 11 November, there were...8,000 Cubans in Angola. Between mid-October and Independence day was the period during which the Cubans began to arrive en masse...The military reinforcement by the Cubans was in response to the invasion of the country by South Africa...and the Zairean-FNLA column...The Cubans and the Soviets were needed to help in the conventional war.

...There were those in the MPLA that believed that the presence of Cuban troops on Angolan soil was preferable to the presence of Soviet troops. These latter, belonging to a superpower would have been very complicated. But Cuba was a Third World country.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ABSHIRE, D M `From the Scramble for Africa to the `New State''
in D M Abshire and M A Samuels (eds.) Portuguese
Africa: A Handbook (London: Pall Mall Press,
1969).
- ABSHIRE, D M `Minerals, Manufacturing, Power and
Communications' in *ibid.*
- ADELMAN, K L `Report from Angola' in Foreign Affairs (New York)
Volume 53 No.3, April 1975.
- Africa (Lisbon).
- Africa Confidential (London).
- Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1974-
1975 (London: Rex Collings, 1975).
- Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1975-
1976 (London: Rex Collings, 1976).
- Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1976-
1977 (London: Rex Collings, 1977).
- Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1977-
1978 (New York, NY: Africana Publishing Company, 1979).
- Africa Digest (London).
- Africa Research Bulletin (London).
- AGUIAR, L Livro Negro da Descolonização (Lisbon: Intervenção,
19..).
- ALBRIGHT, D Soviet Policy Toward Africa Revisited (Washington
DC: CSIS, 1987)
- Angola: A Tentativa de Golpe de Estado de 27 de Maio de 77
(Informação do Bureau Político do MPLA, Edições Avante, 1977).
- Angola, Rumo à Independencia. O Governo de Transição: Documentos
e Personalidades (Luanda: Livrangol, 1975).

- BARBER, J and J Barratt South Africa's Foreign Policy: The Search for Status and Security 1945-1988 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press/SAIIA, 1990).
- BARNET, D and R Harvey The Revolution in Angola: MPLA, Life Histories and Documents (Indianapolis, New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1971).
- BENDER, G 'Kissinger in Angola: Anatomy of Failure' in R Lemarchand (ed.) American Policy in Southern Africa: The Stakes and the Stance (Washington DC: University Press of America, 1978a).
- BENDER, G 'Angola, the Cubans and American Anxieties' in Foreign Policy 31 (Washington/New York: 1978b).
- BENDER, G Angola under the Portuguese: The Myth and the Reality (London: Heinemann, 1978c).
- BENDER, G 'American Policy toward Angola: A History of Linkage' in G Bender, J Coleman and R Sklar (eds.) African Crisis Areas and US Foreign Policy (Berkeley, Cal: University of California Press, 1985).
- BENOT, Y 'The Impact of Stalinism on Radical African Socialism' in Gutkind and Waterman (eds.) African Social Studies
- BIRMINGHAM, D 'The Twenty-Seventh of May: An Historical Note on the Abortive 1977 Coup in Angola' in African Affairs: Journal of the Royal African Society Vol. 77, No.309 (October 1978).
- BOWKER, M and P Williams Superpower Detente: A Reappraisal (London: Sage Publications/RIIA, 1988).
- BRAGANÇA, A de and I Wallerstein (eds.) The African Liberation Reader Vol I (London: Zed Press, 1982).
- BRANDENBURG, F 'Development, Finance and Trade' in D M Abshire and M A Samuels (eds.) Portuguese Africa: A Handbook (London: Pall Mall Press, 1969).
- BRANDENBURG, F 'Transport Systems and Their External Ramifications' in ibid.
- BRIDGELAND, F Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1986).

