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PRESIDENT CARTER'S RESPONSE TO SHABA II:

OR, HOW TO PLAY THE CUBA CARD

By

George V. Wright

If the Soviet Union is permitted to exploit opportunities arising out of local conflicts by military means, the hopes we have for progress towards a more peaceful international order will ultimately be undermined.

Dr. Henry Kissinger
Statement from his book
American Foreign Policy

This charge is a complete comedy....

Fidel Castro
September 29, 1979
Responding to President
Jimmy Carter's accusation
that there were Soviet
combat troops in Cuba

On May 12, 1978, the Congolese National Liberation Front (F.N.L.C.) launched the so-called Shaba II invasion into the Shaba Province of Zaire from its sanctuary in northeastern Angola. The F.N.L.C. were former "gendarmes" in the Katanga Province (renamed Shaba), who had collaborated with Belgium, in an attempted secession from the Congo (Zaire) in 1964. The eventual objective of the invasion, code-named "Operation Dove," was to overthrow President Mobutu Sese Seko, with whom they had historic grievances.¹ The purpose of this paper is to examine the response of the Carter Administration to that invasion.

Only days after the invasion President Jimmy Carter accused the Soviet Union and Cuba of being responsible for the invasion.

This accusation simply added to the body of anti-Soviet and Cuban rhetoric that had been emanating from the Carter White House during the Spring of 1978. During the winter and early spring of 1978, President Carter had lashed out at the Soviet and Cuban military involvement in the Horn of Africa.²

The thrust of that language claimed that the Soviet Union was "expansionist," posing a threat to world peace. And that the Cubans in Africa were proxies for the Soviet Union.

On March 17, 1978, speaking at Wake Forest University, Carter said that Cuba's venture in Africa was another "ominous inclination on the part of the Soviet Union to use its military power" in combination with "mercenaries from other countries" which intervene in local conflicts around the globe.³

Carter also condemned Soviet intervention in Africa as "a danger to Russian-American relations."⁴ At Wake Forest Carter said that although the United States was supportive of SALT II, we would "match...defense expenditures and military force levels."⁵ He also "warned the Soviets that they risk a loss of support if they do not begin to restrain their military build-up."⁶ Carter was alluding to a loss of Congressional support for the ratification of SALT II.

Shaba II reinitiated United States concern about Cuban and Soviet involvement in Angola. In 1975, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had used the fact that the Soviet Union and Cuba provided military aid to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (M.P.L.A.) as an excuse for covert C.I.A. operations in Angola.⁷

What is curious is that the Soviet Union did not resume aid to the M.P.L.A. until after the United States reinitiated its covert support of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (F.N.L.A.) in July.⁸

John Stockwell, who headed the C.I.A.'s Angolan Task Force established in Summer 1975 documents in his book *In Search of Enemies*, that major Soviet aid in March, 1975, which was used as a basis for increased concern about Soviet expansionism, did not occur until after Kissinger and the 40 Committee authorized aid to the F.N.L.A. in January, 1975.⁹

The Cuban "presence" in Angola was in part a response to Western aggression. Before early Fall 1975, there were only 260 Cubans in Angola. There was a significant increase of Cuban personnel only after a major attack in southern Angola by South Africa on October 23, 1975. By early 1976, over twenty-thousand Cubans had been airlifted to Angola.¹⁰

The Cubans played a decisive role in the fighting against the contending nationalist factions and their allies. During this period the Cubans did come in contact with the F.N.L.C., who had apparently shed their secessionist ideology and adopted a leftist-nationalist perspective.¹¹

During the winter of 1975-1976, Congress passed legislation to stop United States' covert aid to Angola,¹² but Kissinger simply shifted the C.I.A. effort to supplying

mercenaries for the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (U.N.I.T.A.).¹³ The war ended in March, 1976. But South Africa began a policy of "destabilization" and "harassment" in southern Angola. Because of this the Cubans decided to stay in Angola until the M.P.L.A. felt its borders were secure.¹⁴

The United States refused to recognize Angola, although the socialist nations, most Third World nations, Zaire being an exception, and the major Western nations recognized the M.P.L.A. Government. The reason the United States gave for not recognizing Angola was because of the presence of Cubans there.

