The London School of Economics and Political Science

Our Sacred Duty: The Soviet Union, the Liberation Movements in the Portuguese Colonies, and the Cold War, 1961-1975

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

I declare that my thesis consists of 99,990 words.

I can confirm that my thesis was copy edited for conventions of language, spelling and grammar by Clare Fitzsimmons.

I have followed the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition, for referencing. In the body of this thesis, Russian place and personal names are transliterated using the simplified version of BGN/PCGN (the British Standard) system, with soft signs, apostrophes, and diacritical marks omitted throughout. In the notes and bibliography, all works that appear in Russian are cited in standard, contemporary Russian, transcribed according to the BGN/PCGN system, with appropriate diacritical marks. I have followed the conventions of American punctuation and spelling.

Abstract

In 1961, a series of uprisings exploded in Angola, Portugal's largest colony in Africa. A struggle for the independence of all the Portuguese colonies in Africa followed, organized by the national liberation movements: the MPLA, FNLA, and UNITA in Angola, FRELIMO in Mozambique, and the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau. The wars would end in 1974, following a military coup d'état in Lisbon and the dissolution of the Portuguese dictatorship during the Carnation Revolution. This thesis explores fourteen years of anti-colonial campaigns: the people who led the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies, the cadres these leaders encountered in Moscow, East Berlin, Prague, Sofia, and Warsaw, and the international environment they faced. It begins by looking at contacts forged between Soviet cadres and African nationalist leaders from Portuguese colonies in the late 1950s, before offering detailed analysis of why the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia offered assistance to the MPLA and the PAIGC in 1961, the same year Angola erupted into spasms of racial violence and the Soviet Union and the United States locked horns over the status of West Berlin. The subsequent chapters analyze the evolution of Soviet relations with the liberation movements during the 1960s and 1970s, the role this relationship played in shaping Soviet attitudes and policy in Africa, and the significance of Soviet bloc assistance in anti-colonial campaigns. This thesis also looks at the diplomacy of the liberation movements and their ideological and organizational transformations over fourteen years of guerrilla war. The final chapter evaluates the Soviet role in the decolonization of Portuguese Africa following the fall of the Portuguese dictatorship and investigates why the Soviets decided to intervene on behalf of the MPLA in the pivotal event of this thesis – the beginning of the civil war in Angola in 1975.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAPSO	Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization
ANC	*Armée Nationale Congolaise* (Congolese National Army)
ANC	African National Congress
BCP	Bulgarian Communist Party
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CC	Central Committee
CEL	*Comité Executivo da Luta* (Executive Committee of the Struggle, PAIGC)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (US)
CIR	*Centro de Instrução Revolucionário* (Centre for Revolutionary Instruction)
Comintern	Communist International
CONCP	*Conferência das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas* (Conference of Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies)
CSL	*Conselho Superior da Luta* (Higher Council of the Struggle, PAIGC)
FAPLA	*Forças Armadas Popular para Libertação de Angola* (Popular Armed Forces the Liberation of Angola, MPLA)
FARP	*Forças Armadas Revolucionarias do Povo* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of the People, PAIGC)
FLEC	*Frente para a Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda* (Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda)
FLN	*Front de Libération Nationale* (National Liberation Front, Algeria)
FNLA	*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* (National Front for the Liberation of Angola)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)
FRELIMO	*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (Mozambique Liberation Front)
GDR	German Democratic Republic (East Germany)
GRAE	*Governo Revolucionário Angolano no Exílio* (Revolutionary Angolan Government in Exile)
GRU	*Glavnoe Razvedyvatelnoe Upravlenie* (Chief Intelligence Directorate, USSR)
KGB	*Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* (Committee for State Security, USSR)
KMO	*Komitet Molodezhnykh Organizatskiy* (Committee of Youth Organizations, USSR)
CPC	Communist Party of Czechoslovakia
MAC	*Movimento Anti Colonialista* (Anti-Colonial Movement)
MANU	Mozambique African National Union

MfAA	*Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten* (Ministry of Foreign Relations, GDR)
MFA	*Movimento das Forças Armadas* (Armed Forces Movement, Portugal)
MPLA	*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola)
NESAM	*Núcleo dos Estudantes Africanos Secundários de Moçambique* (Nucleus of Secondary African Students of Mozambique)
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PCP	Portuguese Communist Party
PIDE	*Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado* (International and State Defense Police, Portugal)
PUWP	Polish United Workers' Party
PAIGC	*Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde* (Party for Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde)
SADF	South African Defense Force
SKSNAA	*Sovetskiy Komitet Solidarnosti s Narodami Azii i Afriki* (Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Peoples of Asia and Africa)
StB	*Státní Bezpečnost* (State Security, Czechoslovakia)
SED	*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Socialist Unity Party of Germany, GDR)
SWAPO	South West African People's Organization
TASS	*Telegrafnoye Agentstvo Sovietskogo Soyuza* (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union)
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
UDENAMO	*União Democrática Nacional de Moçambique* (National Democratic Union of Mozambique)
UNAMI	*União Africana de Moçambique Independente* (African Union for Independent Mozambique)
UNITA	*União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (National Union for Total Independence of Angola)
UPA	*União das Populações de Angola* (Union of Peoples of Angola*)*
UPNA	*União das Populações do Norte de Angola* (Union of the Peoples of the North of Angola)
VTsSPS	*Vsesoyuznyi Tsentral'nyi Sovet Proffessional'nykh Soyuzov* (All-Union Central Soviet of Trade Unions)
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union

INTRODUCTION

"We are approaching Luanda, but there is nobody at the airport. Our An-12 lands. I walk out. In front of me, I see an Angolan soldier, who stands ten to fifteen feet away. He carries an American automatic rifle, hanging on a piece of rope. His eyes are blank. Holding his finger on the trigger, he aims at my stomach. Whoever is in charge at the airport is unclear. I cannot reach him because he will open fire and riddle me with bullets. He stares at me meaninglessly; and I assume that he does not even know Portuguese. I was rescued by the chief of airport security, an Angolan, who knew me well. He ran towards me for like hundred and fifty meters, shouting, 'Boris.' This helped me. Then we were accompanied to our hotel."[1]

Thus Boris Putilin, a Soviet military intelligence officer, recalls arriving at Angola's capital Luanda on 11 November 1975, the day scheduled to mark the independence of Angola, Portugal's largest remaining colony. Putilin had arrived as a part of a delegation led by Yevgeniy Afanasenko, the Soviet Ambassador to Congo-Brazzaville, who had been invited to participate in independence celebrations and the inauguration of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA; *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*) as the new government of Angola. Putilin recalled that at 11am, their delegation was accompanied to Luanda's city hall for the inauguration of MPLA's President Agostinho Neto as the first President of Angola. Yevgeniy Afanasenko addressed the crowds from a balcony of the city hall, passing on greetings from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the Soviet people in a show of solidarity with the MPLA.[2] These were no ordinary celebrations, as Putilin's account of their arrival at the airport clearly indicated.

Celebrations were short, taking place against the backdrop of Angola's slide into a bloody civil war. Only a few months earlier, fighting had broken out between the

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[1] Boris Putilin, "My Obespechivali MPLA Oruzhiem." *Vospominaniya Neposredstvennykh Uchastnikov i Ochevidtsev Grazhdanskoi Voyny v Angole: Ustnaia Istoriia Sabytykh Voin*. Eds. Vladimir Shubin and Andrey Tokarev (Moscow: Memories, 2009), pp. 23-24.
[2] Ibid., p. 24.

MPLA and the other two liberation movements contending for power in Angola: the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA; *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola*) and the National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA; *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola*). By November, the FNLA, armed by Zaire, the Republic of South Africa, and the United States, had amassed troops outside of Luanda, in an attempt to take over the MPLA-controlled capital. On 10 November, the FNLA launched a major assault on Luanda, but the MPLA, armed with Soviet weapons and backed up by a team of Cuban Special Forces, retaliated. At midnight on 11 November, crowds crammed themselves into Luanda's stadium, cheering and firing weapons into the night sky as the MPLA's red and black flag was raised to the sounds of the new national hymn, *Angola Avante* ("Forward Angola!").[3] 11 November thus marked a turning point in the history of Angola, a country that had already become a bone of contention in the Cold War.

11 November 1975 was also a turning point in the history of European imperialism. The Portuguese empire had crumbled following a military coup in Lisbon on 25 April 1974, which put an end to almost half a century of dictatorial rule by António Oliveira Salazar and his successor Marcelo Caetano. To a great extent, the coup of 25 April was spurred by fourteen years of colonial wars, waged by the army in Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau from 1961 until 1974. Shortly after the coup, Lisbon launched negotiations on decolonization of the colonies with the liberation movements that had spearheaded the armed struggle against colonial rule. On 10 September 1974, Portugal transferred power to the Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC; *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde)* in Guinea-Bissau, and on 25 June 1975 to the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO; *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique)* in Mozambique. On 10 November, the last Portuguese soldiers left Luanda for Lisbon by sea, signaling the formal dissolution of the last colonial empire.

[3] "Angola: A Brief Ceremony, a Long Civil War," Time 24 November, 1975.

In this thesis, I trace the history of Soviet relations with the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC from the early 1960s until independence in 1975, during fourteen years of anti-colonial campaigns. The Soviet contribution to the anti-colonial struggles was celebrated as a major achievement in the 1970s, but Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the CPSU since 1985, was not particularly interested in the Third World and scaled down Soviet involvement by the late 1980s. The very essence of Soviet policy in the Third World was passionately debated during Gorbachev's perestroika until the very end of 1991 when the dissolution of the USSR put a temporary end to those debates since all the institutions and policies of the CPSU no longer seemed valid.[4] The Soviet role in the anti-colonial campaigns in the Portuguese colonies or Africa in general is no longer a subject of public debate, remaining a topic of discussion for a narrow circle of experts and former participants. If so little connects us to this history today, why does the study of this episode in Soviet history matter?

My personal source of a potential answer lies in a story told to me by my late grandfather, Moisey Slutskiy, who in 1945 was a twenty-three-year-old Red Army officer in a mounted artillery regiment. My grandfather, having been present at the legendary meeting between the Red Army soldiers and their American counterparts on the Elbe, was invited with his fellow officers to a dance hosted by the Americans. He found himself dancing with a young American woman, who looked dark-skinned. A fluent English speaker, my grandfather rather innocently asked the young woman whether she was from the South of the United States. Instantly offended at his remark, the woman broke down crying, as she inferred that my grandfather's question alluded to her black ancestry. The Americans accused my grandfather of insulting the woman by asking this question, leading my grandfather to explain that being black was not considered an insult in the Soviet Union.

Attitudes towards race among ordinary people in the Soviet Union were not as uniformly positive as state-sponsored propaganda would like you to believe. There

[4] For an example of such a discussion, see: *Sovremennyi Etap Razvitiya Stran Azii i Afriki i Dvizhenie Solidarnosti: Materialy Siskussii*. Ed. Komitet Solidarnosti Stran Azii i Afriki (Moskva: 1991).

was also state-sponsored anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, of which my grandfather himself was a victim. However, this story shows that, for millions of Soviet citizens, the explicitly non-racist ideology of Marxism-Leninism was not an empty slogan, but formed part of a bold world-making project, which envisioned the emergence of a socialist commonwealth where class would supersede race, ethnicity, and nationality. The USSR is long gone, but nostalgia for the ideals that this project represented remains with us today, however flawed its implementation. Unfortunately, debate on Soviet history in Russia is stifled by the current political elites, who often invoke the populism of the USSR without its egalitarianism. My intention is thus to stimulate free discussion of this period, and maybe help the new generation formulate a new conception of Russia's place in the world. Before proceeding to outline the substantive findings of this thesis, it is worth pausing for an overview of the existing literature that has informed and inspired my work.

One set of authors dealt specifically with the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC: their leaders, the twists and turns of the anti-colonial campaigns, intra-movement feuds, and diplomatic strategies. Among the earliest narrators of the anti-colonial struggles were left-wing European and American intellectuals, such as the famous British journalist and political activist Basil Davidson, who ventured into the so-called "liberated areas" of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau in the 1960s and the early 1970s motivated by a moral imperative to attract international attention to the wars. Given that the central premise of the Salazarist propaganda machine was to dismiss the liberation movements as communist creations, these authors made every effort to portray these organizations as genuinely popular and independent movements.[5] The Soviet scholarship of the liberation movements is limited to accounts by journalists like Oleg Ignatyev, who wrote about the liberation movements from an insider's perspective. If Western intellectuals limited their discussion to foreign influences on

[5] Basil Davidson, *In the Eye of the Storm: Angola's People* (Harmondsworth: 1975); Basil Davidson, *The Liberation of Guiné: Aspects of an African Revolution* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969); Barbara Cornwall, *The Bush Rebels: a Personal Account of Black Revolt in Africa* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972); Iain Christie, *Samora Machel: a Biography*. 2nd (London: Panaf, 1989); Patrick Chabal, *Amilcar Cabral: Revolutionary Leadership and People's War*. African studies series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

the liberation movements, Soviet journalists, on the contrary, often highlighted a connection between the anti-colonial campaigns and the international communist movement, and did not shy away from underlining Soviet contributions to the cause. Both pictured the leaders of the liberation movements in a very positive light, often paying very little attention to more controversial aspects of the struggle.[6] John Marcum's two-volume *Angolan Revolution* is a notable exception, as he provided a fairly impartial account of Angola's liberation movement prior to 1975, unrivalled in detail and coverage.[7]

One of the most recent trends has been to re-examine the history of the liberation struggles from the vantage point of subalterns, to look at the traumatic experiences of common people as they faced the tyranny of the colonial system and the coercion of the guerrillas.[8] Overall, this represents one aspect of a broader tendency to write more critically about the heavily mythologized history of the liberation movement. Examples include such works as Mustafa Dhada's *Warriors at Work*, João Cabrita's *The Torturous Road to Democracy*, and Lara Pawson's *In the Name of the People*, even though the political views and interpretations of these authors are quite different.[9] This is not to say that enthusiasm for individual leaders of the liberation movements has dried up, as evidenced by Sarah LeFanu's biography of Mozambique's first president Samora Machel, *S for Samora*, or by the publication of numerous volumes on the PAIGC's first leader, Amílcar Cabral.[10]

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[6] Oleg Ignatyev, *Operatsiya 'Kobra-75'* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1978); Oleg Ignatyev, *Syn Afriki. Amilkar Kabral* (Moscow: Isdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1975); Tomas Kolesnichenko, *Granitsu Perekhodyat v Polnoch:* Pis'ma *iz Angoly* (Moscow: Molodaya Gvardiya, 1966).

[7] John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution: The Anatomy of an Explosion (1950-1962)*. Studies in Communism, Revisionism, and Revolution. Vol. 1 (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969); John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution: Exile Politics and Guerrilla Warfare (1962-1976)*. Studies in Communism, Revisionism, and Revolution. Vol. 2 (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1978).

[8] Merle Bowen, *The State Against the Peasantry: Rural Struggles in Colonial and Postcolonial Mozambique* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 2000); Jean-Michel Mabeko Tali, *Dissidências e Poder de Estado: o MPLA Perante si Próprio (1962-1977): Ensaio de História Política*. Colecção Ensaio 2 vols (Luanda, Angola: Editorial Nzila, 2001); Inge Brinkman, *A War for People: Civilians, Mobility, and Legitimacy in South-East* Angola *during MPLA's War for Independence* (Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe, 2005).

[9] Mustafah Dhada, *Warriors at Work: How Guinea was Really Set Free* (Niwot, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 1993); João M. Cabrita, *Mozambique: the Tortuous Road to Democracy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000); Lara Pawson, *In the Name of the People: Angola's Forgotten Massacre* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014).

[10] Sarah LeFanu, *S is For Samora: A Lexical Biograpy of Samora Machel* (London: Hurst & Company, 2012); John Fobanjong and Thomas Ranuga, *The Life, Thought, and Legacy of Cape Verde's Freedom Fighter Amilcar Cabral (1924-1973): essays on his liberation philosophy* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006); Carlos Lopes, *Africa's Contemporary Challenges: the Legacy of Amilcar Cabral* (London: Routledge, 2010); Firoze Manji, ed. *Claim No Easy Victories: The Legacy of Amilcar Cabral* 2013).

While scholarship on the liberation movements is quite substantial, the Soviet involvement in the anti-colonial struggles has not received the same kind of attention. The main goal of Western scholars studying Soviet interventions in southern Africa in the 1970s and 1980s was to analyze the reasons for interventions and to predict future behavior. Some observed that Soviet policy was essentially expansionist, driven by competition with the United States, and conducted through so-called proxies, such as the GDR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Cuba.[11] Others attempted to analyze the trajectory of Soviet views on the liberation movements with a bit more complexity by looking at publicly available documents. Galia Golan, for example, managed to trace a long record of internal Soviet debates about the liberation movements, with the so-called dogmatists, who often favored support for the movements as manifestations of worldwide revolution, aligned against the realists or pragmatists, who were generally skeptical about the revolutionary potential of the liberation movements.[12] Mark Katz surveyed the military literature on the subject and concluded that the Soviet military were enthusiastic supporters of wars of national liberation, with the party leadership coming around to accept the military's view in the 1970s after the Soviet Union had reached nuclear parity with the United States.[13]

Soviet involvement on the side of the MPLA in the Angolan Civil War has been the subject of numerous studies, with each author giving different weights to ideology vs. strategic interests, and the importance of competition with the US vs. with China in Soviet considerations, but with all underlining that the Soviet Union had become more assertive in the 1970s because of changes in strategic capabilities.[14] One problem with these case studies, like David Kempton's *Soviet Strategy Towards Southern Africa,* was the attempt to view the practice of Soviet policy in Africa through a political science

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[11] See, for example: Alvin Rubinstein, *Moscow's Third World Strategy* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988); Richard Shultz, *The Soviet Union and Revolutionary Warfare: Principles, Practices and Regional Comparisons* (Standord: Hoover Institution Press, 1988).

[12] Galia Golan, *The Soviet Union and National Liberation Movements in the Third World* (Boston, MA: Allen & Unwin, 1988).

[13] Mark Katz, *The Third World in Soviet Military Thought* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1982).

[14] The substantive works include: Colin Legum and Tony Hodges, *After Angola: the War over Southern Africa* (London,: 1976); Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, *The Angolan War: a Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World*. Westview Studies on Africa (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1980); Keith Somerville, *Angola: Politics, Economics and Society*. Marxist Regimes Series (London: Pinter, 1986); Fernando Andresen Guimarães, *The Origins of the Angolan Civil War: Foreign Intervention and Domestic Political Conflict* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001).

framework.[15] Yet another problem was the lack of any primary sources, since Soviet archives were inaccessible, which meant that most of the narrative was inevitably based on conjecture.

The end of the Cold War has transformed the literature on Soviet engagement with the liberation movements in two important ways. One trend has been to rediscover the role of ideology in the analysis of the Cold War. Arne Westad argued in *The Global Cold War* that both superpowers were driven to intervene in the Third World because of their respective ideologies, but Westad also went much further by explaining how Third World elites responded to and aligned themselves with the competing ideologies, often with devastating consequences. Westad devoted one chapter to the Cold War interventions in southern Africa and reconstructs a detailed narrative of the crisis in Angola following the 1974 coup d'état in Lisbon. He explained Soviet interventions in Africa through the change in the balance of strategic capabilities at the turn of the 1970s, as well as the growing confidence in the prospects of socialism felt by the cadres of the International Department as a by-product of the Vietnam War. His discussion of the Soviet intervention in Angola – based on a unique collection of primary sources and interviews with former participants – depicted a slow build-up of assistance to the MPLA, with Fidel Castro constantly prodding Moscow to commit greater resources to the cause, and with the Soviet leadership finally opting for all-out assistance after the invasion by the South African Defense Force in October 1975.[16]

Conflicting Missions by Piero Gleijeses is an excellent example of the trend to recover the importance of regional or non-superpower actors in the Cold War. He convincingly argues that Cuba's assistance to revolutions in Africa had nothing to do with instructions from Moscow, but that Fidel Castro fashioned himself as a revolutionary leader in his own terms, and that Cubans sacrificed much more than the

[15] Daniel Kempton, *Soviet Strategy toward Southern Africa: the National Liberation Movement Connection* (London: Praeger, 1989).
[16] Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Soviets had ever done for the cause of liberation and revolutionary change in Africa. Gleijeses disagrees with Westad about certain aspects of Cuban involvement in the Angolan Civil War, taking issue in particular with Westad's argument that the Soviets threw their support behind the MPLA after Pretoria invaded southern Angola in October 1975.[17]

In *The Hot Cold War*, Vladimir Shubin, who had been involved in support of the liberation movements in Southern Africa as Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity Committee (1969-1979) and Head of the African Section of the CPSU International Department (1982-1991), built his narrative on the premise that Soviet involvement in Southern Africa was productive and that it was motivated by the Leninist principle of proletarian internationalism. Shubin reminded us that one has to understand the progress of the anti-colonial struggles in order to see what policy options the Soviet cadres actually had with regard to the liberation movements. Perhaps most importantly, Shubin recovered the contributions of many Soviet men (there were very few women at the highest ranks of Soviet foreign policy apparatus) – the "unsung heroes" as he calls them – and their relationships with African leaders in explaining the reasons for Soviet involvement in Southern Africa.[18]

The broad surveys of the Cold War do not challenge the general narrative of Soviet intervention in Angola constructed by Westad and Gleijeses, but differ in their interpretative emphasis depending on the specific arguments of each author. "Why would Leonid Brezhnev, in his declining years, go adventuring in places like Angola, Mozambique, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan?" asked John Lewis Gaddis in his 1997 reinterpretation of the Cold War, *We Now Know.* This had to do with the efforts of old revolutionaries, he answered himself, for "reasons more sentimental than rational," to convince themselves that the compromises they had to make while coming to power were not all in vain, that revolution had to succeed.[19] In *For the Soul of Mankind*,

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[17] Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
[18] Vladimir Shubin, *The Hot Cold War: the U.S.S.R in Southern Africa* (London: Pluto Press, 2008).
[19] John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War history* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 187.

Melvyn Leffler argues that Brezhnev and his comrades, who "took their communism seriously" even if they did not want to jeopardize détente, were spurred into action by Cuba's leadership, which "maneuvered the Kremlin into giving more aid than Soviet leaders had intended," and by the South African military intervention.[20]

In *Failed Empire,* Vladislav Zubok suggests that Soviet foreign policy from Stalin to Gorbachev could be explained in terms of the "revolutionary-imperial paradigm," a mix of Stalin's *Realpolitik* and Marxism-Leninism. While it helped forge alliances between the ideologues, the military, and the managers of the military-industrial complex, this paradigm also imprisoned the Soviet leadership, which became unable to walk away from commitments that often led to spending at home and adventurism abroad. Zubok argues that under Brezhnev, a certain myopic attitude set in. The Soviet leadership became "incapable of bold schemes and initiatives," which meant that it took other dynamic players, such as Angola's Agostinho Neto, Ethiopia's Mengistu Haile Mariam, and Cuba's Fidel Castro, to "drag the Soviet leaders into the African gambit."[21]

John Haslam, in his most recent study *Russia's Cold War,* agrees with the prevailing view that ideology did matter for the Soviet leadership, but goes further by suggesting that Moscow often pursued a quite aggressive strategy towards revolutionary goals. He devotes two chapters to Soviet policy in Portugal after the coup of 25 April 1974, arguing that Moscow acted decisively in the hope of "luring Portugal into the Soviet camp and, at the very least, ensuring the emergence of its colonies in Africa as states under communist auspices."[22] While ideology emerges as one of the key explanatory variables for Soviet policy in southern Africa, there are a number of differences as to how much the Soviets were "pulled in" to each of these engagements by various third-party actors.

The historiography is thus heavily focused on the 1970s, with the Soviet

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[20] Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), p. 255.
[21] Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press 2007), p. 251.
[22] Jonathan Haslam, *Russia's Cold War: from the October Revolution to the Fall of the Wall* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 286-287.

leadership depicted as being spurred into action by so-called peripheral actors. Tony Smith summarized this argument when he wrote: "Moscow was long doubtful that Africa was an interesting place for it to pursue its interests, and it took Castro – not Africans – to persuade Moscow it should become involved there, something that did not occur until 1975."[23] This interpretation lacks any substantial discussion of the role that the anti-colonial struggles in the former Portuguese colonies played in Soviet calculations, starting from the early 1960s and continuing until the Angolan Civil War in 1975. More specifically, there is little explanation of exactly why the Soviet cadres and their counterparts in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, the GDR, and elsewhere became committed to supporting the anti-colonial struggles in the first place. It was not clear from these accounts as to whom was driving this engagement forward, and how this changed over the course of the 1960s and early 1970s. What is more, there is a heavy emphasis on Angola in the existing historiography, but very little understanding of the role that the liberation movement in Guinea-Bissau played in Soviet policy in Africa. The goal of this thesis is to address some of these gaps.

I make three main contributions to our understanding of Soviet relations with the liberation movements during the Cold War. The first relates to the *timing* of the Cold War in the Portuguese colonies. I argue that despite the general emphasis on the 1970s, it was during a major popular revolt against colonial rule in Angola—known as the Angolan Uprising of 1961—when the Cold War initially spread to Portuguese Africa. I argue that it was during that year that competition between superpowers over the Portuguese colonies originally began, spurred by demands for assistance from the radical African nationalists in an environment of mounting international tensions. It was in 1961 that the Soviet Union provided its first assistance package to the MPLA, while the United States became committed to their main rival, the FNLA (or rather its predecessor), thus internationalizing the divisions befalling the Angolan liberation movement. This thesis thus contributes to what James Hershberg termed a

[23] Tony Smith, "New Bottles for New Wine: A Pericentric Framework for the Study of the Cold War," *Diplomatic History,* 24 4 (2000): p. 576.

"retroactive de-bipolarization" of the Cold War.[24]

My second contribution is towards a debate on Soviet *goals* and *strategy*. In terms of goals, I agree that the driving motivation for Soviet involvement with the liberation movements in the post-war period was driven by the ideological imperative of Marxist-Leninism, defined by a system of beliefs that essentially envisioned the world in terms of competition between the two systems of capitalism and socialism. Ideological considerations were also instrumental in the process of selecting the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC for donor status and determining levels for assistance. However, the Soviet revolutionary goals were implemented with a great deal of pragmatism, consideration for military realities on the ground, and often with a great deal of caution. While ideology did define the engagements with the liberation movements, this was a rather low-priority area, especially for the members of the highest-ranking organ in the Soviet hierarchy: the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (hereafter CC CPSU).[25]

My final and perhaps most important contribution relates to the question of *agency* driving Soviet involvement with the liberation movements in the former Portuguese colonies. I argue that it was primarily the leaders of the liberation movements who pulled the superpowers into their struggles, through the relationships they forged with middle-ranking officials at various levels of the Soviet bureaucracy, including the CC CPSU International Department, the Military, the KGB, and the Soviet diplomatic community. I show that it is only by taking into account these personal bonds that we can explain how the leaders of the liberation movements managed to sustain and expand the commitment of the socialist countries to their cause throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. I also demonstrate that it is only by considering the actions, urgings, and proddings of the MPLA leadership, the personal relationships forged at various levels between the Soviet bureaucrats and the African nationalists,

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[24] James G. Hershberg, "The Crisis Years, 1958-1963." *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory*. Ed. Odd Arne Westad (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 304.

[25] The Politburo was renamed *Presidium* at the Nineteenth Congress of the CPSU 1952. *Presidium* was then renamed Politburo at the Twenty-Third Congress of the CPSU in 1966.

and the international environment that one can understand the pivotal event in this thesis: the Soviet involvement in the Angolan Civil War in 1975.

The full story of this period remains buried in the archives of the Russian Federation, because the vast majority of Soviet-era documents for this period and topic are still classified. Of the few resources that are available, I have used the records of the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Countries of Asia and Africa (SKSNAA or Soviet Solidarity Committee; *Sovetskiy Komitet Solidarnosti s Narodami Azii i Afriki)* located at the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF; *Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii*). I also looked at the newly declassified records of the Committee of Youth Organizations (KMO; *Komitet Molodezhnykh Organizatskiy*) at the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI; *Rossiiskii Gosudarsvennyi Arkhiv Sotsialno-politicheskoi Istorii*) and documents of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, partially declassified at the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF; *Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii*). While records of the CC CPSU for this period remain largely classified, I have used documents of the CPSU Propaganda Department and those collected under the title "fond 89," housed at the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI; *Rossiiskii Gosudarsvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii*). The files of the two main Soviet intelligence services, the First Directorate of the Committee for State Security (KGB; *Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti*) and the Chief Intelligence Directorate (GRU; *Glavnoe Razvedyvatelnoe Upravlenie*), remain completely closed. To at least partially fill those gaps, I have looked at the archives of the former ruling communist parties of the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Poland. I have to specifically acknowledge the records of the Czechoslovak Security Services (StB; *Státní Bezpečnost*) for their help in partially reconstructing the role of the intelligence services in this story.[26]

I have also greatly benefited from the memoirs of the former Soviet cadres,

[26] See the full list of archives used at the end of this dissertation.

such as Petr Yevsyukov, Vasiliy Solodovnikov, Oleg Nazhestkin, Alexander Dzasokhov, Vadim Kirpichenko, Georgiy Kornienko, Anatoliy Chernyaev, and Karen Brutents, who were in one way or another involved with the liberation movements during this period.[27] As for primary sources on the liberation movements, I used collections of documents, interviews, and memoirs by former participants, such as the MPLA's Lúcio Lara, FRELIMO's Joaquim Chissano, Sérgio Vieira, and the PAIGC's Aristides Pereira.[28] While the historical record is far from complete, the partial opening of the archives, especially in Eastern Europe, allows us to reconstruct a more detailed story of Soviet relations with the liberation movements in the Portuguese African colonies.

Chapter One offers a detailed analysis as to why the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia offered assistance to the MPLA and the PAIGC in 1961, the same year that Angola erupted into spasms of racial violence and the Soviet Union and the United States locked horns over the status of West Berlin. It argues that 1961 was the key moment when the Cold War spread to Portuguese colonies, because it was during this year when the Soviet Bloc aligned with the MPLA and the United States with the rival group UPA, establishing the ideologically-charged system of alliances in the region. It also shows that from this time onwards there gradually emerged a group of people – middle-ranking officials across various departments - who become personally invested in the cause.

Chapter Two traces the trajectories of the anti-colonial campaigns waged by the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC between 1963 and 1966 from the vantage point of military strategy. It shows that the leaders of the liberation movements managed to

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[27] For recollections of Soviet diplomats who worked in Africa including Petr Yevsyukov, Pavel Danilov, Vasiliy Solodovnikov, and others, see a three-volume collection published by the Africa Institute in Moscow: Aleksey Vasilyev, ed. *Afrika v Vospominaniiakh Veteranov Diplomaticheskoi Sluzhby*. 3 vols (Moscow: Institut Afriki RAN, 2000-2004); Oleg Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady." *Vneshnyaya Razvedka*. Ed. Vladimir Karpov (Moscow: XXI Vek-Soglasie, 2000); Oleg Nazhestkin, "Superderzhavy i Sobytiya v Angole," *Novaya i Noveyshaya istoriya,* 4 (2005); Vadim Kirpichenko, *Razvedka: Litsa i Lichnosti* (Moscow: Geya, 1998); Karen Brutents, *Tridtsat' Let na Staroy Ploshchadi* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1998); Georgiy Kornienko, *Kholodnaia Voina: Svidetel'stvo ee Uchastnika* (Moscow: OLMA Press, 2001); Anatoliy Chernyaev, *Sovmestnyi Iskhod: Dnevnik Dvukh Epokh, 1972-1991* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008); Aleksander Dzasokhov, *Chelovek i Politika* (Moscow: Rossiyskaya Gaseta, 2009).

[28] For an official history of the MPLA, see a three-volume collection of documents compiled by Lúcio Lara: Lúcio Lara, ed. *Um Amplo Movimento: Itinerário do MPLA Através de Documentos e Anotações* 3vols (Luanda: Lúcio e Ruth Lara, 1997-2008); *Lúcio Lara: Tchiweka: Imagens de um Percurso... 80 anos...até à Conquista da Independência* (Luanda: Associação Tchiweka de Documentação, 2009); Sérgio Vieira, *Participei, por isso Testemunho*. 3 (Maputo: Ndjira, 2011); José Vicente Lopes, *Aristides Pereira: Minha Vida, Nossa História* (Lisboa: Spleen, 2012); Drumond Jaime and Hélder Barber, eds., *Angola: Depoimentos Para a História Recente* (Luanda: Edição dos Autores, 1999); Tor Sellström, ed. *Liberation in Southern Africa: Regional and Swedish voices* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999).

sustain the commitment of the socialist countries to their cause by means of vigorous diplomacy, and shows that Nikita Khrushchev's fall from power in October 1964 actually led to the expansion of Soviet aid to the liberation movements. This chapter also argues that it was during this period that the Soviet military became increasingly engaged with the leaders of the liberation movements.

Chapter Three looks at the ideological and organizational transformations of the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC between 1966 and 1970, and analyzes the reaction of the Soviet cadres to these changes. It shows that while the Soviets were skeptical about the revolutionary prospects of the liberation movements around 1966, their attitudes changed because they saw that the leaders of the liberation movements were increasingly adopting Marxist-Leninist ideology and certain organizational practices that borrowed, at least in rhetorical terms, from the Soviet experience. These experiences, coupled with the successes of the Soviet-backed North Vietnamese regime, meant that by 1969, the cadres of the CPSU International Department became quite optimistic about the revolutionary prospects in Southern Africa.

Chapter Four builds on the conclusions of the previous chapter, explaining why this growing confidence provided the foundation for the expansion of Soviet aid to the liberation efforts in the early 1970s. It then proceeds to explain how not only the international environment, but also the dynamics of the colonial wars (which saw major Portuguese offensives in all three territories) frustrated the Soviet expectations for serious advances in the Portuguese colonies. The chapter ends with an argument that the years 1970-1974 – the peak of détente – was actually a period of frustrated expectations for the Soviets in Southern Africa.

Chapter Five shows how the Soviet leadership responded to events following the 25 April 1974 coup in Lisbon. It argues that the Soviets were very anxious about developments in Portugal and tried to tread very carefully in order to keep the Portuguese communists part of the political process, which constrained their role in the decolonization of Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. Chapter Five also reveals that

the Soviet decision to arm the MPLA in late 1974 was inspired by their anxieties about an international conspiracy underway in Angola, a belief consistently spurred by the MPLA, which was locked in a bitter and increasingly violent competition with the local rivals. It shows that by the end of April, some middle-ranking officials who had already been invested in the political fate of the MPLA became increasingly skeptical about a non-violent solution in Angola and thus campaigned for greater commitment, ultimately swinging the general consensus in favor of all-out support following independence on 11 November 1975. The conclusion positions the history of Soviet involvement with the liberation movements in a broader framework.

What follows is the story of fourteen years of anti-colonial campaigns, of the people who led the anti-colonial movements in the Portuguese colonies, the bureaucrats they encountered in Moscow, East Berlin, Prague, Sofia, and Warsaw, and the international environment they faced. On one level, this thesis investigates the policies adopted by the leadership of the communist parties in Moscow, East Berlin, Prague, and Warsaw towards the anti-colonial movements in the Portuguese colonies. It investigates their goals and tactics, but also the personal relationships developed between cadres in the capitals of the socialist countries and the leaders of the national liberation movements. It is also a study of decolonization during the Cold War. It explains how nationalist leaders from the Portuguese colonies used the international environment to advance their cause by means of war and international diplomacy and how this environment affected their struggle. The title of this dissertation – *Our Sacred Duty* – is a direct quotation from the main instigator of Soviet involvement with the liberation movements, Nikita Khrushchev, but is also an allusion, describing how the cadres in the socialist countries viewed their commitment during this time period. Before going any further, I pause briefly to outline the Soviet views on the liberation movements in historical context and the development of the national liberation movements in Portuguese Africa.

PROLOGUE

Soviet Policy towards the Liberation Movements: from Lenin to Khrushchev

The founder of the Russian Bolshevik Party, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, first developed his views on national liberation movements during the First World War, in essays and works such as *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism* and *Notebooks on Imperialism*. He believed that the proletariat must help oppressed nations achieve political separation. "Otherwise, the internationalism of the proletariat would be nothing but empty words," wrote Lenin in an essay published in 1916.[29] Lenin believed that the national liberation movements in the "underdeveloped, backward, and oppressed nations" complemented the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the advanced countries.[30]

The Bolsheviks seized power in Russia on 25 October 1917, and Lenin could thus transform theory into practice. At the international meeting of communists held from 2 to 6 March 1919, at the height of the Russian Civil War, Lenin and his comrades founded the Third International (hereafter the Comintern), an organization dedicated to the spread of the communist revolution, deemed crucial to the survival of Soviet Russia. Under the strict control of the Bolsheviks, the Comintern grew into a massive and complex organization, which recruited, trained, and funded communist cells around the world in the 1920s and 1930s. In Africa, Lenin attributed the greatest importance to South Africa: as the most industrialized country on the continent, it had the greatest potential for a socialist revolution. In August 1921, a number of Marxist organizations in South Africa established a united party called "The Communist Party of South Africa, Section of the Communist International." In early 1922, the party was admitted into the Comintern.[31] In 1928, the Comintern founded the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers (ITUCNW) as a sub-section of the trade

[29] Quoted in Kevin Anderson, *Lenin, Hegel and Western Marxixm: a Critical Study* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), p. 140.
[30] Ibid., p. 143.
[31] For a detailed discussion of the Comintern and its activities in South Africa see: Irina Filatova and Apollon Davidson, *The Hidden Thread: Russia and South Africa in the Soviet Era* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2013).

union movement, in order to promote revolution among the black populations of the USA, the West Indies, and "Black Africa." George Padmore, a black Trinidadian activist and a member of the US Communist Party, was appointed its organizing secretary.

Lenin's successor – the General Secretary of the CC CPSU, Joseph Stalin – also believed in providing support for the worldwide communist revolution, but he was increasingly concerned with safeguarding the interests of Soviet Russia, especially against the backdrop of the increasingly imminent security threat emanating from Nazi Germany and Japan in the 1930s. This danger demanded that Stalin improve relations with Britain and France, both major colonial powers. The Comintern therefore drastically curtailed the activities of the ITUCNW, with articles on colonial matters almost disappearing from the pages of the Negro Worker in 1933. Padmore, like many other black revolutionaries, Communist and non-Communist alike, felt betrayed by what they perceived as Stalin's betrayal of the black liberation struggle. Padmore thus resigned from the ITUCNW, an act of disobedience for which he was officially expelled from the Communist movement in February 1934.[32] Padmore became very critical of Stalin's policies, like many of his generation, but still retained faith in the Soviet Union and the merits of a socialist planned economy. The ranks of the Comintern were thoroughly purged in the late 1930s, and the Comintern was officially abolished in 1943 because the onset of the Second World War and Stalin's prioritizing the maintenance of good relations with his allies in the Grand Alliance did not match the Comintern's goal of promoting a worldwide communist revolution. Consumed by post-war reconstruction and mounting tensions between the Soviet Union and the West after the Second World War, Stalin remained uninterested in other powers' colonies. Soviet policy thus remained unchanged until his death on 5 March 1953.

The renewal of Soviet interest in the Third World can be attributed to Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, who succeeded Stalin in the post of the CC CPSU General Secretary (renamed "First Secretary" in 1953). Khrushchev believed that the Soviet

[32] James Young, *Socialism Since 1889: A Biographical History* Rowman & Littlefield, 1988), p. 42.

Union should provide developmental assistance and advice to the newly independent states. On a lengthy state visit to India in 1955, Khrushchev's challenged the leaders of the capitalist states to "verify in practice whose system is better" and "compete without war."[33] His first major success came in September 1955, when Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser announced an agreement, brokered by Khrushchev, to purchase some $320 million worth of Soviet-made weapons from Czechoslovakia.

Khrushchev's interest in the developing world was primarily rooted in pragmatism. He realized that decolonization gave the Soviet Union a perfect opportunity to "extend a helping hand" to leaders of the newly independent states and, thus, win new friends for the Soviet side.[34] However, that was not his only motivation. While the prospects of socialism in the Western hemisphere were dim, the newly independent states provided a new frontier. Khrushchev saw that many nationalist leaders proclaimed their adherence to Marxism, which made him conclude that the chances of socialism developing in those countries were high. "There, in the colonies, the almost forgotten dream of revolution was reborn. It seemed to father that the world was beginning to stir, that with only a small effort there would be progress," recalled Khrushchev's son Sergey.[35]

It was not by chance that Czechoslovakia became the intermediary for Khrushchev's deal with Nasser. When the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC) took absolute control of the country in February 1948, Czechoslovakia already had commercial relations with several African countries, including Ethiopia, the Belgian Congo, Nigeria, and South Africa. By the late 1950s, Czechoslovakia had also developed an advanced arms manufacturing industry, having previously supplied weapons to the Little Entente—including Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia—in the 1920s, to Soviet Russia in the 1930s, and to Israel in 1948. Moreover, the First Secretary of the CPC, Antonín Novotný, was not a popular figure at home and relied on continuous

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[33] Quoted in Alexander Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War: the Inside Story of an American Adversary*. 1st (New York: Norton, 2006), p. 57.
[34] Georgiy Mirskiy, "Na znamenatel'nom rubezhe," *Vostok,* 6 (1996): 131.
[35] Sergey Khrushchev, *Nikita Khrushchev: Creation of a Superpower* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), p. 436.

support from Moscow. Khrushchev's new policy in the Third World thus allowed Novotný and the CC CPC Politburo to carve out a new significant role for Czechoslovakia, both in the Warsaw Pact and in the international arena.[36]

The leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) also became quite interested in Africa for reasons that were quite similar to the Czechoslovaks. Todor Zhivkov, the General Secretary of the BPC in power since 1954, had staked his political career on close relations with the Soviet leadership. Bulgaria, thus, followed Soviet foreign policy to the letter. The BCP had had long-standing connections with the CPSU, with the majority of its cadres coming of age during the interwar period, and a few had been involved in the Comintern's activities abroad. One example was Dimo Dichev, a long-time functionary in the BCP, who in the 1960s became the head of the BCP's "Foreign Policy and International Relations Department" (hereafter the Bulgarian International Department), the Bulgarian equivalent of the CPSU's International Department. Having spent most of his youth in prison for his participation in the communist underground, Dichev moved to the Soviet Union to study and then served in the Red Brigades during the 1936-1939 Spanish Civil War.[37] While one example is not sufficient to generalize about the experiences of every member of the BCP's Central Committee, it is important to remember that many Eastern European communists had shared similar experiences, which made them share the worldview of their Soviet counterparts. Because of these connections, the Bulgarian leadership shared not only a close personal relationship with the Soviets, but also a very similar worldview. By the early 1960s, then, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria had become active players on the African continent, supplying arms, developmental assistance, and technical expertise.

Khrushchev unveiled his foreign policy doctrine at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in February 1956. Khrushchev announced that a new world war was not fatalistically inevitable, that different countries could take different roads to socialism,

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[36] For further information, see: Petr Zídek and Karl Sieber, *Československo a Subsaharská Afrika v Letech 1948-1989* (Prague: Ústav Mezinárodních Vztahů, 2007), p. 315; Curt F. Beck, "Czechoslovakia's Penetration of Africa, 1955-1962," *World politics,* 15 3 (April 1963): 406.

[37] Personal file of Dimo Dichev, Rossiiskii Gosudarsvennyi Arkhiv Sotsialno-politicheskoi Istorii (hereafter RGASPI), f. 495, op. 195, d. 103.

and that the Soviet Union would strive for "peaceful coexistence" with the West. Khrushchev heralded the disintegration of the colonial system and invited the newly independent states to join together to form a "zone of peace." The most famous and momentous part of the Twentieth Congress was Khrushchev's unpublished address to the Congress (known as the "secret speech"), in which he denounced Stalin for his megalomania, for his central role in mass arrests and executions of the party cadres, for mass deportations, and for arrogance, which cost thousands of lives during the war. Khrushchev's promise was to revitalize the party and Soviet socialism by returning to the "Leninist principles", and the principle of "proletarian internationalism" alongside "peaceful co-existence" was one of those principles. Khrushchev's new foreign doctrine was, thus, an integral part of his de-Stalinization campaign, which opened the way for the partial liberalization of Soviet society known as "Khrushchev's Thaw."

Changes in Soviet foreign policy required a new theoretical foundation. This task fell to a group of experts working for the Institute of World Economy and International Relations in Moscow. Soviet experts would formulate a concept of "non-capitalist development," whereby a third-world country could skip the capitalist stage of development towards socialism via an intermediary stage characterized by heavy industrial development led by a "vanguard party." Georgiy Mirskiy, who was part of that expert group, wrote that even those of his colleagues who were critical of the Soviet system believed in the general crisis of capitalism and agreed that capitalism could not provide solutions to the problems of the developing countries. Mirskiy recalled: "We felt like innovators, working against Stalin's dogmatism, one can't understand this outside the historical context of the Twentieth Party Congress which changed the situation in the country within days."[38]

Khrushchev's new policy in the Third World raised the importance of the CC CPSU International Department, which became responsible for expanding Soviet contacts with the liberation movements. The International Department was

[38] Mirskiy, "Na znamenatel'nom rubezhe," p. 132.

responsible for setting the policy agenda, coordinating the work of the various Soviet public organizations, and allocating cash allowances for communist parties and liberation movements from the so-called "International Trade Union Fund for Assistance to Left Workers' Organizations."[39] Given that the International Department had to deal with foreigners, its cadres were recruited from academia, journalism, and research institutes, and were thus on average better educated than their counterparts who had made their careers by climbing up the party ranks. Nevertheless, the major priorities were established by the head of the International Department, Boris Nikolayevich Ponomarev.

Ponomarev was influenced by the Comintern era in many ways. Born in 1905, Ponomarev received his training at Moscow University and the University of Red Professors in 1932, after which he was appointed deputy director of the Institute of Party History and served as a personal assistant to the head of the Comintern, Georgiy Dimitrov. Karen Brutents, who was one of the senior advisers at the International Department in the 1970s, recalled that for Ponomarev, internationalism was not simply a slogan but a personal choice. Brutents recalled that Ponomarev was undoubtedly a staunch anti-Stalinist, but he still possessed the mentality of a former Comintern activist because he believed in the infallibility of the CPSU, had a tendency to preach, and often relied on KGB agents to make sure that the leaders of the foreign Communist parties and liberation movements would not deviate too far from the policy preferences established by the CC CPSU International Department.[40]

The relationship between the KGB and the International Department has been a subject of debate. One of Khrushchev's goals was to reduce the powers of the KGB in internal affairs. This task fell to a young and ambitious leader of the Komsomol youth organization, Alexander Shelepin, whom Khrushchev promoted to the post of KGB Chairman in 1958. Shelepin had graduated from the prestigious Moscow Institute of

[39] For discussion, see: Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 9.
[40] Brutents, *Tridtsat' Let na Staroy Ploshchadi*, 191. One reason why Ponomarev was a staunch anti-Stalinist was perhaps his personal experience of the Great Terror. In 1937, Ponomarev was accused of harboring personal sympathies for his former boss Vilgelm Knorin, a high-ranking Comintern functionary. However, he denied any connections and was not charged, maybe because of protection from Georgiy Dimitrov. See: Personal file of Boris Ponomarev, RGASPI, f. 495, op. 65a, d. 330.

Philosophy, Literature, and History, but his key career success came when he was working at the Moscow section of the Komsomol and recruited an 18-year-old female student named Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, whose martyrdom during partisan actions against invading German forces became the symbol of wartime resistance. When the story of Zoya's sacrifice appeared in the Soviet press, the young Shelepin was noticed by Stalin and quickly promoted through the ranks of the Soviet bureaucracy. Shelepin fully supported Khrushchev during the succession struggle, which is why the First Secretary trusted him with the reform of the security service.[41]

One of the ways that Khrushchev wanted to reduce the powers of the KGB was by redirecting their attention abroad, and Shelepin obliged. Given that the International Department was the decision-making agency in all matters relating to the liberation movements, the KGB and GRU intelligence officers actually fulfilled a supportive role, collecting information and implementing the International Department's policy agenda. Vadim Zagladin, one of Ponomarev's deputies, argued in a 2006 interview, that the KGB "never bossed us around, it was completely out of the question, while the opposite was actually the case."[42] No matter how many disagreements arose between the KGB and the International Department, their aims were ultimately the same: to facilitate the eventual victory of socialism worldwide. However, one can not really speak about the KGB's activities in Sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1950s because only in 1960 did the Agency send their first officers to the Congo, as will be further explained.

Only in 1958 did the CC CPSU enact a series of steps to expand Soviet influence in Africa, based on discussions of Soviet foreign policy experts at the closed-door "Conference of Soviet Orientalists," held between 28 October and 1 November. The Central Committee thus released two top-secret decrees, instructing various Soviet ministries to magnify radio and print propaganda in Africa, expand the number of scholarships for African students, and train a network of Soviet Africanists. The

[41] For a detailed bibliography of Alexander Shelepin, see: Leonid Mlechin, *Zheleznyi Shurik* (Moscow: Eksmo, 2004).
[42] Pamyati Vadima Zagladina (Sohranennoe Intervyu), www.svoboda.org.

Foreign Ministry was also instructed to establish a specialized desk to deal with newly independent countries in sub-Saharan Africa. A special role was given to the so-called 'public organizations': the All-Union Central Soviet of Trade Unions (VTsSPS; *Vsesoyuznyi Tsentralnyi Sovet Proffessionalnykh Soyuzov*), the Committee of Youth Organizations (KMO; *Komitet Molodezhnykh Organizatskiy*), and the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with the Countries of Africa and Asia (SKSNAA*; Sovetskiy Komitet Solidarnosti s Narodami Azii i Afriki*). The CPSU entrusted these organizations with expanding ties with the corresponding organizations in African countries, strengthening their contacts with the national liberation and workers' movements, and giving these movements full-fledged assistance.[43]

Of these three organizations, the Soviet Solidarity Committee would become the most important one in dealing with leaders of the national liberation movements. The Committee was established in 1956 as a Soviet branch of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) on the heels of the first meeting of the 1955 Bandung Conference. Cairo became the headquarters of the AAPSO's "Permanent Secretariat," which was led by the famous Egyptian writer Yusuf Al-Sibai. Thus, the Soviet Solidarity Committee was officially a public organization, funded by the Soviet people who donated to the World Peace Council. Its main decision-making organ, the Presidium, included well-known members of the Soviet intelligentsia, such as writers, journalists, and academics, thus providing an avenue for the Soviet intelligentsia to participate in political life. While the Soviet Solidarity Committee was overseen by the CC CPSU International Department, it acquired a certain influence of its own, given that the officials of the Solidarity Committee would often be the first point of contact for foreign revolutionary leaders visiting the USSR.[44]

Khrushchev was a pragmatist, but ideology played an important part in his turn towards the Third World. He saw decolonization as an opportunity for the Soviet

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[43] Sergey Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: the USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956-1964*. Cold War International History Project series (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), p. 19.
[44] The author's conversation with Alexander Dzasokhov, March 2010

Union to cultivate new friends or even allies, as well as an opportunity to increase his own international prestige and, thus, strengthen his standing in the party. The Soviet Union's activist policy in the Third World also provided opportunities for career advancement for young men and women, often recruited from the Soviet peripheral republics, thus also strengthening Khrushchev's domestic power base. However, Khrushchev also thought that in the Third World, socialism might advance with little effort. Khrushchev was a "Trotskyist," explained Filipp Bobkov, an unreformed Stalinist who made a career of chasing after dissidents while working at the KGB in the 1960s. "When Khrushchev came to power, he started fulfilling the idea of a world revolution," argued Bobkov in a 2007 interview.[45] Khrushchev's policy of third-world engagement found support not only among many senior and middle-ranking party who still remembered the heyday of the Comintern, but also among many young cadres who believed that Khrushchev's reforms could lead to the revitalization of Soviet society.

The Cold War in Africa Unfolds

Just like the Soviet Union, the United States did not have any long-term economic or strategic interests in sub-Saharan Africa, but had a long-standing anti-colonial tradition, rooted in its history of resistance against British rule. During the First World War, US President Woodrow Wilson had ignited the aspirations of nationalists around the world with his critique of the European colonial system and his rhetoric of "self-determination." For millions of colonial subjects, this meant a transformation of the international order, based on equality and national sovereignty. His use of the term was largely misinterpreted, argued the historian Erez Manela. Wilson meant to apply the principle of "self-determination" to Europe, and not to the colonial subjects. The history of race relations in the United States itself had influenced Wilson to believe that equality of peoples was only possible within the framework of

[45] Igor Ilinskiy, "Filipp Bobkov: SSSR Pogubili Trotzkisty Khrushchev i Gorbachev," Znanie. Ponimanie. Umenie 2007.

European tutelage. When colonial intellectuals attended the Paris Peace Conference hoping to find support, they were deeply disappointed to find that the European powers had no inclination to give up their colonial possessions; Wilson drafted his proposals for the "League of Nations" without any mention of national self-determination.[46] Following the First World War, the United States focused primarily on domestic affairs, a position known as "isolationism" in US foreign policy.

US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt again raised the colonial question during the Second World War. Roosevelt had a particular distaste for European colonialism, an issue on which he often clashed with his allied partners, most notoriously with British Premier Winston Churchill. Like his predecessors, Roosevelt shared the prevailing view that much of the colonial world was not yet ready for independence and that immediate independence would only lead to conflict, yet he believed that decolonization was inevitable and promoted his vision both in numerous private conversations with his European counterparts and in public speeches.[47]

The onset of the Cold War meant that the military preparedness of the United States and the Western alliance trumped any concerns for the welfare of the colonized peoples. The United States needed strong European powers to resist communism in Europe, and European colonial powers needed their empires for the reconstruction of their war-torn economies. The United States, therefore, did not press its post-war allies on decolonization, and even gave a helping hand to the colonial powers fighting anti-colonial nationalists, most infamously to the French in Indochina. European governance provided a guarantee that the colonial peoples would not succumb to communism. US President Dwight Eisenhower did not devote much attention to Africa in his first presidential term, as he preferred slow-paced decolonization under European control. His Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, once remarked in the late 1950s that none of the African colonies were capable of self-government any time

[46] Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: elf-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University PRess.

[47] For an overview of Roosevelt's wartime diplomacy, see: Warren F. Kimball, *The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

soon.[48] However, this attitude started to change during Eisenhower's second term in office, under the influence of Khrushchev's offensive.

Change began in 1957, when Vice President Richard Nixon made his first long tour of Africa. He came back convinced that the continent would become the next battlefield between the West and the Soviet bloc. "Communist leaders consider Africa today as important in their designs for world conquest as they considered China to be twenty-five years ago," argued Nixon in his report to Eisenhower. He therefore recommended that the United States should "strengthen its operations and programs," increase the effectiveness of the propaganda effort, and reinforce its representation in Africa.[49] Eisenhower and Dulles agreed to a policy review, and on 23 August, the National Security Council approved their final report, NSC 5719/1. "Communist control" in Africa could threaten NATO-bloc communications and strategic facilities and could lead to "economic dislocation" in Western Europe, according to the report, and thus the United States was to "combat Communist subversive activities" and support "constructive non-Communist, nationalist, and reform movements" in Africa.[50] While Khrushchev's motivation to engage with Africa was motivated in part by his ideological idealism, the guiding principle of US policy in Africa was to deny the continent to the Soviet Union.

Cold War rivalry in sub-Saharan Africa developed peacefully in the late 1950s, as both sides focused on economic relations. The first subject for competition was Ghana, formerly the British colony of the Gold Coast, which was, in 1957, the first colonized country in sub-Saharan Africa to achieve independence, with Kwame Nkrumah as the first Prime Minister. A leading pan-Africanist, Nkrumah held radical ideas, specifically arguing that socialism was more adaptable to African socio-cultural circumstances than capitalism, a doctrine that came to be referred to as "African socialism." Nkrumah was thus a fitting candidate to introduce socialism in Africa, but

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[48] Stanley Shaloff, ed. *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1955-1957 - Africa*. Vol. 18 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office 1989), Document 19.
[49] See: Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena*. Kindle (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).
[50] Shaloff, ed., *FRUS, 1955-1957 - Africa*, Document 24.

early Soviet efforts to establish formal diplomatic relations with Ghana and break the British monopoly on the Ghanaian cocoa trade proved difficult. Washington and London used all of their influence to keep the Soviet Union out of Ghana as long as possible. Soviet efforts proved more fruitful in Guinea, a former French colony in West Africa.

Guinea was a fairly unique case because of its decision to leave the French community after a successful referendum run by a radical nationalist leader, since 1958 the first president of independent Guinea, Ahmed Sékou Touré. Touré fashioned himself a radical leader and a staunch critic of colonialism. He wanted to pursue a neutralist policy, but he was left with little choice but to seek assistance from the Soviet Union when Paris cut all economic ties with Guinea following independence. In 1959, the Soviet Union signed a series of agreements with Guinea, including the provision of 140 million roubles in loans, repayable in twelve years with an interest rate of 2.5%, which Guinea could use to buy Soviet equipment and technology and repay with its own goods. Soviet experts also began working on the "socialist concept of development," which was to provide an alternative to a capitalist model based on principles of free trade and private enterprise. The Soviet establishment held high hopes for this project and were quite optimistic it would succeed.[51]

Khrushchev's optimism regarding Eisenhower and the benefits of peaceful competition steadily declined in 1960. Khrushchev was frustrated by a lack of progress on his proposals for arms limitations, and he was shocked when the U-2 spy plane piloted by Francis Gary Powers was discovered and shot down over Soviet territory on 1 May 1960. To add insult to injury, Eisenhower had lied to Khrushchev, trying to cover up US involvement. Yet another important reason for Khrushchev's growing hostility towards the Eisenhower administration was the crisis in the Congo. The Congo, otherwise referred to as Congo-Léopoldville, was a vast Belgian colony located in the heart of Africa, known for its vast mineral wealth, including much of the world's

[51] Alessandro Iandolo, "The rise and fall of the 'Soviet Model of Development' in West Africa, 1957–64," *Cold War History,* 12 4 (November 2012). Also see: Mazov, *Distant Front*.

supply of copper, cobalt, and uranium, mostly located in the south-western provinces of Katanga and Kasai. Following several years of violent protests in major cities, Brussels decided to grant independence to the Congo in early 1960. Following the first nationwide elections, radical nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba was appointed the first prime minister, while on 30 June the more conservative Joseph Kasavubu became the country's first president. However, a relatively peaceful transition turned violent less than a week later, when the Congolese army mutinied over pay and the presence of Belgian officers in the army. This revolt was quickly followed by a workers' strike, general chaos and violence against white citizens, the intervention of the Belgian army, and the secession of the Katanga province under a local strongman, Moïse Tshombe.

Lumumba interpreted the Belgian intervention as a neo-colonial coup rather than a rescue mission, and thus appealed to the international community, including Nikita Khrushchev, to put pressure on Brussels to withdraw support for Tshombe's gendarmerie. However, Lumumba did not manage to obtain adequate support from the West and therefore turned to Khrushchev, who offered Lumumba two and a half million roubles in economic aid, ten thousand tons of food, and logistical support for military operations against the secessionist provinces. [52] Meanwhile, the administration of US President Dwight Eisenhower and the Chief of the Central Intelligence Organization (CIA), Allen Dulles, saw Lumumba as a dangerous pro-Soviet nationalist, "like Castro or worse," and started planning for his overthrow.[53] Over the summer, Khrushchev grew increasingly frustrated about the Congo, as he believed that UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold had colluded with President Eisenhower, turning a blind eye to Katanga's secession. "He was depressed by his own impotence and irritated by the arrogance of the West," wrote his son Sergey.[54] This was precisely when—in July 1960—the KGB and the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior extended their collaboration to intelligence operations in the Third World.

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[52] Lise Namikas, *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965*. Cold War International History Project Series Stanford University Press, 2013), p. 68.
[53] See, for example: Larry Devlin, *Chief of station, Congo: a Memoir of 1960-67*. 1st (New York: Public Affairs, 2007).
[54] Khrushchev, *Nikita Khrushchev*, p. 405.

The KGB and the corresponding Czechoslovak State Security (StB; *Státní Bezpečnost*) had developed close ties since the Soviet-sponsored takeover of Czechoslovakia by the CPC in 1948. Like KGB Chairman Alexander Shelepin, the Czechoslovak Minister of the Interior, Rudolf Barák, was a rising star in the party hierarchy. He was particularly influential because, as the Minister of the Interior, he supervised the state security apparatus and the StB's First Directorate, which was responsible for foreign intelligence.[55] Barák was an ambitious and dynamic man with a taste for foreign affairs and, as we shall see, took a personal interest in the liberation movements. Many even believed that Rudolf Barák was planning to supersede the unpopular Novotný as CC CPC General Secretary.[56] Not much is known about Shelepin's personal relations with Barák, but we do know that Barák's term as Minister of the Interior ushered in a new era of cooperation between the KGB and the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior on a number of issues, including joint intelligence operations in the Third World.

Meeting in Prague in July 1960, Shelepin and Barák presided over the first consultative meeting of the Soviet and Czechoslovakian intelligence chiefs, where the KGB and the StB signed an agreement pledging to cooperate on intelligence operations across all the regions of the world, including in the United Arab Republic, Guinea, Mali, the Congo, Ghana, Angola, Sierra Leone, and Zanzibar in Africa.[57] One month later, the KGB established their first eight-man desk to work specifically on intelligence operations in Africa. Vadim Kirpichenko, who was part of the team, remembered: "We started seriously working on Africa only in 1960, the year that the United Nations proclaimed as the Year of Africa."[58] While there is no hard proof that these initiatives were undertaken in direct response to the U-2 Spy Incident or the Congo Crisis or both, the timing is not coincidental, and most certainly reflected Khrushchev's growing

[55] In this thesis, the StB's First Directorate is mostly referred to as "Czechoslovak Intelligence," as per the established convention.
[56] František August and David Rees, *Red Star Over Prague* (London: The Sherwood Press, 1984).
[57] For details, see: Pavel Žázek, "Czechoslovak and Soviet State Security Against the West Before 1968 " *The Contours of Legitimacy in Central Europe: New Approaches in Graduate Studies,* (2002): p. 2. I have not been able to look at this document
[58] According to Kirpichenko, this department was established in August 1960. Kirpichenko, *Razvedka*, 88.

discontent with the United States and personal frustration with Eisenhower. In any case, one of the first operations that the KGB would undertake was their mission in the Congo.

On 6 August, a team of KGB intelligence officers arrived in the Congo's capital, Léopoldville. According to Oleg Nazhestkin, who was part of the team, they bore instructions from Moscow to find out more information about Western plans in the country.[59] Nazhestkin also wrote that one of his tasks was to establish contacts with Angolans living in Léopoldville.[60] However, their mission soon came to an end because on 14 September, the chief of the Congolese army, Joseph Mobutu, staged a coup, dismissing Lumumba from power and ordering the Soviet and Czechoslovak diplomats to leave Léopoldville within the next twenty-four hours. Khrushchev, who heard about the coup aboard a ship mid-way to New York, was distraught. Speaking at the UN General Assembly, Khrushchev lashed out at the West generally and at UN General Secretary Dag Hammarskjöld personally for conniving to overthrow Lumumba, and proposed an overhaul of the UN's governing body.[61] Many radically-minded heads of state, such as Kwame Nkrumah, grew increasingly sympathetic toward Khrushchev's viewpoint, but the reality remained that the Soviets had lost the first round of competition for the Congo.

The events of 1960 were to have a profound effect on Khrushchev's thinking and subsequent policy in the Third World. Khrushchev had thought that socialism and capitalism could compete peacefully in the Third World, but the Congo Crisis revealed that this was not the case. The Soviet Union simply could not compete with the West when it came to projecting military capabilities over long distances, but beyond that, the crisis showed that the capitalist countries were willing to use force to maintain their interests in the former colonies. Moreover, Khrushchev was frustrated in his attempts to reach any sort of agreement with the US on arms limitations. The U-2 Spy

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[59] Oleg Nazhestkin, "Gody kongolezskogo krizisa, 1960-1963. Zapiski Razvedchika," *Novaya i Noveishaia istoria,* (2003): 155.
[60] Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," p. 235.
[61] For details of this episode, see, for example: Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's cold war*, pp. 307-320.

Incident was particularly infuriating for Khrushchev, especially after he discovered that Eisenhower himself had tried to conceal the truth about the incident. Khrushchev's belief that peaceful competition between the two systems was possible faltered, and thus he authorized the KGB to launch intelligence operations in the Third World, including, for the first time, Sub-Saharan Africa. This meant that Khrushchev was increasingly willing to pursue aggressive tactics in essentially ideologically-driven competition over the Third World.

The Portuguese Empire in Africa

"Portugal is Not a Small Country," read an inscription across a map displayed at the First Colonial Exhibition held in Porto between June and September 1934. The map showed the areas of Portuguese colonies – Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Principe, and Macau – overlaying the political map of Europe. A chart attached to the map showed the surface area of Portugal and its colonies: 2,168,077 square kilometers, which was bigger than the combined total area of continental Spain, France, England, Italy and Germany, which was then 2,091,639 square kilometers. With over five hundred pavilions, which took five months to build, the exhibition displayed various aspects of colonization, such as the natural and human resources of overseas possessions, as well as the industries and economies of the colonies. The exhibition guide extolled Portugal as a country that had "given worlds to the world," using "highly original colonial methods." The Exhibition closed with a colorful "colonial procession" illustrating various aspects of the Portuguese discoveries and colonial expansion. Having attracted one million visitors, the exhibition was truly a propaganda feat for the newly established authoritarian regime, the Estado Novo, led by prime minister António de Oliveira Salazar.[62]

Salazar rose to prominence in the aftermath of a 1926 coup d'état, which had overthrown the First Portuguese Republic and inaugurated a period known as

[62] Patrícia Ferraz de Matos, *The Colours of the Empire: Racialized Representations during Portuguese Colonialism* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), pp. 176-189.

"Ditadura National" (National Dictatorship). Salazar was born on 29 April 1889, into a religious peasant family. Having received primary education at a seminary, Salazar decided against becoming a priest, going on to study and then teach economics at the prestigious University of Coimbra. Known for his ascetic lifestyle, Salazar never married and remained a devout, conservative Catholic throughout his life. In 1928, president António Carmona invited Salazar to serve as Finance Minister in his government, and in 1932 appointed him prime minister. One year later, Salazar introduced a new constitution, which inaugurated a new regime, the Estado Novo. He based the regime on principles of fundamentalism, traditionalism, anti-liberalism, and anti-communism. Salazar promised to bring order, fight corruption, and achieve economic revival after years of political instability and economic collapse. He designated a key role for the empire in this project of conservative nationalism. Salazar used the colonies to contribute to Portugal's balance of payments by selling goods on the world market, and to serve as a source of raw materials for Portuguese industry. Only through empire did Salazar believe Portugal could gain the status of a great European power. Through re-establishing commitment to Empire as Portugal's "historical mission," he sought to revive the Portuguese nation.[63] In a 1934 speech, Salazar conveyed this message to the First Congress of *União Nacional* (National Union), the only legal political party in Portugal: "Amongst the dominant characteristics of our nationalism – Characteristic, which clearly distinguish it from all other nationalisms, adopted by the authoritarian regimes in Europe – is the colonizing aptitude of the Portuguese, a force which is not of recent growth but has been rooted in the soul of the nation for centuries."[64]

The Portuguese presence in Africa dates back to the "Age of Discovery" in the 15th century, when Prince Henrique, otherwise known as "Henry the Navigator," encouraged the exploration of Africa. Henrique was motivated by economic

[63] For two sides of the debate on the Portuguese empire, see: Gervase Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire, 1825-1975: a Study in Economic Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985); Anne Pitcher, *Politics in the Portuguese Empire: the State, Industry, and Cotton, 1926-1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
[64] Quoted in Heriberto Cairo, "Portugal is not a Small Country: Maps and Propaganda in the Salazar Regime," *Geopolitics,* 11 3 (2006): p. 372.

opportunism and desire to establish an alliance with Prester John in his quest against Islam. John was a legendary powerful Christian ruler, rumored to be residing somewhere in northeast Africa. One of Henrique's favorite captains, Nuno Tristão, reached the coast of present day Senegal around 1446, only to die from a poisonous arrow shot by one of the African warriors. Portuguese maritime expansionism then slowed down, but twenty years after Henrique's death, João II renewed interest in African exploration. The renewed interest was driven by an interest in finding an ocean route to India, and enabled by advances in nautical technology. In 1482, Diogo Cão reached the mouth of the Zaire River as he sailed down the West coast of Africa. Cão established contact with the Bakongo rulers of the Kongo kingdom. The kingdom, at its height, stretched across the northern parts of present-day Angola and the southwestern Congo. In 1498, Vasco da Gama rounded the continent, stopping on the way at the port cities along the east coast of Africa, before sailing off to India.

Having forged initial contacts in Africa, the Portuguese established a network of trading posts along the coastline. They coexisted alongside African kingdoms, with which the Portuguese engaged in lucrative trade of silver, gold, ivory, pepper, and, above all, slaves. Modern-day Guinea-Bissau was once part of a vast Portuguese trading enterprise in the area where a series of great rivers – the Senegal, the Gambia, the Niger, the Benin, and the Cacheu – flow into the sea from West Africa. Competition among Europeans in this part of Africa was intense. The Portuguese ultimately focused on a territory they called the Rivers of Guinea, which was their original source of slaves, shipped via trading ports at Cacheu and Bissau to the originally uninhabited archipelago of Cape Verde en route to Europe and the Americas. Over the centuries, soldiers, royal officials, adventurists, traders, and "outcasts," mostly of Cape Verdean origin, settled at coastal anchorages. This cluster of settlements grew over the years, reaching recognition as Portuguese Guinea in the nineteenth century.