- BROWN, K 'Angolan Socialism' in C Rosberg and T Callaghy (eds.) Socialism in Sub-Saharan Africa: A New Assessment (Berkely, Cal: Institute of International Studies, 1979).
- BURCHETT, W Southern Africa Stands Up (New York, NY: Urizen Books, 1978).
- CAMPBELL, B Liberation Nationale et Construction du Socialisme en Afrique (Montreal, Quebec: Nouvelle Optique, 1977).
- CAMPBELL, K M Southern Africa in Soviet Foreign Policy IISS Adelphi Paper 227 (London: Winter 1987/8).
- CASTRO, A O Sistema Colonial Português em Africa (Lisbon: Editorial Caminho, 1980).
- CHABAL, P 'People's War, State Formation and Revolution in Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Mozambique, Guine-Bissau and Angola' in Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics Vol XXI, no.3, (1983a).
- CHABAL, P Amílcar Cabral: Revolutionary Leadership and People's War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983b).
- CHALIAND, G 'The Political Strategy of Guerrilla Warfare' in Gutkind and Waterman (eds.) African Social Studies
- CHALIAND, G Revolution in the Third World: Myths and Prospects (Hassocks: The Harvester Press, 1977).
- CHAZAN, N, R Mortimer, J Ravenhill and D Rothchild Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1988).
- CHILCOTE, R Emerging Nationalism in Portuguese Africa: Documents (Stanford, Cal: Hoover Insitution Press, 1972).
- CLAPHAM, C Third World Politics: An Introduction (London: Routledge, 1985).
- CLARENCE-SMITH, G The Third Portuguese Empire 1825-1975: Study in Economic Imperialism (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985).
- COHEN, R 'Marxism in Africa: The Grounding of a Tradition' in B Munslow (ed.) Africa: Problems in the Transition to

- Socialism (London: Zed Press, 1986).
- COKER, C Nato, the Warsaw Pact and Africa (Basingstoke: Macmillan/RUSI, 1985).
- DAVIDSON, B In the Eye of the Storm (London: Penguin, 1975).
- DAVIS, N 'The Angola Decision of 1975: A Personal Memoir' in Foreign Affairs (New York) Fall 1978.
- DOMINGUEZ, J To Make a World Safe For Revolution: Cuba's Foreign Policy (Cambridge MASS: Harvard University Press, 1989).
- DONGEN, I van 'Agriculture and Other Primary Production' in D Abshire and M Samuels (eds.) Portuguese Africa: A Handbook (London: Pall Mall Press, 1969).
- DUFFY, J Portuguese Africa (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1959).
- DUNCAN, W R The Soviet Union and Cuba: Interests and Influences (New York, NY: Praeger, 1985).
- DURCH, W J 'The Cuban Military in Africa and the Middle East: From Algeria to Angola' in Studies in Comparative Communism Volume XI, Nos. 1 & 2, (Cal: University of South California, 1978).
- EBINGER, C K 'External Intervention in Internal War: The Politics and Diplomacy of the Angolan Civil War' in Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs Vol. 20, No.3 Fall 1976 (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute).
- EDMONDS, R Soviet Foreign Policy 1962-1973: The Paradox of Superpower (London: Oxford University Press, 1975).
- Expresso (Lisbon).
- Facts and Reports Press Cuttings on Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Portugal and Southern Africa (Amsterdam: Angola Comitê).
- [1974] Volume Four.
- [1975] Volume Five.
- FALK, R 'Intervention and National Liberation' in H Bull (ed.) Intervention in World Politics (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).
- FRANCO DE SOUSA, A 'Mukanda ao Meu Irmão Angolano' (Pamphlet 10 December 1990).

