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MORE THAN 500 U.S. AFRICAN SPECIALISTS PROTEST PROPOSALS TO AID ANGOLA INSURGENTS

East Lansing, Michigan:

Petitions signed by more than 500 African specialists were submitted this week to President Reagan and the Congress urging them to prevent military and non-lethal assistance for insurgents in Angola.

African specialists from universities and colleges in 38 states and Washington, D.C. signed the statement urging the United States not to "intervene in the internal affairs of the nation of Angola." A similar letter was sent to President Reagan in November from 108 members of Congress protesting the rumored Administration intent to send covert aid to the Angolan UNITA movement.

African Studies Association President Gerald J. Bender said "the proposed policy runs counter to the best judgments of practically all American academic experts on Africa." Bender is a specialist on Angola and international relations at the University of Southern California.

"The experts are convinced that aid to UNITA would undermine U.S. political and economic interests, not only in Africa but throughout the world," Bender added. "One consequence would be to further exacerbate the US debt problem since Angola is buying nearly \$ 0.5 billion per year of US goods and services and is the tenth largest source of oil for the USA."

Signers of the petition also include five former presidents of the ASA and the current president-elect, directors of major university African studies centers, two former U.S. ambassadors in Africa, the co-

chairpersons of the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars, members of the ASA Board of Directors, a senior officer of the Ford Foundation and of the African-American Institute, and specialists on African politics.

In addition, the petition was signed by a number of African specialists on Southern African affairs and politics from Columbia, Harvard, Yale, Stanford, University of Chicago, Northwestern, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Michigan State University, Georgetown, Dartmouth, Howard, American University, and the universities of Wisconsin, Texas, Illinois, Oregon, Washington, California, Virginia, Florida, and Michigan.

The petition also notes that any U.S. support for dissident movements in Angola places the United States "in support of the South African regime, its aggression in the region, and its repressive policies" at home.

The petitioners call on the President and the Congress "to reject any proposal to provide either military or non-lethal U.S. assistance, openly or covertly," to UNITA or any other dissident movement in Angola.

A similar petition was circulated in 1975 among Africa scholars preceding the Senate passage of the "Clark Amendment," which ended CIA funding of the Angolan civil war. The 1975 petition led to the formation of the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars (ACAS), which has developed this new petition in response to proposals in both the Administration and the Congress for military and non-lethal aid to UNITA in Angola.

Some of the signatories and their current affiliations are: former U.S. Ambassador Elliott Skinner (Columbia U.); former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa and Ambassador to Nigeria Donald Easum (African-American Institute); ASA President-Elect Aidan Southall (Wisconsin); former ASA presidents Gwendolen Carter (Florida), Robert Cummings (Howard), Richard Sklar (UCLA), Immanuel Wallerstein (SUNY-Binghamton), and M. Crawford Young (Wisconsin); directors of major African studies centers Hunt Davis (Florida), John Harris (Boston U.), Patrick O'Meara (Indiana), John Paden (Northwestern), and David Wiley (Michigan State); and Ford Foundation Deputy Vice-President John Gerhart.

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