The Portuguese preferred to use a mixture of infiltration and persuasion. They entered into alliances with local rulers, but did not hesitate to use force if necessary.

Following Diogo Cão's exploratory mission of 1498, Lisbon co-opted the Bakongo rulers of the Kongo kingdom, who adopted Christianity and welcomed Christian missionaries. However, further to the south, the Ndongo were more suspicious of the Portuguese. Convinced that the Ndongo possessed rich silver mines, in 1579 the monarchy dispatched Paulo Dias de Novais to subdue the Ndongo by force, thus unleashing more than a century of wars, most notably with Queen Nzinga of Muthemba and the Ndongo in the seventeenth century. Neither Novais nor any subsequent expedition found silver, and the Portuguese settled on slaving in the vast interior of this territory they called "Angola." On the east coast of Africa, the Portuguese gradually replaced the Arab, Persian, and Swahili traders and established a garrison at Mozambique Island, which became the main point of export for ivory, gold, and slaves. Seduced by the prospect of finding gold, the Portuguese advanced into the interior of the Monomotapa Kingdom, founding garrisons at Sena and Tete on the Zambezi River. By the nineteenth century, the Portuguese had managed to entrench their presence in various locations in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau, especially along the coastlines, but they did not have control of the interior, still dominated by African kingdoms.[65]

The nineteenth century was a period of major change in the way that Europeans interacted with Africans. Competition between colonial powers intensified, with all looking to Africa as source of natural resources and potential markets. The slave trade was abolished, which led to the gradual reorientation of African economies. Cape Verde was revived as a coaling station for British steamships. Angola and Guinea-Bissau produced cash crops for Portuguese industry and the world market, while Mozambique's economy evolved into a source of cheap labor for British mines in Nyasaland, Transvaal, and South Rhodesia. At the 1884-85 Berlin Conference, European powers defined their colonial possessions and came to a settlement, which produced arbitrary borders. Thanks in part to British patronage, Portugal extended

[65] Anthony Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: from Beginnings to 1807*. Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

formal rule over Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. Additionally, European powers agreed that imperial claims could be made on the basis of effective occupation, which included a provision for economic development and a commitment to stamp out slavery. International pressure thus demanded occupation of the interior. This was achieved by extending effective control, often by leasing large territories to the so-called concession companies that brought in white administrators and encouraged white settlement in the interior, and by "pacification campaigns" conducted by the army if the local population did not comply. This process was accompanied by land expropriation, introduction of forced labor, and immigration controls.

This new stage of imperialism encountered resistance throughout the Portuguese empire. In Guinea-Bissau, almost every ethnic group resisted Portuguese attempts to take control of the interior. In response to this resistance, the Portuguese participated in no fewer than eighty-one campaigns, expeditions, and operations between 1841 and 1936.[66] Only in 1895 did the Portuguese manage to defeat the legendary Gungunhana, the last emperor of the "Gaza Empire" of southern Mozambique, but regional revolts flared up quite frequently, most notably led by Makonde and Yao chiefs of the north and the Barue of the central Zambezi region. The Ovimbundu kingdoms of Angola's highlands revolted in 1902 against forced relocation of laborers to Sao Tome, and so, in 1913, did the Bakongo of the northwest of Angola.[67] The history of this so-called "native resistance" would become the foundation of nationalist mythology for the post-war liberation struggles in the colonies.

The turn of the nineteenth century also saw the rise of a "nativist" movement in the empire. Over the centuries, the interaction between the Portuguese and African populations led to the emergence of mixed-blood persons, collectively referred to as "mestizos," who gravitated towards centers of Portuguese settlement, serving as interpreters, local officials, and slave masters. However, their status declined with the arrival of white immigrants from Portugal. "Nativists" spoke against abuses committed

[66] John P. Cann, *Brown Waters of Africa: Portuguese Riverine Warfare*. Kindle (Solihul: Helion and Company, 2013).
[67] Stephen L. Weigert, *Angola: A Modern Military History, 1961-2002*, pp. 32-34.

by the colonial administrations, as well as the preferential treatment given to the white settler community. They did not demand independence, but wanted systemic reform and greater local autonomy. Nativists were also active in the Pan-African movement, which was facilitated by the First Pan-African Congress of 1919. Among the native activists was António de Assis, Junior, a solicitor, publicist, and novelist, who became famous advising the native population on such issues as land expropriation and campaigning for reform of the colonial administration. He also co-founded *Liga Angolana*, an affiliate of *Liga Africana,* which was intended to serve as a confederation for all the African associations from the Portuguese colonies. After the 1926 coup d'état, the movement was suppressed. Despite the backlash, it served as a source of inspiration for the next generation of nationalist leaders.[68]

The 1930 Colonial Act formalized pre-existing racial distinctions between *indigenas* (indigenous) and *não-indigenas* (non-indigenous). *Indigenas* constituted the majority of the black African population, who received rudimentary primary education, mostly in missionary schools. This segment of the population was routinely subjected to forced labor and immigration controls. The *não-indigenas* were formally regarded as Portuguese citizens, but they were de facto sub-divided into white Portuguese, mixed-race mestizos, and a tiny group of black natives known as *assimilados*. To become *assimilado* one had to swear loyalty to the colonial state, speak only Portuguese at home, abandon traditional beliefs, and pay a substantial sum to the colonial authorities. In return, *assimilados* obtained greater access to educational and employment opportunities and were freed from forced labor and immigration controls. In practice, *assimilados,* mestizos, and even whites born in the colonies were treated as second-class citizens. This system would remain virtually unchanged until 1961, when reform, albeit minimal, would be forced upon Salazar.

The Liberation Movement in the Portuguese Colonies: A Cast of Characters

[68] For further discussion, see: Jacopo Corrado, *The Creole Elite and the Rise of Angolan Protonationalism: 1870-1920* (New York: Cambria Press, 2008); Fernando Tavares Pimenta, "Angola's Euro-African Nationalism." *Sure Road? Nationalisms in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique*. Ed. Eric Morier-Genoud (Boston: Brill, 2012).

The conclusion of the Second World War saw a general crisis of imperialism as colonial subjects, who had fought alongside metropolitan citizens during the war, called for the same rights as those bestowed upon their European counterparts. Europeans did not want to dispose of the colonies, especially in Africa, but were increasingly pressured to invest in costly developmental schemes. These developments were reflected in the final resolution of the 1945 Fifth Pan-African Congress, held in Manchester: "The delegates of the Fifth Pan-Africanist Congress believe in peace… Yet if the Western world is still determined to rule mankind by force, then Africans, as last resort, may have to appeal to force to achieve freedom, even if force destroys them and the world." One of the main organizers, the Ghanaian Kwame Nkrumah, also recalled that the Congress, attended by twenty delegates from twenty-six countries, rejected capitalist reformist solutions to the problems of Africa and unanimously endorsed the doctrine of "African socialism," a concept that involved trying to integrate socialist principles organically into the fabric of African society.[69]

While some major European colonial powers, such as Britain and France, gave their colonies varying degrees of autonomy and encouraged economic development, Portugal had neither the resources nor the willingness to institute any major changes in the colonies. Time and again, Lisbon would fail to prevent the devastating consequences of frequent droughts in Cape Verde, leaving thousands to starve to death. Education of the "indigenous" population was relegated to the Catholic Church, while only a few colleges offered education up to the secondary level for a tiny elite. The district officers, known as *chefes do posto*, had absolute judicial power over the indigenous population. Additionally, they were entitled to conscript forced labor, which was used on a massive scale for the private sector in Angola and Mozambique and for public works in Guinea. This formed the shared experiences of a new generation of young colonial intellectuals, who converged around the urban centers in the colonies and at university towns in Portugal. They started to express their

[69] Quoted in Sayaka Funada-Classe, *The Origins of War in Mozambique: a History of Unity and Division* trans. Masako Osada (Somerset West: African Minds, 2013), p. 140.

grievances by means of poetry, creative writing, and the visual arts, trying to rediscover and celebrate the African culture of their ancestors, but many ended up leading armed struggles against the colonial regime. Out of this socio-political milieu, there gradually emerged the liberation movements that represented the aspirations of the radical African elites: the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA; *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*) and the Party for Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC; *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde*).

The MPLA was founded by a group of left-wing intellectuals based in Luanda. One of the most prominent ones was Viriato Clemente da Cruz. Born in Porto Amboim on 25 March 1928 to Abel Francisco da Cruz, a businessman, and Clementina (Ana) Clemente da Cruz, a housewife, Viriato moved to Luanda when his parents divorced. He started writing critical poetry and enmeshed himself in the cultural and political milieu of Luanda. This was the time when a group of young people, who called themselves the "New Intellectuals of Angola," embarked on a search for the traditional culture and history of Angola in protest against assimilationist policies imposed from Lisbon. Viriato da Cruz became part of this movement, befriending other leading intellectuals of the time such as Ilídio Machado, Tomas Jorge Vieira da Cruz, António Jacinto do Amaral Martins, and Mário António de Oliveira.[70] In 1951, he became editor in chief of the Luanda-based literary journal *Mensagem*, which published poetry, literary essays, and ideological pieces, celebrating Angolan culture and criticizing colonial practices. Only four issues of the journal saw print, but *Mensagem* was of major importance to a whole generation of young people campaigning against the colonial regime.

In 1955, Viriato da Cruz, together with Ilídio Machado, António Jacinto, and Mário António de Oliveira, founded the Angolan Communist Party (PCA).[71]The PCA's founders, writes Lúcio Lara, quickly realized that a communist party would not acquire a broad appeal, and therefore in 1956, the group published a manifesto that called for

[70] Emmanuel Akyeampong and Henry Louis Gates, eds., *Dictionary of African Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 138.
[71] Ibid.

the unification of "all anti-imperialist forces" without regard for "political colour, social status, religious beliefs or philosophy" and called on the people to organize "thousands and thousands" of organizations throughout the country under the banner of a broad Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, the MPLA. The manifesto also called upon Angolans to fight against Portuguese colonialism and domination by European and North American monopolies, in order to establish a democratic and popular government with the working class at the forefront.[72] Most probably, the authors of the manifesto believed that the PCA would co-exist with other nationalist organizations, which would spring up across the country as a result of their appeal The MPLA leadership would later appropriate the publication of the Manifest as the official foundation date for the organization, but it is clear that in 1956, the movement was little than a collection of a small group of individuals inspired by left-wing ideas.[73]

Meanwhile, a rather different conception of Angolan nationalism germinated among the 500,000-strong community of Bakongo in northern Angola. In 1956, a group of Angolan émigrés based in the Congolese capital of Léopoldville established the Union of the Peoples of the North of Angola (UPNA; *União das Populações do Norte de Angola*). The group was dedicated to the restoration of the ancient "Kongo kingdom," a Bakongo kingdom that had occupied present-day northern Angola and western Congo before the Portuguese conquest. Among the leaders of the movement was Barros Necaca, and he, unlike the Luanda-based intellectuals, believed that the United States was not part of the problem but part of the solution for Angola. When Portugal joined the United Nations in 1955, the Léopoldville group petitioned for Angola to be placed under UN authority in the form of a Trusteeship of the United States and declared that they opposed 'Communist penetration' into their country.[74] In January 1958, seeking to obtain exposure for the newly established UPNA, Necaca wrote to George Houser, an American civil rights activist and the founder of the American Committee on Africa. Houser referred Necaca to George Padmore, who was

[72] Lara, ed., *Amplo Movimento*, 1:23-29.
[73] Interview with Lúcio Lara in Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*.
[74] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, 1:61-62.

the working with Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah. Padmore invited the UPNA to participate in the 'First All-African People's Conference' in Accra, Ghana, and Necaca chose his nephew, Holden Roberto, to represent the UPNA.[75]

Holden Roberto would come to dominate the movement. Roberto was born in Sao Salvador, northern Angola, but had spent most of childhood and youth in the Belgian Congo. He studied at the Baptist Missionary School in Léopoldville. Later, he worked as an accountant for the Belgian colonial administration before his uncle enlisted him to work for the nationalist cause.[76] In 1958, he went to the "First All-African People's Conference" in Accra, where he encountered many influential African leaders, including George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, Guinean president Sékou Touré, and the Congolese nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba, who advised Roberto to broaden the appeal of the organization. He dropped the "*do Norte*" from the name, and the UPA emerged. Holden Roberto stayed on in Accra, where he worked with George Padmore at the Ghanaian Bureau of African Affairs. Roberto also became a friend and admirer of Franz Fanon, the ideologue of the Algerian revolution, and began to contemplate military action in Angola.[77]

Although the MPLA was established in Luanda, the movement would become associated with a close-knit group of African student activists based at the universities of Lisbon and Coimbra. Students from the colonies had begun to arrive in Portugal in the late 1940s. They were predominantly from the major cities, and thus represented the sons and daughters of the relatively privileged colonial elite. The Portuguese authorities believed that the African students would absorb Portuguese culture during their studies and return home convinced of the benefits of empire. Instead, the politically charged atmosphere of the colonies became a perfect breeding ground for future revolutionary leaders. Student activists converged at the government-sponsored *Casa dos Estudantes do*s *Império*, which was established as a self-help organization to provide accommodation and scholarships. It turned into a meeting

[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid., 1:65.
[77] Ibid., 1:68.

place for student activists who would meet and discuss their grievances against the colonial system. Among these were Amílcar Cabral from Cape Verde, Mário de Andrade, Agostinho Neto, and Lúcio Lara from Angola, and Marcelino dos Santos from Mozambique. In 1951 they founded a group called *Centro dos Estudantes Africanos* as a workshop to discuss African history, culture, and politics. They also participated in the resistance movement against the Salazarist dictatorship, dominated by the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), to such an extent that Neto, for example, sat on the steering committee of *Movimento de Unidade Democrática* (MUD-*Juvenil*), a youth wing of a broad anti-Salazarist front affiliated with the PCP. Before going any further, we have to pause to explore the backgrounds of the people who would play central roles in the anti-colonial struggles in Portuguese Africa.

Amílcar Cabral (12 September 1924 – 20 January 1973) was the first of the group to establish an organization dedicated to the independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. Born in Bafatá, Guinea-Bissau, Cabral was a son of Juvenal António da Costa Cabral, a well-respected schoolteacher and a politically conscious man with a particular interest in the economic problems of Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau. His mother Iva Pinhel Evora owned a small business, but then had to take up a number of low-paying jobs after divorcing her husband. While Cabral's father instilled in him the "seeds of political education," his mother taught him about gender inequality, writes Cabral's biographer Patrick Chabal. Amílcar would later argue that it was the experience of extreme poverty during adolescence that pushed him to revolt against the colonial system later in his life.[78] Cabral studied agronomy at the University of Lisbon. Despite graduating at the top of his class, he was unable to find a job in Portugal due to his skin color, so he took up a job in Bissau as a research officer at an agricultural research station, where he was put in charge of conducting the first agricultural survey of the country.

[78] Chabal, *Amilcar Cabral*, pp. 30-31.

In Bissau, Cabral continued political mobilization for independence and gradually acquired a network of loyal supporters. One of them was his younger half-brother Luís, who was trained as an accountant and worked for *Casa Gouveia*, a branch of *Companhia União Fabril*, Guinea-Bissau's largest monopoly. Aristides Pereira was another Cabral supporter. Pereira was born on 17 November 1923 in Boa Visa, Cape Verde, to Porfirio Pereira Tavares, a highly respected priest and music teacher, and Maria das Neves da Cruz Silva, an agricultural worker. Like the vast majority of Cape Verdeans, Pereira was deeply affected by the experience of living in the famine-stricken archipelago. He wished to study in Portugal, but was unable to obtain a scholarship. Therefore, he trained as a radiotelegraph technician, later moving to Guinea-Bissau where he worked for the Bissau Telegraph and Telephone Services.[79] In 1954, Cabral organized a sports and recreation club for young people. The secret police soon discovered that the club also encouraged political discussion and banned Cabral from ever residing in Guinea-Bissau, though he was allowed to return for a short time to visit family.[80] During one of his visits to Bissau, Cabral met with Luís Cabral, Aristides Pereira, Fernando Fortes, and Eliseu Turpin, which led to their founding an organization. After several name changes, it became known as the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC; *Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde*) on 19 September 1956.

António Agostinho Neto (17 September 1922 – 10 September 1979) was from the village of Catete, Icolo e Bengo, near Luanda. His father Agostinho Neto was a Methodist pastor, and his mother Maria da Silva Neto was a teacher. A diligent and quiet student at the *Liceu Salvador Correia* in Luanda, Neto supplemented his income by working as a secretary for the Methodist bishop Ralph Dodge. He worked for three years for the colonial healthcare administration in Luanda. In 1947, he went to Portugal to study medicine at the University of Lisbon on a scholarship provided by the Methodist church. In the 1950s, Neto developed into an influential poet, publicist and

[79] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 40.
[80] Dhada, *Warriors at Work*, pp. 3-4.

theoretician. From Negritude, a literary and cultural movement developed by francophone black intellectuals during the 1930s, he borrowed a demand for repatriation of traditional culture and land. In his lengthy poem "Saturday in the Musseques," Neto depicted the poverty and the anxiety of the *musseques*, or Angolan shantytowns, but also celebrated them as a source of Angolan culture and pride. The last verse reads: "Saturday mingled the night/in the musseques/with mystic anxiety/and implacably/unfurls heroic flags/in the enslaved souls."[81] Neto was in and out of prison for the most of the 1950s for his criticism of the Salazarist regime and association with the PCP, thus acquiring admiration from a whole generation of radically minded students in Portugal for his unwavering stance.

Mário Pinto de Andrade (21 August 1928 – 26 August 1990) was born at Golungo Alto, close to Luanda. His father, Jose Cristino Pinto de Andrade, was one of the founding members of the *Liga Africana* in the pre-war period. Like Neto, Mário also studied at the *Liceu Salvador Correia* and was involved in the movement for the revival of Angolan culture, before leaving for Lisbon in 1948. Mário de Andrade wrote poetry both in Kimbundu and in Portuguese and would become one of the most famous critics of "Lusotropicalism", a popular theory adopted by Salazar, which postulated that the Portuguese were better colonizers than other European nations. Both Neto and Andrade maintained contact with Luanda and published work in the short-lived *Mensagem.* Fleeing police persecution, Andrade relocated to Paris in the early 1950s, where he continued his studies at the Sorbonne, after which he worked for *Présence Africaine*, an influential journal founded by Alioune Diop, a famous Senegalese writer and a key figure in the Negritude movement. While working at the journal, Mário de Andrade developed an extensive network of contacts with African nationalist leaders residing in Paris at the time.

Marcelino dos Santos (born 20 May 1929) was one of the rare Mozambicans who managed to study in Portugal. Born in Lumbo on the eastern coast of

[81] Quoted in Irene Margues, "Postcolonial African Consciousness and the Poetry of Agostinho Neto," *Comparative Literature and Culture,* 5 4 (2003).

Mozambique, he was raised in the capital, Lourenço Marques. His father Firmindo dos Santos was involved in the one of the Mozambican associations, which called for unity and revitalization among Mozambicans in pursuit of justice and social equality. Heavily influenced by Marxism-Leninism, Marcelino dos Santos became a regular at the various youth conferences, seminars, and cultural events held in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the 1950s. Pavel Shmelkov, who was responsible for Sub-Saharan Africa at the Soviet Friendship Association with Foreign Countries (SSOD) recounts meeting Marcelino dos Santos along with Mário de Andrade, and Agostinho Neto at one such poetry reading in early 1960s Moscow.[82]

Lúcio Gouveia Barreto de Lara (born 9 April 1929) was born to a white sisal farmer, Lúcio Gouveia Barreto, and a mestizo mother, Clementina Leite.[83] He spent his early childhood at his father's sisal plantation. Later, his family sold the farm due to financial difficulties and moved to Huambo. While living in Huambo, he studied at the *Colégio Alexandre Herculano*, an experience that was only affordable to a select few. His experience there left a lasting impression of racial prejudice and abusive Catholic priests upon the young Lara.[84] After completing secondary school, Lúcio Lara travelled to Portugal to study economics at the University of Coimbra. In 1955 he married Ruth Pflüger, a white woman of German parentage who was an activist in MUD-Juvenil. Actively involved in opposition politics during his student days, Lúcio Lara would remain one of Agostinho Neto's closest associates throughout his life.[85]

In 1957, student activists in Lisbon received the MPLA's "Manifesto" and the "Statutes of the Angolan Communist Party," with instructions from Luanda to mobilize African students in Europe for the cause of independence for the colonies.[86] This led to the establishment of the first umbrella organization for nationalists from the

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[82] Pavel Shmelkov, "Obshestvennue Svyasi S Afrikoi. Kak Oni Nachinalis." *Afrika V Vospominaniyah Veteranov Diplomaticheskoi Sluzhbu*. Ed. Aleksey Vasilev (Moscow: Institut Afriki RAN, 2000), 29.
[83] Later, Lara would assume 'Tchiweka' meaning 'fire' as his nome de guerre.
[84] Lara recalled: "One of the priests who opened my eyes was the one who treated black priests at mass badly, which was revolting, and who once, for pedagogical and academic reasons, beat me up in a classroom, which installed in me animosity towards priests, after which I stopped being religious." See: Interview with Lúcio Lara in Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*, p. 36.
[85] *Lúcio Lara: Tchiweka*.
[86] Lara, ed., *Amplo Movimento*, 1:37.

Portuguese colonies, the Anti-Colonial Movement (MAC; *Movimento Anti Colonialista*).[87] Viriato da Cruz then unexpectedly arrived in Lisbon on October 1957, fleeing persecution by the Portuguese Secret Police (PIDE; *Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado*). From Lisbon, Viriato fled to Paris, where he joined Mário de Andrade and Marcelino dos Santos. The trio began to organize a press campaign against Portuguese colonialism. That same month, Lara was invited to participate in the Fifth Congress of the Portuguese Communist Party. During the Congress, independence for the colonies was embraced in the party program for the first time.[88]

During the same time period, Viriato da Cruz, Mário de Andrade, and Marcelino dos Santos came to the "First Afro-Asian People's Writers' Conference" held in Tashkent, Soviet Uzbekistan, in October 1958. While there is no evidence as to whom they met in Tashkent, it is probable that Viriato da Cruz, Lúcio Lara, and Mário de Andrade established first contacts with Ivan Potekhin, one of the "founding fathers" of Soviet African studies, who had taught at the Comintern-affiliated "Communist University of the Toilers of the East" in the 1930s. That Potekhin knew of the Angolan activists can be derived from the fact that in June 1959, he dispatched a circular letter to Mário de Andrade, notifying him of the establishment of the Soviet Friendship Association with the African Peoples and asking whether the recipients could put him in touch with "cultural figures, mass and youth organizations in their country."[89] Mário de Andrade responded by asking for scholarships for students from the Portuguese colonies. Potekhin, who was appointed the first Head of the Friendship Association, had to decline: the "Friendship Organization" still did not have the capacity to offer scholarships for Africans to study in the USSR.[90]

While the British and the French eventually began a process of negotiations with local nationalist leaders to transition to independence, violent Portuguese repression of political protest in the colonies only intensified. In 1959, violent protests

[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid., 1:39.
[89] Ibid., 1:209.
[90] Ibid., 1:206.

broke out in the Belgian Congo. Fearing that the same would happen in Angola, the colonial administration arrested and jailed fifty Angolans suspected of involvement in nationalist agitation. One of the jailed was Ilídio Machado, one of the founding members of the Angolan Communist Party. On 3 August 1959, the police shot at peaceful protesters at the Pidjiguiti docks in Bissau, killing fifty protesters and injuring many more. The PAIGC leadership, who took responsibility for agitating workers to strike, came to the conclusion that non-violent resistance was not working. The leadership pushed the peasantry to agitate for a rural-based armed resistance movement. In Mozambique, too, a similar pattern emerged. In June 1960, a few hundred Makonde gathered in front of a governor's house, protesting for the release the leaders of a Mozambican self-help organization based in the neighboring British-held territory of Tanganyika. In response, the police fired at the crowd, killing (according to some estimates) up to 600 people. Although historians have since disputed the eyewitness account of events during what would be called the "Mueda Massacre," this occurrence did prove the need for armed struggle in Mozambique.[91]

The Liberation Movement on the Eve of the Uprising, 1960

The Second All African People's Conference, which opened in Tunis on 25 January 1960, was very different in spirit from the first conference, held in Accra, Ghana, in 1957. By 1960, the Algerian War had come to constitute what historian Matthew Connelly had called a "diplomatic revolution," not only because the rebels chose the international arena as a weapon against the French, but also because it became a rallying point for the Non-Aligned Movement and inspired other Third World revolutionaries.[92] Although the Conference represented a wide spectrum of political views, it was Franz Fanon, the ideologue of the Algerian Revolution and adviser to the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN), who personified the militant mood at the

[91] Michel Cahen has discovered that the real numbers killed in those events were between 9 and 36, that the petitioners who had come were the members of the Mozambique African Association of Tanga, a rival of the MANU, and that their goal was to negotiate the return of the Mozambican community to Tanganyika. Michel Cahen, "The Mueda Case and Maconde Political Ethnicity," *Africana Studia,* 2 (November 1999).

[92] Matthew J. Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-cold War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

conference. Participants agreed to create an African "volunteer corps" and make regular financial contributions to the cause. Delegates also agreed to intensify their struggle for independence and decided to establish a committee to coordinate aid from independent states to the nationalist movements.[93]

In Tunis, Franz Fanon called on Angolans to learn from the Algerian example. That was the first time that Mário de Andrade, Lúcio Lara, and Viriato da Cruz had attended a conference in Africa, and they immediately clashed with Fanon. Their previous encounter had occurred a year earlier, when Fanon had approached the MPLA leadership at the Second Congress of Negro Writers and Artists in Rome and proposed that they should send "eleven young people" for military training with the FLN. Amílcar Cabral had travelled to Luanda to select the appropriate cadre in August of 1959. He returned empty-handed, since the majority of the activists had been arrested. Lúcio Lara writes that they tried to explain the complexity of the situation, but Fanon was still disappointed and insisted that that they should begin military action immediately in order to relieve pressure on the FLN. Lara also writes that Fanon believed the MPLA were "people from the city," while Holden Roberto was "connected with the masses." Negotiations between Fanon and the MPLA broke down, while Holden Roberto agreed to send his men for military training at the FLN camp in Tunisia.[94]

Holden Roberto was in a much better position to start any kind of military action in Angola. Roberto was much more prepared to follow Fanon's advice because he had already become convinced of the need for armed struggle. "Cousin, without bloodshed liberation is not possible," wrote Roberto, in Fanon's style, in 1958.[95] Moreover, Roberto was already well acquainted with many African leaders from his fairly long stay in Accra, and he had acquired some international prominence in 1959, when he became the first Angolan to speak in front of the General Assembly in New York, arguing for the UN to assume jurisdiction over Angola. Holden's biggest

[93] "Tunis Conference Ends on Militant Note," *Africa Report,* 5 (1960): 13.
[94] Lara, ed., *Amplo Movimento*, 1:239.
[95] Quoted in Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, p. 68.

advantage was that the UPA had already established a base in the Belgian Congo, which was the ideal launching pad for military operations in neighboring Angola. Holden Roberto recalled that Patrice Lumumba was his "personal friend" and promised him to support the UPA if he came to power in the Congo.[96] The UPA was thus well positioned to take advantage of Congolese independence, scheduled for June. In Tunis, Roberto arranged with Fanon to send his men for military training with the FLN, and also established a relationship with the Tunisian president, Habib Bourgiba, who would send the first arms for the UPA.[97]

The Tunis Conference also provided a platform for talks between the MPLA leadership and the Guinean delegation, including Sékou Touré's brother, Ismail Toure, who agreed that the MPLA could establish their headquarters in Conakry. Viriato da Cruz relocated to Conakry shortly after the conference, and the rest soon followed.[98] The move to Conakry was considered a temporary necessity, since the ultimate aim of the MPLA leadership was to establish a base in Congo-Léopoldville, neighboring Angola. Lúcio Lara argued that when the MPLA leadership met Lumumba in Conakry shortly after Congolese independence, they tried to persuade him that it was Holden Roberto who did not want to unite into a common front, and that Lumumba allowed them to move their headquarters to Léopoldville.[99] Meanwhile, Agostinho Neto returned to Luanda, where he started a private medical practice, but continued mobilizing for the nationalist cause. Neto sent Manuel Pedro Pacavira to meet with Lúcio Lara and discuss a joint strategy. In April 1960, Lúcio Lara flew to meet Pacavira in Congo-Brazzaville, where the two agreed to mobilize the population in the countryside, but wait until international opinion towards the Portuguese colonies "matured" before proceeding with any kind of armed action, in order to avoid the loss of lives. They also agreed, writes Lara, that the sides would exchange a sign to alert the other as to when this would take place. However, Pacavira was arrested by the secret

[96] Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*, p. 21.
[97] Ibid., 17.
[98] Lara, ed., *Amplo Movimento*, 1:238.
[99] Ibid., 1:370.

police, along with Neto and a group of their supporters, shortly after returning from Congo-Brazzaville.[100]

While the MPLA's organization inside Angola was shattered, the MPLA leadership in Conakry continued to organize and mobilize support for the movement. On June 9, MPLA's leadership in Conakry formalized the organizational structure for the movement, electing Mário de Andrade, Viriato da Cruz, Luiz de Azevedo, Matias Miguéis, Eduardo dos Santos, and Hugo de Menezes from São Tomé and Príncipe to the MPLA's first Steering Committee.[101] The MPLA also continued to campaign for a common front with the UPA, but grew increasingly frustrated with recurrent failures. When Mário de Andrade spoke to representatives of the Soviet Solidarity Committee in August, he stated that the UPA was a "rather racist organization and due to its ties with the USA, a reactionary one."[102] Moreover, their plan to transfer their headquarters to the Congo failed because of Patrice Lumumba's fall from power in September 1960. Speaking at the London Conference for Nationalist Leaders from the Portuguese Colonies on 6 December, Mário de Andrade declared that while the liberation movements preferred a "pacific solution to the colonial problem," they would resort to "direct action" if faced with continuous Portuguese intransigence. The MPLA would later claim that this was the signal they had agreed on with Pacavira to launch military operations.[103] The MPLA was definitely preparing to use force, and the first country they turned to for concrete support was Czechoslovakia.

Viriato da Cruz travelled to Prague in January of 1961, accompanied by his close friend and deputy secretary general of the MPLA, Matias Miguéis. Their goal was to discuss a request for scholarships, placements for military training, financial aid, and weapons, which they had already transmitted via the Czechoslovak embassy in Conakry.[104] On 28 January, while talking with the Czechoslovak Deputy Foreign Minister, Ján Bušniak, Viriato da Cruz explained that the MPLA represented the

[100] Ibid., 1:336.
[101] Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*, 46.
[102] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 8. For a detailed discussion of the MPLA's "common front strategy," see: Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, pp. 159-172.
[103] Lara, ed., *Amplo Movimento*, 1:407.
[104] Ibid., 1:386.

Angolan people and that they aspired to establish a common national-liberation front, but that these ambitious were hampered by the UPA. "Only the UPA, founded and supported by the United States, stands apart, but it does not have support from the Angolan people," da Cruz complained. Viriato da Cruz also said that although he did not believe in nonviolent liberation of Angola, the situation was "not ripe for armed struggle at the moment."[105] While the MPLA was seriously sourcing means for an anti-colonial campaign, it does not seem that the leadership had any concrete plans in mind.

The MPLA's move to Conakry also paved the way for Amílcar Cabral and the PAIGC. Amílcar Cabral moved to Conakry in August, taking a job in peanut cultivation at the Guinean Ministry of Agriculture. He also set up a school to train recruits, where Cabral would himself famously teach. If Conakry could only serve as a temporary base for the MPLA, Guinea at least shared a long border with Guinea-Bissau, and was thus an ideal launching pad for armed struggle. During a visit to Beijing in August, Cabral negotiated to send his cadres for short-term military training at the Nanjing Military Academy.[106] In early 1961, the first recruits, including Constantino Tersheira, Francisco Mendes, João Bernardo Vieira, Domingo Ramos, Victorino Costa, Victor Gomes, and Manuel Saturnino, travelled to Beijing. This is when they received their first impressions of the Soviet Union, during a stopover in Moscow: "Me and a couple of others decided that we have to visit the Red Square at all costs, to visit the mausoleum, to see Lenin. I took the underground – it was my first trip – I arrived to the center and came to the Red Square. This stayed in my memory for the rest of my life: my first encounter with Moscow, snow, frost, and a long line for the mausoleum," recalled Constantino Tersheira.[107]

The PAIGC was not the only nationalist organization based in Guinea looking for support from the socialist countries. One rival group was led by an individual called Luís da Silva, who had gained patronage from the Guinean authorities even before

[105] Prague, 28 January 1961,"Záznam o návštěvě představitelů národně-osvobozeneckého hnuti Angoly," Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č. f. 1261/0/44, inv. č. 75, ka. 71.
[106] *Lúcio Lara: Tchiweka*, 156.
[107] Ignatyev, *Syn Afriki*, p. 101.

Cabral's arrival. On 17 January 1961, First Secretary of the GDR Trade Mission in Conakry Joaquim Neumann wrote to Berlin, reporting that da Silva had approached the Soviet and Chinese embassies in Conakry and that he had received invitations to visit Moscow and Beijing. The Soviets had promised da Silva scholarships to enroll at the Lumumba People's Friendship University in Moscow. However, as Cabral and Mário de Andrade told Neumann, da Silva had attempted to sell those scholarships in Dakar, Senegal. The Chinese also complained of his arrogance, as Neumann discovered. If da Silva and his group were "dangerous careerists who put their personal interests at the forefront," the PAIGC was "the only organization of political emigrants from Portuguese Guinea and Cape Verde which should be taken seriously and which should receive our support," Neumann concluded.[108]

One of the first men who established regular contacts with Cabral was Miroslav Alter, the deputy resident of Czechoslovak Intelligence (StB's First Directorate) in Conakry. It seems that his task was in line with the plan for joint intelligence operations, which the KGB and the StB had signed in July. Guinea's capital Conakry was one of the locations where both intelligence services had established *rezidenturas*. Alter's task was thus to establish relations with persons of interest to the StB in Conakry. On 22 November 1960, he invited Cabral for lunch in order to obtain information about this country "in accordance with our plan of our work in the Portuguese colonies," as he wrote in a follow-up report. Alter continued: "The meeting took place in a friendly atmosphere, even if it was impossible to extract any information during the first meeting, our conversation was rather general."[109]

Over the following months, their meetings became quite regular, and the pair would regularly discuss current events. On 13 January 1961, Cabral asked Alter whether he could visit Prague after a trip to Moscow, where he wanted to discuss aid. Cabral explained that he could have received assistance from the capitalist countries,

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[108] Conakry (Naumann) to MfAA (Berlin), 17 January 1961, "The Situation in Portuguese Guinea," Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amt - Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (hereafter PAAA-MfAA), A16050.

[109] "Amilcar Cabral/Abdel Djassi/ - navazeni styku," 23 November 1960, Archiv Bezpečnostních Složek (hereafter ABS), 43197.

but would not do this for political reasons. Czechoslovakia did not attach any political conditions to aid, said Cabral, while "western imperialists" wanted to build capitalism in Guinea-Bissau: the US and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) were already exploring ways to tap into unexploited deposits of petroleum and bauxites. The PAIGC had all the necessary means to launch an armed struggle in 1961 or the following year, argued Cabral, which could serve as a catalyst for rebellion in other Portuguese colonies, Angola in particular.[110]

1960 was the year when pressure from international actors such as Franz Fanon and internal rivals such as UPA in Angola intensified for the liberation movements to proceed from nationalist agitation to armed struggle. That is why it was essential for the liberation movements to turn to the socialist countries, because only they were willing to provide aid. The MPLA was increasingly tied into a cycle of competition with Holden Roberto's UPA, which had already been gathering support for armed struggle. Although the MPLA tried to construct a "common front" with the UPA, Holden Roberto was not interested an alliance of equals. Increasingly frustrated with the UPA, the MPLA leadership began to construct the image of their rival as "pro-American." While the MPLA was clearly getting ready for armed action, conditions were not right for the movement to proceed, and the organization did not have any concrete plans for the uprising. Amílcar Cabral and the PAIGC were actually in a much better position to launch an armed uprising in Guinea-Bissau, and it was expected that they would do so in the nearest future.

However, the nationalist leaders were running out of time. Angola was in the midst of an economic recession. A few years earlier, world prices of coffee, Angola's largest export commodity, had dropped, leading to wage cuts in the coffee producing areas of the north. In addition, 1960 was not a good year for the cotton farmers of the Kassange (Malanje) region. There is very little information about this revolt. According

[110] Alter, Konakřy, 'Záznam za schuzky',14 January 1961, ABS, Sv.4317. Guinea has one of the largest reserves of bauxites in the world. There is also a large reserve of bauxites across the border (Boé region) in Guinea-Bissau. Serious exploration started in the 1970s but mining has not started until today due to political instability in the country. Guinea-Bissau's other natural resources include phosphates, granite, clay, and unexploited deposits of petroleum and limestone.

to John Marcum, an established authority on the Angolan liberation movement, it was led by António Mariano, a member of a Christian sect devoted to the Virgin Mary. In January 1961, wage cuts spurred a wave of protests, which were soon answered by arrests. This led to a full-blown rebellion against the system of forced cotton growing in the area, with farm laborers burning crops and destroying infrastructure. The Portuguese responded with massive reprisals, killing thousands.[111] This revolt and the reprisals – known as "Maria's War" and the "Massacre of the Lower Kassange" – passed relatively unnoticed by the word press. This was primarily due to strict censorship imposed by the authorities, but also because the uprising was fairly spontaneous. The issue of Portuguese colonialism did come up a few times during deliberations at the United Nations in 1960; however, developments in the colonies were still out of international headlines. This changed on 23 January 1961, when a luxury Portuguese liner, the *Santa Maria*, was hijacked by a group of political activists led by 66-year-old Henrique Galvão.

[111] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, pp. 124-126.

CHAPTER ONE

Our Sacred Duty: The Angolan Uprising and its Aftermath, 1960–1963

"Portugal: Revolt on the High Seas," ran a headline in *Time* magazine on 3 February 1961. Henrique Galvão was a long-term opponent of the Salazarist dictatorship. A former high-ranking colonial official, Galvão believed that Portugal had a right to rule in Africa. The continuation of exploitative colonial practices, however, did not coincide with his romantic notion of the Portuguese civilizing mission. Galvão had been imprisoned in 1952 on charges of plotting a coup d'etat, after he had publicly criticized the government for failing to improve conditions for the indigenous peoples in the colonies. However, he managed to escape to Latin America, from where he began to plan the overthrow of the Salazarist regime. When he and his crew seized the liner *Santa Maria* in January 1961, rumors spread that the ship was sailing towards Angola, where Galvão would launch a coup. Reporters thus flocked to Luanda awaiting the ship's arrival. After navigating the Atlantic for 10 days, Galvão ultimately docked at Recife, Brazil. Galvão claimed that his goal was indeed to launch a coup d'etat in Angola, but, pursued by the US navy, the crew probably realized that the mission was unattainable and sought a safe harbor for political asylum. Galvão and his crew succeeded in attracting the world's attention to Portuguese colonialism.[112] Only a few journalists remained in Luanda, but those who stayed were to witness a series of events that would change the course of Angola's history.

On 4 February, at dawn, around 150 black men armed with clubs and knives attacked the police station, Sao Paolo prison, the military detention barracks, the radio station, and the airport in Luanda. By the evening, six white policemen, one African

[112]"Portugal: Revolt on the High Seas " *Time,* 3 February, 1961. Galvão later confirmed that this was indeed his original plan. See: Henrique Galvão, *Santa Maria: My crusade for Portugal* trans. William Longfellow (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961).

army corporal, and fourteen so-called rebels had been killed. The next day, interracial violence erupted again at the large public funeral of those had been killed the previous day. On 10 February, the prison was again under attack, leaving seven dead and seventeen wounded. Only after a week of violent clashes between the white and black residents, punitive sweeps of the Luandan slums, midnight arrests, and vigilante shootings was the revolt put down.[113] However, events in Luanda did not end the violence in Angola, because just one month later, on 15 March, another major uprising swept across northern Angola. The Northern Uprising grew into a massive revolt against the colonial system of forced labor in the north, which was only suppressed after six months of military operations conducted with overwhelming force, leaving thousands killed, wounded, and displaced on both sides of the racial divide.[114]

The Angolan Uprising of 1961 shattered the myth of harmonious race relations in Angola and thrust the Portuguese colonies into the Cold War. For the first time, the issue of Portuguese colonialism became a salient international topic. The timing was important because the Angolan Uprising coincided with a spike in tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States over the status of West Berlin. Khrushchev initially believed that the Soviet Union could engage in peaceful competition with the West in the Third World. However, he became increasingly disillusioned with this possibility, especially during the 1960 Congo Crisis. Khrushchev had had great expectations of the newly elected US president, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, but yet again, Khrushchev's expectations proved futile, as Kennedy ordered a build-up of conventional and nuclear arms and sanctioned a CIA plan to invade Cuba and overthrow Fidel Castro. At the Vienna Summit in June 1961, Khrushchev responded by challenging Kennedy over Western rights of access to West Berlin. This initiated another period of heightened tension between the Soviet Union and the United States,

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[113] "Angola: Land of Brotherly Love," *Time,* February 17, 1961.

[114] It is incredibly difficult to count the death toll in the conflict. Some estimate that the Angolan uprising led to the deaths of 7,000 white settlers and up to 20,000 "natives" by the end of 1961. See: Tom Hartman and John Mitchell, *A World Atlas of Military History, 1945-1984* Guild Publishing, 1984), p. 41.

ultimately leading to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.[115]

While escalation of the Cold War forced Kennedy to moderate his pressure on Salazar due to the threat of losing the Azores base, the effect on Soviet policy was quite the opposite. Khrushchev responded to his own failed expectations of peaceful competition by upping the ante in the Third World. Khrushchev was thus more willing to challenge the US by supporting anti-colonial uprisings throughout the world. By the end of 1961, therefore, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria approved their first assistance packages for the MPLA. By the end of 1961 therefore, Czechoslovakia also forged a clandestine relationship with the PAIGC's leader Amílcar Cabral, providing him with the first weapons they obtained from abroad, along with material assistance and training. While FRELIMO would only be formed in 1962, the Soviet decision to provide assistance in 1963 would follow similar logic. By the end of 1963, the Soviet Union would tie themselves to the political fates of the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC.

The Angolan Uprising, February–March 1961

There has been much speculation about who initiated the first attacks of the Angolan Uprising and what their objectives were. Both the MPLA and the UPA leadership claimed that the initiative belonged to their supporters in Luanda. Most recently, Dalia and Álvaro Mateus have discovered that the attacks organized in Luanda were not connected with either organization. Their objectives were to free the political prisoners incarcerated at the Sao Paolo prison and to express desire for independence.[116] The reality did not matter to Governor *Álvaro* Tavares, who immediately blamed "Communist agitators" for the attacks and promised to reveal documents that the uprising had been planned from abroad, while Lisbon argued that arms made in Czechoslovakia had been found with the rebels. The colonial

[115] For the most recent overview of the Khrushchev-Kennedy relationship, see: Jeffrey Sachs, *To Move the World: JFK's Quest for Peace*. Google Play (New York: Random House, 2013).

[116] Dalila Cabrita Mateus and Álvaro Mateus, *Angola 61 – Guerra Colonial: Causas e Consequências. O 4 de Fevereiro e o 15 de Março* (Lisbon: Texto, 2011). The leader of the group was Manuel Agostinho Domingos, a painter from Malange. Others included António Domingos Francisco, António Bento, Christopher Raul Deião, Virgil Francisco Sotomayor, Paiva Domingos da Silva, Bendinha Adam Neves, and Adam Manuel Mateus. The majority were from Icolo e Bengo region

administration instituted strict censorship, arresting journalists, confiscating cameras, and seizing film to silence the coverage of events in Luanda.[117] From the few available reports, we know that white vigilantes turned on blacks with a vengeance; hundreds of blacks were dragged from their huts, mostly at night, and many were beaten, shot, and left to die on the streets.[118]

The *Santa Maria* incident and the bloody events in Luanda placed Portuguese colonialism on the international agenda. "Angola: the Land of Brotherly Love," stated *Time* magazine, mocking the words spoken by Angolan Governor General Tavares only a few days before tensions in the capital escalated into full-blown racial violence. "Freedom Will Come to Angola," proclaimed the headline in the CPSU mouthpiece *Pravda* on 5 February 1961. The author of the article in *Pravda* was Mário de Andrade, the president of the Conakry-based MPLA. Although the MPLA leadership would later claim it gave the signal for the uprising in Luanda, the MPLA leadership in Conakry did not actually know anything about it. In his article for *Pravda*, Mário de Andrade introduced the MPLA as originating from a "Marxist circle" established in October 1955. He also heralded the hijacking of the *Santa Maria*, but did not mention that the MPLA were behind the events in Luanda.[119] What mattered was that media attention was finally focused on Angola. Shortly after the events in Luanda took place, Libya introduced a motion to put Angola on the agenda of the UN Security Council.

The newly elected US president, John F. Kennedy, had quite a different stance on the colonial issues than his predecessor. While Dwight Eisenhower had generally preferred gradual decolonization under European patronage, Kennedy believed that the United States should engage with the African nationalist leaders in order to appeal to the Afro-Asian movement and sway them to the side of the "free world."[120] Then-Senator Kennedy had denounced the French colonial war in Algeria in a passionate speech to the US Congress on 2 July 1957, which had scandalized Washington and

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[117] "Angola: Land of Brotherly Love."
[118] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, p. 129.
[119] Mario de Andrade, "Svoboda Pridet v Angolu," *Pravda,* February 6, 1961, p. 3.
[120] Robert B. Rakove, *Kennedy, Johnson, and the Nonaligned World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Paris but had earned the respect of many African leaders.[121] While Kennedy's main motivation was to prevent the spread of communism to Africa, he promised that he would no longer hesitate in putting pressure on allies regarding colonial issues. On 7 March, the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, instructed the US Ambassador to Portugal, Charles Burke Elbrick, to tell Salazar that Portugal should move towards "full self-determination within a realistic timetable" and promised economic aid if Salazar agreed. Rusk also warned of the possibility of trouble in Guinea-Bissau, predicting that inaction on the part of the Portuguese government would lead to "catastrophic upheavals of Congo type or worse."[122]

Washington's policy towards Holden Roberto is less clear. Roberto first visited the US in 1959, when he allegedly met Kennedy, then still a senator famous for his stance on African affairs. Holden, who admired Kennedy's courageous stance on Angola, recalled: "We agreed that it was necessary to do something to prevent the communists from taking over the Angolan liberation movement."[123] Holden again travelled to the US in March 1961, but it is not clear whom he met during the trip. Richard Mahoney writes that Roberto met with the Attorney General, Robert Kennedy, John F. Kennedy's brother, who was impressed by him, and that in late April, the National Security Council authorized covert assistance for Roberto, at a sum of $6,000 per year.[124] However, as Roger Hilsman, the director of the State Department's bureau of intelligence and research, explained in a letter to Kennedy's national security adviser, McGeorge Bundy, the CIA had been giving assistance to Roberto "for some years" and the US State Department had decided it was not necessary to advance any further funds for Roberto.[125] While in Washington, Roberto apparently met with

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[121] John F. Kennedy, "Imperialism - The Enemy of Freedom," 2 July 1957, retrieved from http://www.jfklink.com/speeches/jfk/congress/jfk020757_imperialism.html. "Instead of abandoning African nationalism to the anti-Western agitators and Soviet agents who hope to capture its leadership, the United States, a product of political revolution, must redouble its efforts to earn the respect and friendship of nationalist leaders," he said.

[122] Charles S. Sampson, ed. *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1961-1963 - Western Europe and Canada* Kindle ed. Vol. XIII (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1994), Document 324.

[123] Jose Freire Antunes, "Kennedy, Portugal, and the Azores Base, 1961." *John F. Kennedy and Europe*. Eds. Douglas Brinkley and Richard Griffiths Eisenhower Centre for American Studies, 1999), p. 152.

[124] Richard D. Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 204.

[125] Nina Davis Howland, ed. *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1961-1963 - Africa*. Vol. XXI (Washington, DC: 1995), Document 349.

representatives of the US State Department. Allegedly, they tried to convince him to abandon violence, but Roberto responded that in order to compete with the "pro-Soviet MPLA" he could not do so.[126] What Roberto had been planning for some time was to initiate an uprising of the Bakongo people against the system of forced labor in the north, and he timed it to coincide with a UN General Assembly debate on Angola scheduled for 15 March.[127]

The UN debate had hardly begun when a massive rural uprising broke out in northern Angola. According to Roberto's official version, the uprising began with an incident at a "Primavera" coffee plantation, during which workers gathered in front of the house of the plantation owner demanding pay, which was six months overdue. The owner refused to listen and shot at the workers. In retaliation, he and his family were hacked to death. When rumors spread about the incident, other plantation owners started using violence against their black laborers, launching a cycle of violence between white settlers and black workers in the north. The UPA wanted to portray the uprising as a "spontaneous combustion" triggered by the cruelty of the colonial system, but in fact, the uprising had been pre-planned by Holden Roberto, who probably did not predict the extent of the violence that would be unleashed in north Angola.[128]. Only a few days after the first attacks, news appeared of the Bakongo attacking isolated farms, destroying infrastructure, burning crops, and killing white settlers – men, women, and children. Holden Roberto deplored the extreme violence, saying that his men had only ordered a campaign of sabotage and general disobedience, which had gotten out of hand due to brutal repression.[129]

Lisbon was initially slow to respond. The colonial administration had not predicted the uprising, and it had taken place in a remote location with little military presence. In April, opposition to Salazar's colonial policy was mounted from inside his government; the Defense Minister, Botelho Moniz, argued that the situation in Angola

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[126] José Freire Antunes, *Kennedy e Salazar—O Leão e a Raposa*. Kindle (Alfragide: Publicacoes Dom Quixote, 2013), Chapter 9.
[127] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*.
[128] Ibid., 1:134.
[129] "Portugal: Revolt in a Non-Colony," *Time,* March 31, 1961.

required urgent reforms and called on Salazar to resign.[130] The coup failed, and Salazar took it upon himself to crush the uprising with overwhelming terror. The army would bomb and raid whole villages looking for suspects, killing thousands on the spot and arresting many more. Even the conservative *Time* magazine stated that the violence unleashed by the "black rebels" was rivaled by Portuguese brutality, famously quoting one unnamed Portuguese officer as saying, "I estimate we have killed 30,000 of these animals already. There are perhaps 100,000 of them in revolt—and we intend to kill every one of them when the dry season starts late in May."

The violence unleashed by Lisbon was bad news for Washington. "Ruthless Portuguese retaliation" would hurt Portugal and "its allies around the world" when "details of the true situation in Angola inevitably come to light," wrote Dean Rusk to Ambassador Bruce Elbrick on 23 April. "We are also fearful," he continued, that the Soviets would be increasingly inclined to "send arms to the Angolan underground," which would diminish the chances of "orderly change." The Secretary of State thus proposed putting pressure on Portugal at the North Atlantic Council and working with Britain and France to put further pressure on Salazar. [131] Washington also contemplated what to do with Holden Roberto. The CIA was proposing to extend aid to the UPA, while the State Department believed it was not necessary to extend any further funds.[132]

Meanwhile, Prague approved a package of assistance for the MPLA. On 18 April, the Politburo of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC) pledged to provide monthly financial assistance worth three hundred Czech crowns to the MPLA office in Conakry, allocated twenty annual university scholarships and twenty placements for military training in Czechoslovakia, and promised to support the Angolan cause at the UN. Prague did not approve a request for arms, but decided to "discuss the issue with the Soviet colleagues." The customary explanatory note attached to the resolution mentioned that the MPLA leadership – Viriato da Cruz and Matias Miguéis – had good

[130] Antunes, "Kennedy," p. 154.
[131] Howland, ed., *FRUS, 1961-1963 - Africa*, Document 348.
[132] Ibid., Document 349.

knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and envisioned the construction of a "socialist type society." The MPLA also enjoyed support among the "popular masses," in contrast to their main rival, the "reactionary" UPA. The author cautioned that the UPA could, in the future, obtain such support thanks to American sponsorship. Aid to the MPLA was thus necessary to counter the UPA. "Shortage of material means, of scholarships is the main obstacle to the development of the Marxist-orientated MPLA, while the USA enables the reactionary UPA to obtain a position in the country," summarized the author. Prague had already adopted a notion that the UPA was pro-American, or had even been established by the Americans to compete with the MPLA. Czechoslovak officials clearly accepted that interpretation from Viriato da Cruz and Matias Miguéis, who had argued that the UPA was "created and supported by the USA" during their visit to Prague in January 1961.[133]

Meanwhile, Khrushchev grew increasingly frustrated with Kennedy: firstly with his decision to increase the numbers of conventional and nuclear arms and, secondly, with Kennedy's approval of the CIA-sponsored invasion of Cuba in April 1961.[134] The change of mood in the Kremlin was evident from the strongly worded statement, "The Situation in Angola: Declaration of the Soviet Government," which appeared on the front page of *Pravda* on 27 May. After outlining crimes committed by the Portuguese army in Angola, the declaration put the blame on foreign monopolies and other colonial powers for allowing Lisbon to evade punishment. In a thinly disguised criticism of the United States, the declaration stated that while "several great powers" voted in favor of the UN resolution condemning Portugal, "those same great powers" had done nothing to restrain Portugal at the NATO Council meeting in Oslo. "As for the Soviet Union, like all the genuine friends of the oppressed peoples, it would not remain indifferent to Angola's fate."[135] The emerging rift between Kennedy and Khrushchev would soon burst into the open, precipitating one of the major crises of

[133] Prague, 28 January 1961,"Záznam o návštěvě představitelů národně-osvobozeneckého hnuti Angoly," Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č. f. 1261/0/44, inv. č. 75, ka. 71.
[134] Sachs, *Move the World*, Chapter 1.
[135] "Situatsiya v Angole: Deklaratsiya Sovetskogo Pravitel'stva," *Pravda,* May 27, 1961, p. 1.

the Cold War.

Kennedy, Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis, June–December 1961

On 3 June, Khrushchev met Kennedy at the Vienna Summit. On the first day, Khrushchev was already in a bellicose mood as he challenged Kennedy about US policy in Angola, Algeria, and the Congo, saying that whenever the United States "supports anti-colonialism for tactical reasons, its voice is very quiet" and reaffirming Soviet support for the "wars of national liberation" that he defined as a "sacred duty."[136] Khrushchev's boldest move was yet to come. The following day, Khrushchev told Kennedy that the Soviet Union would sign a separate peace treaty with the GDR, which would, he said, terminate the four-power agreement allowing American, British, and French access rights to West Berlin. Khrushchev insisted that the decision was final and that if they (the US) wanted to start a war over Berlin, there was "nothing the USSR could do about it."[137] Kennedy refused to relinquish the Western presence or access rights to West Berlin and ordered a military build-up to defend the city. The 1961 Berlin Crisis, which began with Khrushchev's provocation and ended with the construction of the Berlin Wall to prevent the outflow of Germans from East to West Germany, had a major influence on Soviet and US policies towards Angola.

The Berlin Crisis weakened Kennedy's resolve to confront Salazar. On 9 June, the United States joined the Soviet Union in a vote at the UN's Security Council, calling on Portugal to stop all "repressive measures" in Angola. Lisbon protested vehemently, with the newly appointed Portuguese Foreign Minister, Franco Nogueira, stating clearly in a conversation with the US Ambassador Elbrick that Lisbon would rather endanger NATO's security than lose Angola.[138] While the African Bureau at the State Department, led by Mennen Williams, argued that Washington should keep the pressure on Salazar, Secretary of State Rusk and the General Staff were against any

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[136] Charles S. Sampson and John Michael Joyce, eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1961-1963 - Soviet Union* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1998), Document 85.
[137] Ibid., Document 87.
[138] Antunes, "Kennedy," p. 159.

measures that might endanger US access to the Azores, and which could as a consequence reduce NATO's capability to support military missions to Berlin, Western Europe, and the Middle East and Africa.[139] On 17 July, Kennedy finally approved a compromise version of a National Security Action Memorandum, which outlined several measures to put pressure on Salazar, but which also stipulated that it was essential to "minimize the possibility of losing the Azores."[140] The CIA was allowed to continue "intermittent" payments to Roberto under cover of third parties and at a magnitude that would not allow the purchase of arms.[141] While the Berlin Crisis weakened Kennedy's resolve to engage with the leaders of the nationalist liberation movements, the opposite was true of Khrushchev. One of the first indications that Moscow was increasingly interested in the Portuguese colonies was that, in 1961, the CC CPSU International Department recruited a case officer to deal specifically with them. His name was Petr Nikitovich Yevsyukov.

Yevsyukov was born on 3 January 1921 in Harbin, China. He graduated from the Military Institute of Foreign Languages in 1949, after which he worked as a university professor and an editor of the foreign-language press. Yevsyukov was brought in as an expert on the Portuguese language (he had authored a popular textbook) to work under Petr Manchkha, the head of the Africa Section at the International Department. When he joined the International Department, Yevsyukov started receiving a stream of articles, briefings and analytical notes from the Soviet embassies, the KGB, the Directorate of Military Intelligence (GRU), the foreign press, and the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS), and thus gradually became the man who was best informed about the situation in the Portuguese colonies. Like many other middle-ranking functionaries in the party apparatus, Yevsyukov believed that decolonization was an inevitable process and that the socialist countries had an internationalist duty to support the national liberation movements. He believed that

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[139] On the views of the US Military, see: Howland, ed., *FRUS, 1961-1963 - Africa*, Document 351; Rakove, *Kennedy*, p. 124. On Secretary of State Rusk, see: Howland, ed., *FRUS, 1961-1963 - Africa*, Document 350.
[140] Sampson, ed., *FRUS, 1961-1963 - Western Europe and Canada*, Document 327.
[141] Howland, ed., *FRUS, 1961-1963 - Africa*, Document 352.

the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution had shifted the world balance of forces in favor of progress, and that it was natural for the Soviet Union to respond to appeals for help.[142]

The MPLA, of course, urgently required assistance to compete with Holden Roberto's UPA, and the Soviets were now willing to offer that help. On 9 June, the MPLA leadership in Conakry released a communiqué celebrating events in Luanda as the beginning of the armed struggle launched by their supporters and appealing for international support.[143] On that very same day, the General Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, Mukhetdin Bakhitov, conversed with Pascal Luvualu, the leader of the Angolan trade union organization affiliated with the MPLA, who was visiting Moscow. Luvualu told Bakhitov that during the first meeting of the newly established Conference of Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP; *Conferência das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas*), held in April 1961 in Casablanca, the leaderships of the liberation movements had agreed to rely primarily on assistance from the Afro-Asian bloc and the socialist countries.[144] Bakhitov informed Luvualu that the Soviet Solidarity Committee had reached the decision to offer "money, medicines, and food" to the MPLA and also considered supplying weapons. Luvualu wrote to Viriato da Cruz later that day, informing him of this conversation and advising da Cruz to contact Soviet representatives in Conakry or write directly to Moscow.[145]

Meanwhile, the KGB and the StB were drafting their response to the Berlin Crisis. On 26 June, the KGB's Chairman Alexander Shelepin and the chiefs of the KGB's intelligence departments met their Czechoslovak colleagues, including Deputy Premier Rudolf Barák, the new Interior Minister Lubomír Štrougal, and Deputy Interior Minister Josef Kudrna, in Prague for a four-day joint consultation session. The result of this meeting was a twenty-eight-page document, which outlined the main spheres of

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[142] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 3. Yevsyukov's memoirs are partly published by the Africa Institute. I have not had the chance to access the full version of his memoirs.
[143] Lara, ed., *Amplo Movimento*, 2:106.
[144] "Kratsaya Zapis Besedy s Sekretarem 'Nazionalnogo Soveta Trudyashchikhsya Angoly' Paskalem Luvualu," 9 June 1961, f.9540, op.2, d.40.
[145] Lara, ed., *Amplo Movimento*, 2:104-105.

intelligence and counterintelligence operations around the world, with the main aim of fighting the "main enemy – the US and its allies." The KGB and the StB agreed, for example, to encourage the neutrality of the non-European world, to undermine the influence of pro-American governments and policymakers, and to recruit "progressive agents" among the leaders of the liberation movements.[146] Cooperation on intelligence operations in Angola was also included in this paper, with both sides pledging to explore the situation in Angola, to identify the "progressive forces," and to assist them in the creation of a common front.[147] Approximately one month later, Shelepin presented a similar plan to Nikita Khrushchev, which included measures to activate anti-colonial mass uprisings in Kenya, Rhodesia, and Portuguese Guinea by arming rebels and training military cadres for the purpose of tying down the United States and its allies during the settlement of the Berlin Crisis. On 1 August, the CC CPSU approved Shelepin's proposals.[148]

While this "master plan" did not specifically mention any particular organization, assisting the MPLA would become the centerpiece of Soviet policy in Angola. On 22 July 1961, Viriato da Cruz and Mário de Andrade arrived in Moscow for talks with officials of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, Petr Yevsyukov at the International Department, and the CC CPSU Secretary, Nuritdin Mukhitdinov. It was unusual for a high-ranking party member such as Mukhitdinov to receive somebody like Mário de Andrade or Viriato da Cruz. The highly hierarchical nature of the Soviet bureaucratic system meant that high-ranking officials would almost never personally meet with the relatively unknown leaders of a national liberation movement. The very fact that Nuritdin Mukhitdinov did have a personal meeting with Mário de Andrade and Viriato da Cruz shows that Angola was definitely on the agenda for the Soviet leadership. Cruz and Andrade talked about the situation in Angola, their party, prospects for armed struggle, and "disagreements" with the UPA, and asked for

[146] "Record of proceedings between the Soviet KGB and the Interior Ministry of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on the expansion of intelligence cooperation," June, 1961, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, ABS, http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113217, p. 4.
[147] Ibid., pp. 7-8.
[148] For a detailed discussion of this plan, see: Vladislav Zubok, "Spy vs. Spy: The KGB vs. the CIA, 1960–1962," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin,* 4 (1994): pp. 28-29.

financial assistance, humanitarian aid to Angolan refugees (medicines, food, etc.), moral support, training of party cadres in the USSR, and arms.[149] The CC CPSU approved an early financial allocation of $25,000 for 1961 and 1962, while the Soviet Solidarity Committee began supplying material aid. There is no evidence to suggest that the Soviets promised any arms to the MPLA.[150]

The implementation of the KGB's tasks, as outlined in the "master plan" of August 1961, became possible due to a temporary settlement of the political crisis in the Congo. Following the arrest and imprisonment of Patrice Lumumba, his followers, led by Antoine Gizenga from Stanleyville, tried to organize a campaign against the newly installed authorities in Léopoldville, but ultimately failed to obtain the necessary resources and therefore agreed to negotiate.[151] Following a meeting of the various political parties in July at the University of Lovanium in Léopoldville, Joseph Kasavubu remained the president, the moderate Cyrille Adoula was elected the new prime minister, and Antoine Gizenga became his deputy. Moscow supported the negotiating process and recognized the new government. Therefore, Léopoldville agreed to re-establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, and Adoula approved the MPLA's application to move their headquarters to Léopoldville.

Oleg Nazhestkin, who was part of the KGB intelligence team that moved with the Soviet diplomats from Gizenga's headquarters in Stanleyville to Léopoldville in September, recalled that one of his tasks was to establish contacts primarily among the "pro-Western" organizations of Angolan exiles, especially within Roberto's UPA, in order to "unite them in one anti-colonial front."[152] This is what the MPLA leadership also wanted. On 8 September, the MPLA organizing secretary, Lúcio Lara, speaking to the secretary of the GDR trade mission in Conakry, Joachim Naumann, spelled out the MPLA's tactics: to isolate Holden Roberto, who was the "man of the Americans," and to

[149] "Otchet o Rabote s M. de Andrade i V. da Cruzem," Gosudarstvennyy Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (hereafter GARF), f. 9540, op. 2, d. 40, p. 141.
[150] Rossiiskii Gosudarsvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii (hereafter RGANI), fond (hereafter f.) 89, opis (hereafter op.) 38, delo (hereafter d.) 4, 5.
[151] Lumumba was captured by Mobutu's troops on his way to reach Stanleyville. He was handed over to forces loyal to Moise Tshombe and murdered by the Katangese in the presence of Belgian officers. The Katangese denied their involvement at that time.
[152] Nazhestkin, "Superderzhavy," p. 31.

win over the "progressive forces" in the UPA. Lara concluded: "The MPLA does not want to liquidate the UPA as a party, but to alter its character in order to find a common platform in armed revolutionary struggle."[153]

Confrontation between Kennedy and Khrushchev at the Vienna Summit over access to West Berlin produced different responses in Moscow and Washington. Khrushchev intensified support for revolutionary movements around the world in order to challenge Western power, and thus the MPLA received their first assistance package. Kennedy, however, realized the limits of "engagement" with the African leaders, given the perceived strategic importance of the Azores base. Still, the US became tied to the political fate of Holden Roberto. Dean Rusk telegraphed the US Ambassador in the Congo, Edmund Gullion, warning him that Holden Roberto was in danger of losing control and urging Gullion to tell the Prime Minister, Cyrille Adoula, that Roberto was a "genuine non-Communist nationalist."[154]

Meanwhile, Salazar emerged victorious from the crisis. Having crushed the Angolan Uprising by September, he announced a set of reforms of the colonial administration, abolishing the distinctions between subjects of the "overseas provinces" based on race, language, or place of birth. While even these concessions to Africans may have come as result of pressure from Washington, reforms did not go far enough to offer any kind of alternative to independence: the legal abolition of racial difference did not translate into any meaningful attempt to alleviate the institutionally-imbued prejudices against non-white subjects of the Portuguese empire or to grant any real political autonomy to the colonized peoples. "The Portuguese, having given three Angolans a university education, were now about to embark on their second five-hundred-year plan," ran an often-quoted joke at the White House.[155]

The Angolan Liberation Movement and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962– 63

The crushing of the Angolan Uprising by the end of 1961 meant that the MPLA

[153] From Conakry (Naumann) to MfAA (Lessing), 12 September 1961, PAAA-MfAA, A15964.
[154] Howland, ed., *FRUS, 1961-1963 - Africa*, Document 355.
[155] Antunes, "Kennedy," p. 162.

and the UPA had to prepare for a lengthy military campaign. Both organizations had to establish military units, begin the recruiting process, and obtain further foreign resources in order to continue the armed struggle. When the MPLA moved their headquarters from Conakry to Léopoldville in September 1961, they established a center for Angolan refugees, set up a newspaper, and organized a recruitment drive to entice young Angolans to join their ranks in Léopoldville. The MPLA received cash from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, which was passed on to Lúcio Lara via Soviet and Czechoslovak intelligence officers in Léopoldville.[156] Sofia also commenced providing aid to the MPLA in early 1962, after Mário de Andrade met and talked to Bulgarian representatives in New York and Conakry. On 17 January 1962, the Bulgarian Foreign Minister, Georgiy Kumbiliev, wrote to the BCP Central Committee, proposing the provision of aid for the MPLA on the grounds that it was a "communist organization," and also because assistance could "establish lasting connections for future trade relations between our country and the Angolan people."[157] On 25 January 1962, the CC BCP approved the provision of light weaponry and medical supplies, to be shipped to the MPLA office in Conakry.[158] However, despite significant foreign assistance, the MPLA's standing in the Congo became increasingly insecure.

