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TELEGRAM NUMBER 460 OF 27 JULY

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON PRETORIA LUSAKA KINSHASA

INFO SAVING PARIS BONN OTTAWA UKMIS NEW YORK HAVANA MOSCOW

NAIROBI ADDIS ABABA LAGOS DAR ES SALAAM MAPUTO HARARE GABORONE

YOUR TELNO 326:UNITA

1. THE REQUESTED ASSESSMENT IS IN MY THREE IFTS. THE FIRST ATTEMPTS TO DESCRIBE THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND AT PRESENT. THE SECOND ASSESSES UNITA'S CHANCES OF EITHER DRIVING THE MPLA FROM POWER OR FORCING THEM TO SHARE POWER, ON VARYING ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT CUBAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR THE TWO SIDES. THE THIRD CONSIDERS WHETHER A UNITA VICTORY WOULD SERVE BRITISH INTERESTS.
2. IN ORDER TO AVOID MAKING MY IFTS EVEN LONGER (AND TREADING ON COLLEAGUES' TERRITORY), I HAVE NOT ADDRESSED A NUMBER OF OTHER QUESTIONS WHICH COULD BE RELEVANT. FOR INSTANCE, HOW FAR DOES SAVIMBI ACT AT SOUTH AFRICAN BEHEST? HOW FAR HAS THE RECENT INCREASE IN HIS ACTIVITY BEEN SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO BLOCK A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME TO THE AMERICANS' NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ANGOLANS (BY SO FRIGHTENING THE LATTER THAT THEY COULD NOT ENVISAGE CUBAN WITHDRAWAL)? WHO WOULD PROVIDE SAVIMBI WITH THE TRAINED ADMINISTRATORS HE WOULD NEED TO GOVERN THE COUNTRY (HE HAS FEW AT PRESENT)? HOW WOULD THE RUSSIANS AND CUBANS REACT TO A FURTHER WEAKENING OF THE MPLA'S POSITION? AND SO ON.
3. I HAVE ALSO FOREBORNE TO MAKE THE OBVIOUS POINTS ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES A CHANGE IN BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS UNITA WOULD HAVE FOR OUR BILATERAL CONCERNS HERE (TRADE, BRITISH COMMUNITY, MERCENARIES ETC).

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INFO SAVING PARIS, BONN, OTTAWA, UKMIS NEW YORK, HAVANA, MOSCOW,
NAIROBI, ADDIS ABABA, LAGOS, MAPUTO, LUSAKA, HARARE AND GABORONE.
DAR ES SALAAM

MIPT: UNITA: WHAT IS THEIR PRESENT STRENGTH?

