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Angola and the War For Southern Africa
By Ronald Walters

Someone recently said: "Today Angola is the capital of Africa." It was meant that Angola was a part of the unfolding reality of African independence, whereby African countries had to rid themselves of colonialist masters and then enter into another conflict in an effort to consolidate the gains of the revolution and protect their independence.

As such, the Angolan situation exists within the framework of Pan African nationalism—to organize Black identity in an effort to express and achieve collective goals.

In America, the sense of peoplehood has assisted Blacks in attacking the ancient shackles of mental inferiority and in developing movements aimed at the acquisition of civil and human rights. And in Africa, nationalism has been used to build movements which culminated into new nations, and is the motive force behind the attempt by these nations to indigenize the systems of technology which control their lives.

For many of the roots of the crisis in Angola, one must be familiar with the details of Congolese/Zairian history of the early 1960s, which strikingly parallels back ing, at the time, to draw together forces which control their lives. For many of the roots of the crisis in Angola, one must be familiar with the details of Congolese/Zairian history of the early 1960s, which strikingly parallels back ing, at the time, to draw together forces which control their lives.

The struggle for Angola is intimately linked to the struggle for the whole of Southern Africa. And many of the same elements at work attempting to exploit genuine Angolan nationalism are doing the same in other parts of Southern Africa.

Thus, it is no accident that 5,000 South African troops remain 50 miles inside Angola, in a line which stretches from the Atlantic Ocean to the Zambian border. (Washington Post, February 4, 1976) The South African Minister of Defense, Pieter Botha, says clearly, that it is a "buffer zone" which allows them to control the "Ovambo elements"—South West Africa People's Organization, [SWAPO] which is engaged in resistance against South African control. Also within this buffer, is the Cunene River power project to which South Africa wants continued access.

This futile effort to control SWAPO is in recognition by the South Africans that what is happening in Angola signals the reality of African independence, whereby Southern Africa is the capital of Africa. It was meant that Angola was a part of the unfolding reality of African independence, whereby African countries had to rid themselves of colonialist masters and then enter into another conflict in an effort to consolidate the gains of the revolution and protect their independence.

In this regard, Black Americans have a particular responsibility not to fight the African revolution, but to contribute to it, and to be particularly concerned with the behavior of the United States in the Angolan and Southern African situation.

It is a known fact that investments in South Africa by American companies are well over $1 billion, but that this sum no longer represents the majority of U.S. investments in Africa as it once did. Now three times as much is invested in the rest of Africa, yet this does not diminish South Africa's attractiveness because of the relatively high rate of profits on investments there, compared to other areas. In order to protect the investments of at least 350 major American firms, and keep shipping lanes open, the South Africans have made overtures to become full partners in NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) for protection of shipping routes around the Cape. The value of these shipping lanes, which carry 1.5 million tons of cargo per day, was demonstrated when the Suez Canal was closed, when the Western powers began to feel that the remaining shipping lanes around Africa must be in "friendly" hands.

Together with the economic value of the South African land mass, its geopolitical significance needs to be cited. A few years ago, I wrote:

Since at least 1957 there has been cooperation between the United States and South African governments in developing space tracking facilities. The United States is now utilizing three such stations inside South Africa, the Minitrack Radio Tracking Station located in Esselen Park, the Baker-nin Optical Tracking Station located in Olifants-fontein, and the Project Syncom Deep Space Probe Tracking Station recently completed at Hartebeeshoek Farm in the Krugersdorf District. ("The Global Context of U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Southern Africa," Africa Today, Summer, 1972.)
Recently, it has been learned that new collaboration between West Germany and South Africa has resulted in the establishment of an intelligence and control center, Project Advocat, in the town of Silvermine near Simonstown, "which can control all ship and air movements in an area reaching from the Cape to North Africa, to the South American Coast, the South Pole and India [...]. All spare parts were given NATO code numbers by the Germans." (Peter Enahoro, "South Africa and the Bomb," Africa, no 51, November 1975.)

Now, NATO apparently has a communications link in that area which supplements the one developed in Ethiopia, Liberia, and eventually on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

Most crucial of these relations for the future, however, is the growing nuclear development in South Africa, which the African National Congress (ANC) has attempted to call to the attention of the world. It is a little known fact that South Africa has the second largest supply of uranium in the world, with 23 percent of the total world supply. Nuclear cooperation between the United States and South Africa started in 1947 and continued under the Atoms for Peace Program until 1967 when scientists at Oak Ridge, Tenn., built the first atomic reactor for South Africa.

Now, West Germany, through the state-owned Society for Nuclear Research (STEAG company) is assisting South Africa in the development of uranium enrichment processes. So far, the success of this collaboration has meant that South Africa is building a plant which will be in operation by 1984 and which will have the capability to produce enriched uranium for sale 40 percent cheaper than the present price. No doubt, its largest customer will be the United States. A.J.A. Roux, president of the South African Atomic Energy Board, once said, "naturally South Africa would look at the countries friendly to South Africa in the first place," with respect to uranium sales. (New York Times, November 23, 1975.)

This also raises the specter of South African possession of a nuclear bomb. South Africa already has air to air and air to ground missiles, and as such, a delivery system for tactical nuclear weapons arsenal. But there is the real possibility that much of Africa could be put into a situation of nuclear blackmail, this dichotomy the revolutionary line-
tude for the exercise of "Cold War Diplomacy," and the Old Left views it as an opportunity to reorganize its ranks around a "stop the war" program. Blacks must say to the policy planners that they now know that "containment" alone is not the real objective of the "Cold War," it is the struggle for control and dominance of people, territory, and resources by both the Eastern and Western bloc states. Containment is, then, not merely a reaction to the threat of military expansion, but a sincere conflict of interest over material and cultural hegemony. As such, the "Cold War" has never died.

Blacks must say to the Old Left that to struggle to "stop the war" is not sufficient, because Blacks now believe Raymond Aron and Von Clausewitz, who said that war is an extension of national policy (the pursuit of national policy by other means). If one would genuinely struggle against war, then, one must combat internal racism and the exploitation of capitalism, because they are the motive force of war. If there were no racism, wars could not be fought which devastate human lives and the territory of Third World countries. If there were no excesses of capitalism, wars would not be fought for strategic access to the resources of these countries.

In a sense, Angola is another Vietnam, but the analysis of it and the strategies to stop it must improve if this situation is to have a productive outcome for the whole of Southern Africa.  

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