While unification of all the Angolan nationalist groups remained a priority for the MPLA, this prospect was increasingly unlikely. First of all, relations between the MPLA leadership and Holden Roberto plunged to a new low in December 1961, when militants affiliated with the UPA captured and executed a group of MPLA guerrillas on a march to northern Angola. The MPLA's main ally in the Congo, Antoine Gizenga, was arrested and imprisoned in early 1962 because he would not return to Léopoldville from his stronghold in Stanleyville and join the coalition government. While Joseph Kasavubu, Cyrille Adoula, and the chief of the army, Joseph Mobutu, remained committed to supporting Holden Roberto, the MPLA no longer had any major allies

[156] Prague (first directorate, 4th department), 4 October 1967, "Záznam o skartaci materiálů pod svazku 11611/303 - LARA," ABS, 11611/114, p. 6. Czechoslovak Intelligence used the codename „KOLÁR" to refer to Lúcio Lara.
[157] Georgii Kumbiliev to CC BCP, 17 January 1962, Tsentralen D'rzhaven Arkhiv (hereafter TsDA), f. 1b, op. 62, a.e. 294.
[158] Politburo CC BCP Resolution "B" № 2, 25 January 1962, TsDA, f. 1b, op. 64, a.e. 294.

among the Congolese politicians. Yet another major blow to the MPLA came in March, when Holden made a deal with a number of Bakongo-based nationalist groups, establishing the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA; *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola*). One week later, he announced the creation of the Revolutionary Angolan Government in Exile (GRAE; *Govêrno Revolucionário de Angola no Exílio*). Visiting Moscow in July, Mário de Andrade complained that the Congolese authorities were actively harassing the MPLA operations in Léopoldville because of pressure from the US State Department.[159]

The MPLA's leadership therefore decided to change tactics and distance themselves from the socialist countries. In May, Viriato da Cruz – known for his strong Marxist beliefs – was ousted from the post of the MPLA's secretary general. On 24 May, Mário de Andrade submitted a special report to the United Nations Special Committee on Territories under Portuguese Administration, arguing that the MPLA was determined to follow positive neutralism in foreign policy and avoid entanglement in the Cold War.[160] The MPLA's Honorary President, Agostinho Neto, continued this strategy after he arrived in Léopoldville in July 1962, having escaped from house arrest in a dramatic operation organized by the Portuguese Communist Party and assisted by the governments of Morocco and Czechoslovakia.[161]

Neto, who immediately assumed the role of actual president of the MPLA, believed that the movement had to diversify its international contacts. This tactic was actually borrowed from the Algerian liberation front, the FLN, which had governed independent Algeria since July 1962. Mário de Andrade and Lúcio Lara actually travelled to Algeria in November, where they received assurances of public support and an offer to train the MPLA military cadres from President Ahmed Ben Bella.[162] In December, Neto chaired the first MPLA Conference in Léopoldville, which confirmed him as president, elected a new seven-member Steering Committee, and proclaimed

[159] Gafurov (Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Solidarity Commitee, Moscow) to Malik (Deputy Foreign Minister), 7 August 1962, GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 53.
[160] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, p. 1:254.
[161] David (Foreign Minister, Prague) to Novotny, 30 November 1962, Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č. f. 1261/0/44, inv. č. 75, ka. 71.
[162] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, pp. 2:62-65.

that the MPLA stood for the "aspirations of the peasant masses" and a principle of "non-alignment" in foreign relations.[163] This is also when Agostinho Neto first met KGB officer Oleg Nazhestkin, who would prove to be an important contact in the future.

Oleg Nazhestkin was first assigned to develop contacts with Angolan nationalists when he originally arrived at Léopoldville in 1960, shortly after the Congo achieved independence. Back in Léopoldville after the restoration of diplomatic relations between the Congo and the Soviet Union in 1961, Nazhestkin was tasked with meeting Neto upon his arrival in Léopoldville. Nazhestkin wrote that he was at first somewhat dazzled by Neto's personality. "Instead of a dashing commander as I had imagined him to be, I saw a gentle, polite, and shy man who was speaking slowly, almost lost in thought but also clearly capable of expressing his ideas clearly and with a great sense of purpose," he recalled. Neto reassured Nazhestkin that the MPLA would not compromise with the imperialists like other leaders did, but he also emphasized that it was too soon to speak of building a communist society in Angola because their task was to unite all sections of society in a struggle for independence, and not to alienate large sections of the population by adopting a communist program.[164]

Nazhestkin wrote he was surprised by the whole conversation, so much that he did not even mention any details in a report to Moscow. He clearly enjoyed the company of Neto's wife Maria Eugénia, whom he found very beautiful, charming, and intelligent. Over time, Nazhestkin would develop a very good personal relationship with Neto, whom he would come to respect as a man of strong will and a good organizer, and would act as one of Neto's key advocates in Moscow.[165] Neto continued with his plan to diversify MPLA's international support base, and around October, he approached the staff of the US embassy in Léopoldville, looking to establish contacts.[166]

Neto's timing could not have been worse. Early on 16 October 1962, Kennedy discovered that the Soviet Union had placed nuclear missiles in Cuba, setting in motion

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[163] Lara, ed., *Amplo Movimento*, 2:526-231. The seven members of the Steering Committee were Manuel Lima (war), Mário de Andrade (external affairs), Lúcio Lara (organization and cadres), Anibal de Melo (information), Deolinda Rodriques (social services), Desiderio de Graca (finance and economics), and Henrique Carreira (security).
[164] Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," p. 239.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Howland, ed., *FRUS, 1961-1963 - Africa*, Document 360.

one of the tensest periods in history of the Cold War, known as the Cuban Missile Crisis. The importance of an agreement over the status of the Azores base, which was being negotiated at that time with the Portuguese government, could not have been higher. That is why, when on 23 October, in the middle of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the assistant secretary of state for African Affairs, Mennen Williams, wrote to Dean Rusk arguing that Washington should re-engage with Holden Roberto and establish contacts with Agostinho Neto, Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs George McGhee angrily responded that he should not raise the subject again.[167] Neto travelled to the United States and Western Europe at the end of 1962, but he returned to Léopoldville empty-handed.[168]

Evidence is lacking as to how exactly the Soviets reacted to Neto's attempt to develop relations with officials from the US and Western Europe. Oleg Nazhestkin recalled that the CC CPSU International Department was very suspicious of Neto, instructing the *rezidentura* to investigate with whom Neto had been meeting in the US, even though they had recommended that he develop contacts with American officials who were opposed to the US's official policy towards Portugal.[169] Nazhestkin believed that the real reason why Moscow had come to dislike Neto was his independence of mind, his unwillingness to make public announcements and sign petitions in support of the Soviet Union, and the fact that he did not hesitate to criticize certain cadres "straight to their face."[170] What also seems to have been very important was that Neto, unlike Mário de Andrade and Viriato da Cruz, seemed aloof and did not consult with his interlocutors on any policy matters. The Czechoslovak intelligence report of October 1967 noted: "One negative feature of our contacts with Neto was that he never informed us of any decisions and did not possess a clear vision for the movement."[171]

Despite these issues, the MPLA continued receiving aid from the socialist countries. When Neto arrived in Moscow after his failed trip to the US and Western

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[167] Ibid.
[168] Gillian Rosalind Gunn Clissold, *Coercion Versus Co-optation: Western relations with the MPLA and FRELIMO from 1956 to 1976* (PhD Dissertation: London School of Economics and Political Science, 2001).
[169] Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," p. 241.
[170] Ibid., p. 240.
[171] Prague, 4 October 1967, "Záznam o skartac materialu podsv. 11611/3OB - Neto," ABS, 11611/114.

Europe, asking for money, arms, and material aid, the International Department raised the allocation for the MPLA from $25,000 in 1961 and 1962 to $50,000 a year in 1963.[172] In East Berlin, Agostinho Neto and Deolinda Rodriques made a good impression on the chief of the Africa Section at the GDR Foreign Ministry, Gottfried Lessing: "Dr. Neto and his companion left a very good impression. They appear to be decisive and objective."[173] The two were received less enthusiastically in Prague: "At the meeting with the Czechoslovak Solidarity Committee, Neto brought along a list of material aid which seemed to be improvised, and one could see he did not know what he wanted," according to a report prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Nevertheless, Prague continued supplying humanitarian aid for the MPLA-run center for Angolan refugees in Léopoldville.[174]

While Kennedy and Khrushchev initiated a series of measures to reduce Cold War tensions following the Cuban Missile Crisis, Khrushchev did not plan the scaling down of support for the liberation movements. On 10 June 1963, speaking to the leader of the British Labor Party, Harold Wilson, Khrushchev argued that the colonized peoples in Africa had a right to wage armed struggle and that the Soviet Union would assist such struggles. "If the peoples of the colonies come to us with a request to help them with arms, we will consider it our sacred duty to help," Khrushchev declared.[175] While the Soviet leadership remained committed to the MPLA in spite of Neto's flirtation with the West, a subsequent series of events would put the relationship under major strain.

The MPLA in Crisis, 1963

On 29 June 1963, the Congolese Prime Minister, Cyrille Adoula, announced that

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[172] RGANI, f.89, inv. 38, d. 5 and d. 6

[173] "Bericht über den Besuch des Praesidenten der MPLA, dr. Neto in der DDR von 20 bis 23 Mai 1963," Bundesarchiv - Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR (hereafter BA-SAPMO), DY 30/IV A 2/20/948, p. 120.Gottfried Lessing was a former husband of the writer Doris Lessing and one of the founding members of the Southern Rhodesian Communist Party, in 1941.

[174] "Vyhodnoceni navstevy predsedy Angolske strany MPLA dr A. Neto a clenky ridiciho vyboru Deolindy Rodrigues v CSSR," 28 June 1963, Archiv Ministerstva Zahraničních Věci (hereafter AMZV), TO-tajné, IV/4, Sign.274.

[175] "Zapis besedy Khrushcheva s liderom leyboristskoi partii Velikobritanii G. Vil'sonom," 10 June 1963, in Alexander Fursenko, ed. *Prezidium TsK KPSS. 1954-1964. Chernpvye protokol'nye zapisi zasedaniy. Stenogrammy. Postanovleniya*. 3 vols (Moscow: POSSPEN, 2003-2006), 3:909.

Léopoldville would extend de jure recognition to the GRAE as the only representative of the Angolan liberation movement. The MPLA did not expect this decision, because only three days earlier, on 26 June, Adoula had allegedly reassured the MPLA leadership that he would not extend unilateral recognition to the GRAE. When Adoula made the surprise announcement on 29 June, the MPLA inferred that the push had come from Washington, since the Assistant Secretary of State, Mennen Williams, had been in Léopoldville at that time. This evaluation was accurate. Mennen Williams knew that the Kennedy administration did not want to annoy Salazar, not only due to the strategic importance of the Azores, but also because Washington required Portuguese support to make sure that Moïse Tshombe would not mount another secessionist campaign in the Congolese province of Katanga from bases in Angola. Williams apparently wanted to dissuade Adoula from making a statement in support of the GRAE, which seems plausible.[176] The initiative indeed lay with Adoula. He had become increasingly anxious about the chaos on the Congolese doorstep and decided to assume a leadership position on Angola.[177]

Stunned by the decision, Neto made a series of miscalculations that made matters worse. First of all, he decided to unite the MPLA with a number of small Bakongo-based nationalist groups under one umbrella organization, in order to strengthen his position in the coming debate on Angola at the Council meeting of the Organization of African Union (OAU). Many in the leadership, such as Mário de Andrade, believed that this merger was a mistake, because many of these groups were suspected of having links to the colonial administration. The most forceful opposition came from a faction led by Viriato da Cruz and Matias Miguéis, who accused Neto and his associates of elitism and of not doing more to form a common front with Roberto's FNLA. The bitter leadership struggle came down to a physical fight over access to the Léopoldville office, only to be broken up by the Congolese police.[178]

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[176] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, pp. 79-80.
[177] Harriet Dashiell Schwar, ed. *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1961-1963 - Congo Crisis*. Vol. 10 (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1994), Document 421.
[178] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, 2:152.

Viriato da Cruz was well-known to the Soviets, while Neto, who had spent the previous decade in and out of prison, was new. Petr Yevsyukov recalled that the confrontation between Agostinho Neto and Viriato da Cruz bewildered him and his colleagues at the International Department.[179] Secondly, when the OUA Council of Ministers convened in July to discuss the situation in Angola, Neto made a very weak case in support of the MPLA. Neto's presentation, coupled with pressure applied by the Congolese government, contributed to the Council of Ministers voting in favor of recognizing the GRAE as the only representative of the Angolan national-liberation movement, thus delivering a heavy blow to the MPLA's prestige.

While the decision deeply concerned the socialist countries, they adopted a wait-and-see approach. On 14 August, the Foreign Ministry of the GDR asked its embassy staff in Moscow to discuss the matter with their Soviet colleagues and come up with a joint plan on how to deal with the situation. The fear was that the GDR would lose out by associating exclusively with the MPLA.[180] Czechoslovakia continued to maintain links with both "MPLA-Neto" and "MPLA-da Cruz," but terminated their regular financial and humanitarian assistance.[181] Moscow also chose to wait. Bulgaria's leadership was more positive. The Bulgarian Foreign Minister, Ivan Bashev, informed the CC BCP that Neto had approached Bulgarian representatives in Léopoldville, saying that the OAU's decision was a victory for neo-colonialism and, in particular, for the USA. Bashev also explained that the Soviet comrades still had a negative attitude towards Roberto's government-in-exile, and thus he proposed giving a further 10,000 Bulgarian leva to the movement.[182] The chief of the CC BCP International Department, Dimo Dichev, supported Bashev's proposal, writing that according to a special note received by the Bulgarian embassy in Moscow, the Soviet Union would continue supporting the MPLA. On 5 February 1964, the Politburo of the CC BCP approved these

[179] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 10.
[180] Berlin (Foreign Ministry) to GDR Embassy in Moscow, 14 August 1963, PAAA-MfAA, A1156.
[181] David (Foreign Minister, Czechoslovakia) to Novotny (General Secretary of the CC CPC), 13 November 1964, Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č. f. 1261/0/44, inv. č. 75, ka. 71. Also see: Zídek and Sieber, *Československo*.
[182] Bashev (Foreign Minister, Sofia) to CC BCP, December 1963, TsDA, f. 1b, op. 64, a.e. 322, pp. 3-4.

recommendations, including the additional funding.[183]

Meanwhile, the Congo had erupted into another round of civil war. The Lovanium consensus had broken down as far back as 1962, when Antoine Gizenga had been arrested and imprisoned. Many opposition leaders formerly linked to Lumumba's party, the MNC, still remained in parliament, but they remained increasingly isolated, as the Adoula–Kasavubu government finally managed to defeat Moïse Tshombe and end Katanga's bid for secession in the second half of 1963. In September, the Adoula–Kasavubu government dismissed parliament on the pretext that it was no longer effective, causing opposition leaders, such as Christopher Gbenye and Bocheley Davidson, to move to Brazzaville, where they organized the National Liberation Council (NLC) and started planning for an uprising. One of the NLC's leaders, Gaston Soumialot, went to mobilize people in the eastern Kivu province, where he found support from Tutsi refugees from Rwanda. Simultaneously, Pierre Mulele mobilized for a rebellion in Kwilu, western Congo.[184] By the end of 1963, the pro-Lumumbist uprising, known as the "Simba Rebellion," had begun, and Léopoldville was no longer prepared to tolerate anybody with links (real or potential) to the opposition. Given that both the MPLA and the Soviets were linked with the Simba leaders, the MPLA was ordered to leave the Congo on 2 November 1963.

The Simba rebellion also sealed the fate of the Soviet mission in the Congo. Oleg Nazhestkin recalled that the International Department ordered their *rezidentura* in Léopoldville to maintain regular contact with the Congolese opposition leaders, and therefore the resident spy, Boris Voronin, would regularly travel across the Congo River to neighboring Congo-Brazzaville, the headquarters of the opposition. One day, Voronin and Yuriy Myakotnykh, the embassy attaché, were returning from Brazzaville when Congolese gendarmes stopped their car and discovered documents proving that Soviet officials had been in touch with the opposition. Voronin and Myakotnykh were

[183] Dimo Dichev to the Secretariat of the CC BCP, 30 January 1964, TsDA, f. 1b, op. 64, a.e. 322, p. 2; Politburo CC BCP Resolution "B" № 1, 5 February 1964, TsDA, f. 1b, op. 64, a.e. 322, p. 1.
[184] Frank Villafaña, *Cold War in the Congo: the Confrontation of Cuban Military forces, 1960-1967* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009), p. 69.

beaten up, thrown into a jeep, and driven to the headquarters of the Congolese intelligence service, where they were interrogated and, as Nazhestkin wrote, even put in front of a firing squad by Mobutu. While the two managed to escape execution and were released the following day, the Soviet diplomatic mission was ordered to pack up and leave within the next forty-eight hours.[185] With the expulsion of the MPLA, and with it the Soviet and Czechoslovak missions, Moscow had lost their foothold in the Congo.

The Soviet Union remained committed to the MPLA despite a relaxation of superpower tensions in the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Congo was still beset by the power rivalries dating back to 1960, and the MPLA was still seen as pro-Soviet while the UPA was regarded as pro-American. The MPLA leadership realized that such a reputation was damaging, and they tried to adopt the Algerian international strategy and forge international links that went beyond the Cold War divide; nevertheless, the MPLA leadership continued reinforcing the Cold War stereotypes by explaining its difficulties as resulting from American pressure on the Congolese government. In late 1963, the MPLA again found itself on the wrong side of the political divide and was forced to close its operations in the country. Faced with disarray in the ranks of the MPLA, officials in Moscow, Berlin, and Prague contemplated the best way to respond.

The Angolan Uprising and the Liberation of Guinea-Bissau, February–December 1961

The news of the bloody events of 4 February 1961 in Luanda was as unexpected for the nationalist revolutionaries from Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau as it was for the Angolans living in Conakry. One of the PAIGC's leading members, the Cape Verdean Aristides Pereira, recalled that they only heard about events in Luanda by listening to the BBC and the Voice of America.[186] Pereira had joined Amílcar Cabral in Conakry one year earlier and had become responsible for logistical issues. Soon

[185] Nazhestkin, "Gody," pp. 160-164.
[186] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 93.

enough, he would become one of Cabral's closest associates. Meanwhile, the MPLA leadership in Conakry allegedly insisted that the PAIGC should launch the armed struggle as soon as possible in order to distract the Portuguese forces from Angola. The Soviet journalist Oleg Ignatev wrote that Amílcar Cabral later recounted the disagreements in a party meeting: "When, in 1961, our comrades from the MPLA told us that they had begun an armed struggle in Angola, and had told us that we should also begin, we replied to them directly that this was premature, because if we started war now, we would have damaged not only ourselves but also Angola."[187]

The PAIGC was definitely unprepared to launch armed struggle as the movement neither had the weapons nor people with military training, but Cabral was definitely laying his hopes for sponsorship on Moscow and Prague. In March, he departed for his first trip to the Soviet Union, the trip of which there remains only one unsigned report prepared by either the Soviet Solidarity Committee or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Cabral was particularly critical of US policy in Africa, saying that many newly independent African countries still de facto remained the "colonial possessions of the imperialist countries."[188] Cabral also attacked the concept of "African socialism" as a lie. "In his words, there only exists scientific socialism that takes into account specific features of a particular country."[189] Cabral also visited Leningrad, where he was taken to the *Aurora* and wrote in the guestbook that the battleship was a "symbol of the new day made possible by Soviet Russia." When taken to a textile factory in Leningrad, Cabral stated that his party hoped to emulate Soviet success and attract women into production and administration in the workplace. "Cabral marveled at the massive scale of housing construction in the Soviet Union, the care for children, the high culture of workers," and asked whether his eight-year-old daughter could go to the Soviet ballet school, apparently saying: "Only in the USSR can a daughter obtain the best education and good Marxist education." The unnamed author of the report

[187] Ignatyev, *Syn Afriki*, p. 103.
[188] "Spravka," 8 March 1961, GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 40.
[189] Ibid.

concluded that Cabral's statements seemed sincere.[190] Cabral's seemingly genuine interest in Soviet achievements and his rejection of African socialism clearly made him a potentially perfect candidate for Soviet sponsorship. That said, there is no evidence to suggest Cabral discussed any concrete demands beyond his request for Marxist literature, mentioned in the report. From Moscow, Cabral flew to Prague, where Aristides Pereira joined him.

In Prague, Cabral and Pereira were received by the top Czechoslovak leadership. Aristides Pereira recalled that the two spoke at length with the Interior Minister, Rudolf Barák. It was very rare for the leaders of liberation movements to be received at such a high level, and such a meeting took place because the deputy chief of station had advocated Cabral as a particularly useful contact. Pereira recalled: "During our conversation, the minister [Barák] became convinced that we were a movement like no other and the one thing we needed was arms." Pereira claimed that Barák had promised to deliver arms if they received a go-ahead from the Guinean authorities.[191] There is no record of Cabral and Pereira ever meeting Barák in Prague, perhaps because within a year Barák would be demoted to the position of Deputy Premier, then arrested and imprisoned for embezzlement of party funds in 1962. Cabral and Pereira did meet the Czechoslovak Deputy Interior Minister, Karel Klima, whom they asked for weapons, financial assistance, and training experts in security and instructors in "subversive activities."[192] Upon their return to Conakry, Cabral asked the Guinean President, Sékou Touré, whether he would allow the PAIGC to receive arms in Conakry. Pereira recalled that Touré immediately agreed to Cabral's request, instructing him that weapons from Czechoslovakia could be shipped directly to Conakry, to the Guinean Ministry of Defense.[193]

On 21 June, Miroslav Alter wrote to Rudolf Barák from Conakry: "I propose to recruit 'SEKRETAR,' real name Amílcar Cabral, born 12 September 1924 in Portuguese

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[190] Ibid.
[191] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 96.
[192] David to Novotny, 20 July 1961, Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č.f. 1261/0/44, inv.č. 394, ka.166.
[193] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 97.

Guinea, an agronomist, general secretary of the African Party of Independence (*Partido Africana da Independenza* – PAI)."[194] In other words, Alter was proposing to enlist Cabral into working for the StB. Alter argued that he had already developed a very close relationship with Cabral, who had already been acting as a "conscious informant" providing useful information on the situation in Guinea-Bissau and American policy in Africa. Moreover, Cabral had already become an important figure in Guinea and in the national liberation movement for Guinea-Bissau, and could potentially occupy a leading role in the country after independence, "which we could exploit to implement the politics of influence."[195] "Conditions for liberation of Guinea Bissau," continued Alter, were "very promising" because the colony was adjacent to Guinea and the Guinean authorities had allowed the transportation of arms via its territory to the border. Alter hoped to raise the issue with Cabral once Prague had decided to approve the assistance package to the PAIGC, which would be very useful because "Cabral would think like he owes me." Alter proposed that he would tell Cabral that their aims in Africa were the same and would ask him to supply regular information about development in Africa. "I expect that Cabral will accept my proposal because apart from the above he is tied in, as he has accepted from us 90,000 Guinean francs for the information."[196]

Within the next two months, the Czechoslovak leadership decided it was a good idea to recruit Cabral and provide necessary assistance to the PAIGC, including arms. There is no evidence to prove that the KGB knew about this plan or participated in it. On one hand, it seems unlikely that they did not given that the level of cooperation between the KGB and the StB was very strong. Miroslav Alter submitted his proposal to recruit Cabral on 21 June. Only five days later, Barák hosted the KGB for their second coordination meeting in Prague. Although Guinea-Bissau was not specifically mentioned in the KGB–StB plan, it was agreed that both sides would try and recruit agents among the leaderships of the liberation movements around the world and that

[194] Npor. Alter M., Konakřy, "Věc: návrh na verbovky SEKRETÁŘE z Portugalské Guineje," ABS, 43197, p. 3.
[195] Ibid., p. 4.
[196] Ibid., p. 5.

the KGB and the StB would share information at the level of local intelligence stations.[197] One the other hand, there still remains a possibility that this was the initiative of a local operative like Miroslav Alter and that the Czechoslovaks did not necessarily have to share that kind of information with their colleagues.

On 21 July, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Václav David, sent the General Secretary, Antonín Novotný, a proposal which outlined Prague's commitment to provide monthly financial assistance worth 2,500 Czech crowns, send light weapons for 3,000 guerrillas, and organize six-month courses to train three instructors in "illegal and subversive work" and two experts in security matters – in total, aid worth 1,210,000 Czech crowns.[198] The note attached to the resolution praised Cabral, whose political philosophy aligned with that of the Czechoslovak government. Cabral did not like the thesis that there was no working class in Africa and rejected the notion of "African socialism." Cabral expressed a "deep knowledge" of Marxism-Leninism, which he had acquired as a political activist in Portugal, where he was also acquainted with the Portuguese communists. The PAIGC had already organized an illegal network in the countryside and was prepared to move arms across the Guinea/Guinea-Bissau border. The report concluded that the Soviet colleagues were to be informed about the decision and that support for the MPLA was to be discussed and coordinated with Moscow.[199]

On 29 July, the KGB Chief, Alexander Shelepin, sent Nikita Khrushchev the final version of the StB–KGB "master plan," which included a statement that the KGB would help to organize anti-colonial uprisings in British Kenya, Rhodesia and Portuguese Guinea "by arming rebels and training military cadres."[200] Why did Moscow not provide assistance to the PAIGC in 1961, after Cabral's first visit? Mustafa Dhada, one

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[197] "Record of proceedings between the Soviet KGB and the Interior Ministry of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on the expansion of intelligence cooperation," June, 1961, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, ABS, http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113217, p. 11.
[198] From Vaclav David to Antonin Novotny, 20 July 1961, Národní Archiv, f. 1261/0/44, KSC-UV-AN2, Inv. 394, ka. 166, p. 4. The arms that Czechoslovakia would send in its first shipment included 600 guns, 30 light machine guns, 1,061 pistols, 50 skyrockets, 2,000 hand grenades, 25 binoculars, 3 heavy machine guns, 25 machine guns, 1,500 kg of explosives with ammunition, one "Jawa" motorcycle, and one "Skoda Octavia."
[199] Ibid.
[200] Zubok, "Spy vs. Spy," p. 29.

of the most detailed narrators of the PAIGC's liberation struggles, speculates that the Soviets may have been deterred by Cabral's links with the Chinese.[201] Yet, there is no evidence in the East European archives to suggest that this was the case. All evaluations of Cabral were overwhelmingly positive, and the Soviets were not too concerned about Chinese influence at that point. One explanation for Soviet inaction could have been that the Soviets negotiated with Prague that Czechoslovakia would act as their "vanguard", as had occurred most famously in 1955, when Khrushchev had decided to provide weapons to Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt via Czechoslovakia. It is also possible that when Cabral visited the Soviet Union in March, he simply did not meet officials who were high-ranking enough to make any such decision. Petr Yevsyukov, who was the key Soviet official responsible for the Portuguese colonies at the CC CPSU International Department, does not even mention Cabral's USSR visit in March, and he probably did not even meet him at that point.[202] On 1 August, the Politburo of the Czechoslovak Communist Party approved its assistance package to the PAIGC.[203] In Conakry, Miroslav Alter could now tell Cabral.

On 13 August 1961, Alter invited Cabral to his house to inform him that Prague had approved his requests. Cabral was very happy to receive the news. Alter began with the good news on purpose: his main goal was to formalize the relationship between Cabral and the Czechoslovakian intelligences. Alter told Cabral that both the PAIGC and Czechoslovakia conducted policy in Africa in the interests of African people, and thus Prague would require even more precise information about the political situation in African countries and the liberation movements. Cabral clearly realized what was going on and was probably prepared for this to happen: "SEKRETAR [Cabral] reacted very well … He reassured me that he has some political contacts in Guinea and he will do everything he can as per his abilities. As for the conferences that he would

[201] Dhada, *Warriors at Work*, p. 157.
[202] Petr Yevsyukov, "Natsionalno-osvoboditelnaya Borba v Gvinee-Bissau i ee Lider Amilkar Kabral." *Afrika v Vospominaniyakh Veteranov Diplomaticheskoy Sluzhby*. Ed. Aleksey Vasilyev (Moscow: Institut Afriki RAN, 2004).
[203] David to Novotny, 20 July 1961, Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č.f. 1261/0/44, inv.č. 394, ka.166, p. 4.

participate in, he would inform us and give detailed information," Alter reported.[204] There is no evidence in Alter's report to suggest that Cabral signed any papers formalizing any kind of relationship, but from then on, officers of the Czechoslovakian intelligence service would refer to 13 August 1961 as the date when they recruited Cabral as their "trusted agent."

There is no written evidence to prove that the Soviets in any way instructed their Czechoslovak colleagues to recruit Cabral, but they probably knew about it and expected Prague to do just what they did. The 1960 Czech–Soviet intelligence plan reflected the turning of Soviet policy to the Third World, with the intelligence services of both countries now expected to cover the United Arab Republic, Ghana, Mali, Sierra Leone, Zanzibar, the Congo, Angola, and Guinea.[205] The initiative to recruit Amílcar Cabral to inform for the StB came from a Czech agent in Conakry – Miroslav Alter – but it is clear that his proposal was based on general instructions that he had received in 1960. It was Alter who developed a personal relationship with Cabral and lobbied on his behalf in Prague. We do not have any information on Cabral's communications with the KGB agents in Conakry, but it seems unlikely there were none, given the abovementioned decision to establish contacts with representatives of liberation movements in the Third World. As the Angolan Uprising and the Berlin Crisis unfolded over the course of 1961, Prague and Moscow upped the ante by including the whole world as a playing field for competition with the United States. Although the KGB was not allowed to recruit members of the communist parties, this principle did not apply to leaders of the liberation movements, and the StB decided to recruit Cabral as an informant.

The relationship between Cabral and the StB would develop on the basis of mutual advantage: Czechoslovakia needed "insider information" on events and actors in Africa, while Cabral obviously needed money, equipment, and arms to proceed to "direct action," which they pledged to do in solidarity with the MPLA. From the

[204] Alter (Conakry) to Prague, 14 August 1961, "Záznam z Verbovky Sekretáře," ABS, 43197/000, p. 16.
[205] Žázek, "Czechoslovak and Soviet State Security," p. 2.

Czechoslovak perspective, Cabral would become a valuable ally, a beacon of their influence in Africa. However, this would have never happened had there not been an understanding that his political views were very similar, if not the same, as those of the cadres in Moscow and Prague. His criticism of imperialism, denunciation of African socialism, and admiration of Soviet achievements were not just for show, yet Cabral was a very practical man and realized the limitations as well as the opportunities that the Cold War offered. As a leader of movement for independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde – two tiny spots on a world map – Cabral knew that it was up to him to convince his interlocutors that supporting the PAIGC was worth the trouble.

Cabral's Quest for Arms, 1961–1963

In November 1961, Cabral visited East Berlin. Talking to the Chairman of the GDR Solidarity Committee, Horst Brasch, and the GDR's liaison officer in Cairo, Henry Eggebrecht, Cabral confirmed that non-violent resistance was no longer a viable option and that the PAIGC had decided not only to prepare for armed struggle, but also to start training cooperative and trade union cadres who could take over the leading role in governing the country after independence. Therefore, he asked for scholarships and material aid (transistors, watches, binoculars) from the GDR. Brasch told Cabral that Berlin had been trying to push for a signature on a peace treaty between the GDR and Western powers, a treaty which would allow for international recognition of the GDR, thus alleviating existing tensions surrounding the status of divided Germany. Brasch therefore asked Cabral to advocate in favor of this plan in Africa. "Cabral responded that he would try to use his many acquaintances with African politicians to propagate for the signing of the peace treaty, expressing his full agreement with our point of view."[206] The desire for international recognition drove the GDR's foreign policy. Even though Nikita Khrushchev dropped the idea of signing a unilateral peace treaty with the GDR after the Berlin Wall went up in August, Walter Ulbricht was still pushing for it

[206] An die Handelsvertretung der DDR in der Republik Guinea, "Beschprechung mit Herrn Cabral," Berlin, den 8 November 1961, PAAA-MfAA, A16050.

to go through. Cabral, agreeing to support the GDR in Africa, must have pleased his hosts – the GDR approved the provision of scholarships and technical aid to the PAIGC.[207]

Having secured arms from Czechoslovakia, Cabral and his associates were planning to unleash active destabilization of the colonial administration in Guinea-Bissau. When Cabral returned from the GDR and from another trip to Czechoslovakia – where he was briefing the StB on the first conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade – he met up with his contact, Miroslav Alter, and Farsky, Alter's replacement in Conakry, telling them that the PAIGC was "finishing off preparations for armed struggle." The Guinean Minister of Defense, Keita Fodeba, had promised Cabral that he would provide trucks to transport arms to the border with Guinea-Bissau, he explained.[208] In December 1961, his younger brother, Luís Cabral, travelled to the Soviet Union for the first time, to attend the Tenth International Trade Union Congress. Luís briefed his interlocutors – the General Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, Mukhetdin Bakhitov, and the desk officer on Portuguese colonies at the International Department, Petr Yevsyukov – about the rivals vying for power with their organization and about their plans to begin military operations by the end of December. The party had already had military commanders trained in Czechoslovakia and China and had also already formed military units who had received arms from Czechoslovakia, said Luís Cabral.[209] His brother, Amílcar, had already forwarded a letter to the CPSU outlining a list of requirements and would visit the Soviet Union to discuss this.[210] It is not clear why Luís Cabral was saying that they had "distributed arms" to the military units. When Czechoslovak arms arrived in Conakry at the end of 1962, they were seized by Guinean authorities, apparently on the initiative of the Defense Minister, Keita Fodeba, who did not want to spoil relations with the Federal Republic of Germany by supporting an armed uprising against NATO member

[207] Ibid.
[208] Alter-Farsky (Conakry) to Prague, "Záznam za schuzky 1.11.1961" ABS, 43197/000.
[209] M. Bakhitov, "Zapis besedy s Chlenom Poliburo PAI Portugalskoi Gvinee Lui Kabralem," 19 December 1961, GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 40, p. 170.
[210] Ibid., p. 171.

Portugal.[211]

Meanwhile, Cabral flew to Moscow for his second visit in early 1962. Petr Yevsyukov recalled in vivid detail their first meeting at the airfield of Sheremetyevo Airport in Moscow: "I did not have a clue what he looked like. I only stood there and waited for a black man. I had the right to approach the airplane ramp and so I waited for an African to appear. After all passengers came out, on the ramp there appeared a man – not particularly black, below-average height; he was dressed in a warm coat and a knitted hat. A whole batch of such hats was a present from Czechoslovakia and many [PAIGC] party members started wearing them. I have a portrait of Cabral in this hat in my home. For me, it is a dear relic. The man went down the ramp, and I approached him to ask whether he was Amílcar Cabral. He smiled with a good smile and answered, 'Yes.' My second question was whether to call him 'Señor' or 'Comrade'. He answered, 'Comrade, of course'."[212]

From the first moments it seemed that Cabral had managed to win over Yevsyukov, who would become one of his greatest fans and would support most of his appeals for assistance. "Cabral made a surprisingly pleasant first impression on me. The man had a unique ability for everyone to warm to him. Physically attractive, he was highly erudite and could convince people that his mission and his views were just. It was pleasant to talk to him, to debate and to argue something that was opposite to his opinion. He could respect the opinions presented by his interlocutors and often agreed with them," continues Yevsyukov.[213] Although Cabral definitely made a very good impression in Moscow, the full extent of the aid that he received after his first visit is not known. We know that the International Department allocated a sum of $35,000 in 1962 and $50,000 in 1963.[214] The Soviet Union also allocated scholarships for young cadres to undergo short-term training at the Komsomol School in

[211] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, pp. 97-98.
[212] Yevsyukov, "Natsionalno-osvoboditelnaya Borba v Gvinee-Bissau," p. 140.
[213] Ibid.
[214] RGANI, f. 89, inv. 38, d. 5 and d. 6

Moscow.[215] Nothing is known regarding the shipment of arms. Given that the Guinean authorities had detained the shipment of arms from Czechoslovakia, and that Soviet relations with Conakry were at their lowest point since the establishment of diplomatic relations, probably no weapons had been sent.[216]

Nevertheless, Cabral was determined to obtain arms despite the delays imposed by the Guinean authorities. He asked the Czechoslovaks to supply arms for 100 men, who were to conduct an operation codenamed "BETA," designed to attack a Portuguese garrison at Bedanda and seize a lot of weapons. On 29 December 1962, the new Interior Minister, Lubomír Štrougal, approved the operation, and the weapons were transferred to Conakry via Morocco.[217] Aristides Pereira never mentioned the operation – perhaps because it never went ahead – but he did argue that the PAIGC started smuggling weapons from Morocco to Conakry after Cabral had spoken to the newly enthroned King Hassan II. The king, recalled Pereira, wanted to continue his father's legacy and offer support for the liberation movements. He allowed Cabral to choose the arms he wanted but told him that he would have to arrange for transportation himself. The PAIGC would load up the carriages and transport them onto small boats that would transport weapons to Conakry.[218]

Simultaneously, the PAIGC launched a recruitment and mobilization drive in the countryside and began small acts of sabotage. Pereira travelled to the Soviet Union in July and told his interlocutors that they had already begun "concrete action: mass-scale sabotage, dislocation of bridges, disruption of road networks, [and] the arson of Portuguese property."[219] Finally, in December, the PAIGC finally received official endorsement from the Guinean authorities at the Sixth Congress of the Democratic Party of Guinea (DPG). Amongst the men who provided support for Cabral at the

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[215] RGASPI, f.1, dd. 27, 39, 42, 55

[216] The crisis developed over the behavior of the Soviet ambassador, Daniel Solod. Allegedly, SékouTourédeveloped a personal animosity towards the Soviet ambassador, who had maintained links with the opposition and often behaved in a paternalistic fashion. Solod was ordered to leave the country and it was only Anastas Mikoyan who managed to reconcile withTouréin January 1962. See: Oleg Gorbunov, "Dva Goda v Gvinee." *Afrika v Vospominaniiakh Veteranov Diplomaticheskoi Sluzhby*. Ed. Aleksey Vasilyev (Moscow: Institut Afriki RAN, 2000). Also see: Mazov, *Distant Front*.

[217] Alter (Conakry) to Štrougal (Minister of the Interior, Prague), ABS, 43197/000

[218] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 100.

[219] From B. Gafurov to CC CPSU, "Memo on conversation between Deputy General Secretary of PAIGC Aristides Pereira and representatives of the SAASC," 7 August 1962, GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 53, p. 110.

Congress was Saïfoulaye Diallo, the DPG's Political Secretary, who had been a long-time supporter of the PAIGC. Cabral showed up at the Congress, but so did his main rival, Luís da Silva. After a brief argument between the Guinean officials, Cabral was invited in, while his rivals were ordered to leave. Sékou Touré gave the floor to Cabral after his opening speech. "That was one of our major victories. My statement showed everybody that the Republic of Guinea supported our party," argued Amílcar Cabral in conversation with Oleg Ignatyev.[220] Shortly afterwards, the PAIGC received official permission to receive weapons in Conakry, and the Guinean authorities released the weapons from Czechoslovakia.

The Origins and Foundation of FRELIMO, 1961-1962

When the Angolan Uprising took place in 1961, the Mozambican liberation movement did not have a united nationalist organization, but consisted of three main organizations, which acquired an independence agenda after the 1960 "Mueda Massacre." These were the National Democratic Union of Mozambique (UDENAMO; *União Democrática Nacional de Moçambique*), the Mozambique Africa National Union (MANU), and the African Union for Independent Mozambique (UNAMI; *União Africana de Moçambique Independente*). Both MANU and UNAMI were regionally based groups, rooted in communities of Mozambicans who had traditionally crossed borders looking for economic opportunities or political freedom elsewhere. MANU was originally based in the British-held territory of Tanganyika in East Africa, where it found support among Mozambicans, mainly those of Makonde ethnic origin, and was modelled on the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), the main political party in Tanganyika, which was led by Julius Kambarage Nyerere. In 1961, MANU moved its headquarters to Mombasa in the newly independent Kenya, where Matthew Mmole, a Makonde Mozambican born in Tanganyika, undertook to develop the organization. UNAMI represented Mozambican workers from the Tete district in Mozambique who lived in

[220] Ignatyev, *Syn Afriki*, p. 40.

British Nyasaland (Malawi). It was first established by Baltazar Chagonga, a former nurse and a political organizer at the Moatize Coal Mining Company in the Tete province, who had had fled to Malawi in 1961, fearing for his life.[221]

UDENAMO was perhaps the only organization that appealed to Mozambicans across regional divides. The organization was first established in Bulawayo, the center of the labor movement in South Rhodesia. Its leader was the 22-year-old Adelino Gwambe, a former employee of the South Rhodesian railways, from Inhambane, southern Mozambique. South Rhodesia offered employment and a freer political climate; thus, many Mozambicans who wanted to escape the forced construction work imposed by Salazar in central Mozambique after the Second World War fled there, finding employment as railway and agricultural workers, as well as establishing self-help organizations that would form the basis of UDENAMO. One of the people who joined UDENAMO in the late 1950s was Reverend Uria Simango. Born in Maropanhe, Sofala province, Uria Simango's father Kamba Simango had been among the first black Mozambicans to receive higher education in the US. On his return to Mozambique, Kamba Simango founded a missionary church that aimed to promote education and religion for black Africans. In the 1950s, its followers were persecuted and fled to South Rhodesia, where Kamba's son, Uria Simango, a Presbyterian minister, joined UDENAMO.[222]

In April 1961, Marcelino dos Santos invited Adelino Gwambe to represent the Mozambican liberation front at the foundational conference for CONCP, the umbrella organization uniting the liberation movements fighting against Portuguese colonialism, in Casablanca, Morocco, where the delegates urged unification of all the Mozambican liberation movements. In Dar es Salaam, Gwambe made a rhetorical announcement that UDENAMO was preparing to liberate Mozambique with some 7,000 soldiers. Given that Tanganyika was not an independent country at that point, Nyerere was not prepared to tolerate such explosive statements, and Gwambe was

[221] Funada-Classe, *Origins of War*, p. 222.
[222] Barnabé Lucas Ncomo, *Uria Simango - Um homem, Uma Causa* (Maputo: Edicoes Novafrica, 2003).

expelled from the country.[223] He then moved to Ghana, where he found support from President Kwame Nkrumah and began to seek international support. This was when Gwambe first visited Moscow and Prague.

Gwambe did not make a good impression in Moscow. Petr Yevsyukov wrote that Gwambe surprised his hosts when he told them that the ancient swords and maces, on display at the Moscow's armory museum would suit the fighters in Mozambique or when he refused to anything but the Russian type of sour yoghurt, *kefir,* in memory of his "hungry comrades," only to devour a huge dinner a few hours later. Yevsyukov also did not like the fact that Gwambe had also travelled to the United States, describing him as a "petty political adventurer, whose main goal was to misinform us and receive more money."[224] The CC CPSU International Department nonetheless allocated a token $3,000 for UDENAMO in 1961.[225]

Gwambe made a better impression in Prague in April 1962, when he and another UDENAMO member, David Mabunda, arrived in search of financial support and scholarships. Gwambe struck Czechoslovakian officials as a young politician, an "inspired champion of independence," but one who was still quite undecided in terms of his political beliefs. Meanwhile, Mabunda was much more self-confident, made good arguments, and adhered to left-wing views. It is not clear what the direct consequences of this trip were, but the unsigned Czechoslovakian report noted with satisfaction that, by receiving Gwambe and Mabunda, they had created direct links with a movement that would probably take a leading role in the attainment of Mozambican independence.[226]

While Gwambe was touring the socialist countries looking for support, many other Mozambican nationalists converged in Dar es Salaam in expectation of Tanganyika's independence. When Marcelino dos Santos heard about Gwambe's expulsion from Dar es Salaam, he moved from Rabat, Morocco, to Dar es Salaam and

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[223] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, p. 197.
[224] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 120.
[225] RGANI, f. 89, inv. 38, d. 4.
[226] "Zprava o povytu a jednani H. Ch Gwambe a D.J. M Mabundy z Mozambiku v CSSR ve dnech 21.-29.3.1962," AMZV, 1970-1974, TO-tajné, IV/8, sign. 273, inv. č. 67, p. 9.

joined UDENAMO, as did Paulo Gumane. Originally a teacher from Inhambane, southern Mozambique, Gumane began his political career as a branch secretary of the Laundry and Dry Cleaner Workers' Union in Cape Town, where he became familiar with members of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party.[227] These activists, who had converged in Dar es Salaam, realized that they had to establish a unified movement in order to achieve credibility with Tanzania's President Julius Nyerere and foreign donors. At that moment, however, they seemed to be lacking a person of significant stature who could lead such a movement. The one man who seemed suitable for the role was the 41-year-old Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane.

Mondlane definitely had the right kind of background and connections to lead a united Mozambican liberation front. Born on 20 June 1920, Mondlane was the son of a Tsonga chief from the Gaza province in southern Mozambique. He was educated by Swiss missionaries, after which he moved to study at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, right when the African National Congress was rapidly expanding its campaign against apartheid. Mondlane became involved in political campaigning, for which he was expelled from the country, and spent some time in Lourenco Marques (later renamed Maputo), where he was one of the founding members of an association for black students in Mozambique (NESAM; *Núcleo dos Estudantes Africanos Secundários de Moçambique*). After a brief period of study in Portugal, Mondlane took up a scholarship to study sociology and anthropology at Oberlin, Northwestern, and Harvard universities, and married a white woman from Indiana, Janet Rae Johnson. In 1957, Mondlane started work as a research officer at the Trusteeship Department of the United Nations, where he encountered many African leaders, such as the leader of TANU and the first President of Tanganyika, Julius Nyerere.

In the first half of 1961, Mondlane embarked on a tour of Mozambique, campaigning for reform and attracting large crowds. On his return to the United States,

[227] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, p. 197.

Mondlane gave a full account of his trip to officials of the US State Department, urging the Kennedy administration to put pressure on Salazar to accept reform in the colonies and move towards self-determination within a realistic timetable. Mondlane struck a favorable chord at the State Department, with Undersecretary of State Chester Boles describing him as a "moderate with the potential for top leadership in Mozambique." Mondlane still believed that the transition to independence could be achieved through negotiation, and that he could facilitate this process. When Mondlane received several letters from Mozambican politicians requesting that he take part in a unity conference organized under the auspices of Julius Nyerere, he set off for Dar es Salaam with this goal in mind.[228]

On 25 June 1962, UDENAMO, MANU, and MANI finally merged to create a new umbrella organization, the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO; *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*). Mondlane, who had apparently campaigned on the promise that he would provide scholarships for Mozambican students, was elected president because he had the support of Marcelino dos Santos and Uria Simango, who believed that Mondlane's international connections and prestige would earn FRELIMO many recruits. Uria Simango became vice-president, and Marcelino dos Santos the secretary for foreign relations. MANU's Matthew Mmole was elected treasurer, David Mabunda general secretary, and Paulo Gumane deputy general secretary. While the previous organizations were supposed to dissolve, there was not much discussion about the long-term goals of the movement. Later in life, Mondlane admitted that the only thing that united those who had founded FRELIMO was hatred of colonialism and the desire to destroy the old social structure, but nobody knew what type of social structure would actually replace the previous one.[229] FRELIMO was the product of a "marriage of convenience," which started to unravel very shortly afterwards.[230]

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[228] Cabrita, *Mozambique*, p. 6.
[229] John S. Saul, "Eduardo Mondlane & the Rise & Fall of Mozambican Socialism: Reflections in Honour of the 85th Anniversary of His Birth, June 1920," *Review of African Political Economy,* 32 4 (2005): pp. 309-310.
[230] Cabrita, *Mozambique*, pp. 1-13.

Crisis and Consolidation of FRELIMO, 1962-1963

The focus of many frustrations was the election of Eduardo Mondlane as FRELIMO's President, as became immediately apparent to the Soviet cadres. When David Mabunda, Fanuel Mahluza, and Matthew Mmole visited Moscow for the International Congress for Peace and Disarmament shortly after the foundation of FRELIMO in July, they expressed concern regarding Mondlane. On 16 July 1962, speaking with the General Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, Dmitry Dolidze, David Mabunda said that Mondlane's election had alarmed them because of his questionable political affiliation. He also asked for financial, material and political support from the USSR, and declared that UDENAMO could withdraw from the front at any time.[231] Former MANU leader Matthew Mmole also asked for military training, scholarships and financial assistance for the purchase of "cars and propaganda materials," but he would not answer which organization (FRELIMO or MANU) he actually represented.[232] In August, Adelino Gwambe accused Mondlane of being an American agent and officially withdrew UDENAMO from the front.

Gwambe's withdrawal from the front did not signal the end to FRELIMO's leadership struggles. Eduardo Mondlane's election as President remained a contentious issues among FRELIMO's leadership, with a few members critical of his relationship with the Kennedy administration. August saw the expulsion of Matthew Mmole, the former president of the MANU and Lawrence M. Millinga, its secretary-general, for lashing out at Washington's dubious anti-colonial stance. Many were apparently critical of the fact that Mozambicans from the south, including Eduardo Mondlane and Marcelino dos Santos, dominated all the leadership positions, while the majority of the rank-and-file members were from the north, did not get as much representation in high-ranking posts. The influx of young recruits from the southern Gaza province strengthened Mondlane's presidency by the time of the September

[231] Dolidze (Soviet Solidarity Committee, General Secretary) to CC CPSU, 9 August 1962, "Zapis besedy s chlenami ZK Nazionalnogo Demokraticheskogo soyuza Mozambika Mabundoi, Mlhuza i Mohlayeye," GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 53.
[232] Gafurov (Soviet Solidarity Committee, deputy chairman) to CC CPSU, 7 August 1962, "Zapis besedy s Presidentom Afrikanskogo natsionalnogo soyuza Mozambika Matthew Mmole," GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 53.

Congress and further alienated many original members, who felt they were being sidelined from effective leadership of the movement. Mondlane was again criticized when he appointed a black American by the name of Leo Milas to the post of the Secretary of Information. While Milas claimed to have been born in Mozambique, many doubted that was the fact and in fact believed that Milas was an agent, recruited by the CIA to keep tabs on FRELIMO.[233]

Opposition leaders thus started to approach the cadres from the socialist countries looking for support. On 2 October, David Mabunda explained to the Soviet Ambassador in Dar es Salaam, Andrey Timoshchenko, that Mondlane had been making slanderous comments about the Soviet Union and the socialist countries, and that the "progressive elements" were being eradicated from FRELIMO's Executive Committee, being replaced by certain individuals (implying Leo Milas) who were being bribed by the Americans. Mabunda told Timoshchenko that he was already being called a "red agent and a traitor" and that he would probably be expelled soon.[234] Two months later, Mabunda approached the Czechoslovakian embassy in Cairo, asking for arms in the name of FRELIMO; however, it was soon apparent that he was already acting on his own accord, and his request was rejected.[235] Gwambe and his associate, Fanuel Mahlayeye, also approached the Czechoslovakian representatives in Cairo, arguing that Mondlane was a "pro-American agent, who had been tasked by the US to destroy the Mozambican liberation movement." The Czechoslovakian cadres were not impressed, as "[both] appeared to be immature politicians, who did not see a way out of the situation," according to a follow-up report.[236]

The crisis reached a crescendo at the end of 1962, when a group of people critical of Mondlane became embroiled in a fight, allegedly beating up Leo Milas in the process. Subsequently, David Mabunda, Paulo Gumane, and Fanuel Mahluza were

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[233] For discussion of FRELIMO's early leadership struggles, see: Walter Opello, "Pluralism and Elite Conflict in an Independence Movement: FRELIMO in the 1960s," *Journal of Southern African Studies,* 2 1 (1975).
[234] From Dar es Salaam (Timoshchenko, Soviet ambassador) to Moscow (Dmitrii Dolidze, General Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity Committee), 2 October 1962, GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 58, pp. 118-119.
[235] Record of Conversation Between Second Secretary Hruzy and David Mabunda on 15 December 1962, AMZV, 1970-1974 TO-tajné, IV/8 sign. 273, inv. č. 67.
[236] "Record of conversation between Hruzy and former leading members of UDENAMO Gwambe and Malhuza", AMFA, 1970-1974 TO-T IV/8 Sign 273 Inv.c. 67.

kicked out of FRELIMO and denied residence visas in Tanganyika. Shortly afterwards, the authorities expelled them from Tanganyika. From Dar es Salaam, they moved to Cairo, resuscitating UDENAMO under the new name UDENAMO-Moçambique on 1 May 1963.[237] Meanwhile, Gwambe proclaimed the creation of FUNIPAMO (*Frente Unida Anti-Imperialista Popular Africana de Moçambique*).

Moscow disliked the expulsion of those supposedly radical members, but did not quite know what to make of it. Writing to Dmitry Dolidze in March 1963, the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Soviet Solidarity Committee to Cairo, Aleksei Tepliashin, predicted: "If the Cairo-based opposition resuscitated UDENAMO, FRELIMO would probably fall apart because former MANU members would also leave." Therefore, he advised strengthening contact with the former UDENAMO's leaders, Mabunda and Mahluza, even though these leaders were weak.[238] The Czechoslovakian ambassador in Cairo, František Zachystal, wrote in a report to the Foreign Ministry in Prague: "The national liberation movement in Mozambique is in crisis, so that it would take no less than one or two years until it becomes consolidated. The situation within FRELIMO is confused and not particularly clear, and it would take a long time until we understand who represents the real force with solid popular support."[239]

The Soviets were suspicious of Mondlane, but they could rely on Marcelino dos Santos, whom they had known well since the late 1950s. On 22 May 1963, Latip Maksudov, the chief Soviet representative at the AAPSO Secretariat in Cairo, spoke to dos Santos at the foundational conference for the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Marcelino dos Santos confirmed that Mondlane was pro-American, but underlined that he had the right education and connections. From the very beginning, he and the opposition leaders had agreed to allow Mondlane to be the figurehead, while they would navigate the movement in the right direction. He added:

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[237] Record of conversation between Latip Maksudov and Fanuel Mahluza on 17 May 1963, GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 68, pp. 40-45.
[238] Manchkha (CC CPSU International Department) to Lusaka, RGANI, f. 89, op. 46, d. 104, p. 5.
[239] Zachystal to Prague, AMZV, 1960-1964 TO-tajné, IV/8 sign. 273, inv. č. 67.

"Later, it would be possible to replace Mondlane."[240]

Dos Santos tried to convince Maksudov that the leadership crisis had nothing to do with ideological differences. The real reason that David Mabunda had left for Cairo, Marcelino dos Santos argued, was because he could not handle the hardships of life in Dar es Salaam. Maksudov reported his conversation with dos Santos as follows: "'Comrade Maksudov, you may not believe me, but talk to [Mário] de Andrade, talk to [Amílcar] Cabral.' 'No', I responded to him, 'We know how to differentiate between our interlocutors. One thing is when we speak to somebody else and another is when we want to know your opinion, the opinion of our old friend, whom we trust. We are worried about the split in the Mozambican liberation movement. Yet, the accusations against Mondlane of his pro-American orientation are quite reasonable.'"[241] Given that Marcelino dos Santos refused to join the opposition and that FRELIMO still enjoyed support from the Tanganyikan authorities, representatives from the socialist countries soon realized that the best solution would be for "progressives" like Gumane to work from inside FRELIMO.[242]

Having dealt with the worst of the crisis, FRELIMO's leadership began a campaign for international sponsors. As with the MPLA, Algeria came first, offering arms and military training for FRELIMO. Mondlane continued to lobby the Kennedy administration for cash. He wanted to use the money for the construction of what would be known as the "Mozambican Institute," a hostel and school for young recruits. In mid-April 1963, Mondlane met the deputy assistant secretary for African affairs, Wayne Fredericks, and Attorney-General Robert Kennedy in Washington, asking them for financial assistance, emphasizing that others in FRELIMO were seeking aid from Ghana, the USSR, and other places not attuned to Western interests. Mondlane managed to source $96,000 from the Ford Foundation for the construction of the "Mozambique Institute" in Dar es Salaam, which was supposed to provide education

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[240] Maksudov (Soviet embassy in UAR, Cairo) to Soviet Solidarity Committee, 5 June 1963, "Zapis Besedy s Marcelino dos Santosom," GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 68, p. 64.
[241] Ibid., p. 65.
[242] Steiner (GDR embassy in Cairo, attache) to MfAA, 24 September 1963, BA-SAPMO, DY 30/IV A2/20/948, p. 7.

and healthcare for recruits.[243]

Mondlane and Santos also continued lobbying socialist countries for support. Dos Santos visited China, where he was received by Mao Zedong, and apparently received an offer of financial assistance. On his return, he urged Mondlane to also go to Beijing to seal the deal. The trip went ahead, but Mondlane came back disappointed, as the Chinese had apparently asked that FRELIMO cease any contact with the Soviet Union and the United States.[244] In November, Marcelino dos Santos saw the Soviet Ambassador to Tanzania (as Tanganyika had become), Andrey Timoshchenko, and submitted a list of requirements for the training of thirty cadres in subversive warfare, humanitarian assistance for Mozambican refugees, technical aid for propaganda purposes, financial assistance, and medical treatment in the USSR. Timoshchenko reiterated his skepticism of FRELIMO, but nevertheless recommended that the Soviets invite Mondlane and Marcelino dos Santos to Moscow and allocate 10 to 15 placements for FRELIMO cadres in Soviet military establishments, because the movement had a "healthy progressive force" in the leadership.[245]

In December 1963, Uria Simango and Marcelino dos Santos went on their first visit to East Berlin, looking for funding, scholarships and material support (textiles, clothing, and printing presses) from the GDR. The two made a good impression. "The subjective impression from both was very positive. They demonstrated genuinely progressive and consistent attitudes which seem genuine, especially Simango," read a report prepared by the GDR Solidarity Committee.[246] This trip laid the foundation for a very close relationship between the GDR and FRELIMO. In 1963, the Solidarity Committee earmarked 20,000 marks for FRELIMO, and would soon provide them with humanitarian aid, scholarships and, from 1967 onwards, arms.[247] This emerging

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[243] Cabrita, *Mozambique*, p. 18.
[244] Ibid., pp. 26-27.
[245] Timoshchenko (USSR ambassador in Tanganyika) to Dolidze (Soviet Solidarity Committee, Secretary), 15 November 1963, GARF, f.9540, op.2, d.70, pp. 146-147.
[246] "Information über den Aufenthalt des Vizepräsidenten der Befreiungsfront Mocambiques (FRELIMO), Herrn Uria Simango und des Sekretaers furÄußere Angelegenheiten Marcelino dos Santos als Gäst des Komitees fur Solidarität mit den Völkern Afrikas vom 6.-13.12.1963," BA-SAPMO, DZ8/163
[247] Hans-Joachim Döring, *"Es geht um unsere Existenz": Die Politik der DDR gegenüber der Dritten Welt am Beispiel von Mosambik und Äthiopien* (Berlin: Links, 2001), p. 143.

relationship with FRELIMO reflected East Germany's interest in establishing its presence in East Africa, in view of long-standing historical ties with the region dating back to Germany's colonial past.[248]

Soviet attitudes towards FRELIMO were colored from their inception by Eduardo Mondlane's connection with the United States in general, and with Kennedy's administration in particular. Soviet cadres believed that Eduardo Mondlane was "pro-American," which hindered any assistance to FRELIMO before 1964. Moreover, the Soviets suspected that FRELIMO might not even survive as a united front, because the majority of its members elected to the Steering Committee had either quit or had been expelled from the movement by 1963. Seeking support from the socialist countries, these members of the anti-Mondlane opposition reinforced Soviet conceptions of Mondlane as staunchly pro-American. What ultimately made the difference to the Soviet evaluation of FRELIMO was that Marcelino dos Santos, a dedicated Marxist, stayed on in the top leadership and that FRELIMO, despite the grim predictions of the opposition, managed to survive thanks to the support provided by the Tanganyikan government.

Conclusion

The 1961 Angolan Uprising plunged the Portuguese colonies into the Cold War. When Nikita Khrushchev emerged as the undisputed trendsetter of Soviet foreign policy after the defeat of his opponents in 1957, he believed that competition between the two rival systems could be peaceful. However, he became increasingly disillusioned regarding this possibility, and his response shifted to a progressively aggressive strategy in the Third World. The 1960 Congo Crisis was an extremely important event that, in conjunction with the U-2 Incident, revealed to Khrushchev the limits of peaceful competition with the West in the Third World. Only in 1960 did Soviet and Czechoslovakian intelligence adopt a joint plan to actively develop relations

[248] Before the First World War, Germany used to rule over the territories which are now known as Burundi, Rwanda, and Tanganyika.

with leaders of the African liberation movements. This signified a move towards a more aggressive strategy, designed to undercut the influence of Western powers in the region. It was not until the Angolan Uprising, however, that Portuguese colonialism became a matter of particular importance for Moscow and Washington. For Khrushchev, support for the anti-colonial uprisings was his way of striking at the West for frustrating his outreach initiatives. While Marxist-Leninist ideology provided the foundation for a Soviet alliance with the anti-colonial movements, superpower competition rendered the incentive necessary to convince Moscow and Prague to allocate the first assistance packages to the MPLA and the PAIGC in 1961. This would not have happened without the diplomacy of the leaders of the liberation movements, who regularly invoked Cold War stereotypes to brand their rivals as "pro-American" or "pro-Soviet," reinforcing dogmatic views held by policy-makers on both sides of the Cold War divide.

One should not forget that the liberation movements were not at the top of the agenda for the CC CPSU, and that Soviet assistance between 1961 and 1964 was fairly limited. In comparison to the money that the Soviets were spending on annual assistance for the Italian or the US communist parties, for example, financial assistance for the MPLA and the PAIGC was negligible, and the number of scholarships for military training was quite low. Moreover, there is no hard evidence to prove that the Soviet Union provided any arms to the liberation movements during this period. The Czechoslovakian commitment to the movements was actually much greater than that of the Soviets, especially given the size of and financial means available to the CPC. Czechoslovakian assistance – arms, training, financial and humanitarian assistance – was especially important for the PAIGC's ability to launch an anti-colonial campaign in Guinea-Bissau in early 1963.

While the liberation movements were not particularly important to the top Soviet leadership, the "middle-ranking officials" who actually dealt with the movements became invested in the cause and would become its main advocates. This

is why human relations became highly pertinent in this story. Initially, the MPLA emerged as the key ally for Moscow. This was due to two factors: Angola became a subject of superpower competition in 1961, and Viriato da Cruz and Mário de Andrade had been well known to Soviet officials since the late 1950s. Oleg Nazhestkin also developed a strong personal connection with Agostinho Neto, a connection that would work in Neto's favor in the following years. In contrast, Petr Yevsyukov was not particularly fond of Neto, but did not hide his friendly affection and even admiration for Cabral, writing that Agostinho Neto, for example, often complained that the PAIGC had received much larger assistance than the MPLA, in terms proportional to the sizes of Guinea-Bissau and Angola.[249] Cabral also managed to develop a very good personal relationship with the StB's deputy *rezident* in Conakry, Miroslav Alter, who was instrumental in advocating on Cabral's behalf before his first visit to Prague in early 1961 and who proposed that Cabral could be a valuable asset. Alter and his senior colleagues in Prague were clearly not idealist romantics; they understood that Cabral needed Czechoslovak money, weapons, and training to launch an armed struggle. The reason why they decided to recruit Cabral in the summer of 1961, when the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia increasingly looked for ways to extend their reach in the Third World, was that they believed that Cabral shared their optimism about the prospects of scientific socialism in Africa and that he could be a long-term ally in the region as it was inevitably drawn into the Cold War. Cabral's impressive interpersonal and diplomatic skills meant that the PAIGC was the first resistance movement to launch the violent phase of its program in early 1963, and that it managed to sustain its momentum after opening battle. One can already see why the PAIGC would become a major recipient of Czechoslovak and Soviet assistance in the 1960s and why Cabral's importance for Prague and Moscow would grow over the following years.

The political consequences of superpower engagement with the liberation movements during this period were of long-lasting importance, even if assistance was

[249] Yevsyukov, "Natsionalno-osvoboditelnaya Borba v Gvinee-Bissau," pp. 142-143.

not particularly large in monetary terms. Both Moscow and Washington became invested in the political fate of their "allies": the MPLA and the FNLA, respectively. This meant that Soviet assistance for the liberation movements continued, even after a decline in superpower tensions following the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. While Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson realized that they could not openly support leaders of the liberation movements because relations with Lisbon were deemed to be much more important, Holden Roberto remained on the CIA radar thanks to his non-communist credentials.[250] The MPLA and the FNLA became politically linked to the opposing sides in the Congolese Civil War, thus entrenching the polarization of the Angolan liberation movement within the framework of the Cold War.

[250] John Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies: a CIA Story* (London: Deutsch, 1978), p. 49.

CHAPTER TWO

Transitions: The Military Campaigns Unfold, 1963–65

In August 1963, António de Oliveira Salazar made one of his rare television appearances. The aging dictator gave an hour-and-a-half-long speech, raging against a wave of "black racism," which was putting the Portuguese "civilizing mission" in Africa in jeopardy. He wondered: "Is the language that we teach those people superior to their dialects or not? Does the religion preached by the missionaries surpass fetishism or not? Is belonging to a nation of civilized expression and world projection not better than narrow regionalism without means for defense or progress?" Salazar never set foot in the colonies, but he was committed to defending them, despite international and domestic pressures. Salazar had already communicated to Washington that he was prepared to jeopardize the security of the Western alliance by denying NATO's access to the Azores if this was the cost of maintaining the empire. Addressing his African subjects, Salazar offered "the closest and most friendly cooperation, if they find it useful," but pledged that Portugal would defend its colonies "to the limit of our resources, if they think fit to turn their threats into acts of war."[251]

By 1963, nobody questioned the fact that Salazar would not relinquish the colonies without a fight. The Portuguese army had already crushed a popular uprising in Angola, which ended all hope of a quick withdrawal. In fact, the scale of guerrilla activity in the North – the site of the 1961 Angolan Uprising – had been reduced to low-scale policing. Neither the MPLA nor the FNLA were equipped for a protracted war, but this is exactly what was required for them to achieve independence. The PAIGC had already launched a military campaign in early 1963 with some success, but by early 1964, Lisbon had responded with a vigorous assault launched by the newly appointed Governor General, Arnaldo Schultz. FRELIMO's President, Eduardo Mondlane, was

[251] "Portugal: Too Late in the Day," *Time,* 23 August, 1963.

also under increasing pressure to launch an anti-colonial uprising in Mozambique, which ultimately took place on 25 September 1964. Therefore, all of the liberation movements engaged in vigorous diplomacy to obtain support for their war efforts from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Bulgaria, China, and Cuba. Soviet assistance to the liberation movements in 1965 increased in accord with requirements of the military campaigns, even though Nikita Khrushchev was dismissed from the position of First Secretary and replaced by Leonid Brezhnev in October 1964. By the end of 1965, the Soviet Union had started supplying weapons to the liberation movements, and had constructed a specialized training center in the village of Perevalnoye, on the Crimean peninsula. Bolstered by more sophisticated weapons, the MPLA, FRELIMO and the PAIGC managed to continue their anti-colonial campaigns. Lisbon was now facing a significant security problem in the colonies, which was no longer easy to dismiss.

The War in Guinea-Bissau Unfolds, 1963–1964

Of the three colonies, Guinea-Bissau represented the most difficult military challenge for the Portuguese army. The dry season, from November to May, is known for hot winds that come from the Sahara desert. The rainy season, during which there are frequent monsoons, lasts from June to October. The country is swampy and crisscrossed by many rivers, which means that 80% of all cargo is transported via the river system. The country's habitable mass shrinks to the size of Switzerland during the rainy season, which makes the whole country "a frontier and a battle zone" difficult to defend.[252] Just how difficult it would be to fight against the PAIGC became apparent soon after the movement launched its first assault, in the south of the country, on 23 January 1963. The PAIGC found overwhelming support among the Balante, the largest ethnic group, and by the end of the year the guerrillas were entrenched in the southern Tombali province and in the Oio region, north of the capital, Bissau. By the end of the

[252] Cann, *Brown Waters*, Chapter 5.

year, the Portuguese Minister of Defense, General Manuel Gomes de Araújo, confessed that the PAIGC had gained control over a significant proportion of the colony.[253]

On 8 October 1963, Cabral arrived in Prague, accompanied by his half-brother Luís and a shopping list. First, Cabral wanted Czechoslovakia to send humanitarian assistance, such as medicine, stationery supplies for children, clothing, and household items, to normalize civilian life in the "liberated areas." Second, Cabral asked for expansion of military assistance. The PAIGC had already liberated 30% of the country, argued Cabral, but the Portuguese still controlled the major administrative centers, which they resupplied with a large fleet of vessels, covered by air support. Thus, the rebels required large quantities of heavy weapons, especially machine guns.[254] Cabral also explained that he wanted to streamline military operations by creating a regular armed force and organizing a headquarters for the General Staff, and for that he would need a military professional who would advise the leadership on such matters.[255] The Czechoslovak leadership was responsive to Cabral's request, approving the allocation of 20 heavy machine guns and 10,000 items of clothing and caps for the PAIGC on 7 January 1964.[256] While Cabral was contemplating the reorganization of the armed forces, the movement was facing a major Portuguese offensive on the island of Como.

A small and marshy island just off the coast of the southern Tombali province, Como was not particularly important, in either economic or strategic terms, for the Portuguese. At the end of 1963, several hundred guerrillas infiltrated the island, mostly inhabited by the Balante, and proclaimed it a "liberated area." The Portuguese decided they could not allow the PAIGC to achieve this symbolic victory, and on 15 January 1964 they launched a massive campaign to retake the island, involving 3,000 ground troops backed by aerial support. The militants managed to resist, thanks to local supporters who were much more familiar with the terrain than the colonial

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[253] Norrie MacQueen, *The Decolonization of Portuguese Africa: Metropolitan Revolution and the Dissolution of Empire* (London and New York: Longman, 1997), p. 38.
[254] Josef Houska (Chief of the First Directorate, StB) to Lubomir Strougal (Minister of Interior), 23 October 1963, "Věc: Zpráva o jednáni se Sekretářem v ČSSR ve dnech 8.-14.10.1963," ABS, 43197/000, p. 158.
[255] Ibid.
[256] Prague, 7 January 1964, "Usnesení 51. schůze předsednictva ÚV KSČ ze dne 7. ledna 1964," Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č.f. 1261/0/44, inv.č. 394, ka. 166.

troops, and after seventy-five days of fierce fighting, Lisbon decided to abort the operation.[257] Como was a heavy blow to the prestige and morale of the colonial army, as it revealed that even a professional force could not always withstand a determined resistance. Meanwhile, the PAIGC was also undergoing a process of internal reorganization.

