



The Washington Office on Africa

Educational Fund

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March 15, 1993

Dear Friend:

Enclosed please find a copy of the "Stewardship for Public Life" newsletter produced by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and written by the Washington Office on Africa.

The material discussed is extremely pertinent and very timely, since both Angola and Zaire are in the midst of major political crises. **The Clinton administration could play a very positive role in the resolution of these crises if sufficient pressure is applied.** We urge you to take a few minutes to read and respond to the suggested actions.

If you have any additional questions, please call the above number. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Imani Countess
Executive Director

Enclosure: 1

U.S. MUST ACT QUICKLY ON ANGOLA AND ZAIRE

With approximately 50 million people and over one-tenth the land mass of the African continent, Zaire and Angola are also endowed with oil, diamonds and other mineral wealth. Strategically located with regard to both the central and southern African regions, they were the scene of the two most prominent Cold War confrontations in Africa.

Now, with the Cold War over, long-standing CIA clients Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire and Jonas Savimbi of Angola can no longer claim to be bulwarks against communism. But instead of adapting to a new era of pragmatic democracy, they continue to rely on violence in their quest to keep or gain power. Unless they are checked, the consequences for Zaire and Angola will be a continuing downward spiral, with millions more lives at risk. And deadly precedents will be set for South Africa and Mozambique, where counterparts of Mobutu and Savimbi also must choose between compromising their ambitions and continuing the violence.

Clear statements from Washington—diplomatic recognition of Angola, explicit calls for Mobutu to resign and

for Savimbi to abandon violence—are **minimum** prerequisites for an effective U.S. policy. But words alone, even if accompanied by active diplomacy, are unlikely to be sufficient unless accompanied by material pressures.

Zaire: No More Equivocation on Mobutu

Mobutu's reputation as a corrupt and wily dictator who

has bankrupted his country is not new. But until recently most policy-makers were persuaded by the Cold War argument that he was necessary to preserve U.S. interests against leftist threats in the region. Mobutu's suppression of a new wave of opposition, spearheaded in the 1980s by the *Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social* (UDPS), met with little protest from Washington.

Finally in 1990, as economic collapse exceeded even the patience of the World Bank, and international trends toward democratization made the Mobutu regime appear ever more anachronistic, Mobutu announced acceptance in principle of a multi-party system. His initial commitment to hold elections by April 1991 quietly lapsed, but he agreed to the convening of a National Conference in August 1991.

The conference elected a leadership committed to democratic reform, chaired by Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya. But Mobutu refused to allow the conference to function freely. Nevertheless, in August 1992, the National Conference elected UDPS leader Etienne

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ACT NOW

URGE THE
ADMINISTRATION
AND CONGRESS
TO TAKE STRONG
ACTIONS AGAINST
MOBUTU AND SAVIMBI

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Tshisekedi as prime minister. The Bush Administration gave nominal support to the new government but failed to respond energetically to Mobutu's continued efforts to sabotage the process.

Since then, Mobutu has orchestrated attacks against Tshisekedi's ethnic group in Shaba province, resulting in more than 350 deaths and the flight of up to 100,000 refugees. He has refused to allow the new government to assume control of Zaire's Central Bank, and he has tried to dismiss Tshisekedi as prime minister. In February troops went on a rampage in Kinshasa after Mobutu paid them in new bank notes not recognized by the transitional government. The Sovereign National Conference began impeachment proceedings against Mobutu, but he still controls the Central Bank and the core of the security forces.

The Presbyterian mission force remains in Zaire amid the unrest, although most dependents have been evacuated. The entire Protestant Faculty of Theology building in Kinshasa was destroyed in the February rioting, and money and medical supplies were stolen from the office and clinic of the Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa.

The time is long past for the illusion that Mobutu will play a constructive role in the transition to democracy in Zaire—the position taken by the Bush Administration. The record shows precisely the opposite. The United States should at the highest levels make clear that it is time for Mobutu to resign

from office, retire from politics and leave Zaire. His incentive to leave should be the hope that he may live peacefully in exile, even if he is eventually forced to return some of his stolen wealth.

Given the long history of ambiguous U.S. statements, which Mobutu has interpreted as license to continue maneuvering, Washington should specify that it will recognize as legitimate any actions that the Sovereign National Conference may take to impeach Mobutu.

This U.S. position should not be construed as support for any one political party or alternative leader to Mobutu, but for the democratic process, which is expected to culminate in a new permanent constitution and national elections.

Angola: Recognize Freely Elected Government

Coming to independence amid conflict, Angola has been beset by war ever since. The Angolan government, led by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), has been hit with successive invasions from South Africa and Zaire, coordinated with guerrilla warfare by the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Unita). Cuban troops which helped to defend Angola left under the terms of agreements signed in late 1988, which also provided for the independence of Namibia. In May 1991 the Angolan government and Unita signed a peace agreement at Bicesse in Portugal, providing for a cease-fire, demobilization of the two armies, and multi-party elections.

Legislative and presidential elections held on September 29-

30, 1992 produced a turnout of over 90%. The United Nations observer mission judged the process generally free and fair, as did other non-governmental and diplomatic observers. The MPLA won 54% of the legislative seats, as compared with 34% for Unita. President dos Santos won almost 50% in the presidential race, while Unita leader Savimbi received 40%.

Savimbi refused to accept the results, choosing instead to return to war. With the aid of supplies from South Africa and Zaire, Unita launched a series of offensives around the country. The government responded, expelling Unita from Luanda, the capital. By early 1993, Unita had taken the town of Soyo, site of almost one-third of Angolan oil production, and bitter fighting raged in many parts of the country. The death toll mounted into the thousands as armies clashed and civilians sometimes took reprisals on their own initiative.