- FREIRE ANTUNES, J Os Americanos e Portugal Vol.I: Os Anos de Richard Nixon 1969-1974 (Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote, 1986).
- FREIRE ANTUNES, J Kennedy e Salazar: o Leão e a Raposa (Lisbon: Difusão Cultural, 1991).
- GAVSHON, A Crisis in Africa: Battleground of East and West (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981).
- GELDENHUYS, D South Africa's Search for Security since the Second World War (Braamfontein: South African Institute of International Affairs, September 1978).
- GELDENHUYS, D The Diplomacy of Isolation: South African Foreign Policy Making (Johannesburg: Macmillan SA/ SAIIA, 1984).
- GIL FERREIRA, H and M W Marshall Portugal's Revolution: ten years on (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) p.169.
- GOLAN, G The Soviet Union and National Liberation Movements in the Third World (Boston, Mass: Unwin Hyman, 1988).
- GRUNDY K, The Militarization of South African Politics (London: I B Taurus and Co Inc., 1986).
- GUERRA, H Angola: Estrutura Económica e Classes Sociais (Lisbon: Edições 70, 1979).
- HALLIDAY, F The Making of the Second Cold War (London: Verso, 1983).
- HALLIDAY, F Cold War, Third World: An Essay on Soviet-US Relations (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989).
- HALLIDAY, F 'Revolutions and International Relations: Some Theoretical Issues' Paper presented at the BISA/ISA Conference, London, March 1989.
- HALPERIN, M 'The Cuban Role in Southern Africa' in J Seiler (ed.) Southern Africa Since the Coup (Boulder, C Col: Westview Press, 1981).
- HEIMER, F The Decolonization Conflict in Angola 1974-1976: An Essay in Political Sociology (Geneva: Institut Universitaire de Hautes Études Internationales, 1979).

- HODGES, T 'How the MPLA Won in Angola' in After Angola: The War Over Southern Africa 2nd Ed. (New York, NY: Africana Publishing Company, 1978).
- HOFFMANN, S 'The Problem of Intervention' in H Bull (ed.), Intervention in World Politics (Oxford: Clarendon Press/OUP, 1984).
- HUTCHISON, A China's African Revolution (London: Hutchinson, 1975).
- JACKSON, H From the Congo to Soweto: US Foreign Policy Toward Africa Since 1960 (New York, NY: William Morrow and Co., 1982)
- O Jornal (Lisbon)
- KHAZANOV, A Agostinho Neto (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1986).
- The Kissinger Study on Southern Africa (Spokesman Books, 1975).
- KLINGHOFFER, A The Angolan War: A Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World (Boulder Col: Westview Press, 1980).
- KOLAKOWSKI, L Main Currents of Marxism Vol III (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1978).
- LAIDI, Z The Third World and the Soviet Union (London: Zed Books, 1988)
- LAIDI, Z The Superpowers and Africa: The Constraints of a Rivalry 1960-1990 (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1990).
- LAQUER, W 'Communism and Nationalism in Tropical Africa' in H Keeschull (ed.) Politics in Transitional Societies: The Challenge of Change in Asia, Africa and Latin America (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1968).
- LARKIN, B China and Africa 1949-1970 (Berkely, CA: University of California Press, 1971).
- LAWSON, E K 'China's Policy in Ethiopia and Angola' in W Weinstein and T Henriksen (eds.) Soviet and Chinese Aid to African Nations (New York NY: Praeger, 1980).
- LEGUM, C 'The Role of Western Powers in Southern Africa' and 'A Study of International Intervention in Angola' in After Angola: The War Over Southern Africa 2nd Ed. (New York, NY: Africana Publishing Company, 1978).