When the war first began, the militants were given a great deal of autonomy to mobilize the local population. Many guerrillas were dispatched to rural areas without proper training because of the rapid expansion of the military campaign. By the end of the year, reports of local people complaining about the militants abusing their powers started to emerge. This had a knock-on effect on the image of the movement. Aristides Pereira remembered: "The population started to demobilize and turn hostile against the party." Many guerrillas also refused Cabral's orders to spread the military campaign to other parts of the country, as they believed their mission had already been accomplished: "We have liberated our own country…now let those others liberate theirs! Why should a Balante go to help liberate the Fulas? Let the Fulas do their own work."[258] Given the seriousness of the threat to the movement, Cabral convened the first party congress in Guinea-Bissau, at Cassaca, on 13 February 1964.

The Cassaca Congress was an important moment in the history of the movement. The rebellious guerrilla commanders were made to examine their actions and lay down their arms. The Congress also approved the creation of a regular armed force, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of the People (FARP; *Forças Armadas Revolucionarias do Povo*).[259] The Congress also adopted a comprehensive program, pledging to establish basic social services for the civilian population, to set up a network of "people's stores" to regulate internal trade, and to adopt a set of measures to increase and diversify agricultural production. Aristides Pereira observed: "Those decisions were extraordinary. One can say that in Cassaca we defined the entire course

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[257] On the side of the PAIGC, the campaign was led by two talented commanders, João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira and Pansau na Isna. See: Peter Karibe Mendy and Richard Lobban, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau* (Plymouth, UK: The Scarecrow Press, 2013), p. 297.
[258] Dhada, *Warriors at Work*, pp. 18-19.
[259] Chabal, *Amilcar Cabral*, p. 82.

of the struggle."[260] Cabral needed modern arms and training to organize a more centralized military force, and Czechoslovakia stepped up its assistance.

On 30 June, the Politburo of the CC CPC approved a generous arms package, fulfilling Cabral's requests from April, and by October the Czechoslovak Solidarity Committee allocated 45,000 Czech crowns worth of medicines, stationery supplies, and medical equipment.[261] In September 1964, the Czechoslovak Interior Ministry honored their promise to Cabral and dispatched the intelligence officer František Polda to Conakry. He was to support the building up of the regular armed force and the centralized military command structure in Conakry. In the first year, Polda was apparently involved in organizing and training cadres for the FARP General Staff and the Information Service, as well as advising on military strategy, in particular planning for the destruction of fortified posts.[262] His other task was to teach military intelligence and counter-intelligence tactics to the guerrilla commanders, and to inform Prague of the developments in the PAIGC.[263]

Thus, Czechoslovakia remained the PAIGC's key foreign donor during the first two years of the war. The Soviet contribution is less clear. In 1963, the CC CPSU International Department allocated $50,000 to the PAIGC; this figure rose to $70,000 in 1965.[264] Cadres from the PAIGC were enrolled in special, six-month courses at the Higher Party School, the Komsomol School, in Moscow, and they received scholarships to universities across the Soviet Union.[265] There is no evidence, however, to confirm that the Soviets shipped arms to the PAIGC before 1965. If they did not, it is plausible to assume that they relied on Czechoslovakia to do so. While the situation in Guinea-

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[260] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 116.
[261] Resolutions of the CC CPC Presidium, 30 June 1964, Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č. f. 1261/0/44, inv. č. 394, ka. 166; Prague, 3 April 1965, "Věc: zprava o cs. pomoci Africke strane nezavislosti Portugalske Guineje a Kapverdskych ostrovu (PAIGC)," ABS, 43197/000, pp. 188-189. The Interior Ministry allocated 25 heavy machine guns (1937); 60 7,62-mm light machine guns; 250 7,62-mm Czech self-loading rifles (1952); 3,000 hand grenades; 300 anti-tank and anti-personnel mines each; 200 shrapnel mines; 50 small-caliber rifles; and explosives with detonators. Contributions from the Ministry of Defense included 15 82-mm. mortars (1952) and 30 p-27 grenade launchers with ammunition.
[262] Josef Houska to Josef Kudrna, 3 April 1965, "Věc: navsteva generalniho tajemnika PAIGC A Cabrala v Praze," ABS, 43197/000, p. 185.
[263] Josef Janouš (Fourth department of the StB First Directorate, chief), 23 February 1965, ABS, 11853/000, p. 110.
[264] RGANI, f. 89, inv. 38, d. 5 and d. 6
[265] Prague, Politburo of the CC CPC, 28 May 1964, "Zpráva o konzultačních poradách odděleni ÚV bratrských stran zemí RVHP o otázkách Afriky," KSC/UV/AN2, F1261/0/44, inv. č. 2, ka.4.

Bissau had become a formidable challenge to the Portuguese by 1964, the same was not the case in Angola.

Jonas Savimbi's Courting of the Soviets

As 1963 drew to a close, the political fortunes of the MPLA were in dire straits. Eleven governments had recognized its main rival, Holden Roberto's Revolutionary Government in Exile (GRAE), as the only representative of the Angolan liberation front. In 1963, the Congolese authorities expelled the MPLA from the Congo in the wake of the Simba Rebellion, which had been led by former associates of the martyred first Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba. This deprived the MPLA of access to northern Angola, the scene of the 1961 uprising. Thus, the Bakongo-based FNLA (the liberation movement behind the GRAE) remained the only guerrilla movement engaging the Portuguese army, in increasingly infrequent raids across the Congo-Angola border. Regardless, Holden Roberto grew increasingly bitter over the lack of support from the United States. According to a US State Department memorandum of November 1963, "Heretofore strongly western-oriented, the GRAE is rapidly assuming a more neutral position and may seek some Eastern European assistance during the coming year – probably for tactical, rather than ideological reasons."[266]

Holden Roberto was indeed looking for ways to diversify the sources of support for the FNLA/GRAE. This had to do with his growing frustration with American officials, who had limited all contacts with leaders of the radical nationalist movements so as to not alienate Salazar. Kennedy's assassination on 22 November 1963 only reinforced this trend, as his successor Lyndon Johnson was not particularly interested in engaging with African leaders. Roberto publicly criticized American policy towards Portugal, and on 4 December 1963, GRAE representatives at the United

[266] Howland, ed., *FRUS, 1961-1963 - Africa*, Document 372.

Nations approached the Soviet delegation, asking them to provide financial and material assistance to the FNLA.[267]

The Soviets had been trying to develop contacts with the FNLA for many years, and therefore Moscow responded positively to Roberto's opening. On 17 December, Dmitriy Dolidze, the General Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, met Holden Roberto in Nairobi, where the two had arrived to participate in Kenya's independence celebrations. Roberto seemed willing to establish contacts with the socialist countries, but he was not open to an idea of a common front alliance with the MPLA, a topic which was of utmost importance to the Soviets, as became clear in the course of the meeting. When asked whether he had considered the prospect of unification with the MPLA, Roberto responded that he was not against a union in principle, but this could only be possible under the banner of the FNLA, wrote Dolidze in his report to the CC CPSU. This was fair, Roberto argued, because the MPLA did not have any presence, military or otherwise, inside Angola, and it was not waging armed struggle. Moreover, Holden accused Neto of collaboration with the Portuguese secret police, and postulated that the MPLA was seeking a compromise with the colonial administration. Dolidze mentioned that Roberto was visibly nervous and distrustful throughout the conversation. Nevertheless, Dolidze invited him to visit the Soviet Union as a guest of the Soviet Solidarity Committee.[268] It was fairly clear that Roberto was not particularly willing to compromise, and thus the Soviets turned their attention to GRAE's Minister of Foreign Relations, the increasingly influential 30-year-old Jonas Malheiro Savimbi.

Savimbi's background and political views were at odds with Roberto's. While Roberto derived support from the Bakongo, a community in northern Angola, Savimbi was born in Munhango, in the eastern Moxico province, the home of Angola's largest ethnic group, the Ovimbundu. Savimbi had studied in Portugal and then in Switzerland

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[267] V. Shitarev (First African Department, Foreign Ministry), 24 December 1963, "Kharakteristika na Al'varo Holdena Roberto/Khose Gil'more/ lidera partii 'Soyuz natsional'nogo osvobozhdeniya Angoly/FNLA, glavu 'pravidel'stva Angoly v izgnanii,'" Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (hereafter AVPRF), fond (hereafter f.) 658, opis (hereafter op.) 3, papka (hereafter p.) 1, delo (hereafter d.) 1, p. 74.

[268] Bazanov (Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity Committee) to CC CPSU, "Zapis besedy s prezidentom partii Soyuz narodov Angoly, prem'er-ministrom tak nazyvaemogo 'Nakhodyashchimsya v izgnanii revolyutsionnogo pravitel'stva Angoly' Kholdenom Roberto," 27 January 1964, GARF, f. 9540, op. 2, d. 64, pp. 282-284.

where, as he would later claim in conversations with officials from the socialist countries, he was inspired by leftist ideas and became well acquainted with Portuguese and Swiss communists. Savimbi initially wanted to join the MPLA, but ultimately decided against it because only the FNLA/GRAE, he believed, had a real chance to engage in a military struggle against the colonialists. His expectations did not materialize because the FNLA required proper training and arms to engage in military action, and thus Savimbi started to criticize Roberto for his failure to accept aid from the socialist countries. He also became critical of Roberto's dictatorial leadership style and for favoring his own Bakongo ethnic group.[269] Charismatic and ambitious, Savimbi acquired a following inside the FNLA, and he proceeded to establish contacts with representatives of the socialist countries to strengthen his claim to the leadership of the movement. In early 1964 in Cairo, where he was in touch with the Soviet representative to the AAPSO, Latip Maksudov, and the Czechoslovak and GDR Ambassadors to Egypt, František Zachystal and Ernst Scholtz respectively, Savimbi launched a campaign to gain the attention of the socialist countries. Speaking to Maksudov, Savimbi argued that there was a group inside the FNLA that was sympathetic to the Soviet Union, clearly separating himself from the "pro-American" Holden Roberto. Savimbi also said that Neto was an effective political leader who enjoyed substantial support among the Angolan masses.[270] He also played up left-wing ideas, which particularly impressed Ambassador Scholtz, who recommended that the GDR extend formal recognition to the FNLA/GRAE, without asking for permission from other socialist countries. Both Scholtz and Zachystal recommended that Savimbi be invited for talks in East Berlin and Prague.[271]The KGB was also very interested in Savimbi's outreach initiative, as they hoped this could lead to the long-sought alliance between the MPLA and the FNLA. Oleg Nazhestkin recalled: "When Savimbi started

[269] Fred Bridgland, *Jonas Savimbi: a Key to Africa* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1986), p. 58.
[270] CSSR embassy in Moscow to Prague, "Angola-snaha exilove vlady o ziskani pomoci ZST," AMFA, TO-T, IV/4, sign. 274, p. 125.
[271] Scholz (GDR ambassador, Cairo) to Schwab (Deputy Foreign Minister, Berlin), 25 February 1964, PAAA-MfAA, A15964; Lessing to Schwab, 25 February 1964, PAAA-MfAA, A1596; Schwab (Berlin) to Scholz (Cairo), 25 February 1964, PAAA-MfAA, A15964; Cairo to Berlin, Record of conversation between ambassadors Scholz and Zachystal in Cairo, 6 April 1964, PAAA-MfAA, A17416.

criticizing Roberto in an attempt to take over the FNLA, our staff [i.e., the KGB] stepped up their efforts to tear him away from Roberto."[272] Therefore, in April 1964, Savimbi travelled to East Berlin, Moscow, and Prague to obtain support from the socialist countries.

Savimbi's main selling point on the trip was that he was prepared to establish a common front with the MPLA. Speaking to the representatives of the Czechoslovak Solidarity Committee in Prague, Savimbi said that Holden Roberto had recently met the US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Averell Harriman, in Léopoldville, under the auspices of Congolese Prime Minister Cyrille Adoula. Savimbi argued that Adoula was apparently concerned about a "communist takeover" of the FNLA, and that Harriman had promised to provide assistance for Roberto. Meanwhile, Savimbi argued that he had been talking to Neto to establish a common front with the MPLA.[273] While it is true that Harriman discussed the fate of the FNLA with Roberto and Adoula during his trip to Léopoldville, he was not in a position to make any promises.[274]

Moving on to East Berlin, Savimbi argued, in conversations with GDR officials, that he had already established a group (the Revolutionary Committee of Angola) inside the GRAE, which was supposed to convince Roberto to unite in a common front with the MPLA. Yet again, he argued that Agostinho Neto was in favor of striking an agreement with the FNLA, but he also said that they had to nominally retain Roberto as a figurehead because of his international contacts and the assistance he was receiving from the Congo, Tunisia, and the United States.[275] GDR officials treated Savimbi's claims cautiously, arguing that one had to wonder whether his claims about the Revolutionary Committee had a real foundation.[276]

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[272] Nazhestkin, "Superderzhavy," 31.
[273] Prague, "Záznam o prijeti delegace FNLA (Narodni fronta osvobozeni Angoly) na Cs.vyboru solidarity dne 14 dubna 1964," AMZV, TO-tajné, IV/4, sign. 274.
[274] Nina Howland, et al., eds., *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1960-1968 - Congo*. Vol. XXIII (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 2013), Document 162. In 1964, the issue to raise the CIA allocation to Roberto's GRAE was raised many times, although this was opposed every time by the Bureau of African Affairs. See: Nina Davis Howland, ed. Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1964-1968 - Africa. Vol. XXIV (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1995), Document 442.
[275] Berlin, 22 April 1964, "Information über den Besuch des Aussenministers der angolesischen Exilregierung, Dr. Jonas Savimbi und seines Begleiters Florentino Duarte in der DDR vom 19.-21.4.1964," BA-SAPMO, DY 30/IV, A 2/20/948, pp. 163-166.
[276] Ibid., p. 166.

Savimbi's message to the Soviets was very similar. When Savimbi met Soviet representatives on 17 April, he sharply criticized Roberto, asking that he not be invited to the Soviet Union. He also briefed his interlocutors about the creation of a special group inside the GRAE in favor of uniting in a common front with the MPLA. Savimbi also asked for financial aid, three scholarships for political education and two for military training in the USSR, as per the report drafted by Petr Yevsyukov's boss Veniamin Midtsev. This shows that he was clearly looking to increase his prestige within the movement, in direct competition with Roberto.[277] The Soviet objectives remain obscure. Oleg Nazhestkin recalled that Savimbi was too ambitious and refused to agree to the unification with the MPLA, implying that this is what the Soviet cadres suggested to him.[278] Conversely, Petr Yevsyukov wrote that it was not within the capabilities of the International Department to engineer reconciliation between Savimbi and Neto.[279] Savimbi himself recalled much later that the officials in the socialist countries were only interested in recruiting new members for the MPLA.[280]

While Yevsyukov denied that Savimbi was in any way considered an alternative to Neto, in reality, the Soviets adopted a more cautious, wait-and-see approach. The support for the liberation movements was one of the topics of a consultative meeting of representatives of the International Departments (or their equivalents) from the Soviet Union, GDR, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Mongolia in late April 1964. Vitaliy Korionov, one of Boris Ponomarev's deputies at the CC CPSU, admitted that the complicated situation in the Angolan liberation movement demanded that the socialist countries maintain contacts with both the MPLA and FNLA/GRAE, given that the latter had already been recognized by many African states. These difficulties notwithstanding, Korionov informed his colleagues that the USSR had already established six-month courses for cadres of the liberation movements on

[277] Vladimir Shubin, *Goryachaya "kholodnaya" Voyna: Yug Afriki, 1960-1990*. Ed. Litres. Kindle (Moscow: 2014), Chapter 2, location 665. A record of this meeting is unavailable from Russian archives, although it remains in the private archive of Eduard Kapskiy, who replaced Yevsyukov after the latter became the first Soviet Ambassador to Mozambique in 1975.
[278] Nazhestkin, "Superderzhavy," p. 31.
[279] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 15.
[280] Bridgland, *Jonas Savimbi*, p. 66.

the basis of the Higher Party School in Moscow and called for continuous provision of assistance, especially in the form of training.[281]

Overall, Moscow, Prague, and Sofia became increasingly skeptical about the prospects of the MPLA, given the on-going internal divisions and lack of unity in the Angolan liberation movements. This is why the Soviets and their counterparts in the socialist countries hedged their bets on ideologically acceptable individuals, like Savimbi, who made every effort to play up his left-wing ideas. Nevertheless, unification of all the Angolan forces into a single front had been pursued by the International Department since 1961, and Roberto's opening provided an opportunity to advance that goal. Moreover, the Soviet Union continued to provide support to the MPLA. For the MPLA, the Soviet flirtation with Holden Roberto and Savimbi was a formidable challenge that had to be addressed if the movement was to revive its fortunes after its expulsion from the Congo.

The MPLA's Diplomatic Offensive

In August 1963, Alphonse Massamba-Débat was appointed the new president of Congo-Brazzaville after his predecessor, defrocked priest Abbé Fulbert Youlou, was overthrown in a coup d'état of 15 August 1963, that followed three days of street riots. Massamba-Débat promised to fight corruption, proclaimed adherence to scientific socialism, and established relations with the socialist countries. When the MPLA was expelled from Léopoldville at the onset of the Simba Rebellion, Massamba-Débat offered Agostinho Neto and his followers a safe haven in Brazzaville and allowed them to establish a training camp at Dolisie. Massamba-Débat offered refuge not only to the Angolans, but also to the Congolese opposition leaders; thus, he was extremely insecure, fearing retaliation from the Léopoldville authorities. Having lost direct access to northern Angola, the MPLA hoped to rekindle guerrilla operations in Cabinda, the

[281] Prague, Politburo of the CC CPC, 28 May 1964, "Zpráva o konzultačních poradách odděleni ÚV bratrských stran zemí RVHP o otázkách Afriky," KSC/UV/AN2, F1261/0/44, inv. č. 2, ka.4.

only stretch of Angolan territory bordering Congo-Brazzaville. First, though, Neto had to inject vitality into the MPLA.

Neto's strategy for overcoming the political crisis was to appeal to the rank-and-file members to strengthen his authority. Therefore, in January 1964, Neto convened a "Cadres Conference" in Brazzaville, which was supposed to outline the future direction of the MPLA. While Viriato da Cruz had departed with a group of supporters, many of the younger cadres, who had come to respect Neto as an unwavering critic of the Salazar regime, remained loyal. One of them was a charismatic youth leader, the 33-year-old Daniel Julio Chipenda, the son of prominent Protestant clergyman and political activist Jesse Chipenda of the Ovimbundu tribe of southeast Angola. Chipenda became a popular student athlete while studying at Coimbra University (1958–1962) before he was summoned by the MPLA to join their new headquarters in Léopoldville. Because of his charisma, he was elected the MPLA youth leader in May 1963.[282] The MPLA wanted to reverse the decision of the OAU recognizing the FNLA/GRAE as the only representative of the Angolan liberation movement and to restore the "exclusive" support of the socialist countries. The MPLA leadership also wanted to revive their military operations in Cabinda. Chipenda recalled: "We decided to launch an offensive to revive the fortunes of the MPLA."[283] With those objectives in mind, Neto travelled to Moscow in April.

Neto was in for a major, unpleasant surprise in Moscow. Shortly before his arrival, Nikita Khrushchev, who was on vacation at his summerhouse in Pitsunda, a resort on the Black Sea in modern-day Abkhazia, had apparently discovered that many African countries had already recognized the GRAE and decided, without consulting the International Department, that the Soviet Union should do the same. The task of breaking the news to Neto fell to Dmitriy Shevlyagin, one of the deputies of the International Department. Yevsyukov recalled that Neto's conversation with Shevlyagin had been going very well right up until the very end, when Neto found out

[282] Akyeampong and Gates, eds., *Dictionary*, p. 77.
[283] Interview with Daniel Chipenda in Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*, p. 141.

that the CPSU had decided to extend formal recognition to the GRAE the following day. Yevsyukov, who was also present at the meeting, recalled that this sounded like a "death sentence" for Neto.[284] Yevsyukov was not one of Neto's greatest fans, but he had grown committed to the MPLA as an organization and decided to help. He explained: "I knew well who Holden Roberto was and understood even better that we had made a mistake, betraying our friends." He advised Neto to talk to the leader of the Portuguese Communist Party, Alvaro Cunhal, who was well known and respected in Moscow. Neto did as Yevsyukov suggested, and the decision to recognize the GRAE was reversed.[285]

Yet another source of support for Neto came from Oleg Nazhestkin, who continued to monitor the situation in the Angolan liberation movements after the forced departure of the KGB's *rezidentura* from Léopoldville in November 1963. In late April 1964, Holden Roberto formally admitted the MPLA's splinter faction, led by Viriato da Cruz, to the FNLA, without any consultations with Savimbi. In one of his analytical briefs from June 1964, Oleg Nazhestkin argued that Roberto's decision had contributed to the polarization of the Angolan liberation movement and had reduced the chances of reconciliation between the MPLA and the FNLA. Nazhestkin also argued that the alliance revealed that Viriato da Cruz was motivated by nothing more than personal ambitions.[286] Nazhestkin was proved right when Jonas Savimbi publicly resigned from the GRAE during the meeting of the OAU heads of state in Cairo in July 1964.

The MPLA leadership also tried to convince the leaders of the socialist countries that both Roberto and Savimbi were disingenuous. On 27 May, Miguel Baya, the MPLA's representative in Cairo, spoke to Henry Eggebrecht, one of the key figures in the GDR Solidarity Committee responsible for maintaining contacts with the liberation movements in Cairo. Baya told Eggebrecht that his task was to clarify to everyone that Savimbi's real mission in the countries of the Soviet bloc was to ensure the recognition of the GRAE by the socialist countries, and that he had no intention of

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[284] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 18.
[285] Ibid.
[286] O. Nazhestkin, Moscow, 15 June 1964, "Kratkaya spravka," AVPRF, f. 658, op. 4, p. 1, d. 1, p. 52.

establishing a common front with the MPLA.[287] The MPLA's representative in Algeria, Luís de Almeida, argued that Roberto's attempted rapprochement with the MPLA was merely a tactical tool, designed to protect the FNLA from Simbas harassing the FNLA's arms depots and supply bases in the Congo, as he told the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Algeria, Yuriy Belskiy.[288]

Yet another twist in the Congolese Crisis put an end to the Soviet rapprochement with Holden Roberto by end of 1964. This twist was the appointment of Moïse Tshombe as the new prime minister of the Congo in July. The former leader of the Katanga secessionists and one of the masterminds behind the assassination of Patrice Lumumba, Tshombe was a Soviet nemesis. On 16 December, *Pravda* published an article by Yevsyukov's immediate superior, Veniamin Midtsev, who lashed out at Roberto for colluding with Tshombe in a military campaign against the Simbas, among other sins: "Rejection of armed struggle against Portuguese colonizers, unwillingness to cooperate with the genuine patriots united under the MPLA, attempts to please the opportunist Tshombe, who is intimately connected with the imperialists – all of this has undermined the prestige of Holden Roberto's government-in exile." However, Midtsev expressed the hope that Jonas Savimbi would cooperate with the MPLA.[289]

Savimbi would not join the MPLA. Shortly after his resignation, Savimbi travelled to Brazzaville for talks with Neto, but left after a short stay. Two years later, Savimbi would establish the third rival liberation movement, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Savimbi argued that the reason he had not joined the MPLA in 1964 had been because he did not like what he had seen at a training camp in Dolisie: "There was no real fighting going on, and Daniel Chipenda was drinking too much and so were all his men."[290] Lúcio Lara argued that the real reason Savimbi did not join was because he had not been satisfied with the post of

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[287] Berlin, 8 September 1964, "Aktenvermerk über ein Gespräch mit dem Vertreter Angolas im Generalsekretariat der AASK und Mitglied des Politburos der MPLA, Baya, am 27 Mai 1964 im Hotel Jonannishof," PAAA-MfAA, A15964.
[288] Belskiy (USSR charge d'affairs, Algiers) to Moscow, 3 July 1964, Record of Conversation with Luid d'Almeida, AVPRF, f. 658, op. 4, p. 1, d. 1, pp. 9-10.
[289] Venyamin Midtsev, "Bortsy i Politikany," *Pravda,* December 16, 1964, p. 3.
[290] Quoted in Bridgland, *Jonas Savimbi*, pp. 64-65.

Secretary of Foreign Relations, which Neto had offered him.[291] Whichever reason was true, a breakdown in the negotiations with Savimbi led to further fragmentation of the Angolan liberation movement.

One of the senior advisers at the International Department, Karen Brutents, invoked the incident of Soviet near-recognition of the GRAE as proof that Soviet attitudes towards the MPLA were defined mainly by practical considerations.[292] Of course, prospects for military struggle mattered, and so did the attitudes of African heads of state, especially those whom the Soviets considered potential or real allies. Still, ideology mattered greatly in the Soviet calculations, in ways that Brunets was not necessarily aware of because he did not actually engage with the anti-colonial movements from the Portuguese colonies in the 1960s. If Neto's faction had not survived, it is possible that the Soviets would have switched their support to Viriato da Cruz, who was well known in Moscow and Prague. Savimbi perhaps seemed to be an acceptable alternative to Roberto, as he flaunted his Marxist-Leninist credentials, connections with Portuguese communists, and willingness to compromise with the MPLA. What seems particularly important is how certain middle-ranking officials, who had already become personally invested in the MPLA – Petr Yevsyukov and Oleg Nazhestkin, in this case – defended Neto in the face of Khrushchev's opportunistic decision to extend recognition to the GRAE, showing how personal relations translated into real policy outcomes. Although the MPLA was still just an annoyance for the Portuguese in Cabinda in 1965, another theatre of operations had just opened up in Portugal's second-largest colony, Mozambique.

FRELIMO Launches Armed Struggle

FRELIMO started preparations for military action in January 1963, when the first group of young recruits left Dar es Salaam for military training in Algeria. One of the most famous graduates of the training course was a 27-year-old native of Zambezia

[291] Lúcio Lara, ed. *Um amplo movimento: itinerário do MPLA através de documentos e anotações* Vol. 2. 3 vols (Luanda: Lúcio e Ruth Lara, 2006).
[292] Brutents, *Tridtsat' Let na Staroy Ploshchadi*, p. 205.

province, Filipe Samuel Magaia. Having gone through military training in Algeria and then China, Magaia rose quickly to become the first chief of defense and security. The second group of graduates would include Samora Machel, the son of a Tsonga tribal chief from the southern Gaza province. Machel first saw Eduardo Mondlane during his 1961 tour of Mozambique, while Machel was working as a nurse in Lourenço Marques, after which he fled the capital to join FRELIMO. Once in Dar es Salaam, Machel decided to go into military training because, as he put it, "I was certain that the Portuguese would not give us independence and that without armed struggle the Portuguese would never agree to establish a dialogue with us."[293]

Tanganyika became increasingly important for FRELIMO as the leadership decided to prepare for armed struggle. Tanganyika's first president, Julius Nyerere, was one of the key supporters of African liberation. Given the artificial nature of the border between northern Mozambique and Tanganyika, there were many cultural, ethnic, and linguistic connections between the two countries. Many Tanganyikan politicians traced their ethnic origins to Mozambique or had even been born there. Nyerere was initially cautious about sheltering the liberation movements, as he openly expressed concern about retaliation from the Portuguese, yet he continued to support the liberation movements. One journalist who lived in Dar es Salaam wrote that once Nyerere had shown him a secret document, revealing the country's contribution to the liberation struggle: "I was astounded; the amount ran into millions of US dollars."[294] Dar es Salaam also hosted the so-called Liberation Committee, established by the Organization of African Union as a fund to provide assistance for African liberation movements. Its first chairman was Oskar Kambona, one of the most influential politicians in Tanganyika at that time. However, in 1964, Nyerere's regime was itself threatened by a series of events spurred by revolution in Zanzibar.

The unrest in Zanzibar began on 12 January 1964, when John Okello, a radical revolutionary originally from Uganda, overthrew the sultan of Zanzibar with the aim of

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[293] Christie, *Samora Machel*, p. 24.
[294] Godfrey Mwakikagile, *Life Under Nyerere*. 2 (Pretoria, South Africa: New Africa Press, 2006), p. 30.

breaking the power of the Arab minority on the island. Okello established a revolutionary council, naming the leader of the Afro-Shirazi Party, Abeid Karume, as President. Abdallah Kassim Hanga, a graduate of Lumumba University in Moscow, became the vice president; Sheikh Abdurrahman Babu, the leader of the rival Umma Party, was appointed the foreign minister. Among the reasons for revolution was dissatisfaction of the African majority with domination by the Arab minority, leading to brutal reprisals against the Arabs and South Asians living on the island. The Soviet Union and China applauded revolution in Zanzibar, extended diplomatic recognition, and offered economic assistance. Zanzibar quickly became a Cold War playing field, with the Soviet Union offering support for Hanga, the Chinese courting Babu, and the United States hoping to strengthen Nyerere, whom they considered a moderate.[295]

The revolution in Zanzibar spurred anti-government protests in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika. On 19 January, soldiers in the Colito barracks of Dar es Salaam mutinied because they were angry about their low pay and the retention of European officers in top positions. Eventually, on 24 January, Nyerere sent a note to the British government asking for military assistance. A British force arrived the next day and bombed the barracks, successfully crushing the mutiny.[296] Convinced that events in Zanzibar and East Africa were linked, Nyerere exploited the power struggle that had emerged in Zanzibar's Revolutionary Council to push for his long sought-after project: unification of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. On 24 April, the agreement was signed, and the new state was christened the United Republic of Tanzania. While Karume remained president, with wide-ranging powers, Nyerere invited Kassim Hanga and Babu to join the government in Dar es Salaam. Most importantly, the act of union strengthened Nyerere's personal power as the main power broker behind the agreement.

The instability facing Nyerere in early 1964 forced him to curb FRELIMO's military preparations. For example, the authorities confiscated a consignment of

[295] O. Igho Natufe, *Soviet Policy in Africa: From Lenin to Brezhnev* (Bloomington: iUniverse, 2011), pp. 307-308.
[296] Amrit Wilson, *The Threat of Liberation: Imperialism and Revolution in Zanzibar*. Kindle (London: Pluto Press, 2013), Chapter Three.

Algerian weapons for FRELIMO and only released them in May. Eduardo Mondlane complained that this delay was damaging because he was increasingly under pressure from both his followers and critics to begin the armed struggle.[297] One of FRELIMO's leading functionaries, Sérgio Vieira, recalled that attitudes towards FRELIMO differed among the Tanzanian ruling elite. "Some were dreaming about annexation of Cabo Delgado, dominated by the Makonde. Others, like the first vice-president of Tanzania and president of Zanzibar, Sheikh Karume, condemned our non-racist policy and our insistence that everybody could be integrated within our ranks." Regardless, it was firm support from Nyerere that ultimately guaranteed FRELIMO a safe haven in Tanzania. In contrast to Karume, Nyerere always opposed the so-called "black racism," which manifested itself in different forms, from anti-Arab riots in Zanzibar to calls for the "Africanization" of the army of Tanganyika during the 1964 uprising in Dar es Salaam. Vieira observed: "The dominant current was embodied by Nyerere, who gave us his support and never wanted a millimeter of Mozambican land."[298]

It was under these circumstances that Eduardo Mondlane and Marcelino dos Santos travelled to Moscow in May 1964. The content of their talks with Soviet cadres in Moscow is not available, and it is not clear whether they even wanted to obtain Soviet arms, given the complicated situation in Tanzania. The Soviets agreed to provide some humanitarian assistance and allocated forty placements for FRELIMO military cadres.[299] When Marcelino dos Santos travelled to Prague after visiting Moscow, he asked for scholarships and humanitarian, material, and financial assistance, but he did not ask for arms on the grounds that FRELIMO had not yet decided on their specific requirements and had not yet figured out how to transport weaponry to Dar es Salaam.[300] While FRELIMO's submitted by Marcelino dos Santos in May were quite modest, the Czechoslovak Interior Ministry denied them, citing the

[297] Cabrita, *Mozambique*, p. 27.
[298] Vieira, *Participei*, p. 209.
[299] This is clear from Mondlane's aid request, submitted to the Soviet Government in 1965. See: Eduardo Mondlane to the Government of the USSR, 11 March 1965, AVPRF, f. 659, op. 2, p. 1, d. 1.
[300] Vaclavic, Prague, 28 May 1964, "Záznam. Marcelino dos Santos - jednáni v ČSSR," ABS, 11690/312, p. 13.

internal divisions and general inactivity of FRELIMO.[301] While FRELIMO had very little means to wage war and only a few recruits, Mondlane was under increasing pressure to launch an armed struggle.

There were several reasons for this. In July, Portuguese president Americo R. Tomas made a two-week tour of Mozambique, greeted by large crowds of Africans and Europeans, who often tried to break police cordons to kiss the hand of the figure in full military uniform. Official sources reported that the trip revealed that peace, progress, and racial harmony existed in Mozambique.[302] Any further delay in the armed struggle threatened a decline in FRELIMO's credibility and gave credence to its rivals. This threat materialized in August 1964, when armed dissidents linked to the rival group MANU moved into Cabo Delgado and killed a Dutch missionary, Father Daniel Boormans, who was a popular figure in the area. One of those who reported these incidents in the area was Alberto Chipande. "Armed bandits" would apparently pillage Indian shops, and the Portuguese would tell the population it was FRELIMO's doing. "This held us back," recalled Chipande.[303] With FRELIMO's credibility under threat, the leadership decided to act.

On 25 September 1964, FRELIMO launched its liberation struggle, when a dozen men led by Alberto Chipande attacked a Portuguese post in the small town of Chai, Cabo Delgado province. This was not actually the first assault, but it is the only one of which a written record, by Chipande himself, has survived. Chipande wrote:

> The guard came and stationed himself at the door of the house of the chefe do posto, seated on a chair. He was white. I approached the guard to attack him. My gunshot would be the signal to the other comrades to attack. The attack took place at 21 hours. When he heard the shots, the chefe do posto opened the door and came out – he was shot and killed. Apart from him, six other Portuguese were killed in the first attack. The explanation given by the Portuguese authorities was 'death by misadventure.' We withdrew. On the following day we were pursued by some troops – but that time we were far away, and they failed to find us.[304]

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[301] Ibid.
[302] Thomas H. Henriksen, *Revolution and counterrevolution: Mozambique's war of independence, 1964-1974*. Contributions in intercultural and comparative studies (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), p. 186.
[303] Quoted in Christie, *Samora Machel*, p. 34.
[304] Quoted in ibid., p. 32.

Why did the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, and Bulgaria provide assistance to FRELIMO in 1964? As Eduardo Mondlane told the American Embassy in Dar es Salaam, the Soviets were prepared to accept his relationship with the United States as a deterrent to China's presence in Mozambique.[305] It is true that the Soviets had, since the early 1960s, become increasingly concerned about the Chinese challenge to Soviet leadership of the international communist movement.[306] Soviet competition with the Chinese was particularly active in Zanzibar, where the Soviets established close contacts with the leader of the Umma Party, Abdurrahman Babu, after Julius Nyerere established a close economic relationship with the Chinese leadership in 1965.[307] Moscow was also concerned about the role of the West in East Africa. After all, it was British intervention in early 1964 that ultimately put down a revolutionary uprising in East Africa, spurred by revolution in Zanzibar. The establishment of Tanzania in April was a highly negative development from the Soviet point of view, because it meant that revolution in Zanzibar would be subsumed into the more conservative regime of Julius Nyerere, as Petr Manchkha, the chief of the Africa section at the CC CPSU International Department, told his colleagues at the Presidium of the Soviet Solidarity Committee on 13 October 1964.[308] Moreover, the Soviets trusted Marcelino dos Santos as a guarantor that FRELIMO would follow a "progressive path," as Ambassador Timoshchenko implied when, in November 1963, he advised Dmitri Dolidze to support the movement because there were "healthy progressive forces" in the leadership.[309]

Soviet Policy in Transition, 1964-65

By the end of 1964, the Soviets were increasingly under pressure to deliver arms to the liberation movements. Nikita Khrushchev personally pledged that the

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[305] Cabrita, *Mozambique*, 27.
[306] Jeremy Friedman, "Soviet Policy in the Developing World and the Chinese Challenge in the 1960s," *Cold War History,* 10 2 (2009).
[307] In 1965, Tanzania and the People's Republic of China signed a Treaty of Friendship. China agreed to build the "Tanzam" railway, connecting Zambia and Tanzania and allocated generous loans and began training the Tanzanian army, navy and the armed forces.
[308] Transcript of the SCSCAA Presidum Meeting, 13 October 1964, GARF, f.9540, op.1, d.155.
[309] Timoshchenko (USSR ambassador in Tanganyika) to Dolidze (Soviet Solidarity Committee, Secretary), 15 November 1963, GARF, f.9540, op.2, d.70, pp. 146-147.

Soviet Union would supply arms to the liberation movements during a special reception of delegates who had arrived in Moscow for the World Forum for Solidarity of Youth and Students in the Struggle for National Independence and Peace in September.[310] On 13 October 1964, speaking at the Presidium of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, Deputy Chairman Vladimir Tereshkin informed his colleagues that the cadres of the Solidarity Committee had had many conversations with the delegates at the Congress, and that many had demanded material assistance in addition to moral support. Therefore, the Solidarity Committee submitted several proposals to the CC CPSU that would meet some of those demands, according to Tereshkin.[311]

That same day, Nikita Khrushchev landed at the Vnukovo-2 airport in Moscow with one of his closest associates, Anastas Mikoyan. Khrushchev came to Moscow from his summerhouse at Pitsunda, to which he had travelled for a short break in anticipation of the forthcoming plenum of the Politburo. The previous evening, Khrushchev had received a call from Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, one of the most senior party members. Brezhnev had told him that the members of the CC CPSU Presidium had decided to hold a special meeting on agricultural policy the following day, and Khrushchev grudgingly agreed to attend. As soon as Khrushchev entered the Presidium meeting room in the Kremlin, it became apparent that the topic of the meeting was not agricultural policy, but Khrushchev himself. Brezhnev spoke first, accusing Khrushchev of treating his colleagues rudely and of making high-risk decisions without consulting them. Then each of the senior party members spoke, pointing out Khrushchev's mistakes in domestic and foreign policy, criticizing him for ignoring the Presidium and instituting his own cult of personality, and calling on Khrushchev to retire. A palace coup, which had been in the making for a few months, concluded later that evening when Khrushchev called Mikoyan, saying that he would not put up a fight and would peacefully retire.[312]

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[310] Friedman, "Soviet Policy in the Developing World " p. 266.
[311] Transcript of the SCSCAA Presidum Meeting, 13 October 1964, GARF, f.9540, op.1, d.155, p. 17.
[312] William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2003), p. 13.

Khrushchev's removal indicated a conservative turn in the Kremlin, which a recently declassified document known as "Polyanskiy's report" confirms. It describes in some detail all Khrushchev's mistakes.[313] One of Khrushchev's protégés, Vladimir Semichastnyi, who had replaced his close friend Alexander Shelepin as KGB Chairman in 1961, admitted much later that the report was actually prepared by economists working for his department, just in case Khrushchev tried to resist involuntary retirement. Given that this did not happen, the report was actually never read at the Presidium.[314] Nevertheless, the unpublished report indicates the mood that took over the Presidium after Khrushchev's resignation.

Polyanskiy's report criticized Khrushchev for singling out the US as a guarantor of world peace and for strained relations with Chairman Mao Zedong, Fidel Castro, and the Romanian leader Georgiy Dej. It pointed out that Khrushchev's policy in Africa was not in the interests of the Soviet Union. The report stated that the leaders of the newly independent countries reaped the benefits of aid but then turned away from Moscow, as when the "so-called socialist Sékou Touré" did not even allow Soviet planes to land at Conakry on their way to Cuba. The solution therefore was for Soviet leaders to be more careful when selecting regional allies. "This happens because we do not differentiate on the basis of class or political affiliation, we give aid and credit to countries whose leaders can easily distinguish a ruble from a fig but who do not discern a communist from a traitor, who follow the line of the imperialist countries," the report contended.[315] While the report did not offer any clear guidelines for remedying the situation, it reflected that the people who took over from Khrushchev were not as immediately concerned with détente with the US and were more willing to stick to Marxist-Leninist dogma, if that meant preserving the status and prestige of the Soviet Union.

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[313] This refers to the member of the CC CPSU Presidium Dmitriy Stepanovich Polyanskiy, who was responsible for agricultural policy.
[314] Rudolf Pikhoya, *Moskva, Kreml', Vlast: 40 Let posle Voyny, 1945-1985*. Noveyshaya Istoriya. Osobyi Vzglyad (Moscow: Rus'-Olimp, AST, 2007), p. 469.
[315] "Doklad Prezidiuma TsK KPSS na Oktyabr'skom Plenume TsK KPSS (Variant)," undated, retrieved from http://on-island.net/History/1964.htm. Originally published in *Vestnik Arkhiva Presidenta Rossiyskoi Federatsii 2 (1995):* 102-125.

The newly elected CC CPSU First Secretary, Leonid Brezhnev, and the collective leadership could agree about the need to restore the unity of the Soviet bloc and above all to mend the Sino-Soviet alliance. One of the first initiatives of the new leadership was to invite Chinese premier Zhou Enlai for talks in the Kremlin. However, negotiations failed rather marvelously when Soviet Minister of Defense Rodion Malinovsky advised Zhou to get rid of Mao. In early 1965, Soviet premier Aleksey Kosygin travelled to Beijing, where he tried to convince Mao to forge a joint strategy of assistance to North Vietnam. As the United States intensified its offensive against North Vietnam in support of the south, the Soviets also stepped up their support, but Mao was not responsive. Kosygin failed to strike a deal on Vietnam, and Chinese anti-Soviet propaganda intensified in 1965.[316]

The Chinese challenge to the Soviet Union's role in the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) dominated the proceedings of the Presidium of the Soviet Solidarity Committee on 5 February 1965. The Chairman of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, Mirzo Tursun-Zade, shared his thoughts about the message that the Soviet delegation would have to convey to third-world revolutionaries at the forthcoming conference of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), scheduled to be held in Winneba, Ghana: "These people want to fight against imperialism, neo-colonialism, and we thus have to start from the will of those people, of course bearing in mind the need to fight for peace, disarmament, and all other issues related to the peace campaign."[317] The deputy chairman, Vladimir Tereshkin, agreed that the Soviet delegation should not raise questions that contradicted the demands of the Afro-Asian countries. One of the main challenges, stated Tereshkin, was the Chinese, who claimed that the Soviet leadership did not have the will to lead the struggle against colonialism.[318] The AAPSO Conference in Winneba in May 1965 turned out quite sour

[316] Sergey Radchenko, *Two Suns in the Heavens: the Sino-Soviet Struggle for Supremacy, 1962-1967*. Cold War International History Project series. (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center, 2009), pp. 120-159.
[317] Transcript of the SAASC Presidum Meeting, 5 February 1965, GARF, f. 9540, op.1, d. 188, p. 12.
[318] Ibid., p. 13.

for the Soviets: the delegates rejected the idea of peaceful coexistence as meaningless and decided to hold the next meeting in Beijing.[319]

The Chinese were not the only ones to challenge Soviet supremacy of the international communist movement. Cuba's famous revolutionary leader Ernesto "Che" Guevara also publicly challenged Soviet policy in Africa when he arrived at the Economic Seminar organized by AAPSO in Algiers in February 1965. Che publicly condemned the Soviet Union's exploitative trade agreements with the African countries, warning, "The socialist countries have the moral duty of liquidating their tacit complicity with the exploiting countries of the West."[320] Che merely repeated the charges leveled against the Soviet Union by those African leaders who, like Guinea's Sékou Touré, were not satisfied with the quality of Soviet aid. This, of course, lay at the heart of the new leadership's criticism of Khrushchev's policy in Africa, as outlined in Polyanskiy's report. Not only was Soviet trade with Africa not particularly beneficial for the Soviet economy, but it was also outright damaging to Soviet prestige.

On 21 April 1965, Edmund Pszczolkowski, the Polish ambassador to the Soviet Union, and Vasiliy Solodovnikov, the newly appointed director of the Soviet Institute of African Studies, met to discuss this problem. Solodovnikov had studied at the Mechanics Department of the Samara Industrial Institute and the prestigious Academy of Foreign Trade in Moscow, had lived in the US as an employee of the Soviet "Amtorg" Trading Corporation from 1947 and 1949, and had served as deputy to Nikolai Fedorenko, the Soviet representative at the UN, before replacing the terminally ill Ivan Potekhin as director of the Institute of African Studies.[321] Unlike his predecessor, Solodovnikov was not an Africanist by training, but he was attuned to the economic problems of developing countries and had good contacts at various research institutes and the Foreign Ministry. He was thus put in charge of imagining a new Soviet policy approach to Africa. "Countries of our camp should seek new ways of developing trade

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[319] David Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement: Ideology and Foreign Policy of the Third World* (Jerusalem: Israel University Press, 1973), pp. 185-187.
[320] Quoted in Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 79.
[321] Vasiliy Solodovnikov, *Tvorcheskiy Put v Afrikanistiku i Diplomatiyu* (Moscow: Institut Afriki RAN, 2000).

relations, new ways of economic and technical assistance for Africa," argued Solodovnikov, "because our work in this area has been sharply criticized by our African partners." Thus he advised that the socialist countries reconsider their recommendation to the African countries to nationalize their industries, because they were not ready. He recommended that socialist countries come up with new terms of trade that could benefit both sides.[322]

What emerges from these rather vague discussions of Soviet policy in Africa is a sense that the socialist countries should be more selective in choosing their partners, in direct reaction to Khrushchev's policy of unilaterally allocating funds for building socialism in countries that were not predisposed towards it. However, support for the liberation movements was a whole different matter. In fact, it went to the core of the new leadership's attempt to reinforce the image of the Soviet Union as the leaders of the international communist movement. It was a response to accusations from the left – specifically, the Cubans and the Chinese – but it was even more so a response to increasing pressure from the leaders of the liberation movements themselves, who desperately needed military means to wage the armed struggle. That is why this emphasis on liberation movements was immediately put into practice in relation to the MPLA and the PAIGC, but not FRELIMO, which was still considered to be 'pro-American' because of Eduardo Mondlane's background and his connections in Washington.

The Resurgence of the MPLA

In September 1964, Neto toured the socialist countries to obtain resources to launch military operations in the exclave of Cabinda, the only portion of Angola's territory bordering on Congo-Brazzaville, which had become the new base for the MPLA. Most probably, Neto's visit in September coincided with the World Forum for Solidarity of Youth and Students in the Struggle for National Independence and Peace

[322] Moscow, 21 April 1965, "Notatka z rozmowy Tow. Ambasadora E. Pszczolkowskiego i Radcy W.Paszkowskiego z dyrektorem Instytutu Afryki Akademii Nauk ZSRR tow. W.G. Solodownikowem," Archiwum Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych (hereafter AMSZ), 58.70.W1.

held in Moscow, at which Nikita Khrushchev affirmed the Soviet commitment to supply arms to the liberation movements.[323] In 1965, the Soviets provided heavy weaponry and $100,000 to the MPLA, doubling the money allocated in 1963.[324] Neto's trip to Sofia was also successful: the Politburo of the Bulgarian Communist Party agreed to provide a shipment of heavy weapons worth 10,000 leva and allocated 10 placements for military training and three scholarships for a three-year course at the Higher Party School in Sofia.[325] A sizable aid package from the Soviet Union and Bulgaria indicated a positive reversal of fortunes for the MPLA.

Czechoslovakia was the only exception. On 13 November 1964, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Václav David wrote to Antonín Novotný, outlining Czechoslovak policy towards the Angolan liberation movement. David admitted that the MPLA had rekindled its activism in the previous year, while Holden Roberto's power was in decline. David wrote that Tshombe's appointment had weakened Roberto and that many African leaders had been switching their support to Neto because of Roberto's connection with Tshombe. The foreign minister argued against renewing regular financial aid. Instead, he recommended that Prague dispatch humanitarian aid via the Czechoslovak Solidarity Committee and hand over a one-time cash amount of $3,000 as compensation for the gap in payments.[326]

On 7 February, Luiz de Azevedo arrived in Prague to convince the Czechoslovak leadership that supporting the MPLA would be worthwhile. Azevedo argued that the MPLA had made substantial progress in Cabinda, where they controlled one-third of the territory. Although they were already expecting to receive the first shipment of heavy weaponry from the Soviet Union to "force the Portuguese out of the barracks," they were still short on funds for "700 combatants operating in Cabinda" and on

[323] Friedman, "Soviet Policy in the Developing World " p. 266.
[324] RGANI, f. 89, inv. 38, d. 8
[325] Report on Agostinho Neto's visit to Sofia, 18 September 1964, TsDA, f.1b, op.51, a.e.23; Dimo Dichev to Ivan Bashev, TsDa, 31 December 1964, f. 1b op. 51, a.e. 23. The shipment left for Ghana on 26 December. It contained six cases of 200 "Mannlicher" rifles and 200 'Suomi" submachine guns with ammunition.
[326] David (Foreign Minister, Czechoslovakia) to Novotny (General Secretary of the CC CPC), 13 November 1964, Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č. f. 1261/0/44, inv. č. 75, ka. 71.

weapons, food, and military equipment. Azevedo thus asked for 30,000 convertible Czech crowns.[327]

In June, the MPLA's Secretary for Security Teles "Iko" Carreira again asked for Czechoslovak aid when he came to Prague for medical treatment.[328] Carreira had been close to the Czechoslovak intelligence agency since 1963, when he had first travelled to Prague for three weeks of training in security matters, including learning how to write cryptography and ensure personal security. At the end of his stay in Czechoslovakia, Carreira had suggested working together with Czechoslovak intelligence. Carreira, or, as the StB had nicknamed him, agent "KONIK," would pass along information "about the Angolan national liberation movement, disagreements within the MPLA and particular personalities," according to the StB report of 1967. However, given that the MPLA had been forced to relocate its headquarters from Léopoldville to Brazzaville, where Czechoslovakia did not have a *rezidentura*, Carreira's usefulness was somewhat limited. [329] While Czechoslovakia was increasingly selective about its foreign engagements, the Soviets became increasingly involved with the MPLA, not only by shipping arms but also by organizing a press campaign to showcase the successes of the liberation struggle in Cabinda.

The MPLA first launched its military campaign in Cabinda in 1964, but the campaign did not take off until 1965. The reason for the campaign's advancement was a rather significant influx of Cuban instructors resulting from an agreement between the MPLA leadership and Che Guevara, who had stopped in Brazzaville during his tour of Africa in January 1965.[330] In May 1965, the first nine Cuban advisers arrived in Brazzaville, led by Rafael Moracén Limonta. Over the next few months, the MPLA and the Cubans crossed the Mayombe jungle into Cabinda, engaging in small clashes with the Portuguese patrols.[331]

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[327] Algiers to Prague, 21 January 1965, AMZV, TO-tajné, IV/6, sign. 274/111.
[328] Meeting between Luiz Azavedo and the Czechoslovak solidarity committee, 8th February 1965, AMFA, TO-T, IV/6, Sign. 274.
[329] Prague (first directorate, 4th department), 7 January 1966, "Vyhodnoceni: DS Konik," ABS, 11611/114.
[330] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 83.
[331] George Edward George, *The Cuban Intervention in Angola, 1965-1991: from Che Guevara to Cuito Cuanavale.* Cass Military Studies (London: Frank Cass, 2005), p. 29.

During this time, Soviet journalists started venturing into Angola, accompanied by the MPLA. The first was *Pravda* journalist Mikhail Domogatskikh, who wrote the first series of articles published in the Soviet press by a journalist reporting from a 'real' theatre of anti-colonial war. The long series, titled "Flame over Angola," was published in *Pravda* between May and June 1965 and was broadcast in Portuguese for African consumption. Domogatskikh described journeying to the liberated areas and meeting the combatants, and reported their motivations for joining the guerrilla struggle, first battlefield experiences, and hopes for the future. In one emotional passage, Domogatskikh described speaking at a rally of guerrilla commanders who had just finished a course of political instruction at one of the Centers. He writes:

> I started talking about how much our people are paying attention to the national liberation struggle, how much they are following the wars in Angola, Mozambique, and 'Portuguese' Guinea: 'The Soviet Union has always been and will remain with you, dear comrades.' Everybody jumped from seats. Hands clutching machine guns went up: 'Vive Union Soviétique! Vive Moscou!'[332]

Tomas Kolesnichenko became the second Soviet journalist to travel to Angola. Kolesnichenko, who travelled to Cabinda with the MPLA, would become one of *Pravda*'s main foreign correspondents, known for his lively writing style and flair for adventure. The account of his trip, published in a series of articles in *Pravda* titled "Letters from Angola" in early 1966, was in many ways similar to his predecessor's. This time, Neto and Hoji Ya Henda, the MPLA's commander in Cabinda, served as the guides. Ya Henda told Kolesnichenko that the MPLA forces were regularly engaged in fighting the Portuguese, who rarely ventured out of their posts for fear of ambushes. Neto apparently told Kolesnichenko that the MPLA had formed many committees in the liberated areas and that membership continued to grow every day. [333]

The MPLA thus emerged as an efficient guerrilla movement with wide popular support. In the last article of the series, Kolesnichenko placed the struggle of the MPLA within the international context. In Angola, the MPLA was up against not only

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[332] Mikhail Domogatskikh, "Plamya Nad Angoloy," 16 June, 1965; ibid; Mikhail Domogatskikh, "Plamya Nad Angoloy," *Pravda,* 31 May, 1965; Mikhail Domogatskikh, "Plamya Nad Angoloy," *Pravda,* 7 June, 1965.
[333] Tomas Kolesnichenko, "Pis'ma iz Angoly: Chistaya Voda," ibid.8 March 1966.

Portuguese colonialism, but also Western imperialism in general: "The struggle of the Angolan partisans proves that the liberation movement against colonialism and imperialism can't exist in isolation from the international workers' movement, from the international socialist system."[334]

Journalistic forays into the liberated areas served many purposes. First, they were obviously intended to educate Soviet citizens about foreign policy. These reports – transmitted in Portuguese over the radio – also helped popularize the struggle in the Portuguese colonies and the MPLA itself. For Soviet purposes, it was important to portray the liberation movement in the colonies as being connected to the international communist movements, with the USSR at the helm. Even deep in the jungle, as Domogatskikh tried to show, guerrillas were reading Lenin and related their struggle to the Soviet experiences during the Second World War. These trips also served as a way to gather first-hand intelligence about the liberation struggle. The actual military campaign in Cabinda stalled by the end of 1965 because the terrain and tough Portuguese response made it increasingly difficult to mount any effective challenge to the colonial authorities.[335] The important development from the Soviet perspective was that things were moving, that the MPLA was engaged in active military struggle. One proof of the importance of action to the Soviets is that Petr Yevsyukov himself visited Brazzaville in 1965, perhaps to discuss further assistance for the MPLA.[336] While the MPLA was making advances in Cabinda, FRELIMO was also expanding its operations in Mozambique.

Mondlane's Diplomacy of Liberation

FRELIMO began its anti-colonial campaign on 25 September, with only 250 men armed with a few automatic rifles. Samora Machel, who was appointed the head of the movement's training camp at Kongwa, central Tanganyika, recalled that he had

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[334] Tomas Kolesnichenko, "Pis'ma iz Angoly: Viktoria o Moerte," *Pravda,* 22 April, 1966; Kolesnichenko, *Granitsu Perekhodyat v Polnoch: Pis'ma iz Angoly*.
[335] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, pp. 175-178.
[336] *Lúcio Lara: Tchiweka*, p. 63.

to use sticks to train his men.[337] The attacks mounted rapidly, spreading to the Mozambican provinces of Niassa, Zambezia, and Tete by the end of 1965. In a January 1965 interview to a Tanzanian newspaper, *The Nationalist*, Mondlane announced that Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia had already offered aid to FRELIMO and that Mozambique would be liberated in two years.

Mondlane's preference was to negotiate for a peaceful transition to independence, with assistance from the United States. This did not work, and the relationship between Mondlane and Washington soured after Kennedy's assassination. In 1964, the Ford Foundation withdrew funding for the Mozambique Institute under pressure from Lyndon Johnson's administration. Mondlane's wife Janet, who ran the Institute, had secured bridging funds from the World Council of Churches, and, after Eduardo and Janet Mondlane visited Stockholm in September 1964, the Swedish government allocated the first 150,000 Swedish crowns for the institute in May.[338] In 1965, the US State Department refused to host a FRELIMO delegation at their official headquarters, giving a clear sign that Washington's previously positive attitude to Mondlane and FRELIMO had changed in comparison to the Kennedy years. Quite incensed over the incident, Mondlane pushed even harder for support from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. In April, he visited Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Hungary with Marcelino dos Santos to obtain further assistance.

Mondlane thus had no choice but to turn increasingly to the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China, argued Jaime Sigauke, FRELIMO's head of the Department of International Organization, in conversation with Peter Fullerton, a British diplomat in Tanzania. "Sigauke said that the Americans were dishonest in their relations with FRELIMO; they kept saying they were willing to support FRELIMO, but had done little for them and said nothing in public to indicate that they were backing them."[339] Writing of Mondlane's attempts to obtain assistance from Eastern Europe, Stephen

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[337] Christie, *Samora Machel*, p. 26.
[338] Tor Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa: Formation of a Popular Opinion, 1950-1970*. Vol. I (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999), p. 453.
[339] Prague, 29 June 1965, "Usnesení 115. schůze předsednictva ÚV KSČ ze dne 29 června 1965," Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č. f. 1261/0/44, inv. č. 328, ka. 138.

Miles, the British Deputy High Commissioner in Tanzania, noted that Mondlane was "staunchly anti-communist by conviction," but that he had to take whatever was available from the communist countries and Algeria.[340]

FRELIMO's requirements for external support multiplied with the expansion of the war effort. When Mondlane visited Czechoslovakia in October 1964, his main request for the deputy foreign minister, Jan Pudlák, was for Czechoslovakia to train recruits for underground work. In November, Mondlane approached the Czechoslovak embassy again, this time asking for material assistance and weapons, saying that he wanted to obtain the support of Czechoslovakia in particular because it was a small country without the ambitions of a superpower.[341] In March 1965, Mondlane appealed to the Soviet government, asking for further material assistance and placements for training cadres who could assume administrative tasks in the liberated areas:

> When I was in the USSR in May [1964], I had the opportunity to tell the Solidarity Committee about the most pressing needs of our struggle, which I suppose had been relayed to the Soviet government. As a result of this visit, our movement has received substantial aid in war material and other supplementary equipment. However, now, our struggle has entered a new stage: now our men and women lead the armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism inside Mozambique. The requirements of our movement have significantly increased in comparison with the last year. Thus, I am asking your Excellences to increase material aid for our movement.[342]

Mondlane also believed that to prepare for independence, FRELIMO had to educate young Mozambicans so they could take over the government when independence came. This vision was embodied in the Mozambique Institute, which opened in September 1964 as a hostel and school for Mozambican refugees in Tanzania. When the war began, it became clear that a protracted guerrilla campaign would require mobilization and politicization of the peasantry. Thus, FRELIMO did not just need young recruits who could count, read, and understand basic science, but who could also explain what the war was all about. Mondlane thus appealed to the socialist countries to dispatch instructors who could teach regular subjects at the Mozambique

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[340] Fullerton (British embassy, Dar es Salaam) to FO, 26 May 1965, National Archives, FO 371/181967.
[341] Dar es Salaam, "Záznam z návštěvy presidenta FRELIMO p. Mondlane na ZÚ dne 12.11.1964," AMZV, 1965-1969, TO-tajné, IV/7, sign. 273, inv. č. 67.
[342] Eduardo Mondlane to the Government of the USSR, 11 March 1965, AVPRF, f. 659, op. 2, p. 1, d. 1.

Institute and could also give lectures in political theory and clandestine organization and action. In his February appeal to the Czechoslovak Solidarity Committee, he explained: "The main purpose of the teachers is to help prepare and direct a program for the training of political cadres in order to send them into the interior of Mozambique. Most of the work we did before the September insurrection was rather improvised. It is now necessary that we should work on a more scientific basis."[343]

Then in April, Mondlane toured Southeast Europe, stopping in Sofia, Budapest, and Belgrade. From Bulgaria, Mondlane obtained 170,000 leva worth of weapons and war material and another 100,000 leva of humanitarian aid. FRELIMO also received 10 annual placements for enrolment at Bulgarian universities and technical lyceums.[344] Prague eventually provided assistance to FRELIMO in June, when the Politburo of the CC CPC approved the provision of second-hand weapons and war material worth one million crowns. Czechoslovakia also agreed to dispatch one expert to provide military and political training at the Mozambican Institute.[345]

While Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria extended aid to FRELIMO, there is no evidence to suggest that Moscow offered any further aid in 1965 beyond what had already been granted in 1964. According to a Czechoslovak report justifying Prague's assistance package to FRELIMO, representatives of the Soviet International Department "welcomed" the initiative, but nevertheless warned the Czechoslovaks about Mondlane's past, when he was closely associated with the Americans. At the same time, the Czechoslovakian officials learned that Ambassador Timoshchenko had met with Tanzanian Minister of Defense Oscar Kambona to discuss the Soviet military contribution to the Mozambican liberation movement.[346]

Cabral: A Hidden Thread

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[343] From Eduardo Mondlane to the Chairman, Czechoslvoak Committee of Solidarity with Nations from Asia and Africa, "Memorandum," AMZV, 1965-1969, TO-tajné, IV/7, sign. 273, inv. č. 67.
[344] Dimo Dichev to CC BCP, 21 April 1965, TsDA, f. 1b, op. 64, a.e. 332. Politburo CC BCP Resolution "B" № 7, 27 April 1965, TsDA, f. 1b, op. 64, a.e. 332.
[345] Prague, 29 June 1965, "Usnesení 115. schůze předsednictva ÚV KSČ ze dne 29 června 1965," Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č. f. 1261/0/44, inv. č. 328, ka. 138.
[346] Ibid.

In 1964, Salazar dispatched Brigadier Arnaldo Schultz as the new governor general and commander-in-chief in the province, following the Portuguese's humiliating defeat at Como. Having served in the pacification campaign in Angola, Schultz was confident that he could end the war in six months. His plan involved constructing a network of control points and garrisons along the Guinean border to cut lines of communication with Conakry. Schultz also oversaw an expansion of the ground troops, from 8,000 in 1964 to 16,000 the following year. He also relied on massive bombing raids to dislodge the PAIGC forces from their strongholds.[347]

The PAIGC thus faced a massive challenge, and the key to its survival was the availability of weapons. In 1964, Czechoslovakia had already stepped up its arms shipments to the PAIGC, and in early 1965, a large shipment of Soviet arms, including one hundred pistols, five hundred small arms, five hundred carbines, fifty light and twenty heavy machine guns, twenty grenade launchers, binoculars, compasses, and anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, reached Conakry. This is the first time that we know for certain that Soviet arms shipments reached the PAIGC, something that Cabral had probably negotiated with Soviet officials around October 1964.[348] Cabral of course knew that the militants required special military training, especially as increasingly sophisticated weapons poured in, if his aim of creating a regular armed force – the FARP – was to be achieved.

Sometime in October 1964, shortly after Khrushchev's forced retirement, the CC CPSU approved construction of a secret training center in Crimea, Soviet Ukraine, upon Cabral's request for the expansion of the training program in the USSR. The 165 Training Center for the Instruction of Foreign Servicemen was located at the village of Perevalnoye, off the highway that connected the capital of Crimea, Simferopol, and Alushta, a famous vacation destination on the Black Sea. The training center at Perevalnoye was under the command of the Tenth (Main) Directorate, a department of the Soviet Ministry of Defense, which was responsible for providing aid to foreign

[347] William Zartman, "Guinea: The Quiet War Goes On," *Africa Report,* November 1967.
[348] Josef Janouš (Fourth department of the StB First Directorate, chief), "Zpráva o situaci v PAIGC Konakry-Guine", ABS, 11853/000.

countries, among other things. The Tenth Directorate was under direct responsibility of the Soviet General Staff, led by the newly reappointed Marshall Matvey Vasilyevich Zakharov. The Ministry of Defense was in a rush, and by the summer of 1965, all the main facilities of a military school, including a two-storied school building, the officers' quarters, the soldiers' barracks, a canteen, an obstacle course, and a shooting range was complete. The first commander of the school was Colonel Ivan Boyko, a heavily decorated war veteran. His deputy was colonel Mikhail Strekozov. Thus Captain Vladilen Kinchevskiy recalled meeting the first seventy-five PAIGC militants at the Simferopol airport in June 1965:

> It was already dark; we could not make out who was going down the ramp… Some sort of invisible men. When we approached very close, it became clear why: all of them were black… Fine, we tried to figure out what language they spoke. No more than 10 spoke Portuguese and the rest spoke various African dialects and gesticulated a lot. All of them were skinny, looked alike, and were of uncertain age – from sixteen to thirty-five.[349]

Perevalnoye functioned like a regular military school. Mikhail Strekozov, who drafted the first curriculum, recalled that the focus was on sapper training. Instructors taught their students how to blow up railway tracks, bridges, and buildings, so that by the end of the course, each recruit would know how to handle explosives. Strekozov argued that this kind of training was commonplace for any regular military school, recalling: "We never prepared terrorists. We taught everything that was commonplace in any military school." Military training was supplemented with the basics of Marxism-Leninism. Course Convener Aleksey Antipov justified the need for his subject with a joke he would repeat very often to his colleagues: "First we should teach whom to shoot, and then how to shoot." The teachers became quite invested in and proud of their students. Vladilen Kinchevskiy, one of the teachers, recalls: "We would read in overviews of international press that a certain number of planes had been hit in the

[349] "Shkola terroristov s Marksistskim Uklonom," *Segodnya,* 22 April, 2005.

Portuguese colonies. Then, our boss, Colonel Boyko, would proudly say, 'This was our job.'"[350]

Meanwhile, Cabral continued campaigning for greater resources for the PAIGC. In May 1966, Cabral had very fruitful discussions with the new Czechoslovak Minister of the Interior, Josef Kudrna. Cabral briefed Kudrna on the situation in the country, saying that the PAIGC had been trying to expand internal trade and correcting the massive shortages in the health-care system, which was severely lacking in medicines and basic equipment. He also told Kudrna that the PAIGC was planning to expand its operations into every region of Guinea-Bissau and finally liquidate the military garrisons. This is why, Cabral explained, he required anti-aircraft and anti-boat guns from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. Moreover, he informed Kudrna that the PAIGC forces were planning to launch guerrilla warfare in Cape Verde. Cabral also said that the PAIGC had been successfully expanding contacts with socialist countries, but he warned that one had to be careful to avoid charges of being pro-communist.[351]

Kudrna was very impressed by Cabral. He approved of Cabral's plan of action in Cape Verde. He also praised Cabral's tactic of not speaking openly about friendship with the USSR, but doing everything to achieve the goals of the socialist movement. "He [Kudrna] expressed his confidence that the liberation movement would become an example for the whole of Africa. It is rooted in realism and is well organized," according to a report of the meeting signed by Houska.[352] Therefore, in June, the Czechoslovak Communist Party allocated 1.85 million crowns for the provision of arms and war materiel and 150 thousand crowns for humanitarian assistance. "Current military situation is favorable; the victory of the national liberation movement in the foreseeable future is evident," according to the attached report.[353]

The StB also needed Cabral to better understand developments in the other liberation movements. On 18 September 1965, Cabral met his new case officer, who

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[350] Ibid.
[351] Josef Houska to Josef Kudrna, 25 May 1965, "Záznam o jednani ministra vnitra soudruha Kudrny s Amilcarem Cabralem, generalnim tajemnikem PAIGC," ABS, 43197.
[352] Ibid.
[353] CCP Politburo Resolution, 1 June 1965, Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, č.f. 1261/0/44, inv.č. 394, ka.166.

was known by his last name, Peták, whom he briefed about the forthcoming CONCP conference in Dar es Salaam. The CONCP had been established in the wake of the 1961 Angolan Uprising and united the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC under one umbrella organization. The main motivations for the conference, said Cabral, were to assert the unity of the liberation movements, to establish common foreign policy lines, and to coordinate military action. Peták in turn proposed to Cabral that he provide material aid, assist with personnel training, and, overall, and share his experiences with the other liberation movements at the conference. He also inquired whether Cabral could serve as mediator between Czechoslovakia and the liberation movement regarding the provision of special aid (i.e., arms). Cabral responded that he had already thought about it, saying that the conference would provide an important occasion for him to speak to his comrades on that issue.[354] It is not clear whether Cabral discussed what Peták had asked him at the CONCP conference in Dar es Salaam, but he did make a strong statement in acknowledging the contribution of the socialist countries to the anti-colonial struggles in the Portuguese colonies.[355]

What is particularly important is that by 1966, both Moscow and Prague considered Cabral one of their most trusted allies in the region because of the kind of influence they believed he had. That is why both the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia were therefore very willing to expand their assistance to the PAIGC. Aristides Pereira attributed this to Cabral, who became so close with the Soviets that assistance for the movement was gradually regularized in a way that it was integrated into early plans of the various agencies. “This demonstrated the trust Soviets had in Amílcar. They practically started to believe he was one of them,” Pereira observed.[356] On 5 January 1966, Josef Otáhal, who was one of the cadres of the fourth (Afro-Asian) department, evaluated the relationship with Cabral very positively, writing that Cabral fulfilled a key function as far as Czechoslovak Intelligence was concerned and that in 1966, they

[354] Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 19 September 1965, "Večeře se SEKRETÁŘem," ABS, 43197/020, p. 84.
[355] Amilcar Cabral, "The Nationalist Movements of the Portuguese Colonies," Opening address at the CONCP Conference held in Dar Es-Salaam, 1965, retrieved from https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/cabral/1965/tnmpc.htm.
[356] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 171.

would rely on Cabral to provide an insight into the situation in the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies.[357]

Conclusion

The Soviet assistance to the anti-colonial uprisings in the Portuguese colonies expanded in 1965 despite Nikita Khrushchev's departure from the Kremlin in October 1964. While Khrushchev's close associates criticized his policy in the Third World, most notoriously in the unpublished "Polyanskiy report", in 1965, the CC CPSU Politburo approved shipments of heavy arms to the MPLA and the PAIGC and oversaw the construction of a clandestine military training center at Perevalnoye in the Crimea. 1965 also saw Soviet international journalists – Tomas Kolesnichenko and Mikhail Domogatskikh – starting to report from the frontlines of the anti-colonial struggle in Angola. This amounted to a qualitative shift in the USSR's engagement with the liberation movements. Soviet aid before 1965 was mainly limited to providing scholarships, some humanitarian assistance, and cash, allocated by the cadres of the International Department; it was only in 1965 that the Soviet Union really began to provide substantial material assistance, including some heavy weapons, to the liberation movements.