On May 17, 1978, President Carter used Shaba II as a pretense to add a new dimension to his accusations concerning Soviet and Cuban "presence" and "culpability" in Africa. At a White House breakfast Carter held with Congressional leadership he stated that he felt frustrated by legislation which prevented the Executive from helping "beleaguered 'friendly' governments."¹⁵

The "beleaguered-friendly government" Carter was referring to was obviously Zaire. Yet the President was vague in his comments to the Congressional delegation as to what legislation he was referring to. He did not tell them he had ordered a State Department review of such legislation.¹⁶

Two days later Carter "complained" that he had to operate under very tight constraints "to counter with limited means the Soviet Union's unchecked ability 'to send Cuban troops into foreign adventures in Africa.'"¹⁷

While Carter was lodging this "complaint," 1,900 Belgian and French Foreign Legion paratroopers were airlifted into the area on May 18, 1978. The United States participated in the airlift by flying eighteen C-130 air transport jets into Shaba. The U.S. also provided Zaire with \$17.5 million in "non-lethal" military aid.

It took approximately four days for the Western forces to break the F.N.L.C.'s control of the important mining town of Kolwezi, in the heart of the Shaba Province. The F.N.L.C. retreated into Zambia and Angola only after sabotaging much of the copper-mining infrastructure. Many Zairians also evacuated the country fearing reprisals by the Government.¹⁸

What were the motives of the Carter Administration in making these accusations about the Soviet Union and Cuba? Were the Soviets and the Cubans responsible for Shaba II? Or was Carter fueling tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union? And if so, for what purposes?

The "hand-tying" legislation that Carter was specifically alluding to was an amendment passed in Congress in 1976, sponsored by Iowa Senator Dick Clark, chairperson of the Senate African Affairs subcommittee, which prohibited United States military involvement in Angola.¹⁹ The amendment did not restrict activities anywhere else in Africa, including Zaire; nor did it preclude military involvement in Angola if Congress gave its approval.

Important to the Angolan-Zaire connection the amendment also restricted third country transfers. For example, Zaire, or Zambia, could not be used as a conduit for covert arms shipments, as Zaire had been used during the "Civil War."

Carter's claim that his "hands were tied" was false. He did provide military aid and assistance to Zaire without any "legal" constraints. Angola was not off limits either; all Carter had to do was to present a sound case to Congress. It appears that Carter was using the Shaba II invasion as an excuse to refocus on the Cubans in Angola.

It was common knowledge among observers of the Presidency that National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski influenced Carter's views on foreign policy. It was also well-known that Brzezinski "is frequently eager to take actions that challenge-test the Soviet Union."²⁰

In a lengthy, but insightful biographical essay in the May 1, 1978, *New Yorker* Elizabeth Drew disclosed that Brzezinski:

*has brought up the idea from time to time that perhaps the United States should cause trouble for Augustinho Neto, the leader of Angola, who has Cuban backing---perhaps by giving some support to Jonas Savimbi....*²¹

Drew also reported that Brzezinski had been concerned about the Congressional restrictions on Angolan involvement for several months.

On May 4, 1978, eight days before the Shaba II invasion, President Carter said in a press conference at Portland, Oregon that "we have no intention to intercede in anyway in Angola."²²

Yet several days later, apparently unbeknownst to Carter, C.I.A. Director Stansfield Turner and Deputy National Security Advisor David Aaron met with Sen. Clark proposing a program for "covert arms aid to Angolan rebels."²³ The plan specifically called for supplying U.N.I.T.A. with arms through France. There are reports that this proposal had been circulating around the National Security Council for three months.²⁴

When quizzed later about the content of the meeting he had with Sen. Clark, Turner claimed he was only attempting to find out from Clark what options the Administration had in Angola. Were not C.I.A. lawyers already aware of those options? Regardless, the Turner-Aaron meeting convinced Senator Clark that the Administration was searching for ways to circumvent the Clark amendment.²⁵

On May 24, discovering that the *Washington Post* was going to disclose that he had had the meeting with Turner and Aaron, Clark announced: "It is increasingly clear that President Carter has made the decision to reinvolve the United States in the Angolan Civil War."²⁶

Both John Stockwell and Gerald Bender, an Angolan expert who has close ties with the M.P.L.A., addressing a House Subcommittee on African Affairs hearing on May 25, concurred with Clark that the President wanted to "resume covert military support to...U.N.I.T.A. forces."²⁷

Bender also stressed that high military, government and party officials in Angola were very concerned about how to read United States policy and rhetoric. He said the question raised to him most in Angola was "How are (we) to decrease...dependence on the Soviet Union without American recognition?"²⁸ They say, Bender continued, "You stand and scream at us about our relations with the Soviet Union, but you don't do anything positive about it. On the contrary, you drive us further and further toward the Soviets."²⁹

On the same day the Congressional hearing was held President Carter held a press conference in Chicago. Although accusations that the Cubans and the Soviet Union were responsible for Shaba II received all the headlines in the American press, Carter's comments about the Congressional restraints were equally significant.³⁰ Carter said that he had "no intention to seek modification of the Clark amendment, or any other piece of legislation." He also declared that he would "faithfully observe" the law.³¹

Carter was apparently reestablishing the position of his Administration once the disclosure about the Turner-Aaron meeting with Clark was made public. He was also responding to key opinions critical of military reinvolvement in Angola.