1. WE HAVE NO RELIABLE MEANS HERE OF ASSESSING THE SIZE AND CAPABILITY OF UNITA'S FORCES. BUT MOST OF THE ESTIMATES WE HAVE SEEN GAVE SAVIMBI 10,000 OR MORE ARMD MEN IN THE FIELD. HE IS KNOWN TO RECEIVE MONEY, ARMS, TRAINING, SUPPLIES (ESPECIALLY POL AND FOOD) AND TRANSPORT FROM THE SADF, PERHAPS ON A SUBSTANTIAL SCALE (SEE FOR INSTANCE THE CZECH ACCOUNT OF THE ATTACK ON ALTO CATUMBELA IN MY TELNO 428 - NOT TO ALL). HE ALSO BENEFITS FROM SOUTH AFRICAN CONTROL OF THE AIR OVER SOUTHERN ANGOLA WHERE HIS HQ ARE LOCATED. RECENT SABOTAGE OPERATIONS INDICATE THAT UNITA HAS ACCESS TO EXPERT DEMOLITION SKILLS. INDIVIDUALS OR EVEN UNITS FROM THE SADF ARE SAID TO OPERATE WITH UNITA FROM TIME TO TIME. ALL VISITORS TO SAVIMBI EXPRESS ADMIRATION FOR UNITA'S EFFICIENCY AND DISCIPLINE.
2. WE HAVE NO HARD FIGURES EITHER FOR THE FORCES DEPLOYED AGAINST UNITA. THEY WILL BE DRAWN FROM THE ANGOLAN ARMY (FAPLA), TOTALLING BETWEEN 35 AND 40,000: AN ESTIMATED 20 TO 25,000 CUBAN TROOPS: AND A FEW THOUSAND KATANGESE DISSIDENTS. IN ADDITION THERE IS A HOME GUARD (THE ODP) , WHO ARE CLAIMED TO NUMBER HALF A MILLION OR MORE, BUT THEY ARE OF DOUBTFUL EFFECTIVENESS (AND LOYALTY). MOST OF THESE FORCES, ESPECIALLY THE CUBANS, ARE IN STATIC LOCATIONS, WITH FEW SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS, THOUGH THE MPLA ARE TAKING STEPS TO IMPROVE FAPLA'S ANTI-GUERILLA CAPABILITY. FAPLA ARE INCREASINGLY STRETCHED. THEIR UNITS VARY IN QUALITY. SOME ARE SAID TO BE GOOD: BUT MANY ARE POORLY TRAINED AND SUPPLIED, THEIR MORALE IS LOW AND THERE ARE FREQUENT STORIES OF DESERTION TO UNITA.
3. EVEN IF THE GOVERNMENTS FORCES MATCHED THE STANDARD OF UNITA'S THEIR NUMBERS FALL WELL SHORT OF THE RATIO REQUIRED FOR CONTROL, LET ALONE DEFEAT, OF A GUERILLA CAMPAIGN. MOREOVER GEOGRAPHY HELPS UNITA. LARGE AREAS OF THE COUNTRY ARE WELL SUITED TO GUERILLA ACTIVITIES AND THE DISTANCES ARE IMMENSE. THE AREAS IN WHICH UNITA HAS BEEN ACTIVE DURING THE LAST 18 MONTHS ARE TWICE THE SIZE OF THE IBERIAN PENINSULA. EXCEPT FOR THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS, THEY ARE SPARSELY POPULATED AND THERE ARE FEW ROADS.
4. SAVIMBI HAS EXPLOITED THESE ADVANTAGES WITH SKILL. HE SEEMS TO BE ABLE TO MOVE SEVERAL HUNDRED MEN AT A TIME IN THE EASTERN HALF OF ANGOLA AND IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS. HIS FORCES THREATEN THE COAST ROAD FROM NGUNZA TO LOBITO AND ROAD AND RAIL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COAST INLAND TO MALANJE AND HUAMBO. THE BENGUELA RAILWAY HAS LONG BEEN UNUSABLE EAST OF HUAMBO. HUAMBO ITSELF IS MORE OR LESS UNDER SIEGE. UNITA (PROBABLY WITH SADF HELP)

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HAS MOUNTED EFFECTIVE ATTACKS AGAINST BRIDGES, DAMS AND POWER STATIONS. THEY REGULARLY KIDNAP FOREIGNERS AND EXTRACT PROPAGANDA ADVANTAGE FROM THEM. THIS HAS CAUSED THE WITHDRAWAL OF MANY FOREIGN AID WORKERS FROM THE MORE EXPOSED AREAS. ALL THIS CREATES A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE EFFECTIVENESS, CREDIBILITY AND MORALE OF THE GOVERNMENT IN LUANDA AND HAS INTENSIFIED THE TRENDS TOWARDS CORRUPTION AND A BRAIN-DRAIN.