The reason for this shift had to do with the increased importance of the conservative interpretation of Marxism-Leninism followed by Brezhnev and other members of the Politburo, such as Aleksey Kosygin, Alexander Shelepin, and Vladimir Semichastnyi. If Nikita Khrushchev thought he could both ensure peaceful co-existence with the West and maintain the leadership of the international communist movement, the conservatives believed that this policy had led to a dangerous weakening of the Soviet Union. Thus, they further reinforced the importance of Marxist-Leninist doctrine as the key principle guiding foreign policy. Their ideological conservatism implied that the Soviet Union would no longer waste resources on funding the

[357] Otáhal (Fourth department of the StB First Directorate), Prague, 5 January 1966 , "Hodnocení spolupráce s DS SEKRETÁŘem za rok 1965," ABS, 43197/000, pp. 18-20.

development of Third World countries where prospects for socialism were slim. Instead, it would support genuine revolutionary movements in the colonies. This is why the Soviets were increasingly willing to provide arms and training to the ideologically reliable MPLA and the PAIGC, but remained quite skeptical of FRELIMO, as they still had doubts about the allegiance of President Mondlane. The cadres from the socialist countries would continue to carefully follow the transformations of these anti-colonial movements, which they believed represented the most vibrant progressive force on the continent.

While ideational changes were important, individual people also advocated on behalf of the liberation movements, as we have seen in the case of Petr Yevsyukov and Oleg Nazhestkin defending Neto during the MPLA's internal crisis and in the members of the Soviet Solidarity Committee and the International Department arguing for an expansion of assistance. The same was true in the other socialist countries, and we have seen just how important Cabral was, since he provided a gateway into African politics for Czechoslovak Intelligence. This was of course an interactive relationship, driven by the leaders of the liberation movements, who engaged in very active diplomacy to obtain resources for the unfolding anti-colonial campaigns. For all these reasons, the Soviet Union, as well as Czechoslovakia and, gradually, Bulgaria, became increasingly involved in providing military aid for the liberation movements.

The most important consequence of this period was therefore the militarization of Soviet relations with the liberation movements. The military became responsible for the procurement of weapons and for the training of the military cadres of the liberation movements on an increasingly large scale, all very important developments in the context of Moscow's ever-deeper involvement in the Vietnam War. While it is difficult to address the importance of particular individuals (because the military archives are still sealed and there are no memoirs) those men who served as instructors at Perevalnoye felt pride in their students, even if it was tinged with a sense of paternalistic superiority. The middle-ranking cadres at various levels of the

Soviet Ministry of Defense therefore became increasingly invested in the liberation cause in the Portuguese colonies, as subsequent chapters will show. Meanwhile, as the anti-colonial struggles in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau picked up the pace, one of the pillars of support for the liberation movements, Kwame Nkrumah's regime in Ghana, crumbled, sparking renewed debate about the future direction of the African continent.

CHAPTER THREE

Zenith: Mobilization, Governance, and Conflict in the Liberated Areas, 1966-69

On 24 February 1966, Kwame Nkrumah had only just landed in Beijing when he was informed of the coup d'état in Ghana's capital, Accra, which had taken place earlier that morning. Nkrumah, who was on his way to North Vietnam with a peace mission, learnt that he had been dismissed as president of Ghana, and that that his Convention People's Party (CPP) had been banned and replaced by a group calling themselves the National Liberation Council (NLC). Nkrumah would spend the rest of his life in Conakry, after receiving an invitation from Guinea's President Sékou Touré. Nkrumah believed that the coup was a product of collusion between hostile forces in the Ghanaian army and police force and the imperialists, as he explained in his 1968 book, *Dark Days in Ghana*. While the role of the US in the coup has been a subject of much speculation, we know now that Nkrumah was partly correct about the reasons for it. Nkrumah looked increasingly anti-American, especially after he accused the CIA of being directly responsible for instigating crises around the world in his book *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*. Washington did know about the impending coup and denied Nkrumah's repeated requests for economic assistance, which contributed to the increasingly desperate economic situation in Ghana; however, Nkrumah overlooked his personal mistakes.[358] Constantly fearful for his life, Nkrumah had introduced legislation that had given him sole authority to dismiss staff from the police force and had established his own presidential guard, alienating the traditional

[358] Paul Lee, "Documents Expose U.S. Role in Nkrumah Overthrow," June 2002, http://www.seeingblack.com/x060702/nkrumah.shtml. The CIA station in Accra may have even provided support on the ground. Station chief Howard T. Bane was promoted to a senior position in the agency shortly after the coup. Also see: William Blum, *Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* (London: ZED Books Ltd, 2004), pp. 198-200.

military and police forces. His economic policies were generally unpopular, while his slide into an increasingly authoritarian one-man rule was resented by the elites. One could not deny that there was generally very little resistance to the coup, reflecting general dissatisfaction with Nkrumah's regime.[359]

Nkrumah's overthrow was in many ways a key moment in Africa's post-colonial history. Not only did it drastically undermine African unity as an ambitious political project, but it also testified to the failures of the nativist-inspired developmental models, such as "African socialism," championed by the first leaders of the newly independent African states, including Nkrumah himself. While the majority of African leaders continued to speak about non-alignment and sought economic and developmental assistance from all factions in the Cold War, others, such as Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, pushed for a more radical transformation of society, following the 1967 Arusha Declaration, which borrowed its theoretical underpinnings not only from "African socialism" but also from China's Cultural Revolution. Nkrumah's fall was also of major significance for the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies, not only because they no longer received Ghanaian support, but also because this confirmed some of the ideas advocated by Amílcar Cabral, an increasingly influential theorist in his own right. During the January 1966 Tricontinental Conference, held in Cuba's capital Havana, Cabral had made a major speech, asserting that the creation of an ideologically driven revolutionary vanguard or so-called "vanguard party" was essential during the struggle for national liberation in order to prevent a neo-colonial situation after independence.

Cabral was seemingly proved right just one month later, because the coup was widely attributed to the meddling of the colonial powers and Nkrumah's inability to create a revolutionary vanguard. Cabral's philosophy had been increasingly adopted by the MPLA and FRELIMO, which started organizing life in the liberated areas in view of future independence, abolishing what they called "traditional" authority and replacing

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[359] Ama Biney, *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 156.

it with new socialist-inspired practices to govern community relations. Out of all three major liberation movements, FRELIMO's transformation was the most significant, as the organization progressed from a collection of individuals who relied on traditional authorities to a much more centralized, top-down organization whose leadership was increasingly adopting Marxism as the key ideology for the movement.

Moscow looked upon Nkrumah's fall as a serious defeat, not only because the coup d'état led to a total reversal of Ghana's allegiance, but also because this revealed a lack of popular support for socialist transformation in the continent, which the Soviets had hoped in the early 1960s to achieve. Although Moscow regarded the situation in Africa with great pessimism, this did not mean they gave up on the prospect of revolutionary change that would eventually lead to socialism. Czechoslovakian intelligence and the KGB actually tried to stage a counter-coup in Ghana with the support of Nkrumah's former advocates, and provided military assistance and training to the liberation movements. Cabral played a special role, both because he was an important source of information regarding Nkrumah's plans and because the PAIGC was perceived as the likeliest of the three liberation movements to achieve a military breakthrough. The Soviets also increasingly looked upon the transformation of the MPLA and FRELIMO as proof of revolutionary potential in the Third World, a conclusion that was strengthened by Washington's inability to make any substantial progress in North Vietnam. Optimism regarding the potential of the liberation movements surged, culminating in the 1969 Khartoum Conference, which was the key symbolic moment when the Soviet Union appeared as the key supporter of liberation in southern Africa.

Rescuing Ghana's Revolution: Nkrumah, Sékou Touré, and Cabral

Nkrumah's fall was a major defeat for Soviet interests in Africa. Not only did the coup mean the loss of an influential political ally, but it also signified a major setback for revolution in Africa as a whole. Additionally, in the first few months after

the coup, the NLC reversed almost all of the economic policies of its predecessor. "Nkrumah was doing more to undermine our interests than any other black African," wrote Robert Komer, the special assistant on national security affairs to US president Lyndon Johnson, on 12 March 1966. "In reaction to his strongly pro-Communist leanings, the new military regime is almost pathetically pro-Western."[360] Long-time Soviet diplomat Leonid Musatov wrote that Nkrumah's fall was particularly painful for the Soviet leadership, given the country's subsequent complete realignment of domestic and foreign policy. Nkrumah's defeat meant the loss of Ghana as a major financial contributor as well as a training ground and logistical hub for the transfer of weapons and money for other liberation movements, especially for the MPLA and PAIGC.[361] The MPLA's President Agostinho Neto, speaking to two members of the Politburo of the Polish United Workers' Party (PUPW), Zenon Kliszko and Edward Gierek, during the Twenty-Third Congress of the CPSU in March 1966, expressed his deep concerns about the situation in Africa, saying that the events in Ghana had reduced the possibility of support for the Angolan people.[362]

One lesson from the coup, some Soviet cadres would later come to believe, was that radical transitional "people's democracies," the term that was used for regimes whose leaders subscribed to a form of socialist organization of society, were unsustainable if they relied upon the traditional social classes. On 21 December 1966, speaking to a group of diplomats from Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia, and Cuba, Vasiliy Solodovnikov, the director of the Africa Institute, also argued that Ghana had become the target for "imperialists and neo-colonialists" because Nkrumah was the main proponent of African unity, even though he did acknowledge that Nkrumah was partly to blame for the coup because he had isolated himself from the masses and had instituted a cult of personality. Solodovnikov argued that the reasons for the coup ran

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[360] Paul Lee, "Documents Expose U.S. Role in Nkrumah Overthrow," June 2002, http://www.seeingblack.com/x060702/nkrumah.shtml. Musatov argues, for example, that the 1968 coup in Mali was not taken badly by the Soviet leadership because it did not lead to any major realignment in foreign policy.

[361] Leonid Musatov, "Afrikanskie Marshruty." *Afrika v Vospominaniiakh Veteranov Diplomaticheskoi Sluzhby*. Ed. Aleksey Vasilyev (Moscow: Institut Afriki RAN, 2000), p. 120.

[362] Warsaw, "Spotkanie z delegacja partii 'Ruch Ludowy o Wyzwolenie Angoli," Archiwum Akt Nowych (hereafter AAN), PZPR, 237/XXII-1354, pp. 4-5.

even deeper than Nkrumah's miscalculations. Young African states could not withstand many post-independence pressures because they had to rely on the pre-colonial social structures and align with the non-proletarian social classes, given their origins as mass movements during the struggle for independence. Under those circumstances, it was no surprise that the army proved to be a powerful force that could be manipulated by a variety of foreign actors. The solution to this problem, according to Solodovnikov, was to raise the issue of creating ideological vanguard parties.[363]

Beneath this swirl of ideologically inspired theorizing lay a tangle of questions about the Soviets' practical response to events in Ghana. The Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrey Gromyko, argued that the war in Vietnam, non-interference, and nuclear non-proliferation could serve as common points for a dialogue between the non-aligned nations and the Soviet Union, during a discussion with his colleagues at the Collegium of the Soviet Foreign Ministry in March. The coup in Ghana was an obvious case of interference by the British, stated Gromyko, but it was also clear that African countries could not present a united resistance. Gromyko said that the USSR has already been successful in pushing through yet another resolution on non-interference at the UN's General Assembly, but the time had come to influence the non-aligned countries with practical advice on how to transform abstract ideas into practical steps. "Clearly, African unity is falling apart. The coup in Ghana throws the country back. We have to contain this process to eliminate the consequences of imperialist intervention," Gromyko concluded. [364]

Nkrumah's defeat also colored discussions on the situation in Africa at the level of the Warsaw Pact. On 22 April 1966, the Soviet deputy foreign ministers, Yakov Malik and Leonid Ilyichev, convened a joint plenary session with their Czechoslovakian counterparts, Jan Pudlák and Jan Ledl, in Moscow. Malik spoke at length about the situation in Africa, arguing that the imperialists were increasingly exploiting internal

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[363] Seiferth (GDR embassy, Moscow) to Berlin, 9 January 1967, PAAA-MfAA, C465/72, p. 69.
[364] Gromyko as quoted in Rostislav Sergeev, *V MID SSSR. Na Kuznetskom Mostu i Smolenskoy Ploshchadi, 1948-1991* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2007), 171. Gromyko refers to the General Assembly Resolution 2131 (XX) of 21 December 1965 titled "Declaration of the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty" which was first launched by the Soviet Union on 24 September 1965.

problems within the newly independent states to provoke distrust of the people's regimes and the non-capitalist path of development. Nevertheless, Malik argued that one could not be overly pessimistic, proposing that the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia should continue developing various forms of cooperation with African countries, especially in the military sphere. Pudlák agreed with Malik's conclusions and explained Czechoslovakia's experiences providing economic aid and the training of military cadres.[365] Responding to Ilyichev's criticism that the socialist countries had misjudged the reality of class relations in Africa by supporting hasty industrialization and misunderstanding the role of the military, Malik said that the Soviet Union would no longer support the megalomania of some African leaders and would make sure that the staffs of the Soviet embassies in African countries would pay attention to what was happening with the army and police.[366] What this meant in reality was that the socialist countries would continue their policies in Africa as before, but without the rabid intensity and enthusiasm of the early 1960's.

Not everybody agreed. The Chairman of the Polish Solidarity Committee, Lucjan Wolniewicz, roused his colleagues as he spoke about his impressions of a recent trip to East Africa at the first consultative meeting of the Solidarity Committees from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Poland, held on 28-29 June 1966 in East Berlin. Wolniewicz gave a strong critique of the nationalist liberation movement, questioning the very idea that African countries would ever join the socialist camp. While some leaders of the liberation movements were simply opportunists who were milking the socialist countries for money and goods, others were living in exile "like the bourgeoisie," completely detached from their people. As long as the two camps existed, Africans could take advantage of both sides, and thus it

[365] Vaclav David (CSSR Foreign Minister) to Antonin Novotny (CSSR General Secretary), 7 May 1966, Národní Archiv, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, f. 1261/0/44, inv. č. 2, ka. 3, pp. 7-8.
[366] Ibid., p. 9-10.

would be impractical for them to choose one over the other, Wolniewicz concluded.[367] Given this logic, continuing support for the liberation movements seemed pointless.

Others could not accept such a view. The General Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, Dmitriy Dolidze, admitted that that there had been a slowdown of the revolutionary process in Africa, but disagreed that one could generalize, saying that all of the liberation movements only represented a small group of people. He defended the MPLA, saying that it would be wrong to assume that the organization did not have any popular following in Angola. The MPLA could not organize an effective armed struggle because the movement was based in Congo-Brazzaville and had very limited access to Angola's interior, as passage via the Congo was problematic, but the MPLA was a "progressive and a good" organization with a "big future," Dolidze argued.[368] Dolidze was much more critical of the Mozambican liberation movement because it was fragmented by disagreements between warring factions. Even though FRELIMO was "weak" and contained "unreliable people" in the leadership, the Soviet Union extended "exclusive support" to that organization because there was simply no other alternative, concluded Dolidze.[369] The final resolution reflected the majority view; the Solidarity Committees agreed to continue to develop contacts with the liberation movements and coordinate policies to minimize future mistakes.[370]

Meanwhile, the Soviet and Czechoslovakian intelligence services were also contemplating their responses to events in Ghana. On 15 March 1966, Prague instructed Peták, the Czechoslovakian intelligence officer in Conakry most closely in touch with Cabral, to talk to Cabral and learn his view of events in the region. This intelligence was sought in order to construct a full picture of events in the region and develop a plan to prop up Guinea's president Sékou Touré in the case of a similar coup

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[367] Berlin, "Konsultationstreffen zwischen den Vertretern Afro-asiatischer Solidaritätskomitees (AASK) europäischer sozialistischer Länder am 28./29.06.1966," BA-SAPMO, DZ8/32, p. 54. Lucjan Wolniewicz would serve as Poland's Ambassador to the Congo in the 1970s and would act as an observer to the situation in Luanda in early 1975. See Chapter 5.

[368] Ibid., pp. 67-68.

[369] Ibid., p. 70.

[370] "Vorschläge für weitere Tagungen der Solidaritätskomitees der sozialistischen Länder, unterbreitet auf der internationalen Konsultation am 28. und 29.6.1966 in Berlin," BA-SAPMO, DZ8/32

attempt.[371] Cabral was not surprised by the coup in Ghana, which he believed was reactionary and harmful for African unity, and was also worried about Touré's stability, as Peták learnt from conversations with Cabral on 1 and 24 March.[372] During another meeting with Peták and StB's resident in Conakry, Pecháček, on 13 May, Cabral again spoke about the situation in Guinea and Ghana. One of Nkrumah's mistakes, Cabral mused, was that Nkrumah had not eliminated the power of the tribal chiefs whilst in office. Another misstep was that he had not established an underground resistance movement shortly after the coup.[373] When Cabral visited Prague in late November, he discussed Nkrumah with Czechoslovakian intelligence agents, including Josef Janouš, the chief of the fourth (Afro-Asian) department of the StB's first (intelligence) directorate. Cabral again repeated that Nkrumah had to organize a resistance movement in Ghana, saying that Nkrumah still enjoyed the support of the masses and that his prospects of returning to the country were therefore quite good. "Upon returning to Conakry, Cabral will visit NK [Kwame Nkrumah] in order to pass on his impressions of the Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party in Sofia, talk about his plans, and promise the PAIGC's help."[374]

One reason why Czechoslovakian intelligence was so interested in Nkrumah was because they were secretly putting together a plan for a counter-coup in Ghana. One of the key personalities in that process would be Kofi Batsa, who had worked as the co-editor of an influential newspaper – *The Spark* – and was a long-time contact for Czechoslovakian Intelligence. Having spent one year in prison following the February coup, Batsa approached the Czechoslovakian resident intelligence officer in Accra and asked for help with his plan to overthrow the military regime in Ghana. The full details of that conspiracy are not clear, but there is evidence that suggests that the KGB believed the operation was vital and that they offered their full cooperation.[375] It is also not clear what role Nkrumah was to play in this plot or whether he even knew about

[371] Prague, "Organizační dopis pro s Petáka," 15 March 1966, ABS, 11853/000, p. 262.
[372] Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 24 March 1966, ABS, 43197/020, p. 94.
[373] Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 14 May 1966, ABS, 43197/020, pp. 95-96.
[374] Otakar Mařík (Fourth department of the StB First Directorate), Prague, 7 December 1966, "Pobyt Sekretáře v ČSSR," ABS, 43197/020.
[375] For a further discussion of this incident, see: Zídek and Sieber, *Československo*, pp. 73-74.

the full extent of it, but it is important that the StB placed their trust in Cabral to act as a kind of mediator between them and Nkrumah.[376]

Over the following years, Cabral grew increasingly skeptical about Nkrumah's political future. On 6 February 1967, speaking to Josef Janouš in Prague, Cabral spelled out his frustration with Nkrumah, whom he had finally met in Conakry. First of all, Cabral objected to Nkrumah's plan to publish a book, *Handbook on Revolutionary Warfare*, in which he proposed the creation of an all-African working class vanguard party, the All-African People's Army and Militia, to counter the future military coups because, as Cabral told Janouš, it would expose his whole strategy to the imperialists. Cabral also complained to Janouš that Nkrumah had not been responsive to this criticism and had actually proposed that Cabral should give him a group of guerrilla fighters who could organize resistance in Ghana. Janos responded by saying that Czechoslovakia would do everything to protect Nkrumah's interests, but that he would have to put aside his Pan-Africanist theories and concentrate on organizing resistance inside the country. Janouš thus asked Cabral to use his influence with Nkrumah for this purpose, but without him knowing about Czechoslovakia's involvement in the plan.[377] Cabral continued feeding information about the situation inside Ghana to Nkrumah, but it soon became quite clear that the former president was no longer actively interested in returning to power. On 25 February 1968, meeting Peták in Conakry, Cabral said that Nkrumah knew very little about the internal situation in Ghana, that he had become more of a philosopher than a politician, and that his plan to liberate the African continent was not realistic.[378]

Nothing came out of the plans to generate a left-wing revolution in Ghana. In August 1968, the Ghanaian police arrested Kofi Batsa, who ultimately moved out of the country.[379] Cabral was a very willing participant in these plans, especially initially, when he believed that Nkrumah still had a chance to return to Ghana. Cabral thus

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[376] Josef Janouš (Fourth department of the StB First Directorate, chief), 18 May 1967, ABS, 43197/020, pp. 154-155.
[377] Josef Janouš (Fourth department of the StB First Directorate, chief), Prague, 13 February 1967, "Zpráva o jednání s Amilcarem Cabralem," ABS, 43197/020, pp. 167-169.
[378] Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 26 February 1968, "Sekretář – schůzka s Nkrumahem," ABS, 43197/020, p. 243.
[379] Zídek and Sieber, *Československo*, p. 74.

pledged support for Sékou Touré and acted as a go-between Czechoslovakian Intelligence and Nkrumah, trying to convince the latter to construct a realistic plan for the liberation of Ghana. While this did not work out, Czechoslovakian Intelligence was still very pleased with Cabral's contribution. On 4 April 1969, looking back at relations with Cabral over the previous nine years, Czechoslovakian Intelligence observed that their focus had been to use Cabral as a "progressive influence" on African public opinion and on regional forums such as the OAU and the CONCP. "Equally useful and influential was the role he played in the interests of Czechoslovakian intelligence when in contact with President Nkrumah, both when the latter lived in Accra and after he left for Conakry."[380] Cabral was willing to help Nkrumah, but this was definitely not his key concern, for the anti-colonial war in Guinea-Bissau intensified in the second half of the 1960s.

The PAIGC Goes on the Offensive, 1966-1967

In January 1966, Cabral made a major speech called the "Weapon of Theory" at the Tricontinental Conference in Havana, where he outlined his views on African liberation efforts. Cabral postulated that only "two paths" were available to an independent nation: to "return to imperialist domination" or to "take the way of socialism." Construction of a socialist society was dependent upon the creation of a "revolutionary vanguard" firmly conscious of the ultimate objectives of the liberation struggle. Given the generally "embryonic" nature of the working class in Africa and the political conservatism of the peasantry, the nationalist petit bourgeoisie becomes the leading force in the national liberation struggle. It is this sector that becomes most rapidly aware of the need to free itself from foreign domination and is most capable of maintaining control of the state after the achievement of political independence. If a wide national liberation front is essential to the achievement of political independence, then the role of the "revolutionary vanguard" is to prevent a neo-colonial situation

[380] Vašata (StB), Prague, 4 April 1969, "Vyhodnocení spolupráce s důvěrným stykem ‚SEKRETÁŘem,'" ABS, 43197/000, p. 24.

whereby the nationalist petit bourgeoisie allies itself with Western capitalism and thus betrays the revolution. To fulfill the role of this vanguard, the nationalist petit bourgeoisie had to commit what Cabral termed "class suicide," which entailed rejecting the temptations of the natural concerns of its class mentality and identifying itself with the working classes, in order to be "reborn as revolutionary workers, completely identified with the deepest aspirations of the people to which they belong." [381]

Cabral's speech impressed Fidel Castro. "His address to the Tricontinental was brilliant. Everyone was struck by his great intelligence and personality," recalled Jorge Risquet, who was then in charge of Cuba's military mission to Congo-Brazzaville.[382] Castro already knew of Cabral from one of his closest associates and friends, Che Guevara, who had visited Conakry in December 1964 during his tour of Africa. Convinced that the PAIGC had good prospects, especially regarding the liberation struggle in Cape Verde, Che had offered Cabral some support. In May 1965, a Cuban ship, the *Uvero,* had brought food, arms, and weapons to the PAIGC in Conakry, while in July, a handful of recruits from the Cape Verde islands had gone to Cuba for military training. "When Cabral visited Cuba [in 1966], Fidel already had information about us from a source he kept in high regard, Che [Guevara]," observed Aristides Pereira.[383] Castro and Cabral spoke at length in Havana; Amílcar explained the needs of the liberation struggle, and Castro promised to expand Cuba's support. By July 1966, the Cuban military mission in Conakry counted 11 artillery specialists, eight drivers, one mechanic, and 10 doctors, led by an intelligence officer, Lieutenant Aurelio Ricard Hernandez, known as Artemio. The Cubans also delivered cigars, brown sugar, distinctive olive green uniforms, equipment for the armed forces, and trucks. [384]

Meanwhile, the PAIGC leadership began preparations for a major military offensive in the east of Guinea-Bissau. By 1966, it had become apparent that the offensive launched by Arnaldo Schultz, the Governor General of Guinea-Bissau, in 1964

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[381] Quoted in Amilcar Cabral, "The Weapon of Theory," retrieved from http://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/cabral/1966/weapon-theory.htm.
[382] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 187.
[383] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 121.
[384] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 189.

had failed to bring any substantial advances.[385] Having successfully defended against army attacks on their stronghold in the southern Tombali province, the PAIGC launched a counter-offensive designed to dislodge the army from its well-fortified posts. One of the key strategic forts in the east was located at Madina do Boé. Close to the border with Guinea, the fort at Madina do Boé blocked the PAIGC's access to the eastern hinterland and protected another strategic army post at Guiledge. Passing through Moscow on his way to the Tricontinental Conference in Havana, Cabral gave an interview with *Pravda*'s correspondent Mikhail Zenovich and said, "I cannot promise we will achieve independence next year, but we will not spare our strength to achieve this goal." [386] Heavy artillery was required for the assault on Madina do Boé, and this was exactly why Cabral asked Castro to urgently dispatch Cuban weapons specialists to Conakry.[387] In July, a Cuban commander, Raul Menéndez Tomassevich, toured the liberated areas of Guinea-Bissau accompanied by Cabral, João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira, and Francisco "Chico" Mendes, advising the rebels about the organization of the military bases and planning for the attack on Madina do Boé.[388]

The eastern offensive soon ran into major difficulties. While support from the Balante had been key to the PAIGC's victory at Como, the eastern front was predominantly inhabited by the Fula (or Fulani), a Muslim ethnic group whose tribal chiefs had long cooperated with the Portuguese and who were generally resistant to the nationalists' mobilization drive. According to the Czechoslovakian adviser to the PAIGC in Conakry, František Polda, writing to Prague in November 1966, the PAIGC had made substantive military progress in the south and in the north, but the situation with the civilian population was impeding progress in the east. He explained, "This region is inhabited by the Fula, who do not identify with the PAIGC. In the beginning of the year, when armed clashes began in this area, a part of the civilian population fled to neighboring Guinea while the rest flocked to the 'protected villages' near two

[385] Zartman, "Guinea: The Quiet War Goes On," pp. 67-72.
[386] "Narod Pobezhdaet," *Pravda,* December 27, 1965, p. 3.
[387] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 188.
[388] Ramón Perez Cabrera, *La Historia Cubana en Africa*, (Lulu.com, July 10, 2013), p. 141. Retrieved from http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=144HT142AgAAQBAJ.

Portuguese posts in Madina and Beli."[389] When the PAIGC – armed with 82mm mortars, three 75mm cannons, 15 rocket launchers, and six 12.7mm anti-aircraft machine guns, and backed up by Cuban artillery specialists and doctors – launched a major attack against Madina do Boé on 11 November, the operation failed spectacularly, resulting in multiple casualties including the military commander, Domingos Ramos, who died at the very beginning of the attack.[390] Ramos was a charismatic military leader who had worked as an effective mobilizer for the PAIGC before being appointed the commander of the eastern front after the 1964 Cassaca Congress.[391] Cabral was particularly upset by his death because the two men were close friends. Visiting Prague in November 1966, Cabral told his interlocutors that he would make a detailed evaluation of the operation that had resulted in Ramos's death.[392]

The Czechoslovakian and Soviet Intelligence services were concerned about the military situation in Guinea-Bissau. "The struggle led by the PAIGC has a large importance for the whole of Africa and especially for other Portuguese colonies," stated a report briefly summarizing a joint consultation session between Czechoslovakian and Soviet intelligence staff and countersigned by Josef Janouš, who was in charge of the Afro-Asian department at the StB's intelligence directorate. While both agreed that the liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau was important and the PAIGC required assistance on multiple fronts, their evaluation of the military situation was quite pessimistic, citing a slowdown of progress and lack of morale. The solution, the report continued, was to "work out a strategic and tactical plan" for the PAIGC and then "choose and teach a few qualified men" who could enact this plan. The Cubans were also to be consulted and asked for aid in enacting the strategy and tactics of

[389] Josef Houska to Josef Kudrna, 15 November 1966, "Souhraná správa o situaci v PAIGC," ABS, 11853/011, p. 61.Ramos was hit by a mortar shell in his observation post and died from internal injuries while being rushed to a hospital.
[390] For a biographical sketch of Domingos Ramose, see: Cabrera, *La Historia Cubana en Africa*, p. 143.
[391] Mendy and Lobban, *Historical Dictionary*, pp. 353-354.
[392] Otakar Mařík (Fourth department of the StB First Directorate), Prague, 7 December 1966, "Pobyt Sekretáře v ČSSR," ABS, 43197/020, p. 122. We do not know when exactly this meeting took place and who participated in it on either side.

war.[393] The Czechoslovakian and Soviet Intelligence services were clearly worried about the PAIGC's military situation and wanted to enlist Cuban support for a rescue operation.

The PAIGC: On the Brink of Victory, 1967-1969

On 6 February 1967, Amílcar Cabral had a long conversation about the situation in Guinea-Bissau with Josef Janouš in Prague. Cabral briefed Janouš on the most recent meeting of the party leadership, saying that the offensive would continue, but that future operations would have to be very carefully planned. Cabral also briefed Janouš on his most recent negotiations with his Cuban comrades in Havana, pointing out that he did not agree with the Cubans' advice that the movement should prepare for an attack on Bissau. Cabral believed that such a high-risk operation could lead to high casualties, which would be demoralizing and harmful for the party's prestige. Janouš criticized Cabral for his gap in military intelligence and for not organizing a well-functioning general staff, two topics that they discussed at length. Cabral again referenced his negotiations in Havana, saying that he had warned their Cuban comrades that if the Chinese managed to undermine the Soviet influence in Guinea and overall in Africa, this would mean success for the imperialists, and for the Cubans, the end of their influence in Africa. "Cuba has influence and weight in Africa only with the presence of the USSR and Czechoslovakia," Cabral told Janouš.[394] Given that Cuba's relations with the Soviet Union were at a low point in 1967, it was smart for Cabral to shore up his interlocutor's confidence by praising the role of the Soviet Union.

While Soviet-Cuban relations remained sour for the remainder of 1967, it appears that Czechoslovakian spies discussed the PAIGC at Conakry. The initiative came from the Cuban *rezident* and First Secretary of the Cuban embassy at Conakry,

[393] Josef Houska to Josef Kudrna, 15 November 1966, "PAIGC – stručné shrnutí konsultací," ABS, 11853/011, pp. 61-62. During this meeting, Janouš told Cabral that Prague had approved to supply additional 1,000 pistols, 2,000 knives, 50 heavy machine guns, and 50 bazookas with ammunition.

[394] Josef Janouš (Fourth department of the StB First Directorate, chief), Prague, 13 February 1967, "Zpráva o jednání s Amilcarem Cabralem," ABS, 43197/020, pp. 165. "Piedro" was perhaps Pedro Rodriques Peralta, a Cuban adviser who would be captured and imprisoned by the Portuguese in 1969. Like elsewhere in the documents of the StB's First Directorate, Peták refers to Cabral as "SEKRETAR," to Luís Cabral as "KOTAS" and to Aristides Pereira as "ACHILLES."

Luís Delgado Perez, who approached the Czechoslovakian *rezident* Pecháček requesting a meeting. Pecháček told him to talk to Peták. On both the 8th and 15th of May 1967, Perez visited Peták at home, accompanied by another Cuban who introduced himself as "Piedro." Military strategy was the principal focus of their conversation. Peták, Luís, and "Piedro" agreed that military operations had stalled and that morale was low. Peták said that the armed forces should be reorganized into larger units capable of engaging in pre-planned military operations. Piedro initially responded that large detachments were vulnerable to attacks and required very effective leadership, but later agreed with Peták. They also agreed that the movement was lacking in military intelligence, which was harmful for the progress of the military operations.[395]

The Cubans and Peták also shared opinions about the movement's leadership. Perez and "Piedro" told Peták that Cabral had fully centralized decision making into his hands, and that the majority of his associates would not dare disagree with him, except for the late Domingos Ramos. In response, Peták praised Cabral, saying that his loss would be very dangerous for the movement and that they had to do everything to ensure his security. Cabral, of course, made mistakes like other politicians, continued Peták, but his popularity both within Guinea-Bissau and worldwide was unrivalled when compared to that of anyone else in the movement. The Cubans agreed that while Aristides Pereira was a good organizer, he was not a politician, and that only Luís Cabral could perhaps succeed his brother. "The two Cubans were very frank and informed us willingly about everything they know. I propose to collaborate with them closely," Peták concluded.[396]

Piero Gleijeses writes that the Cubans never tried to impose their opinions on Cabral, who was ultimately the final authority on all matters of military strategy in the conflict. For example, Cabral preferred a war of attrition in order to avoid high casualties, while the Cubans argued in favor of larger operations. "We would have

[395] Ibid.
[396] Quoted in Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 17 May 1967, "Konsultace problémů PAIGC s kubánskými přáteli 8. a 17.5," ABS, 43197/020, pp. 151-153.

preferred a more aggressive strategy, but we adapted," recalled Victor Dreke, the new head of mission.[397] Evidence is lacking as to how the Czechoslovakian advisers evaluated these Cuban tactics. Meeting Francisco "Chico" Mendes and Osvaldo Vieira on 14 December 1966, Peták discovered that Cabral had requested that the two prepare the ground for "several destructive propaganda operations" in Bissau. "From their information, they do not have a single plan of action," wrote Peták to Prague, saying that he had advised the two to focus on propaganda, while remembering that any "destructive operations" required forward planning and accurate intelligence.[398] In any case, it did not seem that the Czechoslovak advisers had any major disagreements with the Cubans, as per the documented conversations. Czechoslovakian Intelligence was still fairly skeptical about prospects for an easy win. In May 1967, evaluating the PAIGC's prospects on a request from GDR's intelligence, Peták stated that the Portuguese would be able to hold on to the colony as long as fighting was concentrated in remote areas of little economic or strategic importance, and if fighting was not so concentrated, Western countries might come to Lisbon's rescue.[399] Nevertheless, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union did their best to help the PAIGC achieve a victory in the east.

Peták remained in Conakry in an advisory capacity until 1968. In 1967, he participated in discussions about a plan for a renewed offensive on the "eastern front." Peták also advised the military commanders about the best use for the advanced weapons arriving from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. One of the discussions was how best to use the 120mm mortars the PAIGC had received from the Soviet Union.[400] During one meeting with Osvaldo Vieira – the new commander of the eastern front – Peták explained how sniper rifles, which had been recently delivered to the PAIGC, could be used to dislodge the Portuguese troops from their fortified posts,

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[397] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 198.
[398] Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 15 December 1966, "OSWALDO VIEIRA a ŠIKO - schůzka," ABS, 11853/011, p. 63.
[399] Peták (Conakry) 30 May 1967, "PAIGC – podklady pro jednání s rozvědkou NDR," ABS, 11853/011, pp. 136-139.
[400] Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 28 December 1966, "Schuze PB PAIGC v Boke - konec prosince 1966," ABS, 11853/011, p. 67; Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 19 June 1967, "SEKRETÁŘ – projednání operačního plánu pro oblast Východní fronty," ABS, 43197/020, p. 184.

including Madina do Boé.[401] However, as the pace of the war quickened, resident spies complained that they could hardly ever see Cabral, who was almost always away on foreign trips.[402] 1968 was of course a turbulent year in Czechoslovakia. After a group of reform-minded party leaders led by the new CPC First Secretary Alexander Dubček took power in January 1968, the Minister of the Interior, Josef Kudrna, and the Chief of Intelligence, Josef Houska, were dismissed from office. While Pecháček remained in Conakry, Peták and František Polda were recalled around this time, for unknown reasons. With these two gone, the volume of communications between Czechoslovakian Intelligence and Cabral declined steadily, even though Prague remained committed to supporting the PAIGC.

With the acquisition of advanced weapons from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, and with military training and medical instruction provided by the Cubans, the PAIGC launched several successful operations. On 28 February 1968, a FARP antiaircraft unit led by Andre Gomes attacked the Bissablanca airport, destroying three aircraft hangars, a control tower, and two jets.[403] One year later, the FARP finally managed to take over Madina do Boé. Snipers would prevent the Portuguese from leaving their bunkers during the day, while artillery continuously shelled the fort at night. "The Portuguese held beyond human endurance," recalled one military commander, but eventually had to abandon the fort.[404] With the military situation rapidly deteriorating in 1968, Arnaldo Schultz was recalled to Lisbon to be replaced by another veteran of the Angolan counterinsurgency campaign, General António Ribeiro de Spínola. When Spínola arrived at Guinea-Bissau, he found the Portuguese army on the defensive, and warned Washington that reinforcements of men and materiel were urgently required to rescue the colonial authority from total collapse.[405] While the

[401] Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 14 May 1967, "OSWALDO VIEIRA – konsultaca o vytvoření jednotek odstřelovačů," ABS, 11853/011, p. 126.
[402] Pecháček (Conakry) to Prague, 20 June 1969, ABS, 11853/011, p. 229.
[403] Dhada, *Warriors at Work*, p. 35.
[404] Conversation between the Portuguese Foreign Minister Franco Nogueira and the US Secretary of State Dean Rusk in Chabal, *Amilcar Cabral*, p. 101.
[405] James E. Miller, ed. *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1964-1968 - Western Europe.* Vol. XII (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2001), Document 174.

PAIGC was increasing the pressure on the Portuguese in Guinea-Bissau, the MPLA's campaign in Angola was also strengthening.

The MPLA's War and State-Building in the Southeast, 1966-1969

The MPLA's fortunes looked promising in early 1966. One reason was the situation in Zambia, a former British colony, which had acquired independence in 1964. Zambia had a long border with eastern and southeast Angola, which provided ample opportunities for penetration of that vast and sparsely populated hinterland. Zambia's first president, Kenneth Kaunda, was initially reluctant to allow liberation movements to operate from Zambia, but Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence in South Rhodesia made Kaunda more inclined to support the liberation movements. The MPLA had already established an office in Zambia's capital, Lusaka, and in early 1966, Agostinho Neto wanted to open a new "front" in the southeast. Beyond that, Neto was receiving a warm welcome in Moscow. Neto attended the Twenty-Third Congress of the CPSU in March 1966, where he held discussions with the Soviets, Bulgarians, and even the Polish, asking for cash, humanitarian assistance (including stationery and medicines), arms, and supplies for combatants in the southeast.[406] On 2 April 1966, speaking to Bogumil Rychlowski, a member of the Polish delegation, Petr Manchkha, the chief of the Africa Section at the CPSU International Department, said the MPLA was active in Cabinda and that the Soviet Union would ship more arms for the organization via Dar es Salaam. He also praised Neto as a man who commanded authority among the "progressive forces in Africa." Manchkha concluded: "CPSU's attitude towards the MPLA, towards its leadership, and towards Agostinho Neto is very positive."[407] The Soviet Union also dispatched a surgeon, Oleg Poremskiy, to run a hospital near the MPLA's training camp at Dolisie, Congo-Brazzaville.

Within the first eight months of his arrival, Poremskiy started providing medical services to address the MPLA's medical needs. He reported to Moscow that

[406] Agostinho Neto (MPLA, Dar es Salaam) to Mitko Grigorov, [undated], TsDA, f. 1b, op. 51, a.e. 603, pp. 5-8.
[407] B. Rychlowski, Warsaw, 2 April 1966, AAN, PZPR, 237/XXII-1354.

while the Soviet Union had delivered medicines and equipment for the hospital, these could not be adequately used because there were no qualified doctors. With Poremskiy's arrival, it was now possible for the hospital to operate at full capacity, offering surgical and general medical treatment, mostly to injured militants. Poremskiy also trained a group of 10 nurses who would be dispatched as first-aid responders wherever required. The surgeon wrote that his relations with Neto and the MPLA's leadership in general were good, which allowed for the resolution of any difficulties that arose.[408] Poremskiy actually arrived just in time to witness the expansion of the MPLA's military operations the north.

The MPLA was still active in Cabinda, but Neto had not given up the hope of reinvigorating military operations in the north, the scene of the 1961 Angolan Uprising. Jorge Risquet, the head of the Cuban military mission in Congo-Brazzaville, recalled, "This was Neto's great obsession." [409] Travelling to the north of Angola – in the MPLA's terminology, the "First Military Region" – from Congo-Brazzaville was a highly risky business, involving trekking through Zairian territory controlled by Holden Roberto's FNLA, which was hostile to the MPLA. The first such expedition, undertaken in July 1966, was a success; a column of about 100 men led by Jacobo "Monstro Imortal" Caetano safely reached Ngalama in the First Military region on 23 September 1966, and immediately asked for reinforcements and supplies. [410] The second expedition, of January 1967, proved disastrous, as the 150 guerrilla fighters, including four women, lost their way, starved, were ambushed, and then were finally captured by FNLA troops. Many of them, including Deolinda Rodriques de Almeida, the only woman in the MPLA's steering committee, would never be seen again.[411] On 12 July, Zairian foreign minister Justin Bomboko sent a letter to his counterpart in Congo-Brazzaville, Charles David Ganao, saying that the MPLA should seek a settlement with the FNLA and warning that any further covert penetration of Zairian territory would

[408] Simonov (Soviet embassy, Brazzaville) to Fomin (3rd Africa Department, Moscow), 17 August 1967, AVPRF, f. 658, op. 7, p. 1, d. 1, p. 20.
[409] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 178.
[410] Ibid., p. 181.
[411] George, *Cuban Intervention*, pp. 37-39.

be "considered a breach of national sovereignty."[412] After yet another disastrous attempt the following year, the MPLA stopped sending columns to the north. Lúcio Lara recalled, "We would have tried again, but we did not have any more weapons, and it had become too difficult – there were spies everywhere and too many checkpoints."[413]

Vadim Kirpichenko, who was responsible for one of KGB's Africa departments in the 1960s, wrote that solid intelligence on the anti-colonial campaigns was lacking. That was why, in early 1967, an intra-departmental mission was assembled with the purpose of traveling to all the frontline states – Zambia, Tanzania, and Congo-Brazzaville – in order to find out what was happening "on the ground." Angola was the key target of this mission: "Out of all the problems facing us, Angola warranted our special attention." Apart from Kirpichenko, other members of the delegation included Petr Yevsyukov, Petr Manchkha, and Genadiy Fomin, Chief of the Third African Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Kirpichenko wrote that they desperately wanted to find somebody who had actually witnessed part of the military campaign in Angola, and eventually they found a "Soviet doctor" working for a military hospital near Dolisie, who confirmed that wounded guerrillas were arriving at the hospital on a regular basis.

This "doctor" to whom Kirpichenko refers was most probably the surgeon Poremskiy, who had arrived at Dolisie a few months beforehand. Kirpichenko wrote that when they finally reached Neto, though he did not look like a military leader, given his bespectacled, round face bearing a tinge of "tiredness and sadness," he proved to be a "decisive and courageous man." Neto did not want to discuss internal dynamics in the movement, concrete military operations, or the prospects for unification of the Angolan national liberation movement, recalled Kirpichenko, but neither did he try to "exaggerate the achievements of the MPLA" and his expectations of Soviet assistance

[412] Bomboko (Foreign Minister, Kinshasa) to Ganao (Foreign Minister, Brazzaville), 12 July 1967, AVPRF, f. 658, op. 7, p. 1, d. 1, pp. 14-15.
[413] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 182.

were modest.[414] Overall, it seems that the trip made a good impression on the four men who participated, because shortly afterwards the CC CPSU Politburo decided to provide "all-round support to the militant nationalists in the Portuguese colonies," as Petr Yevsyukov wrote. He did not go into any detail, but this probably meant more weapons, cash, and humanitarian assistance for the MPLA.[415]

While the Soviet delegation found some proof that the MPLA was active in Cabinda, the bulk of operations had actually been transferred to the southeast. Cabinda was a very difficult front: increasingly so in 1967, when the US-based company Gulf Oil discovered vast reserves of offshore oil in the region. As the economic importance of the enclave skyrocketed, the Portuguese government tightened security, making it more difficult to engage in any kind of operations in the territory. Writing in August 1967, Poremskiy confirmed that there were no longer any injured guerrillas at the hospital because there were "no active military operations in Cabinda."[416] Meanwhile, the MPLA's campaign in the southeast, launched in May 1966, was making some progress. Writing to the Foreign Office in September 1966, Cosmo Stewart, the British Consul General at Luanda, acknowledged that the security situation was not good and that the Portuguese army in the southeast was overextended, while the MPLA were efficiently led and well equipped.[417] In early October, Silvino Silvério Marques, Angola's governor general, was recalled to Lisbon amidst the deteriorating security situation and allegations of corruption in the colonial administration, while Luanda was filled with alarmist rumors about mounting casualties. [418]

Southeast Angola thus became the main focus of the MPLA's anti-colonial campaign and the main trial ground for an exercise in state building. Popularly known as the "End of the World," this vast territory on the border with Zambia was very scarcely populated and was of very little strategic or economic consequence, except for

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[414] Kirpichenko, *Razvedka*, p. 207. In fact, the International Department allocated $145,000 for the MPLA in 1966, an increase from $100,000 the year earlier. See RGANI, f. 89, inv. 38, d. 8 and d. 9.
[415] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 16.
[416] Simonov (Soviet embassy, Brazzaville) to Fomin (3rd Africa Department, Moscow), 17 August 1967, AVPRF, f. 658, op. 7, p. 1, d. 1, p. 17.
[417] Stewart (U.K Consul General, Luanda) to FO, 30 September 1966, National Archives, FO 371/187927.
[418] Stewart (U.K Consul General, Luanda) to FO, 24 November 1966, National Archives, FO 371/187927, p. 10.

the Benguela railway, which carried minerals from the Congolese province of Katanga to the Angolan port of Lobito via Zambia and southeast Angola. Given the absence of any major economic or economic interests in the region, the main competition between the MPLA and the colonial authorities would be over people: the MPLA would move the people from the riverbanks to territories under their control in the "bush," while the Portuguese would try to concentrate the population in *aldeamentos* known as "protected villages." Large-scale displacement of the rural population led to the disruption of farming and rural networks of exchange. Like the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau and FRELIMO in Mozambique, the MPLA would have to provide basic services for the civilian population: "people's stores" for distribution of basic goods, a network of rudimentary clinics and schools, and "people's fields" to sustain agricultural production.[419]

The MPLA's activity in the southeast would not be limited to providing basic services, because the leadership also wanted the people to adopt a new version of modernity that they believed was essential for a free and prosperous Angola. "We are trying to free and modernize our people by a dual revolution – against their traditional structures, which can no longer serve them, and against colonial rule," Neto told visiting British journalist and political activist Basil Davidson.[420] One of the key tools for revolutionizing the population was education. The MPLA established special training courses for guerrillas known as the "Centers for Revolutionary Instruction" (CIR; *Centro de Instrução Revolucionário*) for the purpose of training guerrillas to become the party's revolutionary vanguard. Civilians, in the meantime, were expected to attend regular political meetings, at which the MPLA would explain the aims of the nationalist movement, often presented in the form of parables and songs, meant to help the people to connect with the MPLA.[421] The MPLA's leadership of course communicated their goals to the Soviets. On 2 November, speaking to representatives of the Soviet Committee of Youth Organizations, the foreign relations branch of the

[419] Brinkman, *A War for People*.
[420] Davidson, *Eye of the Storm*, p. 279.
[421] Brinkman, *A War for People*, pp. 148-149.

Komsomol, Neto argued that the disunity of the African countries could be explained by the absence of "vanguard parties" and by the policy of "balancing" pursued by the ruling African elite. He complained that Angolans studying in the USSR were not introduced to these issues and insisted that all Angolans studying at the Higher Komsomol School study "all the main tenets of Marxism-Leninism," which was crucial for the creation of a politically conscious revolutionary vanguard.[422]

The MPLA's leadership increasingly identified with scientific socialism as a model for a future Angola. "Our ideology is scientific socialism," stated Spartacus Monimambu, the chief of operations in the eastern front, in a 1968 interview, saying, "We are going to be a socialist country tomorrow." Monimambu confirmed that ideological education of the militants was necessary to create a vanguard party that would rule post-independent Angola.[423] Although official rhetoric stressed that the modernizing mission would be achieved through education, new studies reveal that the MPLA used a great deal of coercion and violence to compel participation, including the forced removal of people from their villages and executions based on accusations of treason.[424]

In August 1968, the MPLA held its First Eastern Regional Conference. Attended by 85 delegates from all five military zones and friendly foreign journalists, the conference publicized the MPLA campaign. Among the topics under discussion were the creation of a regular army and the transformation of the MPLA from a broad movement into a political party. The major decision approved by the conference was to generalize the armed struggle to all regions of Angola. The conference was publicized as a major success. As Roy Harvey, a documentary filmmaker, author and political activist, described it in his eyewitness account of the event, the conference was a "quiet

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[422] Spartacus Monimambu quoted in Moscow, 21 December 1967, Record of conversation with Daniel Chipenda and Agostinho Neto, RGASPI, f. M1, op.1, d. 777, pp. 3-4.
[423] Donald Lucas Barnett and Roy Harvey, eds., *The Revolution in Angola: MPLA Life Histories and Documents* (Indianapolis, New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1972), p. 21.
[424] Inge Brinkman, "War, Witches and Traitors: Cases from the MPLA's Eastern Front in Angola (1966-1975)," *Journal of African History,* 44 2 (2003).

illustration of the MPLA's success in winning the support of the peasantry."[425] The delegates did not know that the conference would mark the apex of the MPLA's military fortunes during the entire campaign in the southeast.

The Transformation of FRELIMO, 1966–1968

In 1965-1966, FRELIMO's campaign in northern Mozambique ran into serious problems. One of the most serious reverses was in eastern Niassa, a sparsely populated province bordering Malawi. While the first attacks in 1964 and 1965 in the province took the colonial authorities by surprise, by 1966, they had begun to respond with overwhelming force. "The censorship imposed in Mozambique is so complete that little is known to the outside world… whole villages have been bombed, strafed with machine-gun bullets and burned to the ground," reported the London-based *Church Times* on 17 September 1965. Faced with massive retaliation, the Nyanja people living around Lake Malawi fled, while many FRELIMO sympathizers were arrested in Malawi on orders from President Hastings Banda. Lord Kilbracken, who visited Niassa in September, reported on the state of the war in a series of articles for the British *Evening Standard*:

> Not one white settler dares stay in all the area. Their once-neat holdings are today silent and abandoned. And most of the Africans – they belonged to the Nyanja tribe – have fled to the mountains or islands or to Tanzania and Malawi. In 80 miles of lakeshore from Metangula to the Tanzanian border only two African villages are still inhabited.[426]

Military setbacks fuelled internal disagreements. Competition developed partly along ethnic lines, because the majority of FRELIMO's rank and file members came from the Makonde people of northern Mozambique, while the political leadership, including Eduardo Mondlane, came from the south. Many military commanders thus resented their dominance, arguing that the military should be given more power. One theory was that this resentment was fuelled by a group of individuals including Filipe Magaia,

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[425] Roy Harvey, *People's War in Angola: Report on the First Eastern Conference of the MPLA*. Ed. LSM Information CentreJune 1970), p. 2.
[426] Reprinted in Ronald H. Chilcote, "Eduardo Mondlane and the Mozambique Struggle," *Africa Today,* 12 9 (1965): p. 7.

the defense and security chief, vice president Uria Simango, and the provisional secretary for the Cabo Delgado province, Lazaro Kavandame.[427] Magaia, for example, was known to criticize the overrepresentation of the Makonde in the guerrilla forces. In October 1966, FRELIMO leadership denounced "the emergence of a certain spirit among several militants who believe there are two types of FRELIMO members – the military and the civilians, the first being the superior ones" at a meeting of the Central Committee.[428] On 10 or 11 October, Magaia was shot dead by fellow FRELIMO guerrilla Lourenço Matola allegedly while on a march, crossing a river after nightfall. An official FRELIMO investigation concluded that Magaia's death was an accident, caused by an accidental shooting of the gun. A few theories as to the real reason behind the shooting immediately emerged: some suggested that Matola had conspired with the Portuguese, while others argued that Matola acted on orders from FRELIMO's leadership and in particular from Samora Machel, who replaced Magaia as chief of defense after his death.[429]

Another debate, over ideology, was also being waged within the movement. While Marcelino dos Santos and Samora Machel were strongly influenced by Marxist ideas,, others, like the Makonde chief Lazaro Kavandame, who had been operating a lucrative trade in goods in the Cabo Delgado province, objected. Eduardo Mondlane was of course a key decisive figure, and some argue that he too was increasingly attached to the prospect of a socialist Mozambique. For Mondlane, a devout Protestant, socialism was a necessary means to overcome colonialism, allowing the land and natural resources, which had rightfully belonged to the people, to be recovered through nationalization. In a 1967 interview, Mondlane declared that Mozambique would become a "democratic, modern, unitary, single-party state" modeled after Tanzania, "neither capitalist nor communist, but rather a socialist state."[430] In yet another political statement made shortly before his assassination in 1969, Mondlane

[427] Quoted in Michael Radu and Anthony Arnold, *The New Insurgencies: Anticommunist Guerrillas in the Third World* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1990), p. 162.
[428] Cabrita, *Mozambique*, p. 47.
[429] Opello, "Pluralism and Elite Conflict," pp. 74-75.
[430] Helen Kitchen, "Conversation with Eduardo Mondlane," *Africa Report,* 12 8 (November 1967): p. 51.

stressed that FRELIMO's thinking was much more "socialist, progressive, and revolutionary than ever" and that the "the tendency was more and more in the direction of socialism of the Marxist-Leninist variety.[431]

The diplomatic community living in Dar es Salaam did not overlook this transformation. Among these diplomats were Dr. Zdanek Kirschner, a Czechoslovakian national dispatched on FRELIMO's request to Dar es Salaam in 1966 to teach at the "Mozambique Institute" alongside other white teachers; Helder Martins, the future Minister of Health for Mozambique, and his wife Helena; Jacinto Veloso, a white Mozambican pilot who had joined FRELIMO in 1963; the historian Fernando Ganhão; and Joaquim Kindler from the GDR. Kirschner stayed at the institute for several years, teaching mathematics and politics. By October 1966, Kirschner had come to the conclusion that FRELIMO leaders were "serious people" who were perhaps not as progressive as the MPLA and the PAIGC, but who had good potential, as he wrote in a report to Prague. Kirschner described President Mondlane as a "progressive liberal" who tried to balance between the two camps, but who could not ignore a "leftist tendency." This was represented by Marcelino dos Santos on the Steering Committee and was widespread among the rank-and-file soldiers in the military camps and guerrilla detachments. Concluding this evaluation, Kirschner suggested that the attitudes of the other socialist countries toward FRELIMO were the same: "Bulgaria has dispatched a large quantity of food, Yugoslavia – medicines, the USSR has invited Mondlane for a meeting to discuss further assistance."[432]

Mondlane confirmed his leftist credentials when he visited Moscow, Prague, and East Berlin in November 1966. On 14 November, speaking to the GDR's attaché in Moscow, Manfred Seiferth, Nikolay Bazanov of the Soviet Solidarity Committee stated that he believed Mondlane's positive attitude towards socialist countries had developed because he had been constantly pushed to the left by the progressive

[431] Saul, "Eduardo Mondlane," p. 310.
[432] Kirschner (Dar es Salaam) to Prague, 20 October 1966, "Zpráva o činnosti s. Kirschnera v Mozambickém institutu," AMZV, 1965-1969, TO-tajné, IV/7, sign. 273, inv. č. 67, pp. 1-8.

forces."[433] Officials from the GDR echoed their Soviet colleagues. "Influenced by the progressive forces in his circle, Mondlane has moved to the left in his beliefs," said a report prepared by GDR's Ministry of Foreign Affairs following Mondlane's trip. Since Mondlane was moving in the right direction, FRELIMO received more aid: humanitarian assistance from the GDR, weapons from the Soviet Union, and medication from Czechoslovakia. [434]

Mondlane was to face a new challenge to the development of internal cohesion among the organization. Trouble began in 1967, when FRELIMO mandated that all of its foreign students attend compulsory military training during holidays. Many students refused to comply, and they found an advocate for their refusal in a black Catholic priest named Mateus Gwenjere, a teacher at the Mozambique Institute. He criticized this policy and accused the white teachers, including Mondlane's American wife Janet, of being agents of the imperialists. He was relieved of his teaching position, but continued his campaign, which sparked a fight between students on 5 March 1968. This incident required the intervention of FRELIMO's leadership, including chief of security Joaquim Chissano, who with the support of the Tanzanian authorities had the students arrested and later dispatched to the Rutamba refugee camp, from where many fled to Kenya. Meanwhile, the school was closed for two years to prevent any further trouble.[435]

This did not end the turbulence within the organization. On 9 May 1968, rank-and file Makonde members stormed FRELIMO offices in Nkrumah Street, Dar es Salaam, striking Mateus Sansao Muthemba, the telecommunications chief, who later died of head injuries. Mondlane and others blamed the incident on a Makonde leader named Lazaro Kavandame, whom Mondlane had accused of profiteering due to his

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[433] Seiferth (GDR embassy, Moscow) to Berlin, 16 November 1966, "Auszug aus dem Aktenvermerk über ein Gespräch mit dem Sekretär des Afro-Asiatischen Solidaritätskomitee in der UdSR, Gen. Basanov, am 14.11.1966," PAAA-MfAA, A1166; Seiferth (GDR embassy, Moscow) to Berlin, 30 November 1966, "Aktenvermerk über ein Gespräch mit Genossen Dolidse, Solidaritätskomitee der UdSSR, am 26.11.1966," PAAA-MfAA, A1166, p. 147.

[434] Stange (chief referent, African department), Berlin, 12 December 1966, "Aktenvermerk uber den Besuch der FRELIMO-Delegation vom 24.-29.11.1966 in Berlin," PAAA-MfAA, A18964, p. 1.

[435] What precisely transpired is still not fully clear. It is unclear whether Marcelino dos Santos and Aurelio Manave, who entered the school, fired shots to pacify the students and whether Manave, having been arrested by the Tanzanian police, was beaten up, with the students cheering on. For details, see: Michael G. Panzar, "The Pedagogy of Revolution: Youth, Generational Conflict, and Education in the Development of Mozambican Nationalism and the State, 1962–1970," *Journal of Southern African Studies,* 35 4 (2009): pp. 803-820.

control of trade in the province of Cabo Delgado. As Eduardo Mondlane explained to the delegation of the Soviet Solidarity Committee visiting Dar es Salaam in early June, unrest at the school was inspired by the Portuguese and Gwenjere's incitement of the students. Mondlane also informed the Soviet delegation that FRELIMO was in preparation of its Second Congress, which would focus on the crucial relationship between the army, the police, and the masses. "All of FRELIMO's former mistakes," in Mondlane's opinion, "came out because there was no understanding between these three forces."[436]

FRELIMO's Second Congress, which opened on 22 July 1968 near the tiny hamlet of Matchedje, in Niassa province, strengthened Mondlane and his supporters. Held inside Mozambique for the first time, FRELIMO managed to ensure a high level of secrecy so that the Portuguese planes arrived dropping bombs after the Congress had already ended. Neither Gwenjere nor Kavandame attended the Congress, and thus more than 170 delegates confirmed the merger of the military and political aspects of the liberation struggle, and ratified equality of the races and the sexes as the guiding principles of the Mozambican Revolution. The Congress also approved the expansion of the Central Committee from 22 to 42 members, to include all the frontline commanders, and the creation of an eight-person Executive Committee, which was to initially include Eduardo Mondlane, Samora Machel, Joaquim Chissano, Armando Guebuza, Uria Simango, Marcelino dos Santos, Jorge Rebelo, and Mariano Matsinhe. Thus, the guiding principles of the liberation struggle, such as the merger of the political and military aspects of the liberation effort and race and gender equality, were confirmed. The 1968 crisis and the July Congress thus became crucial parts of the foundational ethic, which has been presented as part of a larger campaign against traditions that strove to undermine efforts at social transformation.[437]

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[436] The Soviet Solidarity Committee, Moscow, "Otchet delegatsii Sovetskogo komiteta solidarnosti stran Azii i Afriki o prebyvanii v Ob''yedinennoi Respublike Tanzania i Respublike Burundi," GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 243a, p. 14-16.

[437] Panzar, "The Pedagogy of Revolution: Youth, Generational Conflict, and Education in the Development of Mozambican Nationalism and the State, 1962–1970."; Georgi Derluguian, "The Social Origins of Good and Bad Governance: Re-interpreting the 1968 Schism in FRELIMO." *Sure Road? Nationalisms in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique*. Ed. Eric Morier-Genou (Boston: Brill, 2012).

FRELIMO proceeded to centralize control over all aspects of the Mozambican revolution. In August, the Central Committee convened to draft a "program of action" for the various departments based on the decisions of the Congress. The Department of Organization was instructed to organize refugees and promote their resettlement inside Mozambique. The Department of Social Affairs was instructed to create assistance centers for those disabled in the war and to set up judicial committees to resolve local issues; the Department of Education was charged with expanding opportunities for primary and secondary education, including ways to "re-integrate foreign students into the struggle," and ensuring that all non-Mozambican teachers "agree to work in accordance with the political principles of FRELIMO." The Department of Defense was strengthened with the creation of the military High Command, a Disciplinary Committee, and a Military Court. The Central Committee also determined that all FRELIMO officers must undergo both political and military training and recommended that "only active militants" should receive scholarships to study abroad. The Political Department was to engage with "theoretical and ideological aspects of the struggle," and the Department of Production, Commerce and Cooperatives was to "extend commercial activities to new zones, establish exchange of goods in the interior, [and] study possibility of trade with other countries"; both were to develop a plan as to how "cooperatives could operate in Mozambique."[438] The "program of action" amounted to the transformation of FRELIMO from an amalgamation of regional groups and interests into a "vanguard party" that would become the single voice of the Mozambican revolution.

The Congress strengthened confidence in FRELIMO among the communist states. On 27 July, Gottfried Lessing, the GDR Consul General in Dar es Salaam, wrote to the Deputy Foreign Minister, Wolfgang Kiesewetter, with an evaluation of the Congress, based on his conversations with Soviet colleagues, perhaps with Bahadyr Abdurazakov, who had attended as a member of the AAPSO delegation. The Consul

[438] "Resolutions of the Central Committee," *Mozambican Revolution,* June-September 1968, pp. 4-7.

reported that the delegates had "reached unanimity with regards to political and administrative work in the liberated areas and accepted the principle that all freedom fighters are full members of FRELIMO regardless of their race." Lessing believed non-racism represented a "rebuff of Chinese attempts at subversion" and thus recommended that the GDR Solidarity committee should "maintain or even increase" material assistance to the movement.[439]

FRELIMO's tendency towards Marxism-Leninism continued after Mondlane was assassinated on 3 February 1969 by means of a parcel bomb. Although it is clear that the Portuguese intelligence services stood behind the assassination, it is still not clear whether anyone inside FRELIMO actually conspired with the Portuguese. While rumor and speculation spread as to who was responsible for Mondlane's death, his post was taken over by a triumvirate consisting of Uria Simango, Marcelino dos Santos, and Samora Machel. On 27 February, the Czechoslovak Ambassador to Tanzania, Mikulas Surina, argued that Mondlane's death signaled a militant tendency in FRELIMO.[440] The triumvirate did not last, however. In November 1969 Uria Simango published a document titled "Gloomy Situation in Mozambique" that accused southern Mozambicans within the leadership of ethnic nepotism and of plans to assassinate rivals. He called for Samora Machel, Marcelino dos Santos, and Joaquim Chissano to stand trial for their criminal activity and threatened to resign if his demands were not met. Uria Simango was expelled from FRELIMO shortly afterwards and in April 1970 he left for Egypt, where he joined the Revolutionary Committee of Mozambique (COREMO; Comité Revolucionário de Moçambique), a small splinter rival group, which been established by Mondlane's critics in 1965. Samora Machel thus assumed the role of FRELIMO's President in May 1970.

The Khartoum Conference, 1968-69

On 15 March 1967, the Presidium of the Soviet Solidarity Committee convened

[439] Lessing (GDR consul, Dar es Salaam) to Kiesewetter, 27 July 1968, BA-SAPMO, DY 30/IV A 2/20/948, p. 45.
[440] Surina (Czechoslovak ambassador, Dar es Salaam) to Prague, 27 February 1969, AMZV, 1970-1974, TO-tajné, IV/8, sign. 273, inv. č. 67.

to analyze the proceedings of the Eighth Session of the Presidium of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) in Nicosia, Cyprus, which officially marked China's de facto withdrawal from the organization, the expulsion of the pro-Chinese liberation movements, and a reversal of the previous decision to convene the following the fifth Congress of the AAPSO in Beijing. While all believed the withdrawal of the Chinese was positive for Soviet influence within the AAPSO, Soviet cadres knew that the organization was in crisis. Dmitriy Dolidze, for example, argued that many newly independent African states like Zambia, Tanzania, Guinea, and Mali were no longer interested in AAPSO because the main goal of the organization, national liberation, had become obsolete and that the Soviet Solidarity Committee should help the Permanent Secretariat Cairo adapt to the new agenda, namely to help in working out a "constructive program in the sphere of economic and social development." [441]

His colleagues agreed, but the Cubans remained a problem. Osmany Cienfuegos, who led the Cuban delegation to Nicosia, hoped to "witness the collapse of the organization," as Chairman of the Soviet Solidarity committee Mirso Tursun-Zade saw the situation.[442] Only the representatives of the liberation movements, argued Bahadyr Abdurazakov, the permanent Soviet representative at the AAPSO headquarters in Cairo, proved to be very actively involved.[443] The national liberation movements provided support and legitimacy for the Soviet Union in international forums such as the AAPSO. The Soviet Solidarity Committee was to expand its activities by organizing public events and seminars for foreign students.[444]

One man who personified this activism was the new General Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, Alexander Dzasokhov. He belonged to the generation of young Soviets who had benefited from the dynamism of Khrushchev's foreign policy. He was born on 3 April 1934 in Vladikavkaz, the capital of North Ossetia in the Soviet Caucasus. Dzasokhov's father worked as the head of a railway station, while his

[441] Osmany Cienfuegos was the older brother of the famous Cuban revolutionary Camilo Cienfuegos. He held a number of government posts in the government of Fidel Castro. He was appointed the Secretary General of the OSPAAAL in 1966.
[442] Transcript of the SAASC Presidum Meeting, 15th March 1967, GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 225.
[443] Ibid., p. 33.
[444] Ibid., pp. 52-55.

mother, educated as a financier, was a housewife. Dzasokhov studied geology at the Mining Metallurgical Institute, where he was elected the leader of the Komsomol organization. After graduation in 1957, Dzasokhov became the Secretary of the Komsomol organization for Vladikavkaz and started teaching at his university. That same year, a high-level Komsomol functionary, visiting Vladikavkaz from Moscow, noticed Dzasokhov and offered him a job in the capital. Soon enough, Dzasokhov found himself working for the Committee of Youth Organizations, a department of the Komsomol responsible for contacts with foreign youth organizations. In 1963, Dzasokhov led a group of Soviet agricultural specialists to Cuba. After a brief spell at the Komsomol after his return, he took over from Dmitriy Dolidze as the General Secretary of the Soviet Solidarity committee in 1967.[445] One of Dzasokhov's first tasks was to travel to Eastern Europe and coordinate policy with other Solidarity Committees. Back in Moscow, Dzasokhov reported that all the Solidarity Committees were expanding their contacts with the liberation movements, even though more information was required to coordinate policy.[446]

The Solidarity Committee also aimed to revive the AAPSO by sponsoring conferences on issues of major concern to the Afro-Asian states: Vietnam, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and African liberation. In April 1968, the Solidarity Committee decided that the Director of the Soviet Africa Institute, Vasilii Solodovnikov, and the Director of the Law Institute, Viktor Chikhvadze, would begin preparing materials for a conference of solidarity with the liberation movements of Portuguese Africa, South Rhodesia, and South Africa.[447] In May-June, one delegation went to Congo-Brazzaville and Guinea, while another travelled to Tanzania and Burundi. The Soviets of course wanted the conference to raise the profile of the AAPSO, tarnished after China's withdrawal from the organization; however, as both delegations would discover, there was not much

[445] See: Dzasokhov, *Chelovek i Politika*.
[446] Report of SCSCAA's visit to the socialist countries, 1967, GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 239a.
[447] Report about SCSCAA activities in 1968, [undated], GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 244, p. 3.

interest in the AAPSO.[448] Nevertheless, preparations went ahead after Khartoum was chosen as a venue. Then, on the night of 20-21 August 1968, the Soviet Union, along with Bulgaria, Hungary, the GDR, and Poland, invaded Czechoslovakia to put an end to a program of political liberalization known as the "Prague Spring."