The U.S. policy of refusing to recognize the Angolan government—in which Washington was joined over the years only by South Africa—should be abandoned. The policy was rationalized for many years as a response to the presence of Cuban troops in Angola. After the Cubans left, recognition was again delayed, contingent on completion of the elections promised in the Bicesse Accords. Now, despite the elections, some argue for further postponement in order to pressure the Angolan government to offer Unita a greater share of power. In his confirmation hearings Secretary of State Warren Christopher

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As this issue goes to press, it appears that the Clinton Administration may respond to appeals for stronger action against Mobutu. Rep. Donald Payne (D-N.J.) is leading congressional calls for strong measures. As yet, there is no indication of willingness to take new initiatives on Angola from either the Administration or Congress. In both cases, without additional public pressure, State Department caution is likely to ensure continuation of the failed Bush policies.

Write the Secretary of State, with copies to other relevant offices, and ask that:

1. ANGOLA

- The United States move immediately to establish full diplomatic relations with the government of Angola, proceed with plans to support economic reconstruction, and demand unequivocally that Unita abandon violence in favor of peaceful political competition.
- The United States support effective action to bar the supply of arms, fuel and other critical war supplies to Unita, including monitoring of flights and sanctions against countries, companies, individuals or groups violating the ban.

A URGENT ACTIONS!

2. ZAIRE

- The United States clearly demand that President Mobutu Sese Seko step down from power, leave Zaire, and stop sabotaging

the actions of the legitimate transitional government.

- The United States support effective international action to ensure Mobutu's withdrawal, including moves to confiscate his overseas assets and block his access to foreign exchange. The U.S. should also provide support for the transitional government in maintaining law and order and a functioning economy.

Address:

Secretary of State Warren Christopher
U.S. State Department
Washington, DC 20520

Mr. Anthony Lake
National Security Advisor
National Security Council
Washington, DC 20500

Send copies of your letter to:

Mr. George Moose
Assist. Secretary of State for African Affairs
U.S. State Department
Washington, DC 20520

House Africa Subcommittee
817 O'Neill House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senate African Affairs Subcommittee
226 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

These suggested actions are based on policy of the 204th General Assembly (1992), which notes that Presbyterian missionaries "have been witness to the brutality and violence of President Mobutu against his own people," and states: "Under the present circumstances, it becomes incumbent upon the government of the United States ... to bring an immediate end to all support for the Mobutu administration" (Minutes, p. 602). Guidance on Angola may be found in the policy parallels to the Nicaraguan situation. The 1990 GA's "Resolution on the Central American Peace Process" commends the government and people of Nicaragua for "participating in free and fair elections ... and celebrates efforts toward the peaceful transition of power following those elections." It "calls on the U.S. government to use its influence toward the demobilization of the 'contra' forces and their reintegration into the normal political process of their home country" (Minutes, p. 635).

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referred to "effective control of territory" as grounds for recognition, in effect giving Unita incentive to continue fighting.

Non-recognition only reinforces Savimbi's belief that he can still prevail militarily and that there will be no international penalty for breaking the peace. It is a signal of the residual power of his lobby in Washington, and of continued U.S. hostility to the Angolan government.

On the other hand, recognition should not be interpreted as a blank check to Luanda for reprisals against Unita supporters or for abuses by either side. The U.S. should urge the Angolan government to adhere to international human rights standards and to hold open the option for Unita to return to peaceful political competition. Those Angolans who voted for Unita, even those who subsequently took up arms, must be guaranteed their rights as citizens to free speech and political participation.

From Talk to Action

The Bush Administration bemoaned its lack of leverage over Mobutu and Savimbi, but ruled out serious exploration of negative sanctions in favor of nebulous hopes that the former U.S. clients would see reason. Continuing that path guarantees failure. U.S. policy-makers should instead concentrate on identifying and mobilizing specific measures which weaken the ability of Mobutu and Savimbi to threaten violence.

Zaire: Mobutu's residual power rests primarily on his

ability to pay the troops loyal to him, and on his control over the Central Bank and his access to foreign exchange. He is therefore vulnerable to economic pressures, including confiscation of his personal assets abroad and international refusal of commercial or financial transactions with institutions under his control.

A joint U.S-European task force, in consultation with the transitional government in Zaire, should begin work immediately on implementing such pressures. The task force might first focus on options that can be adopted by administrative action, while identifying others that may require national or international legislative approval. Participation in international or bilateral economic ties on behalf of the Zaire government should only be open to accredited representatives of the legitimate transitional government in Zaire.

The United States should also support international responsiveness to the Zairian government's request for peacekeeping assistance, either through expansion of the mandate of Belgian and French forces already present in the region or through other multilateral channels.

Angola: Unlike Mobutu's troops, Savimbi's fighters are bound to him by strong discipline and organizational loyalty rather than monetary considerations. Unita forces have stocks of weaponry sufficient for several months. But Unita's capacity to wage large-scale war still depends on outside supplies of fuel, ammunition, medical supplies and other goods. Those supply lines, by air from South Africa or

Zaire, or by land from Zaire, must be the primary focus of any serious effort to deter Savimbi's war option.

This implies identifying and applying sanctions against those involved in providing supplies, whether private individuals, companies or governments. If current evidence is insufficient, additional intelligence resources should be allocated to collecting the necessary information.

While resolving the crisis in Zaire would facilitate monitoring these supply routes, this should not be an excuse for delay. There should be particular stress on identifying those in South Africa who are involved in supplying Unita, whatever their official status, and on demanding that the South African authorities take effective action against them.

Washington should also emphasize that any further attack by Unita on oil installations would result in an offer to the Angolan government of U.S. military assistance to protect those resources. ■

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