5. BUT SAVIMBI'S CLAIM TO QUOTE CONTROL UNQUOTE A THIRD OR MORE OF THE COUNTRY NEEDS QUALIFICATION. MOVEMENT OUTSIDE THE TOWNS HAS BECOME MORE DANGEROUS IN MANY PROVINCES THAN IT WAS A YEAR AGO. THERE ARE LARGE, SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS IN THE EAST OF THE COUNTRY WHERE GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL HAVE TO TRAVEL IN ARMED CONVOYS. THIS IS ALSO TRUE OF SOME PARTS OF THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS. BUT UNITA STILL DOES NOT OCCUPY, NOR HAS EVER ATTACKED ANY OF THE 18 PROVINCIAL CAPITALS: ALL ARE HELD BY THE GOVERNMENT EXCEPT FOR ONDJIVA (CUNENE) WHICH IS OCCUPIED BY THE SADF. THE FEW TOWNS WHICH UNITA HAS ATTACKED SUCCESSFULLY HAVE BEEN ABANDONED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT UNITA HAS ESTABLISHED ANY ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES EXCEPT IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF SAVIMBI'S HEADQUARTERS, WHICH REMAIN AT MAVINGA IN THE REMOTE AND UNPOPULATED SOUTH EAST OF THE COUNTRY.

6. THE SITUATION IN ANGOLA THUS RESEMBLES GUERILLA INSURGENCIES ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD. MIFT CONSIDERS WHETHER SAVIMBI'S PARTIAL CONTROL OF THE COUNTRYSIDE CAN WIN HIM CONTROL OF (OR A SHARE IN) THE GOVERNMENT IN LUANDA.

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AND DAR-ES-SALAAM.

MY TWO IPTS: UNITA: CAN SAVIMBI WIN?

1. IT IS THE UNANIMOUS VIEW OF MY COLLEAGUES (WHICH I SHARE) THAT, AS LONG AS CUBAN COMBAT FORCES REMAIN IN ANGOLA, UNITA COULD NOT TAKE AND HOLD LUANDA EVEN IF THE SADF WERE TO INTERVENE ON THE SAME SCALE AS IN 1975. TALK OF A UNITA GOVERNMENT IN LUANDA IS THREFORE UNREALISTIC.
2. COULD UNITA SEIZE KUITO, HUAMBO OR BENGUELA/LOBITO AND PROCLAIM A RIVAL GOVERNMENT THERE? THIS POSSIBILITY IS SAID TO WORRY THE MPLA. BUT I THINK IT VERY UNLIKELY. UNITA'S SKILLS ARE GEURRILLA SKILLS: THEY DO NOT YET HAVE THE NUMBERS OR THE EQUIPMENT TO FIGHT THEIR WAY INTO A LARGE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL AND WITHSTAND THE INEVITABLE FAPLA AND CUBAN COUNTER-ATTACK. SAVIMBI'S CARE SO FAR TO AVOID ATTACKS ON MAJOR TOWNS SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. BUT ONE CANNOT ENTIRELY EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE MIGHT SUCCEED IN ESTABLISHING HIMSELF IN A MORE REMOTE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL (EG LUENA OR SAURIMO).
3. ANOTHER SCENARIO (WHICH IS SAID TO WORRY THE MPLA) IS THAT THE SADF MIGHT SEIZE MOCAMEDES AND LUBANGO AND INSTAL SAVIMBI THERE AS AN ANGOLA HADDAD. BUT THEY ARE VERY HEAVILY DEFENDED (BY CUBANS AS WILL AS FAPLA) AND IT IS ANYWAY DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT THIS WOULD SUIT SAVIMBI'S POLITICAL PURPOSES.
4. IT IS MORE DIFFICULT TO ASSESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF CUBAN FORCES HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN AND THERE HAD BEEN A REDUCTION IN SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR UNITA. AN IMPORTANT FACTOR THEN WOULD BE THE SUPPORT WHICH SAVIMBI COULD MUSTER AMONGST HIS FELLOW OVIMBUNDU AND AMONGST THE REST OF THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE. AGAIN WE LACK HARD FACTS.

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SAVIMBI HAS GREAT CHARISMA AND IS SAID TO BE IN EFFECT THE TRIBAL CHIEFTAIN OF THE OVIMBUNDU (WHO ACCOUNT FOR ABOUT 35 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION). BUT MOST VISITORS TO THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS THINK THAT, ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT IN LUANDA IS INEFFECTIVE AND UNPOPULAR, THE PEOPLE IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS ARE MORE DESIROUS OF AN END TO THE WAR AND THE INCREASINGLY BRUTAL REPRISALS BY BOTH SIDES THAN OF VICTORY FOR SAVIMBI.