The invasion of Czechoslovakia was a public relations disaster for Moscow. Out of all the African countries, only Mali's Modibo Keita publicly supported the invasion. Many African leaders, such as Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda and Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, publicly condemned the invasion. Others, like the President of Congo-Brazzaville, Alphonse Massamba-Débat, maintained a calculated silence. The Soviet Ambassador to Congo-Brazzaville, Ivan Spitskiy, wrote about a conversation he had with Massamba-Débat shortly after the invasion: "Having listened to my explanation, he declared that a small country like Congo-Brazzaville could not agree that a great power, the Soviet Union, had occupied a small country, Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, Massamba-Débat stated that they would refrain from making a public statement condemning the invasion, in consideration of the friendly relationship between Congo-Brazzaville and the Soviet Union," Spitskiy recalled.[449]

The Khartoum conference was thus quite convenient for helping mend Moscow's tarnished reputation. On 1 October 1968, speaking at the Presidium of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, Vasiliy Solodovnikov argued that the issue of southern Africa was of particular importance in an "ideological, political, economic, and strategic sense."[450] Solodovnikov told his colleagues that he was convinced that a major crisis was to be expected in the region and that one should therefore prepare properly for the conference and increase the number of articles covering issues of racism and colonialism in the Soviet press.[451] Most importantly, argued Solodovnikov, the Khartoum conference would improve Soviet public relations after the invasion of

[448] The Soviet Solidarity Committee, Moscow, "Otchet delegatsii Sovetskogo komiteta solidarnosti stran Azii i Afriki o prebyvanii v Ob''yedinennoi Respublike Tanzania i Respublike Burundi," GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 243a; Report on the SCSCAA's trip to Congo-Brazzavile and Guinea, 28 May -14 June 1968, GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 243a.
[449] Ivan Spitskiy, "Obrazovanie Afrikanskikh Otdelov v MID i Moy Opyt Raboty v Narodnoy Respublike Kongo v 1964-1969." *Afrika v Vospominaniiakh Veteranov Diplomaticheskoi Sluzhby*. Ed. Aleksey Vasilyev (Moscow: Institut Afriki RAN, 2001), p. 35.
[450] Transcript of the SCSCAA Presidum Meeting, 1 October 1968, GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 240, p. 12.
[451] Ibid., p. 13.

Czechoslovakia: "I believe that this will be the second conference (like with the Vietnam conference) that will allow us to reduce residual tensions connected to the measures adopted in Czechoslovakia and reduce implications of the reaction to events in Czechoslovakia."[452]

The Khartoum Conference was held between 18 and 21 January 1969 and was generally considered a success. Although countries like Zambia and Tanzania refused to participate in what was clearly a Soviet-sponsored event, the conference hosted representatives from fifty-six countries and twelve international organizations. The MPLA, FRELIMO, PAIGC, ANC, ZAPU, and SWAPO – were declared the only "authentic" representatives of the liberation struggle. The conference also established a Cairo-based Mobilization Committee to coordinate assistance to the liberation movements. The "Khartoum alliance" strengthened the links that had previously existed among the members, which allowed the six so-called "authentic" liberation movements to lobby as a bloc. Perhaps most importantly, the conference allowed for international publicity. It was a turning point after which those six movements, called "authentic" to separate them from rival organizations, started receiving humanitarian aid from the Nordic countries.[453]

The Khartoum Conference also marked an important watershed for the Soviets, as became evident from a brief presentation by Rostislav Ulyanovskiy, one of Boris Ponomarev's deputies at the CC CPSU, responsible for Afro-Asian affairs. A sixty-five-year-old man in 1969, Ulyanovskiy's life story was representative of his generation, but fairly uncommon for an official of his rank. Born in Vitebsk, now in northeast Belarus, Ulyanovskiy lost both parents at a young age, joined the Red Army in 1920 and moved to Tashkent, currently the capital of independent Uzbekistan but then a Russian city, where he joined the Komsomol. In 1922 he was dispatched to Moscow, then enrolled at the Moscow Institute of the Far East, briefly interning at the Soviet embassy in Afghanistan. In the 1930s, he headed the section for the "Far East and the

[452] Interview with Holden Roberto (17th April 1996) in ibid., p. 14. Also see: Sellström, ed., *Liberation*, p. 33.
[453] Scott Thomas, *The Diplomacy of Liberation: the Foreign Relations of the ANC since 1960* (London: Tauris Academic, 1995), p. 22; Personal file of Rostislav Ulyanovskiy, RGASPI, f. 495, op. 65a, d. 3486, p. 38.

Colonies" at the Comintern's International Agrarian Institute and published research on India. His life took a sharp turn on the night of 1 January 1935, when he was arrested, charged with belonging to a Trotskyist organization, and dispatched to the labor camps. Rehabilitated in 1955, Ulyanovskiy returned to Moscow, where he was invited in 1961 to join the International Department to supervise Afro-Asian affairs.[454]

On 19 February 1969, delegates of the Presidium of the Soviet Solidarity Committee listened to Ulyanovskiy report on the Khartoum conference he had attended along with Alexander Dzasokhov. Ulyanovskiy started his speech by predicting a "historic turning point" in Africa. "One can say that we stand on the eve of a major intensification of our activities and the people's war in Africa and in the Middle East, which was reflected in the decisions and the mood of the conferences." [455] "Only a few years ago, when we faced the splinter group of Mao Zedong," argued Ulyanovskiy, "many representatives of the liberation movement in Africa and Asia" had argued that the "imperialists" had been prevailing against the socialist countries and the liberation movement. However, this thesis had been called into question by the inability of the United States to defeat North Vietnam by military means, Ulyanovskiy argued. The reason lay in the linkage of "people's resistance" in North Vietnam with Soviet weapons, a linkage that "could not be crushed even by the militarily strongest country in the world."[456] Having witnessed this, continued Ulyanovskiy, the leaders of the liberation movements realized that it was "impossible to defeat imperialist racism" without Soviet assistance.[457]

Ulyanovskiy also explained the positive developments in the liberation movement. Of utmost importance to him was the progression from political to armed struggle, and he especially pointed out the success of armed struggle in Guinea-Bissau. "A. Cabral showed us, and we also had other ways to make sure of this," argued Ulyanovskiy, "that two-thirds of Guinea-Bissau has been liberated, with the exception

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[454] Ya. V. Vasilkov and M. Yu. Sorokina, eds., *Lyudi i Sudby. Bibliograficheskiy Slovar Vostokovedov - Zhertv Politicheskogo Terrora v Sovetskiy Periud* (St. Petersburg: Peterburgskoye Vostokovedeniye, 2003).
[455] Transcript of the SCSCAA Presidum Meeting, 19 February 1969, GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 255, p. 81.
[456] Ibid., p. 83.
[457] Ibid., p. 85.

of a few Portuguese garrisons, besieged by insurgents, with their prospects being hardly auspicious, given that the guerrillas are increasingly able to fight the Portuguese colonialists with weapons and guerrilla tactics employed by the Vietnamese patriots." If Cabral had always been quite close to Moscow, both FRELIMO's Eduardo Mondlane and the MPLA's Agostinho Neto had become closer to the Soviet Union. Mondlane told Ulyanovskiy that the Soviet cadres had gained his trust because they had always delivered on their promises and had never been patronizing.[458] According to Ulyanovskiy, Mondlane had evolved in a way similar to other leaders of the liberation movements, like Agostinho Neto, who used to be far removed from scientific socialism. At Khartoum, Neto approached Ulyanovskiy, asking him for advice on the politics of race: "We need you to arm us, anti-racists, with theoretical theses – a political textbook – that could counter the whole racist system not in general methodological terms, but that could specify what a state should look like, how to pacify two communities, how to ensure co-existence of the white and black man."[459] Neto also praised the Soviet experience of partisan warfare, saying that the Soviet Union had great experience of armed struggle during their Revolution, their Civil War, and World War II, but, Neto complained, they did not have 'a single book about your armed struggle." Ulyanovskiy concluded, "We have defeated the Chinese accusation that we are pacifists incapable of armed struggle, but now we should think about how to make the great experience of our peoples accessible for the public."[460] Judging by Ulyanovskiy's account, Soviet relations with the liberation movements were destined for a bright future.

Conclusion

What emerges from the second half of the 1960s is the transformation of the liberation movements – the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC – from groups of individuals united by little more than commitment to independence into collectives

[458] Ibid., p. 87.
[459] Ibid., p. 93.
[460] Ibid., p. 94.

defined by a specific set of beliefs, such as non-racialism, rejection of tradition, and early attempts to build revolutionary "vanguard parties" on the basis of the mass movements. In the later 1960s, the radical African nationalists seemed to be turning away from the nativists' projects, such as "African socialism," in favor of a model that included high levels of planning and state involvement in the economy, which borrowed heavily from Soviet example. The leaderships of the liberation movements were attracted to Soviet socialism for several reasons. One key attraction was the application of socialist universalism in mixed-race contexts, which was particularly suitable for the predominately mestiço leadership of the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies, especially in the cases of the MPLA and the PAIGC. Kwame Nkrumah's fall from power was yet another reason why the leadership of the liberation movements chose a model that rejected indigenous tradition in favor of social revolution, to be led by strong parties. Many of these categories were merely imaginary constructions, and the reality of the guerrilla campaigns meant that the liberation movements had to rely on whichever forces – indigenous or not – provided support. Nevertheless, this transformation of the late 1960s would to a great extent determine the adoption of the Soviet developmental model in independent Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau.

Cadres from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and the GDR followed these transformations with a growing sense of optimism. They observed the liberation movements adopting practices resembling embryonic socialist structures in the liberated areas. In addition, their leaders pledged adherence to a set of beliefs that was close to their own. Moreover, they thought that the leaders of the liberation movements had finally come to recognize the importance of the Soviet Union. In part due to their observation of Vietnam, they saw what was possible with Soviet assistance. Additionally, China no longer posed a formidable threat as far as the liberation movements were concerned. This represented a shift in perspective by those functionaries who were regularly in touch with the liberation movements. The

1969 Khartoum Conference symbolized the pinnacle of this optimism, as Ulyanovskiy's speech reveals. Ulyanovskiy saw Mondlane and Neto evolve in the direction of "scientific socialism" and become eager to learn from the experience of the socialist countries.

Cabral played a very important part in this story. Cabral's analysis of the situation in Africa contributed to the MPLA and FRELIMO adopting the establishment of strong "vanguard parties," led by revolutionary elites, as their desired objective. The Czechoslovak intelligence services ascribed very high importance to Cabral because, out of the three liberation movements, the PAIGC exhibited the greatest military potential. The few sources we have show that the Soviet intelligence also very much valued Cabral for the same reason. The Czechoslovak intelligence also believed that Cabral was exerting a "progressive" influence on African public opinion, regional forums such as the OAU, and even Kwame Nkrumah. While Nkrumah could no longer be saved, the liberation movements provided new hope for the prospects of revolution in Africa.

CHAPTER FOUR

Setbacks: Portuguese Offensives and Détente, 1969-1974

On 27 September 1968, Portugal's president, Américo Tomás, invited a 62-year old Lisbon law professor, Marcello Caetano, to take over as Prime Minister after António de Oliveira Salazar suffered a debilitating stroke. Caetano presented a sharp contrast to Salazar in many ways. Unlike his ascetic predecessor, Caetano was married with four children. While Salazar almost never ventured beyond Portugal's borders, Caetano travelled widely, spoke French, and was interested in cultural developments. Upon assuming the premiership, Caetano fashioned himself as a moderate. He eased press censorship, loosened government control over the trade unions, and allowed some outspoken critics of the regime, such as the head of the Portuguese Socialist Party, Mário Soares, to return from exile. In many other aspects, however, Caetano's regime differed little from that of his predecessor. Having served as a legal adviser to Salazar in 1929, Marcello Caetano had been one of the architects of the Estado Novo. Caetano had held a number of key government posts, serving as the head of the state youth movement, *Mocidade*; Minister of the Colonies; and President of the Corporative Chamber before becoming Minister to the Presidency in 1955, a post that can be compared to that of the deputy prime minister. The relationship between the Prime Minister and his protégé deteriorated in the late 1950s, yet in power, Caetano retained all the major features of the Salazarist dictatorship: political opposition was ruthlessly suppressed, the press was censored, and all the seats in the Portuguese National Assembly remained occupied by the ruling party, the National Union.[461]

Above all, Caetano shared Salazar's resolve to retain the Empire at any cost. In 1970, Caetano authorized a major offensive designed to crush the liberation

[461] Tom Gallagher, *Portugal: A Twentieth-century Interpretation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), pp. 165-173.

movements, despite mounting international pressure, escalating costs, and war weariness. By 1974, many of the army's top generals believed that the colonial wars were unwinnable in the long term, but Caetano was unmoved, refusing to give in until his own fall from power as a result of a military coup d'état on 25 April 1974. Caetano's colonial policy received tacit support from US President Richard Nixon, sworn in on 20 January 1969, and Nixon's omnipotent national security adviser, Henry Kissinger. Convinced that the anti-colonial campaigns would not lead to independence and generally uninterested in Africa, Nixon and Kissinger provided increasing support to Lisbon, but stopped short of reversing the ban on weapons sales to Portugal just before the coup.[462] On 30 May 1970, speaking to US Secretary of State William Rogers, Caetano declared that the decolonization of the Portuguese colonies in Africa could not follow the Brazilian model of 1822 because the transfer of power to the liberation movements would represent a "danger to civilization" and would lead to "implantation of communism," presenting a great risk to South Rhodesia and South Africa. Rogers responded by saying that the danger of "communist penetration" had lessened in comparison to the level during other periods but emphasized that the Nixon administration understood Caetano's point of view and valued the relationship with Lisbon.[463]

Contrary to Washington's assumption, Moscow was very much interested in Africa. Having experienced war first-hand, CC CPSU General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev wanted desperately to avoid another horrific scenario, which motivated Brezhnev to push for détente with the United States. After Nixon's inauguration on 20 January 1969, Washington and Moscow started talks concerning controlling the arms race, and on 26 May 1972, Nixon and Brezhnev signed a historical agreement limiting the build-up of anti-ballistic missiles, known as the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I) at the Moscow Summit. However, Brezhnev never gave up the idea that

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[462] For a detailed account of Nixon and Kissinger's policy towards Portugal, see: Witney Schneidman, *Engaging Africa: Washington and the Fall of Portugal's Colonial Empire* (New York: University Press of America, 2004).
[463] Myra Burton, ed. *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1969-1976 - Southern Africa* Kindle ed. Vol. XXVIII (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2011), Document 90.

socialism would ultimately triumph all around the world. Relaxation of tensions was necessary to resolve conflicts by peaceful means, but this did not mean the end of class struggle. On 16 April 1970, while opening a memorial complex dedicated to Lenin in Ulyanov (Simbirsk), Brezhnev declared that only a little effort was required to achieve total victory for socialism.[464] What is more, the Soviet leadership did not believe that détente would lead to a fundamental change in American behavior in the Third World. Even though Washington was disillusioned with trying to stifle left-leaning regimes by orchestrating coups d'état, they wanted to undercut revolutionary processes by bribing people in the Third World with economic assistance. At the same time, by 1970, the cadres of the International Department had come to believe that the prospects of the liberation movements were quite promising. The Central Committee thus decided to seize the initiative by offering qualitatively more sophisticated kinds of assistance, including new weapons systems with the capability to shoot down low-flying aircraft; however, optimistic Soviet expectations did not pan out. The MPLA was heavily hit by a renewed Portuguese offensive, which exacerbated pre-existing divisions within the movement. By 1974, Agostinho Neto's leadership was heavily criticized by Moscow, with the Soviets demanding that Neto reconcile with the opposition or face termination of Soviet assistance. FRELIMO's relations with the CPSU were also difficult, with President Samora Machel unsatisfied with his treatment at the hands of the Soviets. Only the PAIGC-CPSU relationship was an unqualified success: by 1974, the PAIGC was on the verge of a military victory in Guinea-Bissau. Overall, the early 1970s was a period of disillusionment for the Soviets in the Third World.

Soviet Designs for Africa, 1970

On 6 May 1970, KGB Chairman Yuriy Andropov wrote to the CPSU International Department proposing to increase Soviet involvement in Africa. Justification for this proposal by Andropov and the KGB was two-fold. Andropov wrote

[464] Dmitriy Volkogonov, *Lenin: A New Biography* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), p. 456.

that Western experts did not think that the Soviet Union was planning for a "broad offensive" in Africa. This assumption, according to Andropov, was a good reason for the Soviet Union to step up operations in Africa. Having been appointed the head of the KGB in May 1967, Andropov had become increasingly influential by the early 1970s and had become capable of manipulating the ailing Brezhnev. Of all the Soviet leaders, Andropov was probably the least understood character, perhaps because he did not like to share his inner thoughts, a survival technique acquired during the Stalinist purges. Known to be intelligent, well-read, and eager to surround himself with people of unorthodox persuasions, Andropov was also an orthodox Marxist who saw the world in terms of class struggle. The Third World was of particular interest to Andropov because he saw that there was where the struggle between capitalism and socialism would play out. On 26 November 1970, KGB Deputy Chairman Viktor Chebrikov wrote to the International Department, explaining that Angola and Guinea-Bissau in particular had strategic importance for the Soviet Union and that both the United States and China wanted to increase their influence with the liberation movements.[465]

The Chief Intelligence Directorate (GRU; *Glavnoe Razvedyvatelnoe Upravlenie*) was also concerned about the US and China in Africa. In a series of reports from 1970, the GRU argued that the capitalist states were putting pressure on African states to enter into base agreements and assistance plans, while China was also targeting countries that had already been receiving aid from the Soviet Union.[466] The GRU's evaluation most probably reflected the views of Petr Ivashutin, the chief of Soviet Military Intelligence since 1963. Trained as a military pilot, Ivashutin had served in military counter-intelligence beginning in 1939, before being promoted to the post of KGB Deputy Chairman in 1954. Very little is known about his personal views on foreign policy, but there is some evidence to suggest that he was interested in the Third World, not least because of the opportunities that part of the world presented

[465] Westad, *Global Cold War*, pp. 214-215. For a detailed discussion of Andropov's personality, see: Leonid Mlechin, *Andropov* (Moscow: Prospekt, 2006). Kirpichenko, *Razvedka*.
[466] Westad, *Global Cold War*, pp. 214-215.

for military reconnaissance. One of Ivashutin's first proposals as GRU chief was to negotiate an arrangement with the Cubans to install a radio-electronic monitoring system to gather information on the US's nuclear capabilities.[467] The GRU was the key agency that approved what military assistance the liberation movements would obtain from the Soviet Union. Not much is known about Ivashutin's personal opinions on any of the liberation movements, but on at least one occasion, he advocated on their behalf in front of his direct boss, Andrey Grechko, the Soviet Minister of Defense from 1967 to 1976, as will be explained in this chapter.

The KGB's and the GRU's evaluation must have been supported by information coming from Soviet diplomatic representatives and intelligence contacts based in Africa. On 27 October 1970, the newly appointed Soviet Ambassador, Anatoliy Ratanov, wrote to the CC CPSU arguing that the western countries had become very interested in Guinea. Having served in a number of high-ranking posts, including secretary of the World Federation of Democratic Youth and ambassador to Cambodia, Ratanov was already an experienced diplomat and a man who would prove decisive in crisis situations. "The USA and the FRG [Federal Republic of Germany] have recently increased their infiltration of Guinea, offering considerable economic aid," argued Ratanov, adding that Guinea also played an important role in China's policy in Africa. Ratanov warned that the socialist countries were to expect a "long and difficult struggle" to safeguard their positions in Guinea, which was important to the maintenance of Soviet positions in Africa overall: "Defeat of the progressive regime in Guinea, especially after the reactionary coup in Ghana, would have delivered a blow to the liberation struggle in West Africa and would have, in many ways, complicated the overall situation for the socialist countries in Africa."[468] Given the importance of

[467] Interview with Petr Ivashutin in Nikolai Poroskov, "On Postroil Akvarium," *Sovetskaya Belorussiya,* 27 June, 2002. Also see: Andrey Danilov, "General Ivashutin: Razvedchik №1," *Belorusskaya Voennaya Gazeta,* 5 September, 2013.
[468] Ratanov (Soviet ambassador, Conakry) to Moscow, 27 October 1970, "O koordinatsii vneshnepoliticheskoi deyatel'nosti SSSR i drugikh sozialisticheskikh stran v otnoshenii Gvinei," RGANI, f. 5, op. 62, d. 56, p. 223.

Guinea, Ratanov proposed involving other socialist countries in developing economic and political relations with the country to counter interest from the capitalist states.[469]

Meanwhile, the liberation movements were gaining popular support from the social democratic governments in the Nordic countries. The PAIGC became the largest recipient of humanitarian aid from the Nordic countries after Amílcar Cabral went to Sweden in 1968 and met the leader of the Swedish Social Democratic Party, Olof Palme. The governments of Sweden and other Nordic countries, including Denmark, Finland, and Norway, also supplied humanitarian assistance to FRELIMO and, to a lesser extent, to the MPLA. Lúcio Lara recalled that the MPLA were even "a little jealous" of the fact that the PAIGC received a larger share of aid from the Nordic governments in proportional terms. "The reason was the presence of Amílcar Cabral. He was very dynamic and always on top of events," Lara argued.[470] For the liberation movements, relations with the Nordic countries were important for two reasons. First, the humanitarian aid – everything from cans of food to trucks – allowed for the provision of basic goods and services to the civilian population, which was crucial in order to counter what the Portuguese were offering to the civilian population. "Weapons alone do not change life, but the clothes, for example, helped us to give something to the peasants in the liberated areas," recalled Sérgio Vieira in a 1996 interview. [471] Second, assistance from the Nordic states decreased the fronts' dependency on aid from the socialist countries, allowing for a more independent stance. Joaquim Chissano, FRELIMO's Secretary for Security in the early 1970s, recalls that independence from any bloc and any outside influence was their basic policy and that support from Sweden and the Nordic countries helped them achieve that goal.[472]

In Europe, public opinion was also turning against Portuguese colonialism. Much criticism was focused on the Cabora Bassa project. The project, envisioned by the Portuguese government, involved the construction of a hydroelectric dam on the

[469] Ibid., pp. 227-228.
[470] Interview with Lúcio Lara in Sellström, ed., *Liberation*, p. 19.
[471] Interview with Sérgio Vieira in ibid., p. 54; Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 137.
[472] Interview with Joaquim Chissano in Sellström, ed., *Liberation*, p. 39.

Zambezi River in the Tete province of Northern Mozambique; this dam was supposed to produce power for industry in South Rhodesia and South Africa. Lisbon also hoped that the electricity generated would promote local agriculture and attract up to a million white settlers to northern Mozambique. FRELIMO vigorously opposed the project on the grounds that it was a colonialist project that perpetuated minority rule in South Rhodesia and apartheid South Africa. Just before the final signoff in September 1969, a Swedish firm, ASEA, withdrew from the Cabora Bassa project due to popular opposition.[473] Popular concern for the liberation movements in the Nordic countries was developed through other initiatives. In 1969, the Swedish Union of Secondary School Students decided to funnel the proceeds raised through their annual charity event, "Operation Day's Work", to health and education projects carried out by FRELIMO's Mozambique Institute, raising public awareness of the anti-colonial wars in the Portuguese colonies.[474]

One clear manifestation of the change in public opinion was the 1970 International Conference of Solidarity with the Peoples of the Portuguese Colonies, held in Rome. That conference was attended by a broad spectrum of sympathizers, including Christian Democrats, Socialists, and Communists, reflecting a broad shift in public opinion. Most significantly, Marcelino dos Santos, Agostinho Neto, and Amílcar Cabral held a brief audience with Pope Paul IV at the Vatican.[475] The papal reception indicated the Vatican's disapproval of Marcello Caetano's colonial policy, which was a public relations debacle for the conservative Catholic regime in Portugal and a victory for the liberation movements, including over their internal rivals, who were not present at the conference in Rome. Speaking to US Secretary of State William Rogers in August 1970, Congolese president Joseph Mobutu complained that the papal reception

[473] Cahora Bassa: Power and Politics. For details of the debate in Sweden, see: Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa: Formation of a Popular Opinion, 1950-1970*, pp. 483-485.
[474] Tor Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa: Solidarity and Assistance*. Vol. II (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2002), p. 81.
[475] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 149. Aristides Pereira recalls that the initiative belonged to Marcella Glisenti, a Christian Democrat activist and the Secretary of the Italian branch of the „Europe-Latin America" solidarity group. It was her who apparently negotiated with Vatican on behalf of the liberation movements.

gave a "psychological advantage" to the MPLA over the FNLA.[476] Yet another surprise came after the conference when the head of the Soviet delegation and the director of the Institute of African studies, Vasiliy Solodovnikov, acknowledged that the Soviet Union was supplying arms to the liberation movements in an interview for *Pravda*.[477]

It is not exactly known how Moscow viewed support from the Nordic countries. Generally speaking, the Soviet cadres recommended that the liberation movements should seek sources of support in the West.[478] The Soviet Solidarity Committee also maintained relations with a variety of individuals involved with European solidarity groups and organizations, such as *Lars-Gunnar Eriksson,* director of the International University Exchange Fund. Vladimir Shubin, who was involved in developing contacts with European solidarity groups at the Soviet Solidarity Committee in the early 1970s, argued that there was no negative attitude in Moscow toward involvement of the Nordic countries, but this does not mean that the Soviet attitude towards the Social Democratic parties was positive.[479] When a delegation of the Polish Solidarity Committee, led by Kwyrin Grela, visited Moscow in November 1971, their counterparts at the Soviet Solidarity Committee informed them that they had witnessed a significant increase in assistance from Social Democrats to the movements, urging the Poles to neither interfere with those contacts nor allow the socially democratic parties to seize all the initiative. Whatever reservations the Soviet cadres had regarding support from the Nordic countries, they definitely did not voice them.[480] Joaquim Chissano remembered that the Soviets did not have a single question about Sweden involvement with FRELIMO.[481]

China re-emerged as a threat to Soviet relations with the liberation movements around 1970, the year the country emerged from the self-imposed diplomatic isolation of the Cultural Revolution. Not only did the CCP re-kindle diplomatic relations with the

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[476] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 91.
[477] Solodovnikov, *Tvorcheskiy Put*, p. 91.
[478] Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," p. 241. Interview with Vladimir Shubin in Sellström, ed., *Liberation*, p. 247.
[479] Sellström, ed., *Liberation*, p. 247.
[480] Polish Solidarity Committee, Warsaw, "Notatka z wyjazdu delegacji PKSzNAA do ZSRR," AAN, PKSNAAAL57, p. 20.
[481] Interview with Joaquim Chissano in Sellström, ed., *Liberation*, p. 39.

majority of African countries, but it also pursued an increasingly activist diplomacy to win over allies at Moscow's expense. Many of these African states voted for China's admission to the United Nations in October 1971. In the second half of 1971, both the MPLA's President Agostinho Neto and FRELIMO's Samora Machel stayed in Beijing for quite a long period of time, during which they were showered with attention by the CCP's top leadership, including Premier Zhou Enlai.[482] On 10 August 1971, the presidium of the Soviet Solidarity Committee held a special meeting dedicated to China's resurgence. The General Secretary of the Solidarity Committee, Alexandr Dzasokhov, warned his colleagues that China might return to undermine the Soviet influence in the AAPSO and urged them to find other ways of countering Beijing's influence.[483] Others agreed, arguing that the Soviets needed to activate their contacts in the AAPSO to convince their friends of the true intentions of the Chinese, and that they needed to avoid blunt anti-Chinese propaganda.[484]

Nevertheless, this did not make the socialist countries back off from supporting the liberation movements. In November 1971, after a trip to Moscow, the Chairman of the Polish Solidarity Committee, Kwyrin Grela, proposed increasing Polish support for the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC by allocating one million zloty for shipments of medicine, equipment for a military hospital, and "three to five hundred automatic pistols" for each of the three movements.[485] While Warsaw had already supplied some goods, including medicine, food, clothes, and household utensils, to the three movements from 1969 to 1971, the Polish commitment was insignificant in comparison to those of the Soviet Union, GDR, and Bulgaria, Grela argued. Moreover, Poland had sold ships to Portugal, which was a lucrative deal for Warsaw, but which predictably provoked a storm of criticism from the liberation movements.[486] Grela

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[482] Steven F Jackson, "China's Third World Foreign Policy: The Case of Angola and Mozambique, 1961-93," *The China Quarterly,* 142 (June 1995): pp. 401-422.
[483] Transcript of the SCSCAA Presidum Meeting, 10 August 1971, GARF, f.9540, op.1, d.287, p. 3.
[484] See arguments made by the former Soviet representatives at the AAPSO headquarters in Cairo Latip Maksudov, a key expert on China Georgiy Kim, and Chairman of he Soviet Solidarity Committee Mirzo Tursun-Zade in ibid., p. 26, 30, 33.
[485] Draft resolution: Support for national liberation movements in Africa,15 November 1971, AAN, PZPR, LXXVI.503.
[486] "Notatka z rozmowy z Antonio NETO przedstawicielem MPLA na Skandynawie i kraje Europy Zachodniej - dn. 11.V.71," AAN, PKSNAAAL/56.

further justified his proposal to increase support for the liberation movements by saying that the provision of military aid would shield Poland from criticism for selling its ships to Portugal. More generally, argued Grela, decolonization in Portuguese Africa had entered the final stage, and it was thus necessary to "intensify our involvement."[487] Richard Frelek, a member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP), supported Grela's proposal.[488] Poland was finally catching up to the commitment other socialist countries had shown the liberation movements.

The MPLA on the Defensive, 1970-1971

In July 1970, the Soviet ambassador to Zambia, Dmitriy Belokolos, proposed a set of measures to provide military aid, logistical support, and political training to the MPLA. The Soviets were also prepared to send advisers and offer political support to Zambia, the Congo, and Congo-Brazzaville. Neto received the news of the Soviet aid very positively; he reiterated that the Soviet Union was the MPLA's main international ally and stressed that he saw no reason to work closely with China.[489] The first signs that Moscow was serious appeared in July, when a team of Soviet journalists, including Oleg Ignatyev, Pavel Mikhalev, and Anatoliy Nikanorov, together with two cameramen, Vladimir Komarov and Yuriy Yegorov, crossed the Zambia/Angola border for a month-long trip to the so-called liberated areas of southeast Angola. Their main goal was to shoot a film and write a series of articles about the MPLA's armed struggle. The crew spent their time observing life in the liberated areas, talking to the MPLA cadres, and even participating in an attack on a Portuguese fort on 26 July, the very same day that António Oliveira Salazar died, two years after his debilitating stroke.[490]

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[487] Kwytin Grela to Ludwikowski (CC PUWP International Department), 15 November 1971, "Notatka w sprawie pomocy ruchom narodowo-wyzwolenczym Afriki," AAN, PZPR, LXXVI/503.
[488] Rychard Frelek to Stanislaw Kania (CC PUWP Secretary), 9 November 1971, AAN, PZPR, LXXVI/503.
[489] Odd Arne Westad, "Moscow and the Angolan Crisis, 1974-1976: A New Pattern of Intervention," The Cold War in Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa. Bulletin No. 8/9 -- Winter 1996, p. 22.
[490] Oleg Ignatyev (Pravda) to the Foreign Ministry, 18 June 1970, AVPRF, f.658, op. 40, p. 1, d.1; Oleg Ignatyev, "A Victoria e Serta: Reportazh iz Partizanskogo Otryada Angoly," *Pravda,* 23 August, 1970, p. 4; Tvoi Syn, Angola.

US intelligence quickly picked up signs that Moscow might be expanding aid to the liberation movements. On 11 August, Wayne Smith at the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research drafted a note stating they had unconfirmed information that a "team of four to six Soviets" had entered Angola from Zambia and that the MPLA had received an "extraordinarily large" arms shipment from the Soviet Union. The release of this information also meant that the MPLA's military campaign was preparing to enter a more active phase.[491] It is not known exactly what kind of aid the Soviets envisioned for the MPLA nor what they actually delivered, but the Soviet willingness to expand assistance indicates there was optimism about the prospects of the movement in the southeast.

This expectation did not materialize, because in 1970, the MPLA faced a renewed army offensive directed by the newly appointed commander-in-chief, General Francisco da Costa Gomes. Known to be a talented commander, Gomes began to use a combination of the "guadrillage" garrisoning system, which had been used by the French in Algeria to divide the country into sectors, each permanently controlled by troops to isolate the insurgents, and mobile reaction groups for dry-season sweeps in the southeast. Costa Gomes also increasingly used helicopters, most notably the French model "Alouette III," for reconnaissance, liaison, and support work. The Portuguese also strengthened their vehicles against mine attacks and greatly improved their land communications by building a network of roads that connected major towns in the east.[492] Most notably, the army started using industrial chemicals to destroy crops in order to deprive the insurgents of any means of sustenance. Daniel Chipenda, a former head of the MPLA's youth wing who became responsible for expanding the military operations in the southeast thus recounts the consequences of the offensive: "This was really hell: during this time, they unleashed herbicides, burning all the leaves, all of the

[491] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 92.
[492] Anthony Clayton, *Frontiersmen: Warfare In Africa Since 1950* (London: UCL Press, 1999), p. 46.

cassava, and then the fields became empty, which made life very difficult both for the guerrillas and for the population who supported us."[493]

The Portuguese offensive put a major strain on the internal cohesion of the MPLA. The first signs of internal discontent appeared shortly following the 1968 army offensive, during which the head of the MPLA medical program, Dr. Americo Boavida, and a charismatic commander, Hoji Ya Henda, had been both killed. The head of the MPLA's youth wing, Daniel Chipenda, recalls that the hardship brought by the offensive forced many guerrillas to reflect upon the war, and that they then started criticizing the leadership for discriminatory practices. In 1969, a group of rank-and-file Ovimbundu guerrillas deserted Angolan camps and went to the Zambian bases, protesting against arbitrary executions of civilians and other abuses committed by the MPLA field commanders. Chipenda remembered that the mutineers demanded to speak to Neto, but he was away and, thus, it was he who was required to negotiate with them. "I talked to them, they told me what they wanted, I transmitted this to the Directorate, but they were already individuals who said that Chipenda wanted to be President and I don't know what else, and thereafter started perpetrating that belief."[494]

This incident testified to the MPLA's inability to obtain grassroots support in Ovimbundu-dominated southeast Angola. Of the top-level commanders, only Daniel Chipenda was of Ovimbundu origin. Others were of Mbundu or mixed-race origin, and they came from Luanda and northwest Angola. By the time military operations in Cabinda and the northwest stalled around 1967, the MPLA had flown the majority of their experienced commanders from Brazzaville to Lusaka to lead the campaign in the southeast. Although they had the necessary education, military training, and experience, they shared very little with the people whom they were supposed to lead into battle. They could not speak the local languages and knew very little about local customs and traditions. They used translators to communicate with their soldiers.

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[493] Interview with Daniel Chipenda in Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*, p. 145.
[494] Interview with Daniel Chipenda in ibid., p. 146. Also see: Weigert, *Angola*, p. 41.

Quite naturally, the MPLA were often seen as intruders rather than liberators. In a 1998 interview, Lúcio Lara admitted that the MPLA commanders abused their privileged status at the expense of the rank-and-file combatants: "In Cabinda, the commanders, including myself, always used to carry our own loads, while in the East, the commanders walked freely, while the guerrillas would carry their loads." The same discriminatory practices often applied to food allocation, recounted Lúcio Lara, thus laying the groundwork for the "Eastern Revolt."[495]

In 1970, a renewed army offensive put a major strain on the MPLA. Persistent bombing raids caused widespread deprivation and starvation in the MPLA-controlled zones, while transportation problems hindered the re-supply of the hinterland. The war was hugely disruptive to the population of the southeast, where the people were forced to abandon their villages and move to the bush or to the Portuguese-run protected villages. Ingre Brinkman, one of the few historians to have conducted extensive research into the popular response to the military campaign in the southeast, shows that the number of people accused of betrayal and executed as traitors increased dramatically after 1970, as people fled to Portuguese-held areas while the offensive intensified.[496] Criticism of the MPLA's leadership resurfaced. When Agostinho Neto visited East Berlin for talks with the leadership of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED; *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands)* in November 1971, he acknowledged that the MPLA was experiencing serious problems, but was undergoing a military reorganization in order to create larger and better-armed units. He also said that the MPLA was planning to hold a party congress the following year.[497]

Moscow observed those developments with some concern, worried especially by Neto's rapprochement with China. "The Soviet comrades believe the MPLA has returned to the Chinese sphere of influence," reported the Polish Solidarity Committee in their conversations with their Soviet counterparts in November 1971. The Soviets

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[495] Interview with Lúcio Lara in Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*, p. 41.
[496] Brinkman, "War, Witches and Traitors: Cases from the MPLA's Eastern Front in Angola (1966-1975)," p. 311.
[497] Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, Berlin, 19 November 1971, "Information uber den bisherigen Aufenthalt des Präsidenten der Volksbefreiungsorganisation von Angola, Dr. Agostinho Neto, BA-SAPMO, DZ8/162.

told the Polish Committee that Neto had spent three weeks in China, during which time he had received assurances of substantial support. Moscow was also concerned with internal developments in the MPLA. The Soviet cadres urged their Polish colleagues to pay attention to what transpired during the MPLA Congress, supposedly planned for the following February or March, warning that the Congress could reveal internal disagreements or even lead to a split within the movement.[498] If the Soviets were full of optimism about the MPLA's prospects in 1970, this was no longer the case one year later. The MPLA failed to proceed to a more active phase of war and also showed signs of internal discontent, which was known to the Soviets. Neto's 1971 visit to Beijing was also disturbing because it was yet another sign that the Chinese leadership had intensified their campaign to win over allies at Moscow's expense; however, there is no evidence to suggest that the extent or nature of Soviet assistance changed dramatically during this period. Moscow again adopted a wait-and-see approach, waiting for events to play out.

The MPLA in Crisis, 1972-74

The Portuguese offensive against the MPLA in the southeast acquired a new intensity in 1972. The culmination of the offensive was known as "Operation Attila." By raining napalm and defoliants onto the nationalist villages, the armed forces inflicted serious damage on the MPLA forces in the southeast. By late 1972, colonial authorities estimated that the offensive had reduced insurgent strength by more than half of the total recorded in 1970.[499] Costa Gomes also made a clandestine deal with Jonas Savimbi to join forces against the MPLA. Having split with Holden Roberto and the FNLA in 1963, Savimbi had established a third liberation movement, called UNITA, in 1966. Rooted in the Ovimbundu community of southeast Angola, Savimbi had acquired a devoted if small following, but the much better equipped and trained MPLA represented a direct challenge to UNITA in the southeast. In early 1972, Costa Gomes

[498] Polish Solidarity Committee, Warsaw, "Notatka z wyjazdu delegacji PKSzNAA do ZSRR," AAN, PKSNAAAL57, p. 20.
[499] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, p. 201; Weigert, *Angola*, p. 41.

and Savimbi agreed that they would not fight each other, but would cooperate in other zones to eliminate the MPLA, with UNITA providing intelligence support. One Portuguese officer remarked that UNITA "gave the Portuguese forces the decisive weapon in that kind of war: information about the guerrilla base camps [of the MPLA]."[500]

Meanwhile, the MPLA began a process known as "readjustment," which called on party cadres to examine their actions in the light of military failures. Daniel Chipenda recalled that the idea for the movement came from a group of high-ranking party cadres, such as Julião Mateus Paulo (nome de guerre Dino Matross), Manuel Alexandre Rodrigues (nome de guerre "Kito"), Zacarias Pinto (nome de guerre "Bolingo"), João Luís Neto (nome de guerre "Xietu"), and Manuel da Costa António Kiaku (nome de guerre "Mundo Real), amongst others, who had returned from China where they had been influenced by the "criticism" and "self-criticism" movement of the Cultural Revolution. Chipenda opposed this idea, stating that the people were not sufficiently politicized for this kind of theoretical discussion. He claimed that "readjustment" would only lead to racist accusations, in that there would be charges that the war was not going well because the whites in the leadership positions had betrayed the liberation struggle. Chipenda argued that what was required was not simply a theoretical discussion, but a real structural adjustment of the movement to adapt to the growth of the MPLA's membership and sphere of operation in the previous years.[501] Criticism of the leadership intensified. On a visit to Congo-Brazzaville in August 1972, the Soviet Solidarity Committee noticed that some prominent members, such as Mário de Andrade, wanted to keep their distance from the leadership, indicating an increase in disagreements within the MPLA.[502]

Furthermore, the Soviets became increasingly concerned with Neto's announcement of 9 June 1972, in which he proposed reconciling with Holden

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[500] Quoted in Piero Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991* The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), p. 65. For a detailed discussion of „Operation Timber," see William Minter, ed. *Operation Timber: Pages from the Savimbi Dossier* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1988).
[501] Interview with Daniel Chipenda in Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*, pp. 146-147.
[502] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 20.

Roberto's FNLA. Given that the eastern front was under a severe strain, Neto renewed his attempts to gain access to the Congo, which was vital for access to Angola's north. The Congolese president, Joseph Desire Mobutu, would only agree for the MPLA to use their territory if they forged an agreement with the FNLA. On 24 October 1972, speaking to Kurt Kruger of the GDR's Solidarity Committee at a conference in Tashkent, Alexander Dzasokhov revealed that Neto had recently forged an alliance with Holden Roberto in order to strengthen his position within the movement. Dzasokhov added that not everyone in the MPLA agreed with the decision, which was probably the reason why Neto kept postponing the long-overdue convocation of the party congress.[503] On 12 December 1972, the MPLA and the FNLA signed a unity agreement, which established the Supreme Council for the Liberation of Angola, in order to coordinate a Unified Military Command and Political Council of Angola, with Neto agreeing to a secondary role in the Supreme Council. Moscow was highly skeptical. As Petr Yevsyukov wrote, the form of the agreement "completely disorientated the MPLA members and supporters, as well as us."[504] Visiting Moscow in January 1973 with Lúcio Lara, Neto tried to convince his Soviet interlocutors that the MPLA would benefit from the unity agreement.[505]

Finally, in early 1973, several years of built-up tensions burst into the open when the MPLA leadership arrested a group of men, all of them of Ovimbundu ethnic origin, on charges of plotting to assassinate Neto. Very few details regarding the circumstances of these events are known, but it would appear that all of these people were interrogated and confessed that Daniel Chipenda masterminded the assassination attempt. Subsequently, four men were executed for treason on Neto's orders. Chipenda always denied involvement in the coup attempt, arguing that the Neto and his supporters extracted these confessions under torture. Chipenda claimed that he was in Lusaka when Iko Carreira arrived with orders for Chipenda to depart for the front. Naturally on the alert, Chipenda refused to leave and stayed on in Lusaka

[503] Kurt Kruger to Berlin, 3 November 1972, BA-SAPMO, DZ8/54.
[504] Quoted in Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 19.
[505] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

under the protection of Zambia's president Kenneth Kaunda.[506] Chipenda attracted a group of followers among the MPLA's Ovimbundu supporters, maintaining an uneasy standoff with Neto. Several reports from Zambia spoke of rebellions in the MPLA's camps, with some turning violent.[507]

Moscow grew increasingly impatient with the MPLA's internal situation and with Neto's leadership style, as evident from a top-secret note for the CC CPSU, signed by Viktor Kulikov, the Chief of the Soviet General Staff, on 23 December 1973. Kulikov criticized Neto for disregarding ethnic considerations in the formation of the MPLA's leadership structures, the imposition of a dictatorial leadership style, and the underestimation of political work, all of which had led to the split within the party. Kulikov also blamed Neto for the heavy-handed management of the crisis. Kulikov argued that he did not try to understand the reasons for its eruption, but tried to use brutal force to quell the growing frustration, claiming to have discovered a coup attempt against him and using this as a pretext to executive five of his most active rivals. Neto accused Chipenda of complicity in the coup, and only the interference of the Zambian authorities saved Chipenda from physical annihilation, according to the report.[508] In August 1973, the majority of guerrillas in Zambian base camps rebelled, urging the convocation of the Regional Conference to elect new leadership, but Neto refused to accede to their demands and cut supplies in retaliation. Kulikov also criticized Neto's unity agreement between the MPLA and Holden Roberto's FNLA, made in hopes of gaining access to the Congo and undermining the FNLA from within. However, the opposite outcome was the result. While the FNLA's prestige rose, the MPLA did not gain any access to the Congo, and remained torn by internal contradictions. Eventually, Kulikov concluded that all these mistakes had resulted in the semi-cessation of all military operations, and proposed that Soviet ambassadors in Zambia and Congo-Brazzaville should impress upon Neto and Chipenda that Soviet aid

[506] Interview with Daniel Chipenda in Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*, p. 147.
[507] Wilkowski (US ambassador, Lusaka) to Washington, 9 November 1973, "MPLA hit by factional strife," Wikileaks.
[508] Kulikov to CC CPSU, 21 December 1973, "O polozhenii v natsionalno-osvoboditelnom dvizhenii v Angole," RGANI, f. 89, op. 46, d. 104, p. 34.

was contingent upon them overcoming the internal crisis and renewing the armed struggle.[509]

The CC CPSU International Department seemed to agree with Kulikov's evaluation of Neto. This was not particularly surprising. Neto's relations with some members of the International Department including with Petr Yevsyukov, were complicated, while Daniel Chipenda was a charismatic and young leader, who was well known in Moscow and whose criticism of Neto seemed justified.[510] On 7 January 1974, Rostislav Ulyanovskiy authored a follow-up note repeating Kulikov's criticism of Neto's crisis management skills, advising that the CC CPSU Central Committee instruct the Soviet ambassador, Dmitry Belokolos, to convey the views of the Soviet leadership in conversations with Neto and Chipenda in Lusaka. Three days later, the CC CPSU approved the decision. Petr Manchkha, the head of the African section at the CC CPSU International Department, thus cabled Ambassador Belokolos, instructing him to tell Neto that MPLA's internal contradictions made it difficult for the Soviet Union to continue its support.[511] Oleg Nazhestkin wrote that the KGB *rezidentura* in Lusaka was also ordered no longer to give assistance to Neto, and to hand the remainder of the "financial means" to Chipenda. Nazhestkin recalled that the decision was a shock to Neto, who expressed his utmost dissatisfaction to the Soviet rezident in Conakry, arguing that even a temporary termination of Soviet aid would put the movement in a very difficult situation, which the MPLA would not be able to overcome in a short period of time.[512] While the decision may seem like a drastic measure, it was probably meant as a means to put pressure on Neto to deliver on his promise and solve the internal disagreements, wrecking the movement. One way or the other, Moscow's relations with Neto were at its lowest point since 1963.

Courting Samora Machel

[509] Ibid., pp. 32-35.
[510] For further discussion, see: Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 26.
[511] Ulyanovskiy to CC CPSU, 7 January 1974, "O polozhenii v rukovodstve Narodnogo dvizheniya za osvobozhdenie Angoly," RGANI, f. 89, op. 46, d. 104, p. 32. Manchkha (CC CPSU International Department) to Lusaka, RGANI, f. 89, op. 46, d. 104, p. 29.
[512] Nazhestkin, "Superderzhavy," p. 33.

FRELIMO's leadership had become dissatisfied with the Soviets by 1970. Firstly, they were unhappy with the quantity and quality of Soviet aid. Two years earlier, Mondlane had complained that the Soviet Union was not responsive to his appeals for financial assistance, and had stressed that they required regular deliveries of modern weapons.[513] The movement had managed to overcome an internal crisis and had acquired greater recognition following Mondlane's death; nonetheless, the nature of Soviet assistance had not changed. In March 1970, a journalist from the GDR, Peter Spacek, toured the Cabo Delgado province for three weeks, accompanied by Joaquim Chissano. He also interviewed Samora Machel, the newly elected president of FRELIMO, who was still relatively unknown to the wider world. On his return to Dar es Salaam, Spacek wrote to Berlin, explaining that while FRELIMO's leaders praised the GDR's contribution to the struggle, they were critical of Soviet assistance. Chissano also told Spacek that the resistance fighters had constant shortages of ammunition for Soviet weapons. They felt that Moscow paid a lot of attention to Vietnam, but did not take the liberation in Mozambique as seriously (as reported by Spacek).[514] FRELIMO was also frustrated by the fact that its access to the Soviet leadership was restricted because, whenever a delegation went to Moscow, it could only negotiate with the representatives of the Solidarity Committee. One of FRELIMO's leading cadres, Sérgio Vieira, wrote: "We felt, to our displeasure, that there were parties and movements of the *first rate* who had direct relations with the central committees in power and others, of the *second rate,* who were dealt with by the *Solidarity Committees."*[515]

What made this a particularly contentious issue was the personality of Samora Machel. Unlike his highly educated and well-travelled predecessor, Eduardo Mondlane, Machel rose within the party ranks because he had been a talented guerrilla commander and a man of the people, although he lacked formal education and did not

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[513] See, for example: The Soviet Solidarity Committee, Moscow, "Otchet delegatsii Sovetskogo komiteta solidarnosti stran Azii i Afriki o prebyvanii v Ob''yedinennoi Respublike Tanzania i Respublike Burundi," GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 243a, p. 16.

[514] Peter Spacek (Dae es Salaam) to Berlin, 1 April 1970, BA-SAPMO, DZ8/163, p. 6. Also see: Matthias Voß, ed. *Wir haben Spuren hinterlassen! Die DDR in Mosambik. Erlebnisse, Erfahrungen und Erkenntnisse aus drei Jahrzehnten* (Münster: LIT, 2005), p. 57.

[515] Vieira, *Participei*, p. 597. Also see: Bílek (Czechosllovak embassy in Dar es Salaam) to Prague, Conversation with Marcelino dos Santos, 8 June 1969, ABS, 11690/312, p. 75.

have any experience as a diplomat. He was well aware of his personal shortcomings and, perhaps partly because of this, he developed an acute sense of pride that many took to be an inferiority complex. Machel subscribed to the party's explicitly non-racist ideology, but he did not have the same kind of personal connections with white Europeans because he had never lived in Europe, unlike many of his colleagues who had studied, lived, and married in Portugal. For all of these reasons, Samora Machel felt close to the Chinese revolutionary leaders, because he could relate to their ideology of peasant-based guerrilla warfare. If Mondlane had always felt uneasy with Chinese radicalism, Machel would come to be inspired by Maoist thought. Yevsyukov wrote that Machel was a decisive leader who could easily relate to the common people, but who was also an admirer of Josef Stalin and who was greatly inspired by the Cultural Revolution, or "leftist extremism," as Yevsyukov called it.[516]

Meanwhile, the Portuguese army unleashed a massive offensive against FRELIMO, which was known as *Operação Nó Górdio* (Operation Gordian Knot), initiated by the newly appointed Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Mozambique, General *Kaúlza d*e Arriaga. Arriaga belonged to the extreme right wing of the Portuguese military elite, having been one of the military men who supported Salazar during the 1961 coup attempt by the Minister of Defense, Botelho Moniz. By the time of Salazar's death, Arriaga had become a three-star general and was one of Portugal's most influential politicians. Upon his arrival in Mozambique, he vowed to crush the insurgency by the end of the year. His offensive plan was to strike FRELIMO's stronghold in Cabo Delgado and to cut supply links with Tanzania. Arriaga used extensive air cover to support thirty-five thousand Portuguese troops on major "search and destroy" operations. Arriaga also *intensified the* so-called psychological campaign to win over the local population. Special operatives would be dispatched into areas under Portuguese control to offer vaccinations, and the army would drop leaflets picturing the rugged guerrillas and broadcast messages in the local Shimakonde

[516] Petr Yevsyukov, "Iz Vospominaniy o Rabote v Mozambike." *Afrika v Vospominaniyakh Veteranov Diplomaticheskoy Sluzhby*. Ed. Aleksey Vasilyev. Iz Vospominaniy (Moscow: Institut Afriki RAN, 2000), p. 231.

dialect, instructing the people to leave the bush and to end the war, which was causing great suffering for the Makonde.[517]

The "Gordian Knot" was largely ineffective, as became apparent by the end of 1970. By September, the army had pushed the guerillas out of their stronghold in Cabo Delgado, but the damage to FRELIMO was generally limited to the loss of military bases, stores, and equipment, because the guerrillas did not directly engage the armed forces but fled to the bush. FRELIMO also started to develop a series of bases along the Zambian border and moved their forces from Cabo Delgado to Tete via Malawi, which was made possible through the tacit consent of the Malawian president, Hastings Banda. Arriaga thus shifted his operations to the Tete province before he was forced to suspend operations because of the rainy season. Although Arriaga claimed the offensive was a success, which he symbolically celebrated by staying at one of the captured bases with his wife for Christmas, Marcelo Caetano was not as enthusiastic about the spiraling costs and the mounting casualty figures, and cancelled all further offensives. Nevertheless, the offensive was hugely disruptive for the civilian population, who saw their crops and livestock destroyed by the army raining defoliants and napalm in order to cut supplies to the insurgents.[518]

March 1971 saw Machel leave Dar es Salaam for a major tour of the socialist countries. His first stop was Moscow. It was his first trip to the Soviet Union, and the occasion was the CPSU Twenty-Fourth Congress, which was held between 30 March and 9 April. Machel's primary goals were to receive new support to overcome the consequences of the "Gordian Knot" and to receive new arms. When meeting Solidarity Committee General Secretary Alexander Dzasokhov and Deputy Chairman Vladimir Kudryavtsev on 29 March, Samora Machel briefed them about the situation in Mozambique, explaining the devastating consequences of the Portuguese offensive and outlining the urgent need for arms, clothes, food and medicine. Machel also asked the Solidarity Committee to ensure that Mozambican students could return home from the

[517] Harry G. West, *Kupilikula: Governance and the Invisible Realm in Mozambique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 145-146.
[518] Malyn D. Newitt, *A History of Mozambique* (London: Hurst, 1995), pp. 531-532.

summer holidays to participate in the military operations, and asked that they send regular reports about the students' performance.[519] Samora Machel apparently also met with the Chief of the Soviet General Staff, Viktor Kulikov. Sérgio Vieira reported that Machel impressed Kulikov with his "honest and direct manner" when he openly complained that they did not receive any of the modern arms on display in Moscow. Kulikov then agreed to review the military allocations for FRELIMO. [520]

Machel's trip to East Berlin was also very successful. Machel arrived in East Berlin for the Eighth Congress of the SED in June, but he was only interested in talking to the top leadership, a demand he was willing to express in no uncertain terms. Given that FRELIMO had become important for the GDR, Machel's interlocutor was Hermann Axen, a member of the SED Politburo responsible for relations. Vieira wrote: "In 1971 in Berlin thus ended the period of us being second class citizens."[521] The GDR would therefore provide the most modern weapons for FRELIMO, including automatic machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades.[522]

Samora Machel was also very well received in Sofia, where he held talks with Bulgaria's top decision-makers, the CC BCP's General Secretary Todor Zhivkov, Defense Minister Dobri Dzhurov, and Chief of the General Staff Atanas Semerdzhiev. Machel evidently impressed his hosts because, shortly after his departure, the head of the CC BCP International Department, Konstantin Tellalov, proposed spending 675,100 leva to satisfy FRELIMO's requirements.[523] "Although Machel is not versed in theory, his sensibility and realistic approach made a good impression," stated the report attached to Tellalov's proposal. During conversations in Sofia, Machel apparently underlined his belief that it was necessary to develop revolutionary ideology during the liberation struggle, and that he saw the socialist countries as allies not only because they supplied weapons, but also because the they wanted to build a new society after

[519] Conversation with Samora Machel and Armando Guebuza on 29 March 1971, GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 302a, pp. 15-20; Samora Machel to the Chairman of the SCSCAA, 29 March 1971, GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 304.
[520] Vieira, *Participei*, pp. 598-599. Vieira writes these included "B-10" recoilless rifles, "Grad-P" light rocket launchers and "Strela-2M" surface-to-air man portable missiles.
[521] Ibid., p. 597.
[522] Ibid., p. 598.
[523] Konstantin Tellalov (Head of the CC BCP International Department) to the CC BCP Politburo, 23 June 1971, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 64, a.e. 405, pp. 8-9.

independence.[524] On 7 July, CC BCP approved Tellalov's proposals. The bulk of the sum (457,000 of 675,100 leva) would be spent on weapons, and the rest on humanitarian aid, such as food, tools, medicines, and stationery supplies.[525]

Despite his successes in Europe, it was his tour of Beijing, Hanoi, and Pyongyang that made the greatest impression upon Samora Machel. In all three capitals, FRELIMO delegation was received at the highest level, in stark contrast to its past experiences in Moscow. Sérgio Vieira, for example, recalled their meeting with Zhou Enlai in September 1971, a meeting which apparently lasted for ten hours because of just how much the PRC's Premier cared for FRELIMO's liberation struggle: "Zhou Enlai brought maps. He placed the maps on the floor, he and Samora began their discussion, squatting. He made questions about each of the operations, how we were organized, the disposition of the attacking and the defending forces, the logistics." Moreover, the following day, the Chinese informed the delegation that a shipment of 10 thousand tons of arms, munitions, uniforms, four-by-four vehicles and trucks would be delivered.[526] In Dar es Salaam in October, Machel met with the GDR consul in Tanzania, Erich Butzke, and asked that the GDR and the Soviet Union offer the same kind of reception of and attention to FRELIMO that had been afforded their delegations in China, North Vietnam and North Korea. FRELIMO did not only need assurance, said Machel, but expected an improvement of material assistance from all the socialist countries.[527]

Military Stalemate in Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau was the theatre of war in which the Portuguese devised the boldest attempt to break the military stalemate. By 1970, Commander-in-Chief and Governor General António de Spínola had become increasingly frustrated with the lack of progress in Guinea-Bissau. Despite Spínola's carefully constructed program to win

[524] CC BCP International Department, Sofia, 26 June 1971, "Informatsiya za prebivavaneto u nas na delegatsiyata na Fronta za osvobozhdenie na Mozambik (FRELIMO)," TsDA, f. 1B, op. 64, a.e. 405, p. 17.
[525] Politburo CC BCP Resolution "B" № 7, 7 July 1971, TsDA, f. 1b, op. 64, a.e. 405, pp. 3-6.
[526] Vieira, *Participei*, pp. 618-619.
[527] Zenker (GDR vice-consul in Dar es Salaam) to Berlin, 12 December 1971, BA-SAPMO, DZ8/163.

over the population with a scheme designed to improve basic social services and introduce a measure of local autonomy, the war continued, and the PAIGC did not show any signs of weakening its grip on the rural areas. Around 1969, Alpoim Calvão, one of Spínola's most imaginative commanders, developed a plan that initially involved sending a raiding party to Conakry under the cover of darkness, with the aim of freeing Portuguese captives held at the PAIGC's "La Montagna" prison in Conakry, including António Lobato, a Portuguese pilot, and destroying Soviet project 183 torpedo boats (NATO reporting name P-6) and the six to eight Guinean MIG-15 (NATO reporting name Fagot) and MIG-17 (Fresco) fighters at the airport. Eventually, Spínola and Calvão also decided to use about 147 soldiers, belonging to Sékou Touré's opposition, in order to stage a coup d'état. The key goal of the coup was to capture President Sékou Touré and Amílcar Cabral, and to shoot them if they resisted arrest. On 17 November 1970, Marcello Caetano approved the plan presented to him by Calvão, on condition that Portugal would not leave any footprints behind. Operation *Mar Verde* (Green Sea) was a go.[528]

On the night of 21-22 November 1970, at around 2 in the morning, six vessels with approximately four hundred men disembarked on the beaches of Conakry, each of them having been assigned a specific target within the city. Pavel Danilov, the First Secretary at the Soviet embassy in Guinea at that time, recalled being woken by a member of the embassy staff, who told Danilov of the emergency. "One could hear shots on the street," wrote Danilov. "I looked to the ocean and saw fire at the villa of the President's wife," he continued. "It became clear to me that what was taking place was an armed intervention in Guinea's internal affairs."[529] The raiding parties proceeded to destroy the PAIGC's fast boats, free the Portuguese prisoners from *La Montagna*, and inflict damage on some of the PAIGC's buildings and vehicles.

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[528] Cann, *Brown Waters*, Chapter 8. Also see: António Luís Marinho, *Operação Mar Verde: Um Documento para a História* (Lisboa: Temas e Debates, 2006).

[529] Pavel Danilov, "Trevozhnye Mesyatsy v Konakri." *Afrika v Vospominaniyakh Veteranov Siplomaticheskoy Sluzhby*. Ed. Aleksey Vasilyev (Moscow: Institut Afriki RAN, 2001), p. 71.

The operation quickly turned into a disaster. Badly organized and misinformed, the raiders could not find the main target, Sékou Touré, who was actually hidden at the home of his mistress. Meanwhile, Cabral was out of the country. One of the groups dispatched to destroy the MIGs at the airport discovered that the jets had been moved. It also seems that communication between various units was not well organized or secure, as Danilov recalled that the Soviet attaché, Yuriy Chepik, was able to listen to conversations between "mercenaries" on an ordinary radio.[530] At around nine o'clock in the morning, Calvão, who commanded the operation, gathered his men and withdrew from Conakry. The following day, Sékou Touré unleashed his wrath on the perpetrators, both real and imagined. Those who had failed to escape were questioned and quickly identified their real sponsors. The United Nations Security Council and the international community immediately condemned Lisbon's actions. Even President Richard Nixon sent a note to Sékou Touré deploring the incident.[531] *Mar Verde* was a diplomatic disaster for Portugal.

Moscow benefited greatly from the fallout from *Mar Verde*. The day after the coup attempt, a Soviet naval ship entered Conakry's harbor with one battalion of marines on board. According to Danilov, the arrival of the ship was precipitated by a message they had apparently received from unofficial sources, stating that the "mercenaries" wanted to capture the Cuban, Chinese, and Soviet embassies. Later, the marines told Danilov that they had apparently received an urgent order to sail towards Conakry and to protect all Soviet citizens.[532] Although there is no evidence to suggest that the opposition wanted to attack the embassies of the socialist countries and they were not in the list of original targets, the arrival of the ship was a clear sign of Soviet support. Sékou Touré also requested that Moscow allow Soviet naval ships to remain near Conakry harbor in order to come to the rescue in the event of another coup attempt. The Soviets, with Cabral acting as an intermediary in talks with Sékou Touré, negotiated for the Soviet navy to dock at the Conakry ports. Danilov wrote that this

[530] Ibid.
[531] Ibid., p. 72.
[532] Ibid., p. 73.

agreement allowed for marines serving in the Atlantic to dock at Conakry for short breaks.[533] *Mar Verde* thus reinforced the Soviet presence in the Atlantic.

Moreover, Guinean authorities directly accused the Federal Republic of Germany of participating in the organization and the execution of the attempted coup. Pavel Danilov retold the story of an FRG intelligence officer who was supposed to act as an intermediary and who allegedly passed on a signal for a general uprising against Sékou Toure. The agent failed to complete his mission, according to Danilov, because he was driving from while he was driving from Meniere to the city with his female secretary, the agent was stopped by anti-government opposition, as their white 'Volkswagen' was mistaken for Cabral's, and they were shot.[534] The Guinean authorities charged a West German citizen, a brewery manager named Adolf Marx, who had allegedly been instructed to give Sekou Touré poisoned beer. Bonn vigorously denied all such accusations, pointing to the GDR as the source of the stories. In fact, it would seem that none of them were true. Whichever story one believes, the outcome was extremely convenient for the Soviets. By the end of the year, the West German community had been expelled from Conakry and, in January 1971, the Guinean government broke diplomatic relations with Bonn. Thus, one of the key Soviet competitors in Guinea was eliminated.[535]

The failure of *Mar Verde* was a political and moral victory for the PAIGC, but the nature of the war in Guinea-Bissau changed little in its aftermath. The PAIGC still held the rural areas, including the eastern region around Madina do Boé, but the Portuguese still possessed aerial superiority. On 17 March 1971, a Czechoslovakian Intelligence officer in Conakry going by the name of "Chmelar" informed Prague of his conversation with a PAIGC functionary, Rogério Oliveira, codenamed "RIGOLETO," a regular source for Czechoslovakian intelligence. Oliveira said there was permanent tension between the powerful *Comissão Permanente* (Permanent Commission), comprised of Amílcar

[533] Ibid., p. 78.
[534] Ibid., pp. 73-74.
[535] For a detailed discussion of Mar Verde for West German relations with Guinea, see: Rui Lopes, "Between Cold War and Colonial Wars," PhD dissertation, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2011

Cabral, *Luís* Cabral, and Aristides Pereira, and the rest of the high-ranking party members. He argued that the reason for this tension was Cabral's favoritism with regard to cadres from Cape Verde, the lack of information received by other well-respected members of the PAIGC, and poor supply of military detachments in the liberated areas, despite regular aid from abroad. Moreover, the majority of the crews manning the PAIGC naval vessels stationed in Conakry disobeyed orders and wanted to leave for the liberated areas; even the two-day negotiations between the crews and Cabral did not bring about any results. The rank-and-file guerrillas were increasingly inclined to leave the movement, but only their dedication to war leaders, such as the popular guerrilla commanders *João* Bernardo "Nino" Vieira and Osvaldo Vieira, kept them from quitting. There was an atmosphere of fear in the headquarters at Conakry, including the fear of being accused of plotting against the leadership, argued Oliveira.[536] We cannot assume that this record of a conversation provides an accurate description of the situation, but it is characteristic of the kinds of tensions that existed within the PAIGC as the result of a protracted war.

Cabral knew well that, for the final push, the PAIGC had to overcome the Portuguese aerial advantage. The Portuguese used aircraft not only to attack the guerrillas' strongholds from air, but also to provide cover for naval vessels and to resupply the urban centers and remote fortified posts. A few years earlier, the Soviets had developed a lightweight surface-to-air man-portable missile known as "Strela-2" (NATO classification SA-7 Grail), which came into series production in 1970. Although its operation required special training, it was highly mobile and thus easy to use in heavily forested or swampy areas. Strela-2 could reach low-flying planes and was mainly used to shoot down helicopters and low-flying aircraft. Thus, Strela-2 had the potential to break the stalemate in Guinea-Bissau, to the PAIGC's advantage.

It is still not certain when exactly Cabral first requested the Soviet Union provide "Strela-2" for the PAIGC. Luís Cabral thought that this happened in late 1972,

[536] Chmelar, Conakry, to Prague, 17 March 1971, ABS, 11853, p. 255.

when Amílcar visited Moscow for the purpose of acquiring "Strela-2."[537] However, there are indications that negotiations to transfer "Strela-2" to the PAIGC had begun before 1972. In November 1971, Amílcar Cabral and his wife Anna Maria attended the celebration of the fifty-fourth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution in Moscow. Cabral also used the occasion to negotiate for further military requirements with the Soviet cadres, who allegedly promised to satisfy his new request for light and heavy weapons, including gunboats, vehicles, and antiaircraft defense systems.[538]

We also do not exactly who pushed the decision forward, but a story from Petr Yevsyukov, a senior specialist on the Portuguese colonies in the International Department, is illuminating. Yevsyukov wrote that when Cabral came to Moscow with his wife on the occasion of some state celebrations (Yevsyukov does not specify the date), he asked for certain kinds of weapons, but the Soviet Defense Minister, Marshal Andrey Grechko, did not approve Yevsyukov's draft proposal granting those requests. Yevsyukov then spoke to GRU chief Petr Ivashutin, who agreed that Moscow should satisfy the request. Ivashutin then proposed that Yevsyukov introduce Cabral and his wife directly to Grechko at the upcoming banquet at the Kremlin. This is exactly what the two did at the banquet. Yevsyukov wrote: "I did not lift my eyes from the table where the Marshal [Grechko] was sitting together with General [Ivashutin]. By the end of the evening Petr Ivanovich [Ivashutin] signaled for us to approach. Amílcar introduced himself. Quite excited and in a good mood, the Marshal responded in a genuinely friendly tone and said: 'So, you are the Amílcar Cabral; I know I declined your request but tomorrow I will sign. However, I have to tell you that you have to introduce the lady first and then yourself.'" Cabral was apparently very pleased with the conversation, and Grechko indeed approved the proposal the following day.[539] Even if this incident does not refer to the 1971 celebration when Cabral allegedly received a promise for Strela-2, it reveals the identity of the person who advocated on Cabral's behalf in Moscow. Not only were the CC CPSU International Department and

[537] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 210.
[538] Polish Solidarity Committee, Warsaw, "Notatka z wyjazdu delegacji PKSzNAA do ZSRR," AAN, PKSNAAAL57, p. 20.
[539] Yevsyukov, "Natsionalno-osvoboditelnaya Borba v Gvinee-Bissau," p. 144.