- LEGUM, C `African Outlooks Toward the USSR' in D Albright
Africa and International Communism.
- LEOGRANDE, W `Cuban-Soviet Relations and Cuban Policy in
Africa' in C Mesa-Lago and J Belkin (eds.) Cuba
in Africa (Penn: University of Pittsburgh, 1982).
- LITTLE, R Intervention: External Involvement in Civil Wars
(London: Martin Robertson, 1975).
- LUCENA, M de A Evolução do Sistema Corporativo Português Vol I
(Lisbon: P & R, 1976).
- MACFARLANE, S Neil Superpower Rivalry and Third World
Radicalism: The Idea of National Liberation
(London: Croom Helm, 1985).
- MACK, A `The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict' in World Politics
January 1975.
- MCGOWEN PINHEIRO, P `Politics of a Revolt' in Angola: a
Symposium (London: Oxford University
Press, 1962).
- MARCUM, J `Three Revolutions' in Africa Report November 1967.
- MARCUM, J The Angolan Revolution, Volume I: Anatomy of an
Explosion 1950-1962 (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press,
1969).
- MARCUM, J `Lessons of Angola' in Foreign Affairs (New York)
Volume 54 No.3, April 1976.
- MARCUM, J The Angolan Revolution, Volume II: Exile Politics
and Guerrilla Warfare 1962-1976 (Cambridge, Mass:
MIT Press, 1978).
- MARCUM, J `Angola: Perilous Transition to Independence' in G
Carter and P O'Meara (eds.) Southern Africa: The
Continuing Crisis (2nd Ed.) (Bloomington IND:
Indiana University Press, 1982).
- MATUMONA, A `Angolan Disunity' in Angola: a Symposium (London:
Oxford University Press, 1962).
- MAYALL, J Africa: The Cold War and After (London: Elek Books,
1971).
- MINTER, W Portuguese Africa and the West (Harmondsworth:
Penguin, 1972).

- MODELSKI, G `The International Relations of Internal War' in J Rosenau, (ed.) International Aspects of Civil Strife (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964).
- MORRIS, R `The Proxy War in Angola: the Pathology of a Blunder' in New Republic (Washington DC) January 31, 1976.
- MPLA 1970 (Liberation Support Movement pamphlet, 1970 ?).
- MPLA Programa (Pamphlet)
- MPLA Central Committee Plenary 23-29 October 1976 (London: MAGIC).
- MPLA First Congress Central Committee Report 4-10 December 1977 (London: MAGIC).
- NETO, A, A Cabral and E Mondlane `A Voz dos Povos em Luta' Declarações à Voz da Liberdade (Algiers: FPLN pamphlet, 1969).
- NEWITT, M Portugal in Africa: The Last Hundred Years (London: C Hurst & Co., 1981).
- OKUMA, T Angola in Ferment (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962).
- OLIVEIRA e CASTRO, L de Situação Económica de Angola no ano de 1962 for Ultramar nos. 13/14 (1963).
- OLIVEIRA MARQUES, A H de History of Portugal Vol.II: From Empire to Corporate State (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1972).
- OLIVEIRA MARQUES, A H de Historia de Portugal Vol. III: Das Revoluções Liberais aos Nossos Dias (Lisbon: Palas Editores, 1981).
- OTTAWAY, D and M Algeria: the Politics of a Socialist Revolution (Berkely, Cal: University of California Press, 1970).
- OTTAWAY, D and M Afrocommunism (London: Holmes and Meier, 1981).
- PAIGE, J Agrarian Revolution (New York: Free Press, 1975).
- Peking Review (Peking).

- PORCH, D The Portuguese Armed Forces and the Revolution (London: Croom Helm, 1977).
- PORTER, B D The USSR in Third World Conflicts: Soviet Arms and Diplomacy in Local Wars 1945-1980 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
- PULIDO VALENTE, V O Poder e o Povo: A Revolução de 1910 (Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote, 1974).
- QUEIROZ, A Angola do 25 de Abril ao 11 de Novembro: A Via Agreste da Liberdade (Lisboa: Biblioteca Ulmeiros, 1978).
- Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council 1961 (New York, NY: UN Official Records).
- ROSENAU, J 'Internal War as an International Event' in J Rosenau (ed.) International Aspects of Civil Strife (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964).
- ROXBOROUGH, I Theories of Underdevelopment (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1979).
- SAMUELS, M A 'The Nationalist Parties' in D M Abshire and M A Samuels (eds.) Portuguese Africa: A Handbook (London: Pall Mall Press, 1969).
- SEILER, J 'South Africa's Regional Role' in J Seiler (ed.) Southern Africa Since the Coup (Boulder Col: Westview Press, 1981).
- SHAW, T 'South Africa, Southern Africa and the World System' in T Callaghy (ed.) South Africa in Southern Africa: The Intensifying Vortex of Violence (New York, NY: Praeger Publishers, 1983).
- SHEARMAN, P The Soviet Union and Cuba Chatham House Papers 38 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul / RIIA, 1987).
- SIMPSON, M The Soviet Union and Afro-Marxist Regimes: The Path to the Treaties of Friendship and Cooperation Ph.D. Thesis (University of London, 1989).
- SOARES, M Democratisação e Descolonização: Dez Meses no Governo Provisório (Lisbon: Publicações Dom Quixote, 1975).
- SOMERVILLE, K Angola: Politics, Economics and Society (London: Frances Pinter (Publishers), 1986).