5. OUTSIDE THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS THERE IS LITTLE TRIBAL SUPPORT FOR UNITA, THOUGH THERE IS AN OVIMBUNDU ELEMENT ROUND THE KEY CITY OF MALANJE, WHICH IS ONE OF THE MAIN AREAS OF CURRENT UNITA ACTIVITY (RAISING FEARS OF AN ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH A CORRIDOR BETWEEN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AND EX-FNLA SUPPORTERS IN THE NORTH). SAVIMBI BENEFITS TO SOME EXTENT FROM THE GENERAL APATHY AND DEMORALISATION WHICH RESULT FROM THE MPLA'S FAILURE EVEN TO PROVIDE THE BASIC NECESSITIES OF LIFE. IF THERE WAS TO BE A GENERAL COLLAPSE OF FAPLA, UNITA COULD CUT THROUGH QUICKLY TO LUANDA AND INSTAL THEMSELVES THERE. BUT OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS WOULD WORK AGAINST THEM: THE KIMBUNDU PEOPLE WHO INHABIT THE LUANDA REGION HAVE NO LOVE FOR THE OVIMBUNDU: THERE IS WIDE DISTRUST OF SAVIMBI'S PERSONAL AMBITIONS: AND MANY IN THE MPLA, FAPLA AND THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE LITERALLY FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVES, ESPECIALLY THE MESTICOS. I WOULD EXPECT THAT, EVEN WITHUT CUBAN COMBAT FORCES AND WITH SOME CONTINUING SADF SUPPORT, UNITA WOULD ENCOUNTER TOO MUCH RESISTANCE TO BE ABLE TO SEIZE LUANDA AND HOLD IT. AND WOULD THE RUSSIANS AND THE CUBANS , AFTER ALL THEIR INVESTMENTS IN ANGOLA, ALLOW THE MPLA TO GO UNDER?

6. SAVIMBI'S PRESENT TACTICS OF DESTROYING ECONOMIC TARGETS, INTERRUPTING FOOD SUPPLIES AND SPREADING UNCERTAINTY AND FEAR ARE ACHIEVING MUCH SUCCESS IN AGGRAVATING AN ALREADY SERIOUS ECONOMIC SITUATION AND UNDERMINING THE MPLA'S CREDIBILITY AS A GOVERNMENT. BUT HE COULD DO MORE. A FEW WELL-PLACED CHARGES COULD INTERRUPT LUANDA'S WATER AND ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES. SABOTAGE OF THE CABINDA OIL INTALLATIONS COULD DRASTICALLY CUT FOREIGN EXCHANGE RECEIPTS. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER UNITA'S FAILURE SO FAR TO ATTACK THESE VITAL TARGETS IS BECAUSE THEY ARE TOO DIFFICULT OR BECAUSE OF DELIBERATE RESTRAINT (ON THEIR PART OR THE SOUTH AFRICANS'). ATTACKS ON THEM,

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AND ON SOME KEY TARGETS IN LUANDA, COULD PROVOKE CHAOS HERE. BUT FOR THE REASONS IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPH I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT UNITA WOULD BE ABLE TO EXPLOIT THAT CHAOS TO DRIVE THE MPLA FROM POWER.