Petr Yevsyukov clearly very interested in seeing the PAIGC succeed in Guinea-Bissau, but so was Petr Ivashutin.

Yevsyukov also wrote that, at some time in 1972, he travelled to the liberated areas of Guinea-Bissau with Generals Ivan Plakhin and Nikolay Tyazhev in order to evaluate the military situation first-hand. Yevsyukov was very impressed by the PAIGC's progress. He recalled sailing calmly past an illuminated Portuguese military post at Guiledge without any precautions. "The Portuguese must have seen us," wrote Yevsyukov. "If only anyone had thrown a grenade from the shore, our whole squad would have been eliminated. But honestly, we swam by without any precautions, as if we were on a boat trip in a park."[540] Cabral apparently told Yevsyukov that he had been in touch with some Portuguese officers, and that they had been having regular meetings to discuss the "rules of war."[541] This is why they could pass right past the Portuguese post, in full view of the enemy. This trip apparently convinced the Soviet delegation that the PAIGC did indeed require the deployment of Strela-2.

One way or another, by the end of 1972, negotiations were complete. In December, twenty-four PAIGC militants arrived at the Perevalnoye training center in Crimea to learn how to operate the Strela-2 complex. Vladimir Sukhorukov, who worked as an interpreter at Perevalnoye at that time, recalls that the twenty-four students practiced "day and night on real targets." Two Soviet anti-aircraft specialists taught the combatants how to "lock on and track" commercial and military aircraft lifted into the air specifically for this purpose; the students practiced firing at Perevalnoye's shooting range.[542] The leader of the group was a thirty-year-old named Manuel "Manecas" dos Santos. Born on the island of Sao Vicente in Cape Verde, dos Santos had studied electromechanical engineering in Lisbon, where he had become involved in the underground nationalist movement, and in 1967 had moved to Guinea-Bissau and then joined the PAIGC. Manuel already distinguished himself as head of artillery in the south of the country between 1970 and 1972, and had been promoted

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[540] Ibid., p. 151.
[541] Ibid., p. 150.
[542] Larisa Kucherova, "Nad Yemenom - Bezoblachnoe Nebo," *Armiya,* 1 (2012): p. 26.

to the Higher Council of the Struggle (CSL; *Conselho Superior da Luta*).[543] The choice of a highly experienced commander who was also a member of the CSL as group leader reflects the high importance that Cabral placed on Strela-2.

The PAIGC was not significantly affected by Spínola's high-risk assault on 22 November 1970. *Operação Mar Verde* did not have the necessary intelligence to ensure its success and, thus, it failed in its primary objective of decapitating the PAIGC. *Mar Verde* weakened western influence in Guinea and provided the Soviets with an opportunity to strengthen their relations with Sékou Touré, thus increasing their naval presence in the Atlantic. Perhaps more dangerous for the PAIGC were the effects of a protracted war, which had turned into a mutually exhausting stalemate. A protracted war intensified internal criticism leveled at the top party leadership by those guerrilla commanders who, unlike the first cohort of recruits, were not personally devoted to Cabral. There was also a growing feeling that those who grew up in Cape Verde held all the power in the party, whereas all the actual fighting was done by natives from Guinea-Bissau. Notwithstanding those difficulties, Moscow agreed to supply the Strela-2 complex to the PAIGC, and this event was supposed to break the military stalemate.

The PAIGC: Tragedy and Triumph, 1973-1974

On Saturday 13 January 1973, the Czechoslovakian Intelligence officer Peták returned to Conakry. Peták had been in close contact with Cabral before 1968, working in an advisory role to the PAIGC leadership in Conakry, but contacts had become quite rare afterwards, both due to events in Prague and because Cabral was very often out of Conakry, almost continuously travelling either to the interior of Guinea-Bissau or abroad. This time, however, Peták arrived to rekindle the StB links with Cabral. The next morning, Peták went to the PAIGC headquarters, where he met Osvaldo Vieira and Otto Schacht, and also saw Cabral and Aristides Pereira working at the office. Peták

[543] From the Soviet Embassy in Guinea-Bissau to the Foreign Ministry, 14 November 1976, "State Commissar for Information and Tourism of the RGB Manueal dos Santos: Charachteristics," AVPRF, f.661, op.13, p.4, d.8, p. 149. Manuel dos Santos would become the first Minister for Information and Tourism after independence of Guinea-Bissau. Aviation would always remain his passion, but he would not speak highly of his experiences at Perevalnoye.

reported to Prague that Cabral looked "somewhat on edge," but he thought that this stemmed from his role as the party leader and not because he was uneasy about Peták's arrival. Peták then explained the situation in Czechoslovakia "according to instructions" and thus answered their question as to why he "could not pay much attention to them" in the previous years. "All the people I talked to received me very well," wrote Peták, concluding that the attitude towards Czechoslovakia had not changed.[544] Cabral asked Peták whether they could meet later that week, but it is not known whether this meeting ever took place because, on 20 January 1973, Cabral was shot dead.

The outline of the events of that evening is known from an account provided by Cabral's wife, Anna Maria. Cabral and Anna Maria drove back to their apartment in Conakry after attending a reception at the Polish embassy. Suddenly, a group of armed men appeared arrived in a jeep. One of them was Inocêncio Kani, a former student at the college for naval officers at Poti, Georgia. He had been fired for personal misconduct and abuse of power, but shortly before the events of the night of 20 January, he was exonerated and placed in charge of a PAIGC vessel. Anna Maria recognized a man by the name of Mamadou N'Djai, who had been placed in charge of security only a few weeks earlier. Kani ordered Cabral to get out of his car, and when he did, Kani began tying him with a piece of rope. This was unsuccessful because Cabral resisted, and the ropes fell to the ground. Anna Maria recalled:

> At this moment, Inocêncio shot at Amílcar, and my husband fell, but then he lifted himself up and sat down. Pressing his hands to the wound on his side, he exclaimed, 'What are you doing? The Portuguese still have not left our land. You are serving them, traitors!' They dragged me to the car, and Inocêncio ordered Bakar, a man who had been working as an accountant at the [PAIGC] office: 'Finish him.' Bakar, who stood behind Amílcar, fired a round. This is how they killed my husband.[545]

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[544] Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 18 January 1973, ABS, 11853. The Soviet journalist Oleg Ignatyev was reporting on the war from the "liberated areas of Guinea-Bissau" and thus he was able to talk to Anna Maria shortly after the events on 20 January 1973.

[545] Oleg Ignatyev, "Kto Ubil Amilkar Kabrala: Reportazh iz Gvinei [Bisau]," *Pravda,* 6 March 1973, p. 4.

Cabral's assassination was the first act of what was yet another attempt at a coup d'etat, arranged by the Portuguese with the aim of paralyzing the movement by arresting the entire leadership. The plotters were supposed to arrest the entire leadership, transport them on a boat to Bissau, and give them up to the Portuguese authorities. Having shot Cabral in a panic, Kani and Mamadou N'Djai seized Aristides Pereira, transferred him to the port, and threw him in a boat. Meanwhile, another group of rebellious PAIGC combatants, led by Momo Turé and Aristides Barbosa, arrested Jose Araujo and Vasco Cabral and placed them in the PAIGC's *La Montagna* prison.

The coup attempt quickly unraveled hereafter thanks to quick action of the Guinean authorities and decisiveness of the Soviet Ambassador, Anatoliy Ratanov. Sékou Touré found out about events at the PAIGC's headquarters at Miniere when one of the foreign diplomats, living nearby, called the presidential office after hearing the gunshots. Touré ordered the army to head immediately for *La Montagna*, where they freed the imprisoned Jose Araujo and Vasco Cabral and arrested the conspirators. By this point, a boat holding Aristides Pereira had already sailed offshore. Given that the Guinean authorities did not have the capacity to chase the boats, they asked for Soviet assistance. Pavel Danilov writes that Anatoliy Ratanov responded by driving to the port and convincing the captain of the Soviet navy vessel that was stationed in Conakry to chase the boat. The Soviet captain agreed, and after several hours of traversing the seas, they managed to locate Aristides Pereira on board one of the vessels and transport him safely back to Conakry.[546]

There has been much discussion regarding the reasons for the failed coup. The Portuguese authorities clearly provided inspiration because the war was at a stalemate, while any prospects of negotiations with the PAIGC initiated by General António de Spínola had failed because Prime Minister Caetano rejected the idea of negotiating with terrorists. Moreover, Lisbon feared that the PAIGC was on the brink of

[546] Danilov, "Trevozhnye Mesyatsy," pp. 81-83.

proclaiming itself the provisional government of Guinea-Bissau, and any international recognition that was likely forthcoming would have delivered a severe blow to Lisbon's prestige. What seems less clear is the motivation of the plotters. Petr Yevsyukov believed that the Portuguese successfully exploited the tensions between the natives of Cape Verde and those of Guinea-Bissau in order to infiltrate the PAIGC. He writes, "Throughout all of his life, Cabral tried to eradicate the hatred of the blacks towards mulattos, but he did not succeed, and, thus, he became a victim of a conspiracy of blacks against the mulattos."[547]

Cabral's assassination shocked everybody who knew him and who believed in his cause. Not only did he command loyalty among the top leadership, but he was also greatly admired by the rank-and-file members. Vladimir Sukhorukov, who served as an interpreter at Perevalnoye in the early 1970s, witnessed the reaction of the group of recruits who had arrived at the center for military training a few months earlier: "For several days, grown-up men were weeping. Sincerely, like children."[548] Aristides Pereira could not remember any details of what had transpired that night, and once in the hospital kept asking what had happened to Amílcar, but nobody would give a straight answer, on doctors' instructions. Only after a few days did the Cuban ambassador to Guinea-Bissau, Oscar Oramas, break the news to Pereira, as he could no longer bear the questioning. "Once I was told that Amílcar had died, I wanted to go and see the body in order to verify," remembers Pereira.[549] Petr Yevsyukov, who arrived at Conakry for Cabral's funeral as part of a Soviet delegation, writes: "I won't describe my feelings; I was deeply sad. It was incredibly difficult to see an intelligent and not-so-recently highly energetic man lying in a coffin with a bullet hole in his head."[550]

Cabral's murder did not change Soviet attitudes towards the PAIGC. Yevsyukov writes that shortly after the funeral, the Soviet delegation met with the leadership and

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[547] Yevsyukov, "Natsionalno-osvoboditelnaya Borba v Gvinee-Bissau," p. 148. For a detailed discussion of the reasons for the failed coup, see: Chabal, *Amilcar Cabral*, pp. 132-142.
[548] Kucherova, "Nad Yemenom," p. 26.
[549] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 163.
[550] Yevsyukov, "Natsionalno-osvoboditelnaya Borba v Gvinee-Bissau," p. 147.

confirmed their willingness to provide "all-sided assistance."[551] Not much changed in the party in the immediate aftermath of Cabral's death. Aristides Pereira assumed Cabral's position as the General Secretary, while Amílcar's brother Luís became his deputy. There was no party reshuffle or change of course. On 7 August 1973, speaking to Jaroslav Kozák, the Czechoslovak chargé d'affaires at Conakry, Anatoliy Ratanov said the PAIGC possessed a "healthy core" and continued following Cabral's political line.[552] Ratanov's replacement at Conakry, Leonid Musatov, spoke to Kozák on 14 December, confirming that Aristides Pereira had a cautious attitude towards China, just like Cabral.[553]

The FARP managed to break the military stalemate in 1973, shortly after the first group of recruits, trained to use Strela-2, had returned to Guinea from the training course at Perevalnoye. The PAIGC started downing aircraft with Strela-2 in March, thus severely limiting the Portuguese aerial advantage. Manuel "Manecas" dos Santos led the first anti-aircraft group, christened after one of Cabral's pen names, "Abel Djassi." On 28 March, the PAIGC shot down the Fiat G-91 belonging to Almeida Brito, the chief of the Portuguese air force, and by July, the PAIGC had downed twelve Fiats, three Harvard bombers, and three Dornier DO-67s. In May, the PAIGC took Guiledge, a Portuguese post on the border with Guinea, the same one that the FARP could not capture for years.[554] Manuel dos Santos recalled that the Portuguese did not expect the PAIGC to obtain such weapons, and he seized control of almost all of the aerial operations after Brito's death.[555] General Costa Gomes, who visited Guinea-Bissau in late 1973 as the new Chief of the Portuguese Armed Forces, recalled, "We were on the verge of a military defeat."[556]

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[551] Ibid., 147.
[552] Jaroslav Kozák (Czechoslovak charge d'affairs, Conakry) to Prague, 7 August 1973, AMZV, TO-tajné, IV/7, sign. 203, inv.c 26, .
[553] Jaroslav Kozák (Czechoslovak charge d'affairs, Conakry) to Prague, 14 December 1973, AMZV, TO-tajné, IV/7 Inv.c26, Sign. 203.
[554] Dhada, *Warriors at Work*, p. 50.
[555] Interview with Manuel dos Santos in João Paulo Guerra, *Descolonização Portuguesa - O Regresso das Caravelas*. Kindle edition (Alfragide: Oficina do Livro, 2009), location 778.
[556] Interview with Costa Gomes in ibid., location 802.

These military advances allowed for a favorable opportunity for the PAIGC to declare the independence of Guinea-Bissau on 24 September 1973. One year earlier, the party leadership had organized elections to the "National Assembly," and on 24 September, the 120 elected deputies convened at Madina de Boé to approve the formation of the Republic and approve the new constitution. Oleg Ignatyev covered the ceremony for *Pravda,* describing Lúcio Soares, a young military commander and recent graduate of a university in the Soviet Union, who trembled with emotion whilst reading the Declaration of Independence. The next speaker was João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira, who asked for deputies to vote on the Declaration of Independence by a show of hands. "150 raised hands. 150 vote in favor. In looking at my watch, it is 8 o'clock and 55 minutes, local time. This is the moment when the new state in Africa is born: 1973, 24 September, 8 o'clock and 55 minutes."[557]

Conclusion

Leonid Brezhnev and other high-ranking Soviet leaders believed that superpower détente provided a way to avoid conflict, but that it by no means signified an end to ideological competition between socialism and capitalism. The Marxist-Leninist dogma simply did not allow for a change of goal, given the belief in the permanence of class struggle and the inevitability of a socialist victory around the world. By the end of the 1960s, the Soviet functionaries believed that the West was changing its tactics in the Third World, even though the goal of stifling revolutionary change remained unaltered. While the West may have abandoned its tactics of plotting the overthrow of radical African leaders by military means, not least because of the Vietnam War, the theory went that leaders in the West were now using other, economic means for the same purpose. This set of beliefs became quite widespread among the Soviet diplomatic community, as was the case in Guinea and among the intelligence organizations, the KGB and the GRU.

[557] Oleg Ignatyev, "Tak Sozdavalos' Gosudarstvo," *Pravda,* 13 November, 1973, p. 4.

Nevertheless, Soviet officials were optimistic about the prospects for the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies as of 1970. One reason was that the liberation movements – especially the MPLA and the PAIGC – had made some military progress in the previous few years. Yet another reason was that the Soviet cadres, especially at the CC CPSU International Department, believed that the liberation movements were moving closer to the Soviet Union, given the desire of their leaders to transform their movements into "vanguard" parties of the Marxist-Leninist type. Therefore, the International Department, the KGB, and the GRU argued for an expansion of Soviet engagement in Africa, which translated into qualitatively greater assistance for the liberation movements.

However, optimistic Soviet expectations failed to materialize, mainly due to the inability of the liberation movements to make any significant military progress, except for the PAIGC. By 1974, the MPLA was practically paralyzed, incapable of resolving many internal contradictions, exacerbated by a successful Portuguese offensive. In 1970, the Soviet cadres argued for augmentation of assistance to the MPLA, but in 1974, they decided on temporary termination. FRELIMO's performance was much better, but relations remained complicated, largely because Samora Machel felt their movement had much more in common with the Chinese rather than the Soviet leadership. Only the PAIGC was an indisputable success story. Soviet commitment to the PAIGC remained very high even after Cabral's death.

The military situation in Guinea-Bissau contributed to the Portuguese army's weariness of the war. There emerged a clandestine organization known as the Armed Forces Movement (MFA; Movimento das Forças Armadas), which consisted of junior military officers who were originally dissatisfied with the new system of promotions and privilege adopted in the army. Their agenda soon changed, as they started preparing for a coup to overthrow the dictatorship. Dissatisfaction with Caetano's colonial policy was also widespread among high-ranking military figures, such as Generals António de Spínola and Francisco da Costa Gomes. In early 1974, Spínola

published a book, *Portugal e o Futuro* (*Portugal and the Future*), in which he outlined his opposition to Caetano's colonial policy. Spínola famously revealed how he had tried but failed to begin negotiations with the PAIGC, because Prime Minister Marcelo Caetano would rather face a defeat than negotiate with the terrorists. Spínola argued that the war was unwinnable and suggested that Portugal accept the principle of self-determination for the colonies and begin negotiations with the liberation movements from a position of strength.[558] The publication of *Portugal e o Futuro*, approved by Chief of the Armed Forces Francisco da Costa Gomes, revealed that opposition to the war had spread to the highest military ranks. Marcelo Caetano responded by ordering General Spínola, General Costa Gomes, and 120 general-rank officers to publicly pledge allegiance to the government's policy in Africa, a demand the generals refused.[559] For the MFA, the time had come to seize the initiative.

[558] Antonio Sebastião Ribeiro de Spínola, *Portugal e o Futuro: Analise da Conjuntura Nacional* (Lisbon: Perskor Publishers, 1974).
[559] Kenneth Maxwell, *The Making of Portuguese Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 35.

CHAPTER FIVE

Triumph: Revolution in Portugal and Its Fallout, 1974-75

On 24 April 1974, at 10:55 p.m., a song known to many Portuguese aired on Lisbon radio. It was “E Depois do Adeus” ("After We Say Goodbye"), a romantic song by Paulo de Carvalho and Portugal’s entry into the Eurovision Song Contest. A few weeks earlier, the Armed Forces Movement (MFA; *Movimento das Forças Armadas*) had agreed to use the song to signal the beginning of a coup against the dictatorship. First of all, the MFA seized all key strategic locations in Lisbon, including radio and television stations, the airport, and bridges. At 12:20 a.m., Radio Renascença broadcast “Grândola, Vila Morena,” a song by popular musician José Afonso, whose work had been forbidden for its left-wing content. This song had been designated as another password, designed to alert MFA loyalists in the army to join in. One of those was Captain Fernando José Salgueiro Maia, who led a column of 10 armored cars from their station in Santarem to Lisbon. The MFA encountered very little resistance, and by the morning they learnt that Prime Minister Marcelo Caetano had fled to the Carma barracks, the headquarters of the National Republican Guard in the center of Lisbon. Maia’s detachment besieged this position from a narrow square in front of the barracks, where thousands gathered in support. After several hours of negotiation, Caetano agreed to surrender to a senior military officer. MFA’s first choice was General Francisco da Costa Gomes, but the publication of *Portugal and the Future* switched their preference to António de Spínola. On 25 April, at 17.45pm, Spínola arrived at the Carma barracks and accepted Caetano’s resignation, becoming the new de facto head of state. In a late-night appearance on national television, Spínola announced that the newly established “Junta of National Salvation” would abolish censorship and hold free elections to the Constituent Assembly. Meanwhile, jubilant crowds swamped the city,

festooning soldiers with red carnations, plentiful in Lisbon's flower market at that time of year. In less than twenty-four hours, the coup developed into a popular movement for the democratization of society, commonly referred to as the "Carnation Revolution."[560]

The Soviet leadership looked at the Carnation Revolution through the prism of Marxist-Leninist dogma, which dictated that class struggle would continue and that the conservative forces would try to stifle a possible socialist transformation. This is why the Soviets urged Alvaro Cunhal, the leader of the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), to join the coalition government and exercise caution in his political demands in order to avoid a rightist backlash. Moscow was therefore quick to recognize the new provisional government. This decision alienated the liberation movements, whose main tactic was to continue putting pressure on Lisbon to ensure rapid decolonization. The Soviets did not play any major role in the negotiations leading to the independence of Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, where power was quickly transferred to the PAIGC and FRELIMO respectively. The situation in Angola, where the liberation movement was represented by three movements – the MPLA, the FNLA, and UNITA – was much more complicated. In early January 1975, Lisbon finally brokered a power-sharing agreement between the MPLA, the FNLA, and UNITA, which intended to outline a roadmap to elections and independence, scheduled for 11 November 1975. The Soviets evaluated the situations in Portugal and Angola in very similar terms. While in Portugal Alvaro Cunhal and the PCP played the key role as a revolutionary force, in Angola it was Neto and the MPLA. The Soviets believed that the MPLA should work within the framework of the power-sharing agreement negotiated between the rival factions under Lisbon's patronage at Alvor, Portugal, in late 1974. However, that promise was increasingly difficult to keep because the FNLA, boosted by Joseph Mobutu's Zaire (formerly known as Congo-Léopoldville, renamed in 1971) was seemingly set on taking power by force. The Soviet Union, along with other socialist

[560] Ibid., pp. 58-59.

countries, therefore started providing the MPLA with arms and training. The MPLA embarked on a major campaign to internationalize the Angolan Civil War, eventually securing assistance from the Soviet Union, Cuba, Eastern Europe, and Yugoslavia, and managed to seize power on 11 November 1975. While Moscow was originally much more focused on developments in Portugal, by early 1975 their focus shifted to the increasingly violent competition among rival factions in Angola.

The Carnation Revolution and Negotiations for Independence in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, April-September 1974

"A huge event," noted Anatoliy Chernyaev in his private diary on 13 May 1974, referring to the situation in Lisbon.[561] Chernyaev had joined the CC CPSU International Department in 1961, and by the 1970s he had become one of the senior advisers to Head of Department Boris Ponomarev. Chernyaev compared Cunhal's return to Lisbon to Lenin's arrival at the "Finlyandskiy" railway station in April 1917 and noted the huge transformative potential of the "Carnation Revolution." Chernyaev had long been frustrated with his superiors, who lacked, as he believed, any political imagination and were incapable of devising the bold and imaginative schemes necessary to provide effective leadership of the international communist movement. He therefore lamented the unwillingness of the Soviet leadership to make bolder statements in support for Alvaro Cunhal. While the social democratic governments were making strong public statements in support of Mário Soares, complained Chernyaev, the Soviets were doing very little to help Cunhal.[562]

There were reasons for Moscow's restraint. The Soviet leadership was very uncertain about the nature of the transformation in Portugal. Alvaro Cunhal and the PCP remained extremely insecure, fearing a right-wing backlash. The PCP thus toned down their demands for increases in workers' wages and removed the term

[561] Chernyaev, *Sovmestnyi Iskhod*, p. 96.
[562] Ibid., pp. 96-97.The Portuguese socialists were affiliated with the Socialist International. Mário Soares personally developed close relations with West European social democrats, including Willy Brand and the West German Social Democratic Party.

"dictatorship of the proletariat" from its program at the party congress in October. Cunhal also established an informal alliance with Mário Soares, his former student and the leader of the Portuguese Socialist Party, who was appointed foreign minister in the first provisional government. Cunhal also accepted Spínola's offer to join the first coalition government as minister without portfolio. The Soviets believed that only by working within a coalition government could the PCP build up its support network without provoking a counter-coup. On 16 May, *Pravda* published a statement highlighting the role of the PCP in bringing down Caetano's regime and calling on all left-wing democratic forces to unite in order to put an end to the colonial wars in the Portuguese colonies in Africa.[563]

The leaders of the liberation movements also did not know what to make of the 25 April coup in Portugal. Aristides Pereira recalls: "We only knew what was going on in Portugal through the press at that time. We were following those [developments] through a magnifying glass."[564] Members of the junta did not always give clear signs about decolonization. When Carlos Soares Fabio arrived in Bissau as the new governor-general on 7 May, he proclaimed that Lisbon planned to create a "Guinea governed by Guineans" as soon as "the colonizers and colonized achieve the same socio-cultural level."[565] This is, of course, not what the PAIGC had waged armed struggle for nor something they were willing to accept.

The PAIGC responded by inviting their closest allies to establish formal diplomatic relations. In April the Soviet ambassador to Guinea, Leonid Musatov, was appointed the ambassador to Guinea-Bissau. On 9 May, Musatov, along with his colleagues from Algeria, Romania, Guinea, and Yugoslavia, set out on an overnight journey from Conakry across the border into Guinea-Bissau to present their diplomatic credentials to Luís Cabral. Musatov remembers that they first reached the border town of Boke, crossed over and then drove until they reached the village of Guideke, just

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[563] "Tsentralnomu Komitetu Portugal'skoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii," *Pravda,* May 16, 1974, sec. 136 (20375), p. 1.
[564] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 207.
[565] Scott (U.S. ambassdor, Lisbon) to Washington, "Roundup of Post-Coup Developments in Portuguese Guinea," 17 May 1974, Wikileaks.

inside Guinea-Bissau. The lively ceremony that greeted them was marked by short speeches, singing, and dancing performed by the partisan ensemble.[566] The act of recognition clearly demonstrated the close relationship that had developed between the Soviet Union and the PAIGC over the years. It also reflected the military situation on the ground: by 1974, the PAIGC had almost won the war in military terms. Moreover, the organization enjoyed broad popular support among the population. When the colonial authorities authorized the operation of rival groups connected to the interests of the tiny white settler community, the PAIGC warned that they were the only representatives of the people. The next day a large crowd rallied in support of the PAIGC in front of the government palace in Bissau.[567]

The appointment of Mário Soares as foreign minister was a clear sign that Lisbon was serious about decolonization. On the day after his appointment, Soares flew to Dakar, Senegal to meet the PAIGC's Secretary General Aristides Pereira. The two agreed to begin negotiations in London on 25 May.[568] It did not seem the Soviets had any influence over the negotiations process. The PAIGC delegation, led by Cape Verdean Pedro Pires, stopped in Algiers on their way to London for negotiations with the Algerian government. The Algerians apparently advised the delegates to keep pressure upon the Portuguese until they had secured an acceptable settlement.[569] The London talks quickly came to a standstill. According to Aristides Pereira, the main stumbling block was Spínola's attitude: he believed that there had to be a referendum for the future of Guinea-Bissau, and he wanted to personally go to the former colony to "hand over sovereignty" in a public ceremony.[570] The PAIGC could not accept either of these conditions. "We were not afraid of the referendum," recalled Aristides Pereira. "Our problem was with the effect it would have in the other colonies, especially in Angola and Mozambique. The OAU pressured the PAIGC not to accept the

[566] Musatov, "Afrikanskie Marshruty," pp. 121-122. Also see: Todman to Washington, "Five Ambassadors Present Credentials to PAIGC", 14 May 1974, Wikileaks.
[567] Scott (U.S. ambassdor, Lisbon) to Washington, "Roundup of Post-Coup Developments in Portuguese Guinea," 17 May 1974, Wikileaks. The two groups were "Liga Popular dos Guineus" and "Movimento Democratico de Guine."
[568] Todman (U.S. ambassador, Conakry) to Washington, 22 May 1974, "Portuguese-PAIGC Negotiations," Wikileaks.
[569] Eagleton (U.S. ambassador, Algiers) to Washington, "Algerian Role in Portuguese-PAIGC Negotiations," 27 May 1974, Wikileaks.
[570] Lopes, *Aristides Pereira*, p. 211.

referendum."[571] Not satisfied with the result, the PAIGC withdrew from the London talks.

In the midst of these negotiations, the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with Portugal on 10 June. The OAU and the liberation movements resented the Soviet move, since their strategy centered around the principle of non-recognition of the Portuguese government until it agreed to negotiate on terms that were acceptable to the liberation movements.[572]

In mid-June, talks moved to Algeria, but the PAIGC again withdrew their delegation. The main reason was that the Portuguese negotiators would not agree to accept the "principle of self-determination" for Cape Verde. Lisbon signaled to Washington that the Soviet Union was behind the breakdown. Speaking to US embassy officials in Lisbon, General Costa Gomes hinted that the PAIGC had pulled out "due to outside pressure," while Spínola's closest aide Almeida Bruno stated point blank that the PAIGC had withdrawn due to pressure from the Soviet Union.[573] There is no evidence to prove that this was the case. Independence for Cape Verde had always been an important part of the PAIGC program, and Portuguese unwillingness to cede this point presented a serious impediment to further negotiations. Increasingly concerned about the communist influence in Portugal, Spínola tried to use the specter of the Soviet threat to gain American support for his bid for power. On 19 June he met US president Richard Nixon at the Azores military base. He warned Nixon that Moscow was "subsidizing communist subversion in Portugal" and asked for US assistance.[574] The Soviet leadership supplied the PCP with cash, but did little more than that to support Cunhal, as Chernyaev lamented in his memoirs discussed above.

Spínola was correct to predict the ascendance of the radical left in government, even though he grossly exaggerated the Kremlin's role. On 13 July, Colonel Vasco dos Santos Gonçalves replaced Palma Carlos, a center-right politician close to Spínola, in

[571] Ibid., p. 216. Scott (U.S. ambassador, Lisbon) to Washington, "Status of Portuguese-PAIGC Negotiations," 5 June 1974, Wikileaks.
[572] Carter to Washington, "African View of Developments in Portuguese Territories", 19 June 1974, Wikileaks.
[573] Scott (US Ambassador, Lisbon) to Washington, 21 June 1974, "Portuguese-PAIGC Negotiations," Wikileaks.
[574] Quoted in Haslam, *Russia's Cold War*, p. 282. Also see Scott (U.S. Ambassador, Lisbon) to Washington, 21 June 1974, "GOP views on PAIGC Negotiations," WikiLeaks.

the post of prime minister. Gonçalves was known to be close with Alvaro Cunhal, and his appointment was seen as a victory for the radical left wing within the MFA. In Moscow it was seen as a hugely positive development. On 19 July *Pravda* heralded the inauguration of the second provisional government as a "new step towards democratization of socio-political life in the country."[575]

Spínola and his right-wing supporters played a critical role in blocking a settlement with the PAIGC. When Vasco Gonçalves was appointed prime minister, the balance of forces within the provisional government shifted to the left, breaking the deadlock. On 4 August, Lisbon released a communiqué accepting immediate transfer of power to Guinea-Bissau and recognizing the "right to independence" in all other colonial territories, including Cape Verde.[576] Speaking to US officials in Conakry, Aristides Pereira confirmed that the communiqué had removed a major obstacle to further negotiations.[577] Mário Soares resumed talks between the PAIGC and the Portuguese government in Algiers, quickly striking an acceptable settlement. On 26 August both sides agreed that Portugal would extend de jure recognition to Guinea-Bissau on 10 September and would withdraw all their military forces by 31 October, while the future of Cape Verde would be settled in a referendum.[578] (Cape Verde became independent in July 1975.)

Soares then turned his attention to FRELIMO. Speaking to Western diplomats on 5 August, he explained that although "FRELIMO wants immediate power," that was impossible since "the organization was not yet accepted in some areas [of Mozambique]."[579] Indeed, while FRELIMO had waged armed struggle in northern Mozambique, its reach never really extended into central or southern Mozambique. The organization also faced opposition from former members-turned-critics and bitter

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[575] "Novoe Pravitel'stvo Portugalii," *Pravda,* 19 July, 1974.
[576] Post (U.S. Embassy in Lisbon) to Washington, 5 August 1974, "GOP Differentiaties Decolonization Process in Each African Territory and Specifies Negotiating Partner", Wikileaks. The UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, who had arrived to Lisbon for talks on the decolonization process, officially released the communiqué.
[577] Macdonald to Washington, 8 August 1974, "CC PAIGC SecGen Pereira Outlines Current Position", Wikileaks.
[578] Pelletreau to Washington, 27 August 1974, "Signature of Portuguese/Guinea-Bissau Accords", Wikileaks.
[579] Post (U.S. Embassy in Lisbon) to Washington, 16 August 1974, "Soares Comments on Waldheim Communique", Wikileaks.

rivals who returned to Mozambique after the coup d'état in Portugal.[580] In mid-August, Mário Soares travelled to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, to conduct negotiations with President Samora Machel. Soares returned to Lisbon with a preliminary agreement: there would be no referendum in Mozambique and that power would be transferred to a mixed FRELIMO–Portuguese provisional government. "Either power is transferred to FRELIMO or the war goes on, but it will be a war in which the Portuguese troops will refuse to fight and the end result will be an independent Mozambique governed by a FRELIMO hostile to Portugal," explained Mário Soares to US officials.[581]

It seems the Soviets had no role in the negotiations process, and could not have one as their main concern was with Portugal. One of FRELIMO's functionaries, Sérgio Vieira, remembered that in August, Moscow asked FRELIMO for an urgent meeting in Dar es Salaam. Samora Machel eagerly accepted, since negotiations with Mário Soares had gone well and he wanted to tell his "good comrades" about the successful completion of the preliminary agreement. This is not how it turned out. According to Vieira, the chief of the Soviet delegation, whose name he could not remember, read out a "forty-five minute sermon" accusing FRELIMO of endangering the "conquests of the Portuguese democracy" because of their assumption of a belligerent negotiating position. Then he told FRELIMO leadership that they should assume a conciliatory approach and pursue serious negotiations with Portugal.[582] "For us, it was like a splash of ice-cold water," Vieira writes. "We expected anything but not such sheer arrogance coupled with ignorance." For Vieira, this attitude did not make sense because the Soviets must have known about the secret negotiations through their contacts with the MFA and the PCP.[583] Although it is not possible to verify the story and ascertain the full extent of Soviet motivations, it does fit: the Soviets were not particularly up to date with the negotiations process and urged caution on the liberation movements in order

[580] Reverend Uria Simango, Joana Simiao, Lazaro Kavandame, Mateus Gwenjere and Paulo Gumane.
[581] Post (U.S. Embassy in Lisbon) to Washington, 19 August 1974, "FOP Frelimo Negotiations," Wikileaks.
[582] Vieira, *Participei*, p. 586.
[583] Ibid., p. 589.

not to jeopardize the PCP and the provisional government.[584] After negotiations in Dar es Salaam, talks moved to Lusaka. On 7 September the two sides published an agreement to form a provisional government that would lead to full independence for Mozambique on 25 June 1975.[585]

The Soviets did not have a comprehensive strategy to reconcile their interest in a transformation in Portugal with their support for the liberation movements. They rightly assumed that developments in the colonies had direct implications on the constellation of power in Lisbon, and they did not want to jeopardize the prospects of the Portuguese communists within the provisional government. However, this is not to say that Moscow was uninterested in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. The Soviet Union, along with other Eastern European countries, would become instrumental in the development and implementation of the post-colonial developmental programs in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. Both Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique would adopt elements of the socialist planned economy as the model for economic development, and at its Third Congress in February 1977 FRELIMO would officially become a Marxist-Leninist Party. The outcome of decolonization in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique was thus, from the Soviet perspective, a victory for the international communist movement.

One man who was deeply dissatisfied with the outcome of decolonization in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique was General António de Spínola. In September 1974, he promised to take personal control over decolonization in Angola. In a conversation with the US ambassador to Portugal, Stuart Nash Scott, Spínola's aide Nunes Barata passed a message to Washington: "Barata said Angolan independence will not be handled precipitously and noted that since difficulties between various guerrilla groups vying for power are well known to the world, Portugal will have more time to deal with Angola than it had with the other two territories."[586]

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[584] Ibid., p. 588.
[585] Nelson to Washington, "FRELIMO-Portuguese Agreement", 7 September 1974, Wikileaks.
[586] From Scott to Washington, 24 September 1974, "Spinola to Take More Direct Role in Decolonization Process", Wikileaks.

The Search for Unity in Angola, April 1974–January 1975

Until September 1974, the Portuguese did not seriously consider negotiations on Angolan decolonization. The Angolan national liberation movement was divided into three rival factions – UNITA, led by Jonas Savimbi; the FNLA, led by Holden Roberto; and the MPLA, led by Agostinho Neto. It was thus unclear exactly who would represent Angola in negotiations with Portugal. As General Costa Gomes told the US ambassador shortly after the coup, in Angola there was less antagonism between races, and since there was no single nationalist movement that dominated the political scene, there was a possibility that the blacks would opt for some form of confederation with Portugal.[587] The Portuguese were in a relatively strong military position in Angola and thus were not under extreme pressure to negotiate. Mário Soares, the main Portuguese negotiator, was busy making a deal with the PAIGC and FRELIMO. This further delayed negotiations for independence in Angola.

Meanwhile, the power vacuum in Angola created in the aftermath of the 25 April coup led to the intensification of local and regional rivalries. The smallest nationalist group was UNITA. The group had a small following in the south and southeast of the country, but it did not have any sizeable guerrilla force, especially in comparison to its rivals. However, UNITA did have Jonas Savimbi. A charismatic Ovimbundu leader, Savimbi fashioned himself as a man of the people, but he was also a shrewd diplomat keenly aware of what his interlocutor was willing to hear. In 1972 he had signed a deal with the Angolan governor-general, Costa Gomes, by which UNITA would help eliminate the MPLA in eastern Angola. When the junta called on the Angolan nationalist movements to cease fire after 25 April, Savimbi was the only one who signed the agreement in June.

The second contender for power in Angola was the MPLA. Led by the Mbundu intellectual and poet Agostinho Neto, the MPLA leadership exhibited an explicitly non-

[587] Scott (U.S. Ambassador, Lisbon) to Washington, 21 May 1974, "General Costa Gomes Comments on Portuguese Africa".

racist ideology based on a notion of redistributive justice that was prevalent among the Luanda middle class. Neto enjoyed long-standing contacts with PCP leader Alvaro Cunhal, who had helped him escape from prison in 1962. The MPLA had mounted a formidable military challenge to the Portuguese colonial army in eastern Angola, but by 1974 the organization was in a weak position due to military defeats and a leadership crisis. One breakaway faction under informal patronage of Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda, known as "Eastern revolt", was led by Daniel Chipenda, a charismatic Ovimbundu leader who was critical of the MPLA's elitism and of mistakes during the campaign in eastern Angola. Yet another faction, known as "Active Revolt", led by Mário de Andrade and his brother Pinto de Andrade, found support from Marien Ngouabi, the president of Congo-Brazzaville. Although Ngouabi had allowed the MPLA to use Congo-Brazzaville as a launching pad for guerrilla operations in neighboring, oil-rich Cabinda, Ngouabi was not a neutral observer of Angolan politics. Revenues from oil sales in the exclave had reached $450 million a year by 1974, and Ngouabi was keen to keep a stake in Cabinda.[588]

However, Ngouabi could not match the ambition of his closest neighbor and main rival, the Zairian president, Joseph Mobutu. Since the early 1960s, Mobutu had been grooming his protégé and close friend Holden Roberto, with whom he had long-standing ties of kinship, culture, and aversion to communism. Roberto and Mobutu had cooperated to exclude the MPLA from Bakongo-dominated northern Angola, which led to the first armed clashes between the MPLA and FNLA in the early 1960s. With the MPLA linked to the pro-Lumumbist opposition, Mobutu believed that having the MPLA in power would constitute a great danger to his personal rule. Moreover, with Holden Roberto in power, Zaire would be guaranteed a stake in the Cabindan oil. The FNLA did not have a clear political program, but Roberto was an outspoken critic of communism, as a result of which he had secured the backing of the Kennedy administration and a limited financial contribution from the CIA. Roberto had been building his armed

[588] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, p. 253.

forces: with Mobutu's mediation, he had secured a large consignment of arms from China and Romania. China also provided instructors to train the FNLA armed forces at the main military base at Kinkuzu.[589]

Regional and intra-Angolan rivalries became immediately apparent when the four presidents – Kenneth Kaunda, Marien Ngouabi, Joseph Mobutu, and the Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere – tried to unite the Angolan factions in the aftermath of the coup in Lisbon. At a meeting supervised by the four presidents in Bukavu, Zaire, Agostinho Neto, Holden Roberto, and Daniel Chipenda signed an agreement to form a common front shortly after the MPLA conference that was supposed to resolve the leadership crisis. Nyerere was probably the most neutral of the four, and it was he who insisted that Neto attend. The meeting of all the MPLA's factions on 12 August near Lusaka did not solve the leadership crisis. After eleven days of bickering, Neto and his supporters left, while the remaining delegates elected Chipenda as the new MPLA leader. When Chipenda moved to Kinshasa and formed a tentative alliance with Holden Roberto, Mobutu welcomed the move.

Mobutu was playing the game on many levels. On one hand, he sheltered Luís Ranque Franque and Alexander Taty, the leaders of the Cabindan separatist movement known as the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FREC; *Frente para a Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda*). At the same time, he supported Roberto and starting putting pressure on Washington to increase its support for the FNLA. When Zairian foreign minister Jean Umba-di-Lutete visited Washington in August, he asked secretary of state Henry Kissinger to increase support for Holden Roberto. The Soviet Union had shown great interest in Angola, and they were pressuring the Portuguese to deal with Neto alone. "Perhaps the United States could assist us in our efforts to counter this pressure," Umba-di-Lutete argued. Kissinger responded that he had not yet studied the problem, but assured him that any suggestions Mobutu might have on the subject would be studied sympathetically.[590]

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[589] Ibid.
[590] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 99.

It is not clear how the Soviet leadership evaluated the situation in Angola immediately after the coup in Lisbon. Oleg Nazhestkin writes that, as early as June 1974, the KGB warned the CC CPSU International Department that the United States, its NATO allies, South Africa, and Zaire were worried that immediate decolonization in Angola could lead to an MPLA victory, which went against their economic and strategic interests in the region. The KGB apparently warned that the Western powers could resort to military intervention in order to block Neto from gaining power.[591] While Yevsyukov who did not relate to Neto on a personal level, Nazhestkin had established a personal connection with Neto since 1962, when he was stationed at the KGB *rezidentura* in Léopoldville. Given that the Soviets had threatened shortly before the coup to cut assistance to Neto if he did not reconcile with Daniel Chipenda, it is fair to say that they were still expecting some form of reconciliation between the two.[592] Nazhestkin, the KGB officer responsible for Angola at this point, also writes that Soviet intelligence reports indicated that Mobutu was making plans to annex Cabinda.[593]

Chipenda's deal with Joseph Mobutu sealed his political fate. "Chipenda and his supporters have been discredited because of their open compromise with Mobutu and the FNLA," argued the first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Brazzaville, Boris Putilin, in conversation with his Polish counterpart, Bojko. Boris Putilin was a military intelligence (GRU) officer who had arrived in Brazzaville a year earlier, specifically to liaise with the MPLA leadership. As he explained to Bojko, Neto enjoyed support from the OAU, the PCP, and Mário Soares; he was also in the best position to negotiate with the Portuguese due to his "racial and tribal affinity" and could be the best man to unite the diverse Angolan factions.[594]

Moscow did not miscalculate: between 12 and 21 September, Neto assembled his supporters at a conference in southeastern Angola. The conference elected a new thirty-five-member-strong central committee headed by a ten-member politburo and

[591] Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," p. 242.
[592] See the previous chapter.
[593] Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," p. 245. This is confirmed by Foreign Ministry reports. See: "Kabinda (Kratkaya Spravka)", 2 october 1974, AVPRF, f.658, op. 13, p. 2, d. 1.
[594] Notatka z rozmowy z I Sekretarzem Ambasady ZSRR w Brazzaville tow. Putilinem, 11 September 1974, AMSZ, 19.77.W1.

revived the MPLA military wing, the Popular Armed Force for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA; *Forças Armadas Popular para Libertação de Angola*).[595] By the time Lisbon turned its attention to Angola in September, there was still no unity between the Angolan factions.

Meanwhile, Spínola was on a collision course with the MFA. In September, he announced that he would take personal charge of the decolonization negotiations and travelled to Cape Verde to meet president Mobutu for discussions on the future of Angola. Rumors emerged that the agreement struck between Mobutu and Spínola at the secret talks was to transfer power in Angola to a coalition of Holden Roberto, Daniel Chipenda, and Jonas Savimbi. Simultaneously, Spínola called for broad support of his policies from the "silent majority." Communists, socialists, and the MFA united to barricade Lisbon against what looked like a rightist coup. On 30 September, after two days of unrest in Lisbon, Spínola resigned and was replaced as interim president by General Costa Gomes, who proclaimed his intention to proceed immediately with decolonization in Angola. On 12 and 21 October Lisbon signed separate ceasefire agreements with the FNLA and the MPLA respectively.

In Angola, this strengthened Vice Admiral António Alva Rosa Coutinho, who had been head of the Angolan junta since July. Coutinho was close to the radical faction within the MFA, for which he was nicknamed 'Red Rosa' by his opponents. He believed the MPLA espoused an explicitly non-racist ideology and enjoyed broad support among the Angolan bureaucracy and intelligentsia. Furthermore, he did not hide his dislike for Zairians. In 1961 Coutinho had been captured by Zairian troops, accused of spying, and imprisoned in Kinshasa, where he was "treated like a spy," as he recounted in an interview. Although he was released after four months, the experience made him believe the Zairians were "black racists" and that with Roberto in power, Mobutu would have de facto control of Angolan politics. "Spínola and Mobutu wanted to

[595] John Marcum, *The Angolan revolution/ Vol.2, Exile politics and guerrilla warfare (1962-1976)*. Studies in communism, revisionism, and revolution (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1978), p. 252. The Politburo included Agostinho Neto as President, Lopo do Nascimento, Lúcio Lara, Carlos Rocha, José Eduardo dos Santos, Joaquim Kapango, Rodriques João Lopes, Pedro Maria Tonha, Jacob Caetano, and Henrique Teles Carreira.

establish FNLA dominance upon Angolan Independence, which for me would be a disaster since it would transform Angola into a Zairian province," he recalled.[596] Following Spínola's resignation, Rosa Coutinho was given the power to negotiate directly with the national liberation movements, and he would use his power as the head of the Portuguese army in Angola to shield the MPLA.

Unilateral ceasefire agreements actually opened up opportunities for open competition between the MPLA and FNLA. Even before the official ceasefire, the FNLA was allowed to enter northern Angola, where they would gradually become the predominant political and military presence.[597] Meanwhile, the MPLA and the Portuguese army launched a joint operation to assert control over Cabinda, where FLEC had taken control of the local administration. On 2 November the joint force entered Cabinda city, secured the telephone and telegraph exchanges, radio station, and the airport, and arrested district governor Themudo Barata, known to be sympathetic to FLEC.[598]

Competition between the MPLA, the FNLA, and UNITA quickly developed over control of Luanda, where all three movements set up officers in early November. The FNLA possessed a clear military superiority, as they were better armed and could easily transport armed loyalists from northern Angola and Zaire. However, the MPLA enjoyed the overwhelming support of the Luandan population, as became clear when a large crowd cheered for Lúcio Lara upon his arrival in the city on 8 November. Rumors quickly spread that both the MPLA and FNLA had smuggled in guns and men to bolster their positions in the capital. The first violent outburst took place on 10 November, when sporadic shooting led to fifty dead and a hundred wounded. The US consul general, Tom Killoran, attributed the violence to "MPLA hotheads" who had taken it

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[596] Interview with Rosa Coutinho in Jaime and Barber, eds., *Angola*, p. 270.

[597] Killoran (U.S. Consul General, Luanda) to Washington, 16 October 1974, "FNLA Strengthens its Political Position", Wikileaks. The US Consul General Tom Killoran was a fairly objective observer of the Angolan political scene, from 1974 to 1975. His views were however largely ignored in Washington. See: Donald Easum, "Assistant Secretary Donald Easum: Hard Times for the African Bureau, 1974-1975: A Diplomatic Adventure Story." *Fifty Years Of U.S. Africa Policy: Reflections of Assistant Secretaries of African Affairs and U.S. Embassy Officials*. Ed. Claudia E. Anyaso. Kindle ed Xlibris, 2011).

[598] Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, pp. 253-254. Also see Porter (U.S. Embassy, Luanda) to Washington, 4 November 1974, "Mini-coup in Cabinda", Wikileaks.

upon themselves to stage a show of force after the UNITA delegation had entered Luanda earlier that day. The FNLA immediately released a strongly worded statement saying that they could bring in "ten thousand men within twenty-four hours" to restore order. On 13 November, Killoran cabled the US State Department: "A siege complex began to take over Luanda in the past two days, and many people are hoarding food and supplies."[599]

It was in this context of rising tensions in Luanda that the MPLA appealed for arms from the Soviet Union in October or November. Georgiy Kornienko, who was responsible for negotiations with the United States and who would become deputy Foreign Minister in 1975, recalls that the CC CPSU Politburo initially agreed only to provide "political and some material support for the MPLA" but refused to become entangled in Angola in military terms, an agreement that perhaps implied that the Soviet Union would not send any more arms to the MPLA. "Only a few days later," Kornienko continues, the International Department received the MPLA's request for arms and drafted a resolution to grant a limited amount of weapons.[600] Boris Ponomarev, the Head of the International Department, Andrey Grechko, the Minister of Defense, and Yuriy Andropov, the KGB Chairman, signed the resolution without any qualms. Kornienko writes that he tried to persuade his boss, Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko, not to sign the resolution because escalation of support for the MPLA might jeopardize relations with the United States. Gromyko hesitated, but nevertheless signed the resolution because, Kornienko believed, he did not want to clash with his colleagues.[601]

We do not know who was the key driving force behind the decision to satisfy the MPLA's request for arms, nor why the CC CPSU Politburo reversed their earlier agreement not to become embroiled in Angola's conflict in military terms, if we are to trust Kornienko's account. Kornienko attributes key responsibility for the reversal of

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[599] Killoran (US Consul General, Luanda) to Washington, 13 November 1974, "Assessment of Recent Wave of Violence in Luanda", Wikileaks.
[600] Kornienko, *Kholodnaia Voina*, p. 210.
[601] Ibid., p. 211.

decision to Boris Ponomarev and his subordinates at the International Department, while he portrays Gromyko as an unwilling participant, hesitant to challenge his colleagues in their bureaucratic sphere of influence. The cadres of the International Department had bureaucratic as well as personal interests in supporting the MPLA's request, since most of them had known Neto and his associates since the early 1960s. It seems that the KGB and the Ministry of Defense were also actively supportive of this decision, as Kornienko's account and future events would suggest. The situation in Portugal might have also played a role. In early November, Alvaro Cunhal made a publicized visit to Moscow, where he spoke with Boris Ponomarev. Anatoliy Chernyaev, who was present at the meeting, wrote in his diary on 3 November: "You are present at history in the making. A lot depends on this man now and not only in Portugal."[602] Although Chernyaev does not make any direct references to Angola, the situation in the country must have been on the agenda. Cunhal had previously intervened on Neto's behalf, and his support was important to Soviet calculations. Ponomarev might have also calculated that by strengthening the MPLA, they would also reinforce Cunhal's position in the new provisional government.[603]

We also still do not know when exactly this decision took place, nor why only in May 1975 did the first sizable shipment of Soviet arms reach Luanda. Arne Westad, who had the opportunity to see Russian documents that are now reclassified, writes that the decision was taken in early December 1974, after Soviet ambassador Yevgeniy Afanasenko had received consent for the operation from Marien Ngouabi, the president of Congo-Brazzaville.[604] The logistics of arms transfers hinged on Ngouabi, because arms could not be directly flown in or shipped to Luanda: the Soviets would have to fly them first to Brazzaville or ship them to the port of Pointe-Noire, from where they would be smuggled undercover and loaded on to the smaller MPLA-owned

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[602] Chernyaev, *Sovmestnyi Iskhod*, p. 114.
[603] There is indirect archival evidence to support this claim. In March 1975, the Head of the Polish Solidarity Committee Kwiryn Grela made this argument after his return from a joint consultation meeting of solidarity committees. See Kwiryn Grela do Jan Czapla, undated, "Dot. Pomocy dla Ruchow Narodowo-wyzwolenczych w Afryce," AAN, PZPR, LXXVI.541.
[604] Westad, "Short Moscow and the Angolan Crisis, 1974-1976: A New Pattern of Intervention," p. 24.

vessels close to the Angolan shore.[605] While Ngouabi agreed to support the Soviet operation, it seemed that he remained hesitant to give all-out support, which, coupled with the overall logistical problems, provides a possible explanation for the delay in arms shipments to the MPLA until May.

Meanwhile, Moscow sought to investigate the situation in Luanda, since the Soviet Union did not have any intelligence or diplomatic presence in Angola. In 1974, the KGB proposed that the *rezidenturas* in Algiers, Rabat, Brazzaville, Bamako, Mogadishu, Lusaka, Nairobi, and Dar es Salaam prepare and send their agents and trusted contacts to Angola and Mozambique to receive information about the situation in both countries.[606] The first Soviet to arrive in Luanda in 1974 was Oleg Ignatyev, in September, followed by Mikhail Zenovich, also a correspondent for *Pravda*. We do not know if Zenovich had any connection with the KGB, but his report submitted to the Foreign Ministry on 27 December sheds light on the kind of information Soviet officials were getting out of Luanda at that point. "Legalization of political parties has created completely new conditions in Angola, whereby prospects of the political parties will be determined by [the] presence of well-trained political cadres, opportunities to organize political and propaganda work, and their ability to form military detachments, trained for combat in urban and rural areas," Zenovich begins.[607] While the MPLA enjoyed support among the "city proletariat, the students and a large section of the intelligentsia," the FNLA had an eight-thousand-strong army "well equipped with Chinese arms and trained with Chinese instructors," Zenovich reported to the Foreign Ministry.[608] Mobutu was another big player in Angola: he was courting Daniel Chipenda and Jonas Savimbi, both of whom he envisioned would enter a provisional government led by his protégée Holden Roberto. Cabindan secession was his "back-up plan."[609] Rosa Coutinho informed Zenovich that the Soviets should establish direct

[605] Putilin, "My Obespechivali," p. 18.
[606] Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The world was going our way: the KGB and the Battle for the Third World* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), p. 450.
[607] "Informatsiya o Komandirovke v Angolu," 27 December 1974, AVPRF, f. 658, op. 14, p. 62, d. 1, p. 69.
[608] Ibid., p. 70.
[609] Ibid., pp. 70-71.

economic and trade contacts with Angola.[610] We do not know if Mikhail Zenovich went to Luanda before or after the CC CPSU Politburo decided to supply arms to the MPLA, but his report must have confirmed that the military prowess of the parties concerned would define the political outcomes in Angola.

Soviet support for the MPLA strengthened by the end of 1974, when Henrique "Iko" Carreira and Pedro van Dunem, the two MPLA members responsible for military operations and logistics, visited Moscow in late December. That the two men came to discuss military matters is clear from that fact that they had lengthy discussions with General Ivan Plakhin, a veteran of the Second World War who had coordinated military aid to the liberation movements since the mid-1960s. The message that the MPLA delegation pushed forward in Moscow was that the situation in Angola was an extension of the struggle in Portugal: the MPLA had entered into an alliance with the MFA, while the right-wing forces in Portugal were behind the FNLA. Carreira also said that the FNLA was in a much stronger military position and was getting ready to seize power by force, while the Portuguese army was war-weary and thus would not intervene. "The battles are waiting for us," he warned.[611] We do not know the details of the discussions that took place; it is very likely that the Soviets promised Ike Carreira and Pedro van Dunem that they would provide training for a group of the MPLA militants – a group that would indeed be trained in the USSR in the following months and would be known as the "Ninth Brigade".

Meanwhile, the Portuguese government negotiated a power-sharing agreement between the MPLA, the FNLA, and UNITA. Talks between the liberation movements and the Portuguese took place at the Penina Hotel, near Alvor, and on 15 January, all parties signed a power-sharing agreement outlining a schedule for the decolonization of Angola, known as the Alvor Agreement. The three liberation movements and the Portuguese authorities would form the transitional government, which would be run

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[610] Ibid., p. 72.
[611] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 35. On General Ivan Plakhin, see: Vladimir Shubin, "Unsung heroes: the Soviet Military and the Liberation of Southern Africa." *Cold War in Southern Africa: White Power, Black Liberation*. Ed. Sue Onslow (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 165.

jointly by the Portuguese high commissioner and the three-man presidential council. The agreement also called for the creation of a mixed military force to compensate for the withdrawal of Portuguese troops. Elections would be held in October with de jure independence to follow on 11 November 1975.

Moscow saw clear parallels between developments in Portugal and Angola. Mobutu, a well-known ally of the United States, was conniving with António de Spínola to exclude the MPLA from sharing power in Angola. Meanwhile, the US was backing Spínola's attempts to reverse the revolution in Portugal. The MPLA played into this vision and reinforced it: the situation in Angola mirrored the struggles in Portugal, and military reinforcements were necessary because Mobutu, backed by the United States, was ready to seize power by force. Although Neto himself did not have a good personal relationship with Soviet officials, he had the backing of the left-wing coalition in Lisbon (Mário Soares, Alvaro Cunhal, Rosa Coutinho), and was thus the best candidate to negotiate with the Portuguese. Moscow decided to satisfy the request for military assistance, although there was no sense of urgency. Moscow had very little knowledge of the situation in Angola, while the Alvor Agreement provided a framework for a peaceful transition to independence. There was still time to observe the situation and work out the details.

The Alvor Agreement Unravels, January–June 1975

In late January, Igor Uvarov, an employee of the Soviet information agency TASS in Algeria, flew to Luanda. He arrived shortly before Rosa Coutinho was to be replaced by the new governor, António da Silva Cardoso. Uvarov, who had been instructed to report on daily developments in Angola, checked into the famous Tivoli Hotel and started sending regular telex messages to TASS.[612] Gradually he became well acquainted with the MPLA leadership and was allowed to use their radio channels to wire confidential messages to the Soviet embassy in Brazzaville.[613] Alexander

[612] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 37.
[613] Ibid., p. 38.

Dzasokhov, who arrived in Luanda in February 1975, first believed that he and his partner were the only Soviet citizens in Angola, but upon his return to Moscow, he discovered that Uvarov was working for the GRU, Soviet military intelligence, and that he was also in Luanda at the time of their trip.[614] Dzasokhov writes that the GRU and its chief, Petr Ivashutin, were very interested in Angola because, as he explains, the problems of South Africa, Namibia, and other southern African countries "centered on Luanda."[615] The MPLA victory in Angola could open up possibilities for military surveillance in the region, and could serve as a further impetus for the liberation of Namibia, Zimbabwe, and maybe even South Africa. While the roles of the GRU and of Ivashutin in this story are not yet fully clear, Uvarov was definitely the main man responsible for observing the developments in Luanda and reporting what he saw back to Moscow.

Meanwhile, violence in the capital continued even after the Alvor Agreement entered into force. One problem was the agreement did not limit the number of troops the liberation movements were allowed to maintain outside the joint military force. Yet another was that the rival parties were allowed to keep their separate barracks and installations in the city. The MPLA, the FNLA, and UNITA thus continued to try and increase their troop strengths.[616] On 25 January the FNLA kidnapped and beat up the deputy director of a local radio station, who was believed to be an MPLA sympathizer.[617] Shooting resumed after the inauguration of the provisional government on 31 January, provoking a series of belligerent communiqués from the FNLA directed against the MPLA.[618] Holden Roberto refused to come back to Luanda, but Agostinho Neto was expected to arrive on 4 February, the anniversary of the 1961

[614] Dzasokhov, *Chelovek i Politika*, p. 39.
[615] Ibid.
[616] Killoran (U.S. Consul General, Luanda) to Washington, 16 January 1975, "Independence Agreement: Strength of Liberation Forces and the New Mixed Military Force," Wikileaks. According to Portuguese army estimates, by February, Holden Roberto had mastered about twenty thousand men, Agostinho Neto had 10 thousand, and Jonas Savimbi could count on eight thousand. These numbers were highly exaggerated.
[617] Killoran (U.S. Consul General, Luanda) to Washington, 30 January 1975, 'FNLA Closes Down Official Radio Station and Beats Up its Deputy Director', Wikileaks.
[618] Killoran (U.S. Consul General, Luanda) to Washington, "Roundup of Recent Liberation Group Activities," 4 February 1975, Wikileaks.

uprising in the capital. The MPLA thus invited delegates from the socialist countries to participate in celebrations of the anniversary and of Neto's arrival at the capital.

Moscow instructed Alexander Dzasokhov and his colleague Sergey Vydrin to fly to Luanda with the task of "reconnecting with Neto" and assessing the situation in the capital. Dzasokhov recalls that when they landed in the city on 4 February, the situation was very tense. The two moved into a hotel only to find unknown people knocking on their hotel door in the middle of the night asking for political asylum, a move that Dzasokhov believed was a provocation. The next day they decided to move to a different hotel, and stayed under a cover story of being "experts in citrus fruit" until they were found by the MPLA and brought to Neto's safe house, which was surrounded by armed guards.[619] The MPLA leadership were clear about their message to Dzasokhov: their movement enjoyed broad popular support and commanded around eight thousand supporters under arms, but there was an imminent danger that Zaire would seize power by force.[620]

The MPLA had a similar message for Lucjan Wolniewicz, the Polish ambassador to Zaire, who also arrived in Luanda in February for the celebrations. Carlos Rocha, the head of the MPLA office in Luanda, told Wolniewicz that the MPLA did not expect such "strong attacks from international monopolies, such brutal attacks from the FNLA, inspired by the USA, France, Great Britain, Belgium, and Zaire." The FNLA had smuggled well-trained guerrilla units into Luanda who were terrorizing the population at night, and the FNLA wanted to start a civil war and would liquidate the MPLA if they did not respond, Rocha continued. Lopo de Nascimento and Agostinho Neto repeated the same message. Neto asked for transport and material assistance and requested that the socialist countries set up representative offices in the city. Wolniewicz, writing to Warsaw, advised the Polish government to satisfy Neto's request for assistance. He

[619] Dzasokhov, *Chelovek i Politika*, p. 38.
[620] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 39.

also warned about the continuing violence in the city: “Although Luanda seems calm, one can feel tension, fear. Shooting at night is considered normal.”[621]

The MPLA resorted to a more aggressive strategy to build up its presence in Luanda following Neto’s return on 4 February. First of all, the leadership organized “popular power” and “neighborhood committees” consisting of its supporters in the suburbs of Luanda. Holden Roberto immediately attacked the committees as “embryonic Soviets” whose purpose was to establish the “dictatorship of the proletariat”, warning of the possibility of civil war if the committees were not immediately disbanded.[622] On 13 February, the MPLA launched a military operation to dislodge Chipenda’s faction from Luanda.[623] General Antonio da Silva Cardoso, the newly appointed Portuguese High Commissioner in Luanda, speaking to Tom Killoran that same day, expressed his deep concern about the situation in Angola, saying that civil war would be inevitable if Daniel Chipenda joined the FNLA. Cardoso thus urged Killoran to seek US pressure on Mobutu to prevent such an alliance.[624] In March, the MPLA contingent undertook military training at Perevalnoye and the higher officer courses in Solnechnogorsk, near Moscow.[625] From Yugoslavia, the MPLA also received $100,000 to transport weapons stockpiled in Dar es Salaam to Angola.[626]

In March, the Solidarity Committees of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, and Hungary assembled for one of their regular joint sessions in Berlin. The head of the Soviet delegation, Alexander Dzasokhov, informed his colleagues that the USSR would provide additional “special military assistance to the MPLA” given its extraordinary needs. The head of the Polish committee, Kwiryn Grela, recommended that Poland also render aid because their colleagues were doing just that, because it would also be an expression of “proletarian internationalism” before

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[621] "Sprawozdanie z pobytu w Luandzie/Angola/ w dniach od 2 do 7 lutego 1975," 12 February 1975, AAN, PZPR LXXVI.541.
[622] Killoran (U.S. Consul General, Luanda) to Washington, 20 February 1975, "FNLA President Roberto Talks Tough to MPLA," Wikileaks.
[623] Killoran (U.S. Consul General, Luanda) to Washington, 14 February 1975, "Fighting in Luanda - Neto's Forces Attack Chipenda - Sit Rep N. 1," Wikileaks.
[624] Killoran (U.S. Consul General, Luanda) to Washington, "Conversation with High Commisioner," 14 February 1975, WikiLeaks.
[625] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 40. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 250. Shubin puts the number of trainees at around two hundred and thirty, Gleijeses at a hundred.
[626] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 250.

the party congress, and because it would help "progressive and left-wing forces in Portugal." The head of the Polish International Department, Richard Frelek, agreed to allocate 5 million zloty in equipment, but the first shipment would not arrive until the next November.[627] The GDR became the largest provider of humanitarian assistance: between January and June, Berlin dispatched four ships containing food, medicines, medical equipment, textiles, and clothing.[628]

In Luanda, the violence continued. One important episode took place in late March, when the MPLA and FNLA confronted each other with mortars and rocket-propelled grenades, leaving over two hundred dead. Reports also emerged that the FNLA had been ordered to attack the MPLA throughout the city, and that the FNLA had massacred MPLA soldiers and civilians.[629] The situation remained relatively quiet for a month, but urban fighting erupted again on 28 April when the MPLA units allegedly attacked the FNLA headquarters. The next day the Yugoslav freighter *Postoyna* docked at Luanda port, carrying weapons and supplies for the MPLA.[630] Tom Killoran reported to Washington that the fighting was part of an attempted coup planned by the MPLA to coincide with the Labor Day celebrations: the MPLA allegedly planned to instigate ethnic violence, which would lead to a "bloodbath" during the May Day parade and would give a pretext for a takeover of power from the Portuguese. He also reported that Neto had allegedly asked Savimbi to join in on the plot, but the latter had refused. Killoran believed that the MPLA had gone ahead with certain parts of the plan: there was a new white–black element to the violence and weapons had arrived alongside "Russian and Bloc personnel, perhaps to direct the final stages of the coup."[631]There is no evidence to suggest that Killoran's source was indeed accurate.

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[627] Kwiryn Grela do Jan Czapla, undated, "Dot. Pomocy dla Ruchow Narodowo-wyzwolenczych w Afryce," AAN, PZPR, LXXVI.541.
[628] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 349.
[629] Killoran (U.S. Consul General) to Luanda, "FNLA Massacres of MPLA troops," 27 March 1975, WikiLeaks.
[630] Killoran (U.S. Consul General, Luanda) to Washington, 30 April 1975, "Urban Fighting Erupts Again in Luanda," Wikileaks.
[631] Killoran (U.S. Consul General) to Washington, 5 May 1975, "Report of Attempted MPLA Coup", Wikileaks.

There were indeed Soviet citizens in Luanda at the time. In March, Navy captain Aleksey Dubenko visited Luanda and stayed for a couple of months.[632] The aim of his visit is unclear: he was clearly there to survey the military situation, but there is no evidence that he was helping the MPLA to direct the coup. As May Day approached, another high-level delegation – Petr Yevsyukov, Eduard Kapskiy, and Gennadiy Yanaev – flew to Angola to participate in the celebrations. All three were highly important. Yevsyukov, the main expert on Portuguese colonies in the International Department, had been well acquainted with the MPLA leadership since the early 1960s. Kapskiy was an Africa expert; he would later supersede Evsyukov as the main authority on the former Portuguese colonies in the International Department. As the head of the Committee for Youth Organizations, Yanaev was responsible for developing links with the international youth movement. These men's experiences in Luanda would become crucial in determining Soviet attitudes towards the developing crisis in Angola.