- SOMERVILLE, K Foreign Military Intervention in Africa (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990).
- SPÍNOLA, A de Portugal and the Future (Johannesburg: Perskor Publishers, 1974).
- STEVENS, C 'The Soviet Union and Angola' in African Affairs: Journal of the Royal African Society Vol. 75, No.299 (April 1976).
- STEVENS, C 'The Soviet Role in Southern Africa' in J Seiler (ed.) Southern Africa Since the Coup (Boulder, Col: Westview Press, 1981).
- STOCKWELL, J In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story (New York, NY: W W Norton & Co., 1978).
- SZULC, T 'Lisbon and Washington: Behind the Portuguese Revolution' in Foreign Policy (New York) No. 21 Winter 1975-1976.
- THERBORN, G 'From Petrograd to Saigon' in New Left Review 48.
- ULYANOVSKY, R National Liberation: Essays on Theory and Practice (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978).
- UNITA (Kwacha Unita Press, 1984).
- VALDES, N 'Revolutionary Solidarity in Angola' in C Blasier and C Mesa-Lago (eds.) Cuba in the World (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979).
- VALENTA, J 'The Soviet-Cuban Intervention in Angola 1975' in Studies in Comparative Communism Vol. XI, nos. 1 and 2 (Cal: University of South California, 1978).
- WEISSMANN, S 'The CIA and US Policy in Zaire and Angola' in R Lemarchand (ed.) American Policy in Southern Africa: the Stakes and the Stance (Washington DC: University Press of America, 1978)
- WHEELER, D L and R Pelissier, Angola (London: Pall Mall Press, 1971).
- WHEELER, D L 'Origins of African Nationalism in Angola: Assimilado Protest Writings, 1859-1929' in R H Chilcote Protest and Resistance in Angola and Brazil: Comparative Studies (Berkely, CAL: University of California Press, 1972).
- WHEELER, D L 'Portuguese Withdrawal from Africa, 1974-1975: The

Angolan Case' in J Seiler (ed.), Southern Africa Since the Coup (Boulder COL: Westview Press, 1981).

WHITE, G `Revolutionary Socialist Development in the Third World: An Overview' in G White, R Murray and C White (eds.) Revolutionary Socialist Development in the Third World (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1983).

WINDSOR, P `Superpower Intervention' in H Bull (ed.) Intervention in World Politics (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

WOHLGEMUTH, P `The Portuguese Territories and the United Nations' in International Conciliation No. 545 (New York, November 1963).

WOLFERS, M Politics in the Organization of African Unity (London: Methuen, 1976).

WOLFERS, M and J Bergerol Angola in the Frontline (London: Zed Press, 1983).

YOUNG, C `The Portuguese Coup and Zaire's Southern Africa Policy' in J Seiler (ed.) Southern Africa Since the Portuguese Coup (Boulder COL: Westview Press, 1980).

INTERVIEWS

Manuel dos Santos Lima, Lisbon, 14 January 1991.

João Van Dunem, London, 3 October 1990.

" " " , " , 15 April 1991.

" " " , " , 22 August 1991.

" " " , " , 23 August 1991.