7. IF UNITA ARE NOT STRONG ENOUGH FOR THAT, COULD THEY NEVERTHELESS FORCE THE MPLA TO SHARE POWER WITH THEM? WE HEAR RUMOURS OF MPLA OVERTURES TO UNITA. BUT IT HAS TO BE REMEMBERED THAT THE CONSTITUTION

OF ANGOLA IS THAT OF A ONE-PARTY MARXIST STATE. NO ROLE IS PERMITTED FOR ANY PARTY OTHER THAN THE MPLA. A FORMAL COALITION WOULD BE UNCONSTITUTIONAL. THE MPLA SAY PRIVATELY THAT ONCE SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION CEASED THEY WOULD OPEN DISCUSSIONS WITH UNITA PERSONALITIES, ALWAYS EXCLUDING SAVIMBI HIMSELF, AND WOULD RESOLVE THE UNITA PROBLEM IN AN ANGOLAN WAY. THEY ARE IMPRECISE ABOUT WHAT THIS WOULD MEAN IN PRACTICE. THERE HAS BEEN MENTION OF SOME FORM OF REGIONAL AUTONOMY FOR THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AND/OR OF THE ADMISSION OF SENIOR UNITA PEOPLE TO THE MPLA. BUT THIS OF COURSE WOULD FALL FAR SHORT OF WHAT SAVIMBI WANTS, NAMELY A SHARE IN GOVERNMENT IN HIS OWN RIGHT. THE MPLA WILL NEVER CONCEDE HIM THAT, HOWEVER MUCH HE MEANWHILE UNDERMINES THEIR ABILITY TO GOVERN. EVEN IF THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP IS REPLACED BY A MORE FLEXIBLE GROUP, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCOMMODATE SAVIMBI HIMSELF.

8. THIS ANALYSIS LEADS TO THE SAD CONCLUSION THAT ANGOLA CONTINUES TO BE TORN APART BY A STRUGGLE WHICH NEITHER OF THE CONTESTANTS CAN WIN. SAVIMBI CANNOT ESTABLISH A UNITA GOVERNMENT IN LUANDA OR OBLIGE THE MPLA TO SHARE POWER WITH HIM. AND THE MPLA CANNOT GOVERN ANGOLA EFFECTIVELY WHILE SAVIMBI MAINTAINS THE PRESENT LEVEL OF INSURGENCY AND ECONOMIC SABOTAGE.

9. THERE ARE THREE WAYS IN WHICH ANGOLA MIGHT IN THEORY ESCAPE FROM THIS ORDEAL:

(A) UNITA COULD BECOME STRONG ENOUGH TO ESTABLISH ITSELF AS THE GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA. FOR THE REASONS GIVEN ABOVE, I BELIEVE THAT THIS COULD ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH EXTERNAL INTERVENTION ON A MAJOR SCALE. THIS WOULD BRING THE CUBANS BACK AND CREATE A MIRROR IMAGE OF THE PRESENT SITUATION - AN INSURGENT MPLA TRYING

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TO UNSEAT A FOREIGN SUPPORTED UNITA GOVERNMENT.

(B) FOLLOWING A SETTLEMENT IN NAMIBIA, UNITA COULD BE CUT OFF FROM FOREIGN SUPPORT ON THE PRESENT SCALE AND INSURGENCY IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS WOULD GRADUALLY DECLINE TO THE POINT WHERE IT DID NOT SERIOUSLY AFFECT THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO GOVERN (CF THE DEMISE OF THE FNLA/COMIRA SINCE 1976). MPLA SPOKESMEN SAY THAT THIS IS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN ONCE THE SADF HAD WITHDRAWN FROM CUNENE PROVINCE AND NAMIBIA. BUT THERE ARE SIGNS THAT THE SCALE OF UNITA'S RECENT ACTIVITIES IS CAUSING THEM DOUBTS. I SHARE THOSE DOUBTS: UNITA MUST BE ASSUMED TO HAVE STOCK-PILED ARMS AND SUPPLIES: IT WOULD BE A TOUGHER NUT THAT THE FNLA AND, EX-HYPOTHESE, THE MPLA WOULD NOT HAVE CUBAN HELP IN CRACKING IT.