Yevsyukov, Kapskiy, and Yanaev flew to Luanda shortly before the Labor Day parade scheduled for the First of May. On their approach to the airport, they already realized there was heavy fighting in the city: looking down from the airplane, they could not see the landing strip because of smoke and could hear short bursts of sub-machine gunfire from all directions.[633] From conversations with Agostinho Neto, the delegation learned that the MPLA had tried but failed to establish contacts with UNITA, and, given the recurrent provocation from the FNLA, armed action was the only way out.[634] On their return to Moscow, Kapskiy, Yanaev, and Yevsyukov concluded that armed conflict loomed inevitably, especially after the departure of the Portuguese army, and recommended appealing to the African leaders to broaden their support for the MPLA.[635]

Their predictions proved correct. In May, violence between the MPLA and the FNLA spread from the capital to the interior of Angola. The FNLA cleared the MPLA

[632] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 40. The record of this trip is not unavailable.
[633] Ibid., p. 41.
[634] Ibid., p. 42.
[635] Quoted in ibid., p. 43. Arne Westad provides evidence that the Soviet embassy in Brazzaville as of mid-April did not believe that an all-out civil war would break out in Angola before independence. The violence that Evsyukov, Kapskiy and Yanaev experienced in Luanda must have altered their perspective. See Westad, *Global Cold War*.

from northern Zaire and Uíge, a large coffee-producing province bordering Zaire. Meanwhile, the MPLA received a first shipment of Soviet weapons, including small arms, 82mm mortars, and some portable rocket launchers known as GRAD-P.[636] Thus armed, they retaliated against the FNLA in Cuanza Norte, a district about hundred miles northeast of Luanda. In June the FNLA took over Carmona, the capital of Uíge. Heavy fighting was concentrated around the town of Caxito, an important strategic location to the north of Luanda.[637]

On 5 June, the head of the Africa Section at the International Department, Petr Manchkha, participated in a closed-door session of the presidium of the Soviet Solidarity Committee. His evaluation of the situation in Angola was highly critical: "Undeniably, there will be bloodshed," said Manchkha. "In this circle, I can say that there is a possibility of a Zairian scenario, when all ours [our friends] will be beaten," he stated.[638] Then he explained that what was going on in Angola was a "serious international imperialist conspiracy." Having suffered a series of defeats in Asia, Manchkha continued, the "imperialist circles" had decided to strike against the Soviet Union in Africa.[639] What he meant by this was that the final loss of South Vietnam to the North Vietnamese forces with the occupation of Saigon, and the fall of Cambodia to the Chinese-backed "Khmer Rouge" in April, were considered serious defeats for US interests in the region and to US global prestige. Manchkha continued: the Soviet Union had invested "enormous material resources" into the MPLA, and it would be bad if those resources were lost in vain, but it was important in a different sense too. "Forces of socialism and capitalism are concentrated there now," he argued. Thus, he urged the committee to harness support for the MPLA through international organizations such as the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) and the OAU. This was

[636] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 44. The portable rocket launchers known as „Grad-P" were supplied heavily to North Vietnam.
[637] Porter (U.S. Embassy, Luanda) to Washington, 30 May 1975, "Major Fighting Breaks in the Interior of Angola", Wikileaks; Porter (U.S. Embassy, Luanda) to Washington, 1 June 1974, "MPLA May have Begun its Offensive," Wikileaks.
[638] Transcript of the SCSCAA Presidum Meeting, 5 June 1975, GARF, f. 9540, op. 1, d. 387, pp. 24-25.
[639] Ibid., p. 25.

particularly important because the MPLA had been "somewhat unfairly" branded as pro-communist and pro-Soviet, which harmed its image, Manchkha argued.[640]

By June, the Soviets believed that Angola had become a Cold War conflict and initiated their response. The note of 21 June delivered from Moscow to the PUPW Politburo read:

> The reactionary FNLA led by Holden Roberto acting with support from the Zairian President Mobutu, the United States, and China are striving to seize power by force… The MPLA has already received part of the Soviet weaponry and other assistance via the People's Republic of Congo [Congo-Brazzaville]. In the nearest future, it will receive larger quantities of weapons and means of transport. The Soviet government has turned to leaders of several African countries with the words of concern about the situation in Angola and has appealed for them to investigate whether they could offer the MPLA political and other assistance.[641]

Soviet views of the nature and the possible outcomes of the Angolan conflict changed quite dramatically between January and June 1975. While there were concerns about the strength of the FNLA relative to the MPLA, by June the International Department believed there was an international conspiracy directed towards the Soviet Union and that bloodshed was very likely. The main source of information must have been the MPLA: during the few fact-finding missions, the MPLA leadership continually emphasized the threat of imminent danger from the Zaire-backed FNLA, from the United States, and from "reactionary forces" of all kinds. What the MPLA leadership claimed was happening in Angola fit with their understanding of the world in terms of the Cold War. It also matched their personal experiences in Luanda. The Congolese crisis and the "Zairian scenario" provided useful reference points. The trip that Petr Yevsyukov, Eduard Kapskiy, and Gennadiy Yanaev undertook to Luanda in April 1975 seems to have been crucial in confirming Soviet fears that the MPLA was being aggressively pushed out of Luanda by the FNLA, judging by the level of violence that all three witnessed during their stay. It was after this trip that the Soviets started shipping their first weapons to the MPLA, based on the belief there was a serious international

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[640] Ibid., p. 26.
[641] "Informacja o Sytuacji w Angoli Przekazana Czlonkowi Biura Politycznego, Sekretarzowi KC - Janowi Szydlakowi przez Ambasadora ZSRR - St. Pilotowicza," 21 June 1975, AAN, PZPR, LXXVI.679.

conspiracy in Angola. However, any serious US aid to the FNLA/UNITA, the "conspiracy" that Petr Manchkha spoke about in June, would not materialize until July.

Washington and Pretoria Intervene in Angola, June–September 1975

An embattled Henry Kissinger finally turned his attention to Angola in June. Embittered by what he saw as American defeats in Cambodia and Vietnam, a strong American response to what Kissinger believed was an imminent Soviet takeover in Angola was his way of showing that the United States had not been defeated in the face of the communist victories. Kissinger was never particularly interested in Africa, but Mobutu was an important ally in the region and had been pushing Kissinger to increase support for Holden Roberto since August 1974.[642] On 22 January, the 40 Committee, which was responsible for discussing and approving major covert operations in the US, approved $300,000 for Holden Roberto.[643] Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda pushed Kissinger to intervene, but on the side of Jonas Savimbi, whom Kaunda had come to believe was the best compromise leader.[644] The Chinese also exerted indirect pressure: in May, Kissinger had spoken to Huang Chen, the Chinese liaison chief in Washington. Chen had told Kissinger that détente had given Moscow a chance to pursue expansionist policies in Africa.[645] However, Kissinger faced opposition from the State Department and especially the African Bureau.[646] Even his colleagues at the 40 Committee – Under-Secretary of State Joseph Sisco and Director of Bureau of Intelligence and Research William Hyland – questioned whether Angola mattered enough to justify direct intervention. Kissinger, however, was determined that the US could not let the "Communists win."[647] Then Mobutu stepped up the pressure.

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[642] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 99.
[643] Ibid., Document 102.
[644] Ibid., Document 103.
[645] Jussi M. Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 408-409.
[646] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 106.
[647] Ibid.

On 15 June, the Zairian daily *Elima* published an article accusing the United States of a failed coup against President Mobutu. Shortly afterwards, US Ambassador Deane Hinton was declared *persona non grata* and ordered to leave the country. Kissinger was deeply concerned that this could mean a break with the most important US ally in the region and immediately dispatched Sheldon Vance, a former ambassador to Zaire known for his close relations with Mobutu, to Kinshasa to mend fences.[648] In Kinshasa on 23 June, Mobutu told Vance that the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia had been "pouring in" arms and money to Neto through Brazzaville and that Zaire was running low on arms and money for Holden Roberto. Like Kenneth Kaunda, Mobutu also believed that Jonas Savimbi was the man most suitable to become president.[649]Back in Washington on 27 June, Vance impressed upon Kissinger his view that Mobutu expected substantially more money and also arms for Roberto and Savimbi.[650]At the meeting of the National Security Council later that day, Kissinger tried to convince his colleagues that it was necessary to supply arms to Roberto and Savimbi. Control of Luanda was a matter of great urgency, because if the MPLA managed to take it over, then they could gradually obtain international recognition. "In the Congo civil war, the reason we came out on top is because we never lost Léopoldville," argued Kissinger. Yet again he faced objections from his colleagues, from CIA director William Colby, who was afraid of the CIA being criticized by Congress over arms transfers, and from Secretary of Defense Arthur Schlesinger, who questioned whether Roberto was effective as a military leader. However, Gerald Ford supported Kissinger: "It seems to me that doing nothing is unacceptable," concluded the president.[651]

Meanwhile, the MPLA was pushing the FNLA out of Luanda. In a three-day battle, MPLA detachments took control of the roads leading into the city and then attacked the FNLA barracks and headquarters in the city center.[652] At the 40 Committee meeting on 14 July, Colby confirmed: "Neto was on the offensive." Yet again

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[648] On American relationship with Mobutu see Götz Bechtolsheimer, *Breakfast with Mobutu: Congo, the United States and the Cold War, 1964-1981* (PhD dissertation: London School of Economics and Political Science, 2012).
[649] Vance to Washington, "Breakfast with Mobutu," 23 June 1975, WikiLeaks.
[650] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 112.
[651] Ibid., Document 113.
[652] Killoran to Washington, 11 July 1975, "MPLA Moves to Throw FNLA out of Luanda", Wikileaks.

his colleagues voiced their objections to sending arms, and yet again Kissinger dismissed them: "If all the surrounding areas see Angola go Communist, they will assume that the US has no will. Coming on top of Vietnam and Indochina their perception of what the US can and will do will be negative."[653] Kissinger did not have a good understanding of the region. He saw the Angolan civil war in terms of the Cold War, and believed it was his duty to show that the US was willing to act against the Soviets.[654] On 18 July, President Ford approved a covert operation in Angola, along with $6 million to cover expenses. "I think we can defend it to the public. I won't let someone in Foggy Bottom deter me," commented Ford to Kissinger and Brent Scowcroft. "Now, so long as they think we are pushing détente, they [the Soviets] will keep their heads down," responded Kissinger to the President.[655] The covert operation, codenamed IAFEATURE, surged ahead.

Helping Zaire to defeat the MPLA constituted the centerpiece of the plan. Following presidential approval, Sheldon Vance flew to Kinshasa to work out the details with the Zairians. Mobutu told him he urgently needed 5,000 M-16 assault rifles with two months' ammunition and anti-tank guns to counter the Soviet-supplied armored vehicles. Vance believed that more money was needed to make a "real impact in Angola." Kissinger himself believed as much.[656] On 27 July, Ford approved an additional $8 million for the operation.[657] Zaire would release weapons to Holden Roberto, while the CIA would resupply the Zairian armed forces. Kissinger urged the CIA to act fast in order to get the weapons to Angola immediately.[658] Colby obliged: the CIA arranged the transport of weapons from the CIA warehouse in San Antonio, Texas to Charleston, South Carolina. From there, US Air Force C-141 Starlifters would fly the weapons to Kinshasa.[659]

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[653] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 115.
[654] Ibid., p. 117. On Kissinger's motivation also see: Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, p. 43.
[655] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 118. "Foggy Bottom" is often used as a metonym to refer to the US Department of State because it refers to a neighborhood in Washington, where its headquarters are located. On Kissinger's policy in the third world, see Hanhimäki, *Flawed Architect*.
[656] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Documents 120-121.
[657] Ibid., Document 122.
[658] Ibid., Document 121.
[659] Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, p. 58.

At around the same time, South Africa escalated its aid program to the FNLA and UNITA. The general outline of South African involvement on the side of the FNLA and UNITA is well known. In early 1975, officers from the South African Defense Force (SADF) established first contacts with Holden Roberto, Jonas Savimbi, and Daniel Chipenda, who promised they would not support the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), the national liberation movement for the independence of Namibia. On 14 July, Prime Minister John Vorster approved an assistance package including weapons, supplies, and equipment for Savimbi and Roberto worth 20 million rand. In early August, the SADF seized control of Calueque Dam and the Ruacana hydroelectric installations across the Angola–Namibia border, supposedly to protect the contract workers who had complained of harassment by UNITA. In early September, the SADF started training Daniel Chipenda's branch of the FNLA and UNITA.

It is less clear who was driving involvement from inside the Vorster government and how much coordination existed between Pretoria and Washington. So far, the broad agreement has been that the impetus for Pretoria's involvement came from Washington.[660] Recently, Jamie Miller has argued that the United States had little to do with the South African decision to intervene and that it was the head of the SADF, P. W. Botha, who pushed the escalation of involvement. Botha was particularly concerned that Angola under the MPLA would become a safe haven for SWAPO, a belief that fit his vision of a communist-inspired "total onslaught." It was Botha who convinced Vorster to provide arms and training for the FNLA and UNITA and who ordered the SADF to seize the border sites in early July, behind the backs of his colleagues, Secretary for Foreign Affairs Brand Fourie and the head of the Bureau of State Security (BOSS), Hendrik van den Bergh.[661]

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[660] Hermann Giliomee has argued that Vorster was tempted to cooperate with Ford and Kissinger in fighting Communism in Southern Africa. Hermann Giliomee, *The Last Afrikaner Leaders: a Supreme Test of Power*. Reconsiderations in Southern African History (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2012). Also see Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*; Westad, *Global Cold War*.

[661] Jamie Miller, "Yes, Minister: Reassessing South Africa's Intervention in the Angolan Civil War, 1975–1976," *Journal of Cold War Studies,* 15 3 (Summer 2013).

Kissinger saw the Angolan conflict in terms of the Cold War: he believed that the Soviets were behind the MPLA, and he was determined to counter what he saw as Soviet influence in southern Africa. Mobutu consistently pushed for US involvement, because Angola was crucial to his security and economic interests in the region, and for that reason he portrayed the MPLA as pro-Soviet and exaggerated the extent of Soviet aid to the MPLA. It seems that not only Kissinger but also his colleagues, with the exception of the African Bureau, bought into that paradigm, although they questioned whether Angola was important enough to risk the money, resources, and criticism from Congress and the public. For Kissinger, Angola assumed such importance because the perception of American strength was crucial to his notion of détente. Kissinger believed that the US should only negotiate with the Soviet Union on important matters from a position of strength or leverage. This desire for leverage lay at the foundation of American rapprochement with China, the centerpiece of Kissinger's triangular diplomacy. However, Kissinger did not think that he had any leverage in the case of Angola, and thus he feared that the "diplomatic option" favored by the State Department could have exposed American weakness to the world. In view of the recent defeats in Vietnam and Cambodia, he could not afford this. He also believed that détente would act as a constraining influence on Soviet actions in Angola. In a way, he proved to be right.

Moscow between Havana and Luanda, August–October 1975

In July and August, the MPLA continued campaigning for additional military aid. Speaking to the Soviet ambassador to Congo-Brazzaville, Yevgeniy Afanasenko, Neto said that the MPLA was no weaker than the FNLA in military terms, but that it still needed to build up its forces, and thus passed on a request for additional military and financial aid.[662] The MPLA also reiterated its request for assistance to the Cuban leadership.[663] This is when the Cubans became involved in Angola. On 3 August, the head of the Cuban *Décima Dirección* (Tenth Directorate), Diaz Argüelles, led a mission

[662] Westad, "Short Moscow and the Angolan Crisis, 1974-1976: A New Pattern of Intervention," p. 33.
[663] For a detailed explanation for the delay, see Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, pp. 246-250.

to investigate what assistance the MPLA required. Neto wanted instructors, but also weapons, clothing, and food for recruits, and Argüelles drafted a proposal along these lines. "In general, he [Neto] wants to make the situation in Angola a vital issue between the systems of Imperialism and Socialism in order to obtain aid from the whole Socialist Camp," Argüelles reported to Cuban leader Fidel Castro on 11 August, when he was back in Havana.[664]

Castro took a personal interest in Angola. In mid-August, therefore, following up on Neto's request and recommendations from Diaz Argüelles, Castro decided on a large Cuban mission in Angola. His proposal was to send 480 Cuban instructors, who would create four training centers, all supplied with enough arms, food, clothing, medicines, and other necessary supplies for six months.[665] Moreover, on 15 August, Castro sent a letter to Leonid Brezhnev informing him of the Cuban decision to send instructors to Angola. Castro asked Brezhnev for Soviet assistance with transportation and for Soviet staff officers to be based both in Havana and Luanda to help with military planning.[666] Back in Luanda on 21 August, Diaz Argüelles, who was now the head of the Cuban military mission in Angola, informed Neto of the Cuban decision. "Comrade Neto accepted our offer with great emotion. He was moved," he recalled.[667] Meanwhile, an MPLA delegation led by Henrique Carreira, Pedro Van Dunem, and Fernando Costa had set out on a major tour of Berlin, Moscow, Warsaw, Sofia, and Budapest to harness additional assistance for the war effort.[668]

The tone of the MPLA delegation was upbeat. Vladimir Shubin, who took part in discussions with Henrique Carreira and Pedro van Dunem in Moscow, writes that the two men were quite optimistic: FAPLA had successfully managed to counter Roberto's advances on Luanda in July, and they would be able to clear the coastal areas and the

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[664] From Diaz Arguelles to Minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces , 11 August 1975, National Security Archive Website.
[665] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 256.
[666] Westad, *Global Cold War*, p. 232. Nazhestkin confirms that Castro sent such a letter. He writes that Castro informed him about the decision to send Cuban instructors and asked for coordination with the Soviet Union. Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," pp. 245-246.
[667] Quote in Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 259.
[668] The MPLA mission was already in Moscow on 19 August.

northern provinces with extra material assistance.[669] When Iko Carreira and Pedro van Dunem came to Warsaw, they likewise spoke about their military victories, informing their Polish interlocutors that the MPLA was in control of all the main strategic points, including Luanda, the ports of Lobito and Mocamedes, the Benguela railway, the diamond-rich Lunda province, and the oil-rich Cabinda enclave. At 15,000 men, FAPLA was in possession of a number of naval units and four planes. The USSR had already armed one troop brigade and several battalions, while Algeria and Yugoslavia had armed several battalions. Recently, the USSR had also delivered combat reconnaissance patrol vehicles with machine guns; Algeria had delivered six trucks, according to Pedro van Dunem. The MPLA would still need a forty-thousand-strong, well-trained and equipped army (including militia) in order to decisively turn the military situation in their favor. Thus they asked the Polish leadership to provide automatic firearms, means for coastal transportation, military training, and university scholarships. The USSR and the GDR had already agreed to provide further military and civilian aid, and more was expected from Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria, they explained.[670]

The MPLA's expectation proved correct. On 3 September, the head of the CC BCP International Department, Radenko Grigorov, submitted a draft resolution to the Politburo of the Bulgarian Communist Party, proposing that Bulgaria hand over a one-off cash payment of $50,000 to the MPLA and allocate 1,243,882 leva worth of weapons and supplies for it.[671]Humanitarian aid would be shipped directly to Luanda, while weapons would be flown first to Brazzaville and from there be transferred to Angola.[672]The Polish leadership allocated trucks, motorcycles, uniforms, means of communication, and medicines, which were to arrive at Pointe Noire by mid-

[669] Shubin, *Hot Cold War*, p. 47.
[670]"Notatka z pierwszej części rozmów z delegacja MPLA, przeprowadzonych w Polskim Komitecie Solidarności w dniu 28 sierpnia 1975", AAN, PZPR LXVI.682 ; "Notatka z drugiej części rozmów, przeprowadzonych z delegacja MPLA w Polskim Komitecie Solidarności w dniu 28 sierpnia 1975", AAN, PZPR LXVI.682 ; Informacja o Wizycie w Polsce Delegacji Ludowego Ruchu Wyzwolenia Angoli/MPLA/, AAN, PZPR LXVI.682
[671]R. Grigorov do Politburo na ZK na BKP, "Dokladna Zapiska," 3 September 1975, TsDA, f. 1b, op. 64, a.e. 459.
[672]Politburo CC BCP Resolution "B" № 7, 3 September 1975, TsDA, f. 1b, op. 64, a.e. 458; Politburo CC BCP Resolution "B" № 8, 4 September 1975, TsDA, f. 1B, op. 64, a.e. 459. The weapons included Kalashnikov automatic rifles, portable anti-tank grenade launchers (RPG-7), hand grenades (RG-42 and F-1), 76 mm. divisional guns, 82 mm. mortars, anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, explosives, and uniforms, while humanitarian aid consisted of canned food, cigarettes, and medicines.

November.[673]Following Iko Carreira's trip to East Berlin, the SED Politburo also approved the allocation of six million marks worth of military aid. In September, the cargo was shipped to Pointe Noire.[674]

The Soviets were willing to provide arms and humanitarian assistance, but they were not ready send Soviet instructors or support the Cuban operation. On 25 September, FAPLA chief of staff João Luís Neto informed Diaz Argüelles that the Soviet Union had promised to provide five multiple rocket launchers (BM-21), ten T-34 tanks, twenty-five 76mm artillery pieces, ten armored cars, and two planes by 11 November.[675]The MPLA remained unsatisfied with the extent of Soviet aid. On 2 September Diaz Argüelles relayed Neto's plea for Castro to ask the Soviets to provide more effective aid for the MPLA.[676]Castro had already sent a request to Brezhnev asking him to provide transportation assistance and Soviet staff to help the Cubans, but the Soviet leadership refused.

Most probably, Brezhnev did not want to jeopardize relations with the United States – sending Soviet staff meant a direct intervention in Angola. He also did not want to endanger détente: the second round of the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT II) was underway, and it was important for the CC CPSU Politburo and for Brezhnev personally to reach an agreement before the Twenty-Fifth Congress of the CPSU, in early 1976. It is also very likely that the Soviets did not believe such a step was really necessary: when Henrique Pedro van Dunem and Fernando Costa Andrade toured Eastern Europe, they painted an optimistic picture of their military situation, and hence the Soviet cadre might have assumed that limited engagement could have been sufficient.[677] In August, the MPLA was also negotiating with Jonas Savimbi. If those talks had been successful, the MPLA would have been in the position to form a provisional government in a tactical alliance with Savimbi.

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[673]"Dotychczasowa pomoc Polskiego Komitetu Solidarności z Narodami Azji i Afryki dla MPLA/Angola," 24 September 1975, AAN, PZPR, LXXVI.541.
[674] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 350. The SED Politburo approved the aid package on 9 September.
[675] Ibid., p. 266.
[676] Quoted in ibid., p. 260.
[677] Westad, *Global Cold War*, p. 233.

September proved a trying month for the MPLA. While the first Cuban instructors arrived in Brazzaville by air in late August, their numbers remained fairly low until October. Supplies from Eastern Europe were expected to arrive by November. Negotiations with UNITA failed, and the MPLA had to face their adversaries reinforced with heavy arms and equipment.[678] By the end of the month, the FNLA had taken over Caxito in the north, while UNITA was active in the south. On 2 October Tom Killoran cabled to Washington: "The increased flow of arms to the forces of UNITA and FNLA/Chipenda appears to have stemmed the MPLA advances in the center and south, but the big unknown at this time is whether they have the ability to push the MPLA back."[679] GRU's Boris Putilin recalls a few "tough conversations" with Lúcio Lara, who was unhappy about the lack of Soviet support: "Lara was shouting: 'You have divided the world with the United States and Angola is not under your sphere of influence. You are not helping us properly.' It was impossible to calm him down."[680] Conventional military estimates were rather futile in the context of the Angolan civil war at that point, as an MPLA commander explained to Ryszard Kapuscinski, a famous Polish journalist who travelled to southern Angola in October 1975: "There are hundreds of fronts because there are hundreds of units. Every unit is a front, a potential front. If our unit runs into an enemy unit, those two potential fronts turn into real fronts … if we are ambushed, we become a real front."[681]

Nevertheless, Pretoria decided that supplying arms and training to Savimbi's UNITA and Chipenda's FNLA was no longer sufficient, and that South Africa would have to send regular forces if the FNLA and UNITA were to have a chance to enter Luanda before 11 November 1975. There is still a debate as to who was responsible for the escalation of South Africa's involvement in the Angolan Civil War. Gleijeses, for example, writes that Henry Kissinger personally communicated with the South African

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[678] On 12 September, the US *American Champion* loaded with rifles, rocket launchers, machine guns, mortars, rubber boats and trucks, rubber boats, and ammunition docked at the port of Matadi, Zaire. See: Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, p. 263.
[679] From Luanda (Killoran) to Washington, "Update on Military Situation," 2 October 1975, WikiLeaks
[680] Putilin, "My Obespechivali," p. 26.
[681] Ryszard Kapuscinski, *Another Day of Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1987), p. 76.

leadership via back-channel communication and pushed Pretoria to intervene.[682] Jamie Miller argues that Pretoria acted on its own accord, and with the impetus for escalation emanating from the defense minister, P. W. Botha. On 5 October, in a skirmish at Norton de Matos, near Nova Lisboa, a UNITA detachment dispersed under heavy gunfire from the MPLA. The SADF's Lieutenant Colonel Kaas Van der Waals, who was in charge of the UNITA training program, advised his superiors that South Africa could never achieve its aims through covert, small-scale intervention. Lieutenant Colonel Jan Breytenbach, who was responsible for training Chipenda's men at Mpupa in southern Angola, concurred. On 8 October, Miller writes, the SADF's upper echelons agreed that the FNLA and UNITA would not be able to enter Luanda before 11 November without intervention of regular troops.[683]

The outcome of this decision was that on 14 October a military column of around 500 black Angolans, led by a smaller group of white South African soldiers, crossed the Namibia–Angola border, initiating Operation Savannah. The military column – "Task Force Zulu" – consisted of Daniel Chipenda's men, who had been trained by Breytenbach at Mpupa, and Bushman soldiers, many of whom had been fighting for the Portuguese during the colonial wars in military detachments known as "*flechas*" (arrows). Meeting little resistance, Zulu overran the MPLA-controlled towns in the south, including Roçadas, Pereira D'Eça, and Sá da Bandeira. On 28 October, Zulu captured Moçâmedes, a major port in southern Angola.[684]

Soviet attitudes towards the crisis in Angola did not significantly change between July and October. The MPLA kept pushing for additional assistance, but Moscow did not think that a qualitative escalation of support was necessary or justified. When the MPLA delegation toured Eastern Europe and Yugoslavia to harness additional support for the MPLA, they painted a rather positive picture of the military situation. Although the impact of Havana's decision to provide instructors to Angola

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[682] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, pp. 294-299; Shannon Rae Butler, *Into the Storm: American Covert Involvement in the Angolan Civil War* (PhD Dissertation: The University of Arizona, 2008), pp. 446-452.
[683] Miller, "Yes, Minister," pp. 28-29.
[684] On the composition of "Task Force Zulu", see: George, *Cuban Intervention*, p. 71.

had not yet materialized, the difference in approaches was readily apparent. Castro believed that the MPLA could win if Cuba and the Soviet Union provided decisive support, including weapons, supplies, and instructors. Castro fashioned himself as a great revolutionary leader; this idea constituted part of his personal identity, popular legitimacy, and international prestige. Brezhnev, on the other hand, did not; his domestic politics, the "Brezhnev Doctrine" in relations with the Warsaw Pact, and his support for détente with the United States were designed to solidify the status quo. The Soviet leadership therefore limited its involvement to increasing arms transfers, hoping that the MPLA would be able to hold on to Luanda until 11 November. Intervention by South Africa's regular forces transformed Soviet calculations.

Moscow and Havana Escalate their Support, October–December 1975

The Soviet intelligence services knew about the South African invasion in advance. In early October, the Soviet leadership apparently received an analytical note, signed by Viktor Chebrikov, that warned of an imminent military intervention and concluded that the MPLA would not be able to hold on to Luanda without outside support.[685] Most likely, the Soviets knew about Pretoria's preparations for intervention from Dieter Gerhardt, a commodore in the South African navy who worked for the GRU. Shortly prior to the invasion, Pretoria had dispatched Gerhardt to Israel to learn about their recent battlefield experience during the 1973 Yom Kippur War and to collect information about contemporary Soviet weaponry.[686] For Gerhardt, it was probably not difficult to connect the dots; however, it seems Moscow did not immediately react to the introduction of troops from South Africa. There are several possible explanations for this. October was a busy month: Boris Ponomarev, the head of the CC CPSU International Department, was trying to organize a second conference of European workers' and communist parties. Meanwhile, Leonid Brezhnev was hosting the French president, Giscard d'Estaing, in a highly publicized state visit to

[685] Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," p. 247.
[686] Sasha Polakow-Suransky, *The Unspoken Alliance: Israel's Secret Relationship with Apartheid South Africa* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2010), p. 85.

Moscow.[687] Most probably, Angola was not at the top of the agenda for the CC CPSU. Moreover, the significance of Zulu's advance might not have been immediately apparent. Above all, Moscow wanted to maintain plausible deniability of any suggestion of their intervention on behalf of the MPLA in Angola before 11 November. Despite this goal, however, in late October the Soviets upped their support for the MPLA.

On 1 November, two Soviet An-22 "Antei" cargo planes (NATO reporting name "Cock") arrived in Brazzaville with four BM-21s ("Grad") multiple rocket launchers. Boris Putilin recalls that transportation of the BM-21s was a logistical nightmare: the Congolese rail cars were too small to transport the heavy "Grads" from Brazzaville to Pointe Noire by railway, while Moscow would not grant permission to fly them directly to Luanda. Thus, the Soviet mission came up with a risky plan to fly only two rocket launchers from Brazzaville to Pointe Noire, even though the landing strip at Pointe Noire was not suitable for the heavy Antei. Soviet military advisers in Pointe Noire were supposed to roll up in tanks and pull the plane out of the ground in case it went over the short landing strip. The Congolese authorities were reluctant to give permission for the operation, and the Soviet embassy appealed directly to President Ngouabi. He gave the go-ahead, and the two Grads were flown in to Pointe Noire.[688]

Also, in late October, Moscow dispatched a group of Soviet weapons specialists accompanied by interpreters to Brazzaville. Andrey Tokarev, one of the interpreters, recounts that at the General Staff headquarters in Moscow they were told that the MPLA controlled the majority of the provinces and the capital, but that that control was not secure. Zaire had bought Mirage fighter jets from France, and those were expected to arrive any minute; there was a possibility that the Mirages would take part in bombing raids on Luanda. Their task was to fly to Luanda and teach someone how to handle "Strela-2," the surface-to-air missile system used to shoot down planes flying at low altitudes that had helped the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau. It is not absolutely clear

[687] For details of Chernyaev, *Sovmestnyi Iskhod*, pp. 168-177.
[688] Putilin, "My Obespechivali," pp. 21-22.

whom they were supposed to teach and if the recruits received any more specific information. On 1 November the group, led by Captain Yevgeniy Lyashenko, landed in Brazzaville. "We spent around a week in the capital; Moscow probably did not have a concrete plan as to what to do with us," speculated Tokarev.[689] It seems that the Soviet leadership was still uncertain exactly how to respond, waiting to see how events unfolded.

Oleg Nazhestkin's memoirs testify to this. He writes that in late October the chief of the KGB First Directorate, Vladimir Kryuchkov, invited him into his office to say that he was to fly to Luanda in order to "establish contacts with Neto" and gather urgently required information about the situation on the ground. Nazhestkin claims that before his departure, he spoke to cadres from the International Department and the Foreign Ministry, who told him to try and influence Neto to "make peace with Roberto and Savimbi" and recreate the tripartite coalition. Nazhestkin, who believed the Soviet Union should provide all-out support for Neto, was stunned. "I was flying to Brazzaville with dark thoughts," he recalled; however, when he arrived in Brazzaville, on 1 November, his instructions changed. The decree that ambassador Yevgeniy Afanasenko handed him shortly before departure for Luanda, and that Nazhestkin had to pass on to Neto, stated that after Angola declared independence, the Soviet Union would recognize it as a sovereign state, exchange embassies, and open negotiations for mutual cooperation, including military assistance.[690]

This account presents a double dilemma. Why would the cadre of the International Department try to persuade Neto to restore the tripartite coalition with Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi during a civil war? And why had Moscow changed their instructions at the last minute? Nazhestkin writes that this revealed the closed-mindedness and lack of understanding on the part of the Soviet cadre about the real situation in Angola, while the change in instructions he attributes to the "victory" of

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[689] Andrey Tokarev, *Komandirovka v Angolu*, Union of Angolan Veterans Website, retrieved from: http://www.veteranangola.ru/main/vospominaniya/tokarev. Putilin confirms the group was sent to provide training in operations for „Strela-2." See Putilin, "My Obespechivali," p. 22. Mobutu indeed Mirage fighter planes from France but they would not arrive to Zaire until after independence

[690] Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," p. 248.

those who supported Neto, presumably the KGB. However, there was another possible explanation for the advice Nazhestkin received from members of the International Department: the need to buy time for the MPLA. One may recall that in late October, Idi Amin, who was the president of Uganda and the chairman of the OAU at that time, called on all sides to agree to a ceasefire. The MPLA leadership actually agreed to this, but UNITA and the FNLA refused, saying it was a tactical maneuver.[691] One way or another, what matters is that, if we are to believe Nazhestkin's account, at some time in late October or early November, the Soviet leadership decided to recognize the MPLA as the government of Angola and step up support after the official declaration of independence on 11 November.

On 2 November, Nazhestkin flew to a besieged Luanda to pass the message of Soviet support to Neto. He checked into the Tivoli Hotel, where he met two Soviet journalists: Igor Uvarov and Oleg Ignatyev. Late at night, all three men drove to Neto's residence in a small car. Nazhestkin recalled that Neto was still working in his office and that he was very surprised to see "Comrade Oleg", as he affectionately called Nazhestkin, since the two had known each other since the early 1960s. Nazhestkin admitted to Neto there were some officials in Moscow who wanted to convince him to unite with Roberto and Savimbi, but that others in the Soviet leadership thought differently. Nazhestkin writes:

> From memory, I am reading the decree of the Soviet government. On Neto's face – surprise, which turns to happiness, exhilaration. 'Finally, we have been understood. Thus we will cooperate and fight together. The Cubans and other friends are helping us, but it was very difficult without the Soviet Union. Now we will certainly win.'[692]

Neto and Nazhestkin talked through the night. Neto explained the situation in Angola; he also said that the Portuguese were ready to hand over power to the MPLA. Neto told Nazhestkin to put in his report to Moscow that the civil war in Angola was not the result of "tribal warfare" but of external military intervention. He told him that moral

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[691] Kissinger to All Posts, "MPLA to abide by ceasefire," 31 October 1975, WikiLeaks.
[692] Nazhestkin, "V Ognennom Koltse Blokady," p. 251.

support was not enough, and that the MPLA needed military aid to defeat the regular military forces of South Africa and Zaire. The Cubans were doing everything they could, but they were short of arms. Thus, Neto asked Nazhestkin to immediately meet the Cuban representatives and discuss with them all the details of the military situation and those measures necessary for its stabilization. The Cubans told Nazhestkin that they were waiting for a special message from Havana about assistance to the MPLA and that a battalion of Cuban Special Forces had already been dispatched to Luanda. The head of the Cuban mission (probably Diaz Argüelles) then handed over a list of weapons and asked Nazhestkin to pass it on to the Soviet government immediately.[693]

Nazhestkin arrived in Luanda at a critical juncture of the war. On 28 October, the South African Zulu force overran Moçâmedes and raced towards Benguela and Lobito, two major ports on the Atlantic coast. On 2 November, FAPLA and around forty Cuban instructors ambushed the advancing column with heavy artillery fire at the town of Catengue, on the way to Benguela. The South Africans brought in reinforcements and managed to push forward after a grueling nine-hour battle. The Cuban instructors had already participated in fighting with the FAPLA troops, but it was at Catengue that they suffered first serious casualties: four Cubans were dead; seven wounded, and thirteen were missing in action.[694] The road to the coastal cities of Benguela and Lobito was open to the South Africans, FAPLA were rapidly withdrawing to the north, and the seizure of Luanda before 11 November was imminent. When news of the defeat reached Luanda, the MPLA Steering Committee discussed the situation with Diaz Argüelles. There was a consensus on the need for reinforcements, and Diaz Argüelles allegedly telegraphed Fidel Castro to report an imminent disaster.[695]

Castro was quick to respond. Defeat at Catengue and the first Cuban deaths posed an obvious threat to Luanda and the whole Cuban mission in Angola. Castro's

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[693] Ibid., p. 253.
[694] For the detailed account of the battle, see George, *Cuban Intervention*, pp. 75-77.
[695] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 305.

personal image as a great revolutionary leader and military commander was at stake. Therefore, on 4 December, Castro decided to send regular troops to Angola: a battalion of elite Special Forces numbering 652 men would be urgently airlifted first, while the bulk of the Cuban troops would follow by boat.[696] This was around the time when Nazhestkin met Neto and spoke to the Cuban commander, who told him they were expecting a decision from Havana. If Nazhestkin's timetable and story is accurate, then Moscow had decided to extend unilateral recognition to the MPLA and provide additional aid before Castro's decision to send in regular troops. On 4 December, the first "Cubana" Bristol 175 Britannia turboprop, with around hundred Cuban Special Forces on board, left Havana on a forty-eight hour journey to Angola, initiating a mission codenamed Operation Carlota.

Moscow found out about Castro's decision by chance. Georgiy Kornienko, the Soviet deputy foreign minister at the time, recalls that one day a telegram from the Soviet ambassador in Guinea caught his attention: the ambassador mentioned that his Cuban colleague had informed him that a Cuban plane with troops on board would make a stop-over in Guinea the next day. Kornienko immediately went to see the foreign minister, Andrey Gromyko. For Gromyko, it was a total surprise. He immediately called Andropov and Grechko. They did not know anything. Apparently, all three men agreed it was a rash step and that it would increase international tensions, and urgently drafted a response trying to dissuade Castro. It was too late; Cuban troops were already "flying across the Atlantic."[697] Castro believed that, faced with a fait accompli, the Soviets would not refuse to help. He did not miscalculate: Kornienko writes that the Soviet leadership decided to back up the Cuban operation because of a sense of "international duty" and because there was a real intervention materializing from South Africa, backed by the United States.[698]

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[696] Ibid.
[697] Kornienko, *Kholodnaia Voina*, p. 211. It is not clear whether Kornienko means Guinea as in Guinea or Guinea-Bissau because first Cuban plans on their way to Brazzaville refueled in Bissau. The Guinean President Sékou Touré also permitted Cuban planes refuel in Conakry.
[698] Ibid., p. 212.

Soviet–Cuban cooperation to boost the Luandan defenses began shortly afterwards. On 6 November, the first plane, carrying a hundred Cuban Special Forces troops, arrived in Brazzaville: one group went to Pointe Noire for training, while the bulk flew to Luanda.[699] Soviet weapons specialists, who had arrived in Brazzaville on 1 November, were dispatched to Pointe Noire, where they would train the Cubans to handle the "Strela-2M" man-portable air-defense system.[700] Meanwhile, the Cuban ship *La Plata* transported the Soviet BM-21s from Pointe Noire to Luanda on 7 November. On 5 and 8 November, FAPLA successfully repelled attacks from Roberto's forces concentrated to the north of the city, near Morro do Cal and Caxito. Roberto, however, pledged that he would take the capital by 11 November. Luanda fell into anxious silence, as another attack was expected any time.[701]

On 10 November, Roberto initiated a frontal assault on Luanda. The decision allegedly met with strong opposition from his South African advisers, who pointed out that the terrain was unsuitable: the only viable approach to the city ran along a narrow stretch of road surrounded by marshes and exposed to view from the hills of Quifangondo. However, Roberto decided to take charge, because he realized that without control of Luanda his claim to power was shaky. On 10 November, the attack began, when three Canberra bombers flew over Luanda and dropped a few bombs. There were no casualties, and by the time the FNLA military column set out to march towards Quifangondo, the FNLA, supported by about 120 Cuban Special Forces, had managed to reassemble their heavy artillery behind the hills. FAPLA unleashed heavy artillery fire on the advancing column, forcing Holden Roberto to retreat to his temporary headquarters at Ambriz. Many observers suggest that heavy arms fire from the Soviet BM-21s had the biggest psychological impact on the FNLA troops, while

[699] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 308. Gleijeses writes that the Cubans had to be trained to use the newer, modified version of Stela-2 known as Strela 2M.
[700] Tokarev, *Komandirovka v Angolu*.
[701] For a sense of the atmosphere in the city in those days, see: Kapuscinski, *Another Day*, pp. 83-128.

others point out that other weapons such as the 76mm anti-tank gun and the portable Grad-P were used in the defense of the city and may have been more decisive.[702]

That night, the MPLA celebrated victory. Governor General Silva Cardoso handed Angolan sovereignty to the "Angolan people" and sailed off. Igor Uvarov and Oleg Ignatyev reported that at midnight crowds gathered at the Luanda stadium to celebrate Angolan independence. To the singing of the new Angolan hymn, "Angola, Avante," the new black-and-white Angolan flag was raised on a mast. The new state was born to the sound of gunfire as the excited crowd fired shots into the night sky.[703]

The Final Round

The next morning, Yevgeniy Afanasenko and Boris Putilin flew to Luanda for a ceremony inaugurating Agostinho Neto as the first Angolan president.[704] That same day, the Soviet Union recognized the MPLA as the government of Angola. The Soviets pushed for diplomatic recognition of the MPLA, while Kissinger ordered all diplomatic posts to exert pressure and block recognition. Boris Putilin recalls that Moscow was pushing Ugandan president Idi Amin, in particular, to support the MPLA because it wanted recognition from the chairman of the OAU.[705] Washington also unleashed a campaign to deny Cuban aircraft refueling rights, first in Barbados, then in Guyana and the Azores.

The MPLA celebrated victory, but the military situation remained precarious. At his temporary capital in Nova Lisboa, Jonas Savimbi proclaimed: "these celebrations may last a day, but our war for final victory – through blood and tears – will take much longer."[706] The South African Zulu force took Novo Redondo on 13 November and was pushing towards Port Amboim, a major port only 250 kilometers from Luanda. On 16 November, a group of Soviet instructors, now larger due to reinforcements from Moscow, flew to Luanda. Andrey Tokarev recalls that the airport was "surprisingly

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[702] For detailed analysis of the battle, see: Willem Steenkam, *Borderstrike!: South Africa Into Angola 1975-1980*. 3rd (Durban: Just Done Productions Publishing, 2006), pp. 104-107; George, *Cuban Intervention*, pp. 88-90; Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*.
[703] Oleg Ignatyev and Igor Uvarov, "Rozhdenie Novogo Gosudarstva," *Pravda,* 12 November 1975, p. 5.
[704] Putilin, "My Obespechivali," p. 23.
[705] Ibid.
[706] Quoted in "Angola: A Brief Ceremony, a Long Civil War."

quiet and empty; nobody was there to greet us." The head of their group, most probably Colonel Vasiliy Trofimenko, assembled everyone at an abandoned warehouse and said that nobody knew about the real situation in the country and that it was possible they would have to take part in military action.[707] Alexander Grigorovich, another interpreter who had arrived in Luanda with Tokarev, remembers: "Nobody was there to meet us. We had a feeling that we would be captured. For two hours we were inside the plane. The engines were on, we were ready to take off any minute."[708] Finally, a Soviet representative (probably Aleksey Dubenko or Igor Uvarov) arrived, and after consultation with the MPLA leadership, they received alarming news: the enemy wanted to surround and lay siege to the capital, while forces hostile to the MPLA were organizing an uprising in the city.[709] The Soviet instructors set up mini learning centers at the Luandan airport, where they would provide weapons training to the FAPLA soldiers.

It is well known how FAPLA managed to halt the advance of the South African troops with the support of the Cuban Special Forces. Between Novo Redondo and Port Amboim, the Cuban forces blew up the bridge over the Queve River, thus forcing Zulu to change course in search of an alternative route towards Luanda. On 24 November, another South African column, "Foxbat," was ambushed at the village of Ebo, leaving hundreds killed and wounded. Meanwhile, the bulk of the Cuban troops (numbering 1,254 overall) arrived in Luanda between 27 November and 1 December, together with supplies, weapons, and a whole regiment of T-55 tanks.[710] The onset of the rainy season also helped: the terrain inland became muddy and it became impossible for the South African Eland armored cars to venture off the main roads. In the north, FAPLA's "Ninth Brigade" pushed the FARP beyond Caxito. In Cabinda, a joint Cuban–FAPLA effort managed to stop Mobutu's attempt to seize it. In the south, the front stabilized to

[707] Tokarev, *Komandirovka v Angolu*.
[708] Gennady Shubin, ed. *Ustnaya Istoriya Zabytykh Voin: Vospominaniya Veteranov Voyny v Angole* (Moscow: Memories, 2007), p. 18.
[709] Tokarev, *Komandirovka v Angolu*.
[710] For details about this stage in the war, see: Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*; George, *Cuban Intervention*, pp. 94-98.

the north of Novo Redondo as both sides reached rough technical and numerical parity by the end of December.

Cooperation between the Soviet instructors and the Cuban troops was very tight, and relations were amicable. Grigorovich recalls that at first the General Staff did not make provisions to supply them with adequate food, and that the Cubans came to help. "For three weeks, we lived off the Cubans, who shared last bits – rice, broth – with us, so that we would not die from hunger. It came to this, that I was assigned to drive around Luanda looking for food."[711] There were regular meetings between the Soviet staff, the Cubans, and the MPLA. The Cubans did most of the fighting, and Fidel Castro personally oversaw military operations from Havana. By early December the Soviet Union had airlifted ten BM-21s, twenty 76mm artillery pieces, and twenty 82mm mortars.[712] Havana and Moscow also agreed that Cuba would dispatch old Soviet weapons to Angola, and that Moscow would compensate them with brand-new ones.[713]

The least clear aspect of the Soviet–Cuban cooperation concerns when Moscow first provided long-range IL-62 (NATO reporting name "Classic") planes to support the airlift of Cuban troops. Piero Gleijeses argues that the first IL-62 left Havana on 9 January 1976, after high-level negotiations between the Cubans and the Soviet leadership in late December.[714] At least one report, from the American Consul in Ponta Delgada in the Azores, claims the US detected "Cuban Airlines" flying Il-62s on 20, 21, 24, and 27 December 1975.[715] Grigorovich recalls: "They would arrive in December, end of December, I do not remember exactly, almost every night. A Cuban Il-62 would arrive with Cuban airhostesses and soldiers in full military gear but without weapons. They were immediately driven off to their detachments, where they would be armed

[711] Shubin, ed., *Ustnaya Istoriya*, p. 22.
[712] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 318.
[713] Putilin, "My Obespechivali," p. 25. Also see interview with Alexander Grigorovich in Shubin, ed., *Ustnaya Istoriya*, pp. 20-21.
[714] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 368. The Cubans had to turn to the Soviets because first Barbados, then Guyana and the Azores refused to grant refueling rights to Britannia aircraft following pressure from the US
[715] Lisbon to Washington, "Cuban Flights to Angola," 31 December 1975, WikiLeaks.

and sent to the front at night."[716] However, without access to Russian documents, the question of when exactly the Soviets decided to provide their long-range IL-62 aircraft for the airlift of Cuban troops remains unresolved.

Meanwhile, the CIA chief, Colby, was increasingly concerned about developments in Angola. On 14 November, when briefing his colleagues at the 40 Committee, Colby explained that the CIA had to match the $81 million that, according to his estimates, the USSR had already provided for the MPLA, warning that the full effect of Cuban involvement had not yet been made manifest. The CIA urgently needed more money, and possibly Redeye missiles to counter the Soviet MIGs that could appear in Angola. As a cheaper option, Colby urged his colleagues to put diplomatic pressure on the Soviets to disengage from Angola.[717] However, Henry Kissinger and Brent Scowcroft, the newly appointed national security adviser to the president, were determined to stay in the game. During yet another discussion of Angola on 19 November, Kissinger agreed that the US should match the Cuban effort and discussed bringing in French mercenaries to fight with the FNLA/UNITA.[718] On 28 November, President Ford approved another $7 million for IAFEATURE.[719]

Kissinger and Ford faced a dilemma. Pretoria was asking for urgent support for their effort in Angola, but association with the South African regime in Pretoria was highly problematic. When President Ford tried to enlist Chinese support for engagement in Angola, Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping explained that China would not get involved. In fact, China had already been reprimanded for its support for the FNLA by some of its African partners, such as the Guinean president, Sékou Touré. Kissinger engaged in frantic shuttle diplomacy in an effort to get other sponsors to support the Zairian effort. In mid-December he flew to Paris for talks with the French president, Giscard d'Estaing. In Paris, Kissinger also met with Zairian foreign minister Bula Nyati, Zambian minister for foreign affairs Rupiah Banda, and Kenneth Kaunda's right-hand

[716] Shubin, ed., *Ustnaya Istoriya*, p. 24. See Lisbon to Washington, "Cuban Flights to Angola," 31 December 1975, WikiLeaks.
[717] The MIGs would not arrive until 1976. On 11 December, Colby admitted that there were probably no MIGs used in Angola. Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 147.
[718] Ibid., Document 138.
[719] Ibid., Document 143.

man, Mark Chona, who urged him to match the Russians in Angola. Kissinger reassured them that Giscard d'Estaing would provide "people, guns, and helicopters," while the US would finance the whole thing.[720]

Kissinger could not deliver on his promise, because on 19 December Congress refused to approve any additional funds for any covert operations in Angola. Kissinger then approached the Shah of Iran, the Saudi Arabian government, and Egyptian president Anwar Sadat to provide additional funds for Zaire.[721] The central problem was that there could be no substitute for South Africa. The involvement of regular South African troops was not initially apparent, but in November and December a series of articles emerged in the American press, clearly identifying the South Africans as regular and not mercenary troops. CIA support for Holden Roberto also leaked into the press.[722] Pretoria was feeling increasingly isolated, as not only the United States, but also those African countries who welcomed South African intervention – Zaire, Zambia, and even Jonas Savimbi himself – publicly condemned the invasion. On 23 December, the South African National Security Council decided to withdraw its forces from Angola.

Meanwhile, Kissinger decided to put pressure on the Soviets to withdraw their support for the MPLA by using détente. In mid-November the State Department drafted a harsh note, which accused Moscow of surpassing "all bounds of restraint" in Angola and warned that the incident could "set back the progress of détente."[723] The Soviets responded by pointing out the extent of Washington's involvement.[724] Kissinger and Ford had a few meetings with the Soviet ambassador in Washington, Anatoliy Dobrynin, trying to convince Moscow to pressure Havana to withdraw the Cuban troops.[725] Even after Congress cut all funding for the covert action in Angola, Kissinger continued to believe that continuous diplomatic pressure would lead to a

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[720] Ibid., Documents 149, 152, 153.
[721] Ibid., Documents 159, 161 162 164.
[722] See, for example: Leslie Gelb, "Ford Said to Bar Combat a Combat Role in Angolan War," *New York Times,* 17 December, 1975; Seymour Hersch, "Early Angola Aid by U.S. Reported," *New York Times,* 19 Decemeber, 1975.
[723] Burton, ed., *FRUS, 1969-1976 - Southern Africa*, Document 140.
[724] Ibid., Document 142.
[725] Ibid., Documents 145-146.

form of power-sharing between the MPLA, the FNLA, and UNITA: "If we keep going and the Soviets don't think there is a terminal date on our efforts and we threaten them with the loss of détente, we can have an effect," he declared at the National Security Council meeting on 22 December.[726] Washington thus continued applying pressure on the African states to forgo recognition of the MPLA. However, with Pretoria backing away from active involvement and with no funds, by early 1976 Kissinger could do very little to prevent the defeat of the FNLA and UNITA, at least for the time being.

Kissinger's strategy of linking détente to de-escalation of Soviet involvement in Angola backfired. Brezhnev was personally invested in détente. He truly believed that a Third World War should be avoided at all costs and that peace was necessary for economic development of the USSR. However, he also believed in the eventual triumph of socialism, and never envisioned that détente should preclude peaceful competition between the two systems. In the early 1970s, détente proceeded apace, despite the many setbacks in the Middle East, Chile, and elsewhere. Moreover, Brezhnev and the Soviet leadership reconciled themselves to the fact that competition in the Third World would continue. Therefore, Brezhnev and other members of the Politburo considered Kissinger's stance on Angola hypocritical. The Soviet leadership knew well that Washington supplied money and arms to the FNLA and UNITA via Zaire, and they also knew much more than the rest of the world about the extent of South African involvement in Angola, most probably thanks to their informant, Dieter Gerhardt.

Kissinger's stern notes, which accused Moscow of escalation in Angola, predictably looked hypocritical and inaccurate to the Soviet leadership. Anatoliy Dobrynin recalls that the head of the International Department, Boris Ponomarev, told him that détente did not prevent the US from consolidating its positions in Egypt and overthrowing the legitimate government in Chile.[727] Even the Foreign Minister, Andrey Gromyko, who was not particularly interested in the Third World and who was not particularly enthusiastic about Soviet involvement in the first place, believed that

[726] Ibid., Document 163.
[727] Anatoliy Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents (1962-1986)* (New York: Times Books, 1995), p. 362.

ideology was an essential part of Soviet foreign policy and that the USSR should be treated as an equal on the world stage.[728] In November, commenting on the Politburo's decision to break diplomatic relations with Uganda over President Idi Amin's stance on Angola to a group of colleagues, Gromyko stated: "We are ready to walk along with those who speak for relaxation of tensions, for improvement of relations. But if we are forced to change the principles of our policy, we put up a red flag; we draw a line that we will not cross. We told Amin that we would not change our stance. He swallowed it, even though we could expect an explosion."[729] Brezhnev likewise believed that Angola was an excuse to put détente on hold. Anatoliy Chernyaev, who came to Zavidovo in late 1975 to work on Brezhnev's speech at the Twenty-Fifth CPSU Congress due to convene in a few months, found the ailing General Secretary distressed about the state of superpower relations. According to Chernyaev, Brezhnev burst into a long speech, lamenting the state of relations with the US:

> Now, even after Helsinki, Ford and Kissinger and various Senators demand to arm America, they demand that America becomes the strongest. They are threatening us – either because of our fleet or because of Angola, or they make up something else altogether. So, Grechko comes to me. So, he says, they are building it up here, threatening to escalate there. Give me, he says, 156 billion instead of 140. So how should I respond? I am the Chairman on the Military Council; I am responsible for national security![730]

Conclusion

Angola turned into a Cold War hotspot as a result of the ambitions of local actors. Mobutu wanted to keep Angola within his sphere of influence for political and economic reasons, and the only way he could achieve this goal was to make sure that his long-time protégé, Holden Roberto, remained a predominant political force in post-independent Angola. Therefore, early in 1974, Mobutu started pushing America to support the FNLA, and the best way he could justify his calls for action was to frame the situation in Angola in terms of a global competition between the superpowers.

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[728] On Gromyko's personal views and principles foreign policy, see the memoires of his son: Anatoliy Gromyko, *Andrey Gromyko: Polet Ego Strely: Vosmpominaniya i Razmyshleniya Syna* Nauchnaya Kniga, 2009).
[729] Sergeev, *V MID SSSR*, p. 231.
[730] Anatoliy Chernyaev, *Moya Zhizn i Moe Vremya* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1995), p. 202.

Washington was reluctant to intervene in any significant way beyond the $300,000 dollars that the 40 Committee approved for Holden Roberto in January 1975. Only when Washington lost the final struggle over Vietnam and Cambodia in April, and when Mobutu used bullying tactics to show his displeasure with American inaction, did Kissinger embark on an ambitious face-saving project aimed at supporting the Congolese dictator in his endeavor.

The MPLA used a very similar strategy on the Soviets. By the end of 1974, faced with an increasingly violent challenge from the FNLA, the MPLA tried to persuade their Soviet interlocutors that violence in Luanda was not just an outcome of local power rivalries, but of an international conspiracy, spearheaded by Zaire and supported directly by the United States. Neto urged the Soviets to assist, on the grounds that the MPLA's very survival relied on support from the socialist countries. The MPLA's interpretation of events coincided with the Soviet understanding of the world. The Soviet Union thus agreed to provide arms and training to the MPLA cadres. On the few occasions when Soviet representatives arrived in Luanda – Mikhail Zenovich in November 1974, Alexander Dzasokhov and Igor Uvarov in January 1975, and Yevsyukov in May 1975 – they witnessed unending violence in the capital that the MPLA explained as part of an international conspiracy. Yevsyukov's trip to Luanda in May 1975 was a particularly important turning point as far as the Soviets were concerned, because what he and his colleagues saw first-hand was a dramatic escalation of tensions in the city, which made them conclude that a civil war was most likely inevitable.

By June 1975 the International Department believed that in Angola, the US and its allies were engaged in a "serious international conspiracy," fuelled by their frustrations in Vietnam and Cambodia. At least a few high-ranking officials at the CC CPSU held such views much earlier than sizable US support for the FNLA and UNITA actually materialized. However, Soviet involvement in Angola was still quite limited because neither Brezhnev nor Gromyko wanted to jeopardize détente, which was a

priority, and because they believed the MPLA would be able to hold on to Luanda. Moscow intensified support after the South African invasion, but the cumbersome nature of Soviet bureaucracy and, again, Soviet unwillingness to be blamed for an escalation of the crisis meant that the bulk of Soviet support came after the official declaration of independence on 11 November 1975. While Castro's decision to send a group of Special Forces and regular troops to Angola might have speeded up that decision, analysis of newly available evidence and eyewitness accounts suggests that Moscow must have made the decision to extend official recognition to the MPLA and step up support.

Once the Soviet leadership decided to recognize the MPLA on 11 November 1975 and step up their support, it was no longer possible to go back, since a consensus among the KGB, the military, and the International Department had already materialized that it was their "sacred duty" to aid a Cuban effort in support of the MPLA. Soviet prestige was on the line. On 25 December, Deputy Foreign Minister Leonid Ilyichev received OAU Deputy General Secretary Peter Onu. Speaking about the forthcoming OAU summit in January, Onu urged continued Soviet support for the Angolan people. He also informed Ilyichev that some African leaders feared that détente with the US would mean that the Soviet Union would forego its struggle against colonialism and racism. Ilyichev responded to Onu with a clear statement, emphasizing that the goal of détente was to solve disagreements through peaceful means and not war, but that détente did not mean the Soviet Union was abandoning its commitment to ideological struggle. "It does not mean that we reject struggle against imperialism, for liquidation of colonialism, it does not give freeway for aggression and suppression of people's struggle for freedom and independence, it does not put an end to ideological struggle," explained Ilyichev.[731] On 16 January 1975, Havana and Moscow signed a military protocol, with the Soviets pledging to transport 35 million rubles ($25 million dollars) worth of weapons directly to the Cuban Military Mission in

[731] From the diary of Leonid Ilyichev, 31 December 1975, AVPRF, f. 658, op. 14, p. 62, d. 1.

Angola by the end of the month, thus initiating a new stage of close Soviet-Cuban military cooperation in the country.[732]

Therefore, by early 1976, Moscow's cautious attitude towards Angola had been supplanted by a consensus that dictated the Soviet Union had a "sacred duty" to protect a faraway ally from the global imperialist forces with all necessary means, with the middle-ranking officials, who had first formed personal bonds with the MPLA's leadership since 1961, playing a decisive role. The top Soviet leadership did not believe that Angola was important and thus they did not believe Kissinger was sincere when he threatened downgrading relations over Soviet involvement, suspecting that was just a useful excuse to slow down negotiations. The failure of negotiations in 1975 paved the way for further internationalization of the Angolan Civil War.

[732] Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 369.

CONCLUSION

Time and again, I ask former Soviet officials to what extent Marxist-Leninist ideology shaped their views of the world. I receive a muddled response somewhat dismissive of ideology as an important factor and often presented in an apologetic manner, hiding an embarrassment of affiliation with and allegiance to the system of beliefs that the Soviet Union represented. A similar sense of unease permeates discussions of ideological motives in the writings of the former Soviet cadres. I have always found this sense of anxiety or guilt to frustrate historical research. Of course, it is not a surprising sentiment, considering that the collapse of the Soviet Union did not just lead to the disintegration of an empire; it also signified the failure of a universal utopian project and the coming of a new era, which many believed ushered in the victory of Western liberal democracy, as famously described by Francis Fukuyama in his 1989 article, the *End of History.*[733]

While Marxism-Leninism might have become defunct after the collapse of the Soviet Union, historians cannot ignore the importance of ideology in understanding what this project entailed, why so many people believed in it, and why it was so attractive to many beyond the geographical confines of the USSR. We should be equally reluctant to consider ideology as a deterministic force that predetermined behavior, but should view it rather as an ideational construct, which shaped individual actions as a result of life experiences, personal preferences, and the environment a given person faced. It is in this framework that we can understand the story of Soviet relations with the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies: as a story of personal relationships between people, whose defining international environment was that of decolonization and the Cold War.

Although it is not possible to give precise figures to the scale of overall assistance, there is no doubt that it would have been impossible for the liberation

[733] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1992); Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?," *The National Interest,* (Summer 1989).

movements to conduct anti-colonial uprisings without the stream of assistance from the Warsaw Pact countries. Perevalnoye, for example, fulfilled the acute need for weapons training, even if the geographic conditions in Crimea did not fully replicate the conditions of armed struggle in the Portuguese colonies. The most important contribution, of course, consisted of advanced heavy weapons, which could only be procured from the Soviet Union, a leading designer and manufacturer of advanced weapons systems at that time. In the case of Guinea-Bissau, for example, the provision of the Strela-2 complex for the PAIGC actually led to a breakthrough in a stalemated war, thus contributing to the failure of the Portuguese Empire in Africa.

Nikita Khrushchev was the main instigator of Soviet involvement with the liberation movements, as he believed it was his responsibility – *a sacred duty* – to support struggles for national liberation in the Third World. If Khrushchev's predecessor, Joseph Stalin, had been primarily concerned with Soviet relations with Europe, Japan, and, increasingly, with the United States, Khrushchev turned his attention to the Third World, driven by the belief that it was there that competition between the socialist and capitalist systems would be played out. By pledging assistance to the liberation movements, Khrushchev wanted to revive the idealism of the early post-revolutionary years, and to resuscitate the universal goals of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, which envisioned the extension of socialism around the world through the medium of class struggle. He believed that the Soviet Union had to support the anti-colonial movements, and that this could be done through peaceful competition with the West. One has to remember that in the context of the 1950s, the movements for national liberation were mainly peaceful, which is why supporting them was not incompatible with Khrushchev's concept of peaceful competition. As a consequence, he was initially rather reluctant to provide military assistance to the anti-colonial movements.

Khrushchev's perspective on peaceful competition changed as he became increasingly disillusioned with the United States. By 1961, having grown restless over

his inability to achieve his foreign policy goals, Khrushchev adopted an increasingly aggressive strategy in the Third World, which entailed providing support for violent anti-colonial movements. Unsurprisingly, when popular resentment against Portuguese rule exploded in 1961, Khrushchev authorized an assistance package for the MPLA, justified in his eyes by Western intransigence and unwillingness to accept him as an equal partner on the world stage. The 1961 Angolan Uprising coincided with the Berlin Crisis, yet another spike in superpower tensions, thus providing an additional push for Khrushchev to approve an aid package for the MPLA and for Czechoslovakia to decide to recruit Cabral as a trusted ally in the region. This is how, at the moment of heightened tensions between Moscow and Washington during the peak of the Berlin Crisis, the Soviet Union and the United States became invested in the political fate of two rival liberation movements, thus setting the stage for the internationalization of the Angolan Civil War. 1961 was a turning point for the history of the Portuguese colonies, the whole region, and for the Cold War in Africa in general.

While Nikita Khrushchev vacillated between his world-making project and the pursuit of peace and cooperation with the United States, Leonid Brezhnev and his closest associates at least initially fell back on Marxist-Leninist dogma as a backdrop for their foreign relations. If Khrushchev was reluctant to authorize direct arms shipments to the liberation movements, the Brezhnev leadership readily sponsored arms shipments and the expansion of the military training program in 1965. The early 1970s ushered in a new era of superpower détente, but Brezhnev and other top-ranking Soviet officials did not actually change their fundamental understanding of the world as driven by competition between two world systems. Under these circumstances, they continued to believe it was Soviet duty to support the anti-colonial movements as an inevitable force of progress. In a way, this signified a return to Khrushchev's concept of peaceful competition with the West, but with the added confidence granted by the overall increase in Soviet military capabilities and the successes of the Vietnam War.

However, neither for Khrushchev nor for Brezhnev was support for anti-colonial struggles in the Portuguese colonies a high priority. The anti-colonial struggles in the Portuguese colonies were merely a sideshow for the Soviet leadership and for Brezhnev personally, whose attention was focused on events in Vietnam and the Middle East and, increasingly in the early 1970s, on the superpower détente. This is precisely why it was middle-ranking officials in the Soviet bureaucracy who assumed such an important role in setting the terms of involvement with the liberation movements, starting from the late 1950s when the first personal relations were forged between the Soviet cadres and the radical African nationalists from the Portuguese colonies. This group of middle-ranking officials working across the bureaucracy – at the CC CPSU International Department, the Soviet Solidarity Committee, the KGB, the Foreign Ministry, and the Ministry of Defense – shared the fundamental sense of history that saw the eventual dissolution of colonial empires as inexorable, and became personally invested in the cause of the anti-colonial struggles.

The countries of the so-called Soviet bloc – Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Bulgaria, and Poland – became involved with the liberation movements for similar reasons, but on their own terms. Czechoslovakia was a crucial player in Africa in the early 1960s, as the key deliverer of military assistance and training to the liberation movements. Over the course of the 1960s, Prague was superseded as the key donor to the liberation movements by other socialist states, such as Bulgaria and the GDR, which reflected growing economic problems and the country's turn inwards after the 1968 invasion. Nevertheless, Czechoslovakia remained a key foreign ally of the PAIGC, given the special relations between Amílcar Cabral and Czechoslovak intelligence. Bulgaria came in a close second, becoming one of the first countries to offer arms, cash, and training for the MPLA and FRELIMO. While every member of the Warsaw Pact had their own reasons for engaging with the liberation movements, the Soviet cadres took the lead in coordinating policy and releasing informal guidelines at bilateral and multilateral levels. Policy coordination took place at regular meetings of the Solidarity Committees

and the International Departments, but there is no reason to assume that Moscow "handed out" instructions to its satellites. In many ways, the countries of the Warsaw Pact came up with their own policy recommendations and solutions, which did not have to be dictated by Moscow. For them, supporting the liberation movements was also a "sacred duty," but they defined it in terms that did not necessarily satisfy the agenda in Moscow.

From the outset, ideology was an important factor that shaped the attitudes of Soviet cadres and their counterparts from other socialist countries, with relation to the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC. The reason behind Soviet support for the MPLA lay in their awareness that the leadership was influenced by Marxists ideas and was close to the Portuguese communists. The case of Soviet and Czechoslovak involvement with Amílcar Cabral and the PAIGC is even more revealing. Guinea-Bissau was a small and insignificant country, but Cabral, who was thought to be heavily influenced by scientific socialism, was expected to influence African opinion towards what they considered to be a left-wing and "progressive direction." This explains why Czechoslovak intelligence maintained close relations with Cabral and why they initially offered such extensive support to the PAIGC. It is not to say that the attitudes of the Soviet cadres were particularly idealistic. There were no very strict criteria to judge whether any particular individual was indeed a convinced Marxist-Leninist, and the Soviet bureaucrats in fact encouraged relations with non-communist nationalists, but only as long as there was any possibility of turning them in the right direction. For this reason, the Soviets were at first reluctant to support FRELIMO because they considered Eduardo Mondlane to be pro-American, but provided assistance nevertheless because Marcelino dos Santos (among others) was a well-known Marxist-Leninist and therefore a man who could influence the direction of the movement from the inside. The military efficiency of a movement and its internal coherence was also a very important consideration, which is another reason why the PAIGC – the only movement which had a real chance of defeating the Portuguese army on the ground –

received aid disproportionate to the size and significance of Guinea-Bissau. One can conclude, therefore, that ideological compatibility was an essential, if not a completely sufficient, criterion for determining Soviet policy towards the liberation movements.

The various stages of Soviet involvement with the liberation movements were by-products of an interactive relationship between the Soviet middle-ranking officials and the Third World revolutionaries in the context of the international environment they faced. By 1966, the Soviet cadres advocated the expansion of aid to the liberation movements in response to the vigorous diplomacy pursued by Third World revolutionaries as they unleashed their military campaigns in 1963-1965. By providing assistance to the anti-colonial struggles, the Soviets saw an opportunity to counter the various challenges from the left – China and Cuba – that argued that the Soviet leadership had abandoned revolution. While the unfolding of the anti-colonial campaigns gave the impetus for the extension of Soviet military aid to the liberation movements, it was the ideological transformations of these movements in the late 1960s that made these middle-ranking officials at the International Department increasingly optimistic about their prospects, thus paving the way for further expansion of aid in the early 1970s. This sense of optimism, of course, cannot be understood without taking into account the War in Vietnam, which accentuated the role of the Soviet Union as protector of the Third World revolutionary movement. One can therefore conclude that by the 1970s, the middle-ranking Soviet cadres and the Third World revolutionaries formed an "epistemic community," a transnational network of people who increasingly saw their goals and interests align around their shared ideals and increasingly close personal relations.[734]

The Soviet involvement in the Angolan Civil War grew out of these personal relationships as they developed in the 1960s and the early 1970s. From the outset, the Soviets believed that events in Angola represented an extension of the post-revolutionary struggles in Portugal, where the FNLA was closely linked with Joseph

[734] Peter Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic communities and International Policy Coordination," *International Organisation,* 46 1 (1992).

Mobutu and therefore with the United States. Their emotional reference point was the 1960-1961 Congo Crisis. In 1974-1975, the situation in Angola looked very similar, and in fact the same people who were on "opposing sides" during the Congo Crisis were again on "opposing sides" during the first stage of the Angolan Civil War. As the Soviet cadres observed the Alvor Agreement unraveling in January-April 1975, they increasingly saw the situation in Angola as the result of international conspiracy. The MPLA leadership reinforced this perspective, arguing that what was going on in Angola was not a regional or an inter-ethnic conflict, but a global one. It was upon recommendations of middle-ranking officials such as Petr Yevsyukov, Oleg Nazhestkin, and others that the Soviet leadership made a decision to step up support for the MPLA. By 11 November 1975, a consensus had formed that the Soviet Union had a "sacred duty" to defend the MPLA despite the possible risks to détente.

Angola's slide into civil war in the first half of 1975 was a major failure, on the parts of both the Soviet Union and the United States, to negotiate directly for a power-sharing agreement before the militarization of both the MPLA and the FNLA in Luanda fuelled the cycle of violence that ultimately led to a total breakdown of the Alvor Accords and the eruption of a full-on civil war by July 1975. The MPLA's declaration of 11 November, proclaiming itself the government of Angola, further decreased the possibility of a peaceful solution because both Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi both realized that nothing short of an all-out military victory would ensure their participation in the future governance of Angola. The intervention of Cuba, the Soviet Union, and the socialist countries on the side of the MPLA, and of Zaire, the US, and South Africa on the side of FNLA/UNITA ensured that each of the rival groups believed they had a good chance to emerge victorious, thus reducing the desirability of peaceful negotiations. Henry Kissinger's heavy-handed attempt to come to some kind of arrangement on Angola by using détente as a yardstick actually helped strengthen the arguments of those cadres in the Soviet leadership who argued that Washington was no longer serious about détente. While Soviet intervention in 1974-75 was a success in

the short term, in the long-term, the internationalization of the Angolan Civil War would lead to a prolonged and bloody conflict, a bleeding sore in US-Soviet relations, and a human tragedy that lasted, with some interludes, well beyond the Cold War, until Jonas Savimbi was killed by government forces on 22 February 2002.

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