(C) THE MARXIST RIGOUR OF THE ANGOLAN CONSTITUTION (AND THE MPLA STATUTES) COULD BE CIRCUMVENTED AND SOME AFRICAN MODUS VIVENDI BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE MPLA AND UNITA, I DO NOT THINK THAT THIS COULD INCLUDE SAVIMBI: HE IS TOO LARGE A PERSONALITY TO ABSORB AND THE MPLA HATE HIM TOO MUCH FOR (AS THEY SEE IT) BRINGING THE SOUTH AFRICANS IN IN OCTOBER 1975. BUT IF HE WAS EVER REMOVED FRM THE SCENE (WHICH WOULD ANYWAY SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE UNITA'S EFFECTIVENESS), IF THERE WAS A NAMIBIAN SETTLEMENT AND IF THEREAFTER THE SOUTH AFRICANS ABJURED THE TEMPTATION TO USE OVIMBUNDU SEPARATISM TO DESTABILISE THE GOVERNMENT IN LUANDA, THE AFRICAN MODUS VIVENDI WOULD BE A POSSIBILITY. THOSE, HOWEVER, ARE BIG IFS AND FOR THE TIME BEING I SEE LITTLE HOPE OF ANY ALTERNATIVE TO CONTINUATION AND POSSIBLY DETERIORATION OF THE PRESENT VERY UNSATISFACTORY SITUATION.

10. MEANWHILE MIFT CONSIDERS THE SENSITIVE QUESTION OF WHETHER BRITISH INTERESTS WOULD BE SERVED BY UNITA'S COMING TO POWER.
PCO PLEASE PASS ALL.

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MY 3 IPTS: UNITA: WOULD ITS VICTORY SERVE BRITISH INTERESTS?

1. THE MAJOR BRITISH INTEREST IN ANGOLA IS TO PREVENT THE RUSSIANS TURNING IT INTO A SECURE POLITICAL AND MILITARY BASE FROM WHICH TO PURSUE THEIR OBJECTIVES ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: OR (TO PUT THE POINT MORE POSITIVELY) TO SHOW THE ANGOLANS AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS, ABOVE ALL THROUGH A SETTLEMENT IN NAMIBIA, THAT THEIR INTERESTS LIE IN COOPERATION WITH THE WEST, NOT THE EAST. A SECOND, AND IMPORTANT, INTEREST IS TO ESTABLISH A CLOSE COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ANGOLA SO THAT THE U K CAN BENEFIT WHEN PEACE EVENTUALLY PERMITS REALISATION OF ANGOLA'S CONSIDERABLE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL. A THIRD INTEREST IS TO PROTECT THE 500-STRONG BRITISH COMMUNITY HERE. THE FIRST AND SECOND INTERESTS INTERACT BECAUSE ECONOMIC COOPERATION IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS WE AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES HAVE OF LOOSENING ANGOLA'S TIES WITH THE SOVIET BLOC.

2. OUR INTEREST IN LIMITING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN ANGOLA SUFFERED A MAJOR SET BACK WITH THE MPLA VICTORY IN 1975/76. BUT THAT SUCCESS HAS NOT BORNE FRUIT FOR THE RUSSIANS, IN SPITE OF A MAJOR INVESTMENT OF RESOURCES AND PRESTIGE. THEIR MPLA PROTEGES HAVE NOT SUCCEEDED IN ESTABLISHING THEMSELVES AS THE UNCHALLENGED GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA. THE RUSSIANS HAVE NOT OBTAINED THE NAVAL BASE THEY WANT. THE ANGOLANS ARE NOT PAYING THEIR DEBTS. WESTERN MULTI-NATIONALS RUN THEIR OIL AND DIAMOND PRODUCTION. THEY SEEM TO BE MOVING TOWARDS ACCESSION TO LOME AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE IMF/IBRD. THEY ARE TAKING THE WESTERN, NOT THE SOVIET, PATH TOWARDS A NAMIBIA SETTLEMENT. THEY MAKE NO SECRET OF THEIR DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE WEST GENERALLY AND TO KEEP OUT OF EAST-WEST CROSSFIRE.

3. ON THE FACE OF IT, OUR ANTI-SOVIET INTEREST WOULD BE FURTHER PROMOTED IF UNITA CAME TO POWER. THAT WOULD BE A MAJOR DEFEAT FOR THE RUSSIANS. SAVIMBI HAS OFTEN CHANGED TACK - FIRST HE WAS THE FNLA'S FOREIGN MINISTER, THEN A BLACK POWER/MAOIST CRUSADER AGAINST WHITE IMPERIALISM, THEN THE WOOER OF THE WHITES IN ANGOLA AFTER THE PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION AND FINALLY THE ALLY OF SOUTH AFRICA. BUT HE HAS BEEN CONSISTENT IN HIS HOSTILITY TO THE RUSSIANS (AND SINCE 1975 THE CUBANS) AND HE COULD BE EXPECTED TO DENY THEM ANY ROLE IN ANGOLA.

4. IF MIPT IS CORRECT, HOWEVER, UNITA COULD ONLY COME TO POWER IN LUANDA WITH MAJOR EXTERNAL SUPPORT. AT PRESENT MOST OF SAVIMBI'S SUPPORT COMES FROM SOUTH AFRICA (SEE MY SECOND IPT). NO WESTERN GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS HIM OVERTLY, THOUGH THE AMERICANS BELIEVE HE SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST A SLICE OF THE PIE IN ANGOLA AND HE HAS RICH AND INFLUENTIAL FRIENDS IN A NUMBER OF WESTERN COUNTRIES.

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IN AFRICA, ONLY MOROCCO GIVES UNITA OPEN SUPPORT, THOUGH ZAIRE CONNIVES AT COMMUNICATIONS WITH, AND PERHAPS SUPPLIES TO, UNITA THROUGH ITS TERRITORY AND THERE MAY BE CLANDESTINE HELP FROM OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

5. A UNITA GOVERNMENT WHICH CAME TO POWER AS A RESULT OF INCREASED SUPPORT FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND /OR THE WEST WOULD BE DAMNED IN AFRICAN EYES. THIS MAY BE ILLOGICAL, GIVEN EARLIER SOVIET/CUBAN SUPPORT FOR THE MPLA, BUT IT IS A FACT OF LIFE. IT WAS SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION IN OCTOBER 1975 WHICH TURNED THE AFRICAN TIDE IN THE MPLA'S FAVOUR. IN SPITE OF THE MPLA'S FAILURES SINCE, I BELIEVE THAT WESTERN INTERVENTION WOULD RALLY ALL AFRICA TO THEM, THE CIVIL WAR IN ANGOLA WOULD CONTINUE AND THE SOVIET UNION, AS DEFENDER OF PERCEIVED LEGITIMACY, WOULD HAVE HAD ITS INFLUENCE STRENGTHENED, NOT WEAKENED.

6. I CONCLUDE THAT THE CONTINUATION IN POWER OF THE MPLA, FOR ALL ITS FAULTS, OFFERS US THE BETTER PROSPECT OF REDUCING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN ANGOLA. IT WILL BE A GREATER VICTORY TO CONVERT THE MPLA TO REAL NON-ALIGNMENT THAN TO INSTAL A UNITA GOVERNMENT. THERE IS A REAL PROSPECT THAT THE MPLA CAN BE TURNED ROUND (INDEED THAT PROCESS IS ALREADY UNDER WAY SEE PARA 2 ABOVE). BUT TO REALISE THIS PROSPECT WE NEED, ABOVE ALL, A SETTLEMENT IN NAMIBIA WHICH WOULD ENABLE THE ANGOLANS TO REDUCE THEIR DEPENDENCE ON THE RUSSIANS AND CUBANS AND TO DEVELOP THEIR ECONOMY WITH WESTERN HELP. IF A NAMIBIA SETTLEMENT CONTINUES TO ELUDE US, IT WILL BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO ADVANCE OUR INTERESTS IN ANGOLA. BUT I STILL THINK THAT CONTINUATION OF OUR PRESENT POLICY WOULD BE BETTER THAN PURSUING A WILL O' THE WISP OF A UNITA VICTORY.
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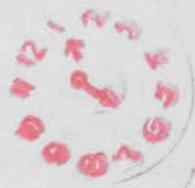
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