Commenting about Carter's remarks, Sen. Clark said "he was reassured" by Carter's statements and was "pleased that the administration now seems to be focusing on easing of restrictions on economic aid rather than military aid."³²

Carter's statements denying reinvolvement in Angola did

not stop the "Cold War" rhetoric emanating from the White House though. On May 28, three days later, Brzezinski, who had just returned from the People's Republic of China,³³ appeared on NBC's "Meet the Press." Projecting a tone that was called "worse than we have ever (seen) from Brzezinski," the National Security Advisor accused the Cubans and the Soviet Union of culpability in Shaba II.³⁴ Brzezinski said on national television:

*It seems to me essential for everyone to understand that in this day and age the intrusion of foreign military power to determine the outcome of specific and particular African conflicts is intolerable to international peace and is an insult to Africans themselves.*³⁵

Brzezinski, of course, did not condemn the 10,000 French troops in Africa maintaining a *Pax Gallica*, the international neo-colonial force that descended upon Zaire to protect Western economic interests, or the legacy of United States covert aid which directly led to the escalation of the Angolan "Civil War." He rationalized the successful effort of stopping the F.N.L.C., by saying "There has to be an international response to an international problem."³⁶

Did not the Soviet and Cuban "presence" curiously fit the description of an "international response to an international problem"? It is well documented that Neto did not request Soviet and Cuban help until after the increase of United States covert aid.³⁷ And that Cuban personnel significantly increased only after South Africa attacked Angola on October 23, 1975.³⁸

On May 26, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee demanded proof of Carter's claim from Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, who was testifying in a closed session on U.S.-Soviet arms limitation. Vance, implying a difference of opinion in the Carter foreign-policy apparatus, said that the Committee should "interrogate" the C.I.A.; the State Department did not have the evidence.³⁹

Sen. George McGovern announced at the hearing that Cuban Vice-President Carlos Rafael Rodrigues had told him that Cuba was not involved in the invasion. McGovern emphatically said that he knew a contradiction when he saw one, and it was "time for the Committee to have a clear answer."⁴⁰

According to reports, Fidel Castro, in an unprecedented move, summoned Lyle Lane, the chief United States diplomat in Havana to his home after Carter claimed Cuba was responsible for the invasion. In that meeting Castro denied any complicity.⁴¹ It was not until June 9, that it was made public that Castro had

also told Lane that he had known about the invasion one month before it occurred and tried to stop it, but Dr. Neto was out of the country.⁴²

On June 16, Castro granted an interview to reporters representing the three major U.S. television networks. The interview was broadcast on ABC's "Issues and Answers" two days later. In the interview Castro explained the Cuban position on Shaba II. He emphatically denied any complicity with the invasion.

In Castro's view Carter's accusation occurred because Brzezinski provided him with misinformation. Castro elaborated:

*In my opinion, President Carter had been confused and deceived when he was falsely informed that Cuba is responsible for these Katanganese actions, and this is what we categorically reject. In all sincerity, I do not think Carter is telling a deliberate lie. Carter has simply believed the information they have given him.*⁴³

Explaining the "Cold War" rhetoric that was emerging from the Carter White House, Castro said that Brzezinski simply used the Shaba II incident as an opportunity to blame Cuba. Castro believed Brzezinski's motives were:

*Brzezinski has a policy of international intervention---the policy of using China against the Soviet Union, the policy of mixing SALT negotiations with the problems of Africa et cetera. And you, the Americans, know this perfectly well.*⁴⁴

Whether Cuba was responsible for the Shaba II invasion, or not, at this stage it was Carter's "word" versus Castro's "word." Yet the Carter Administration was never able to conclusively prove its accusation that Cuba and the Soviet Union were responsible.⁴⁵ It does seem plausible, however, that with the sophisticated electronic equipment the C.I.A. possesses they could have easily proved "culpability."⁴⁶

There was a spate of world opinion that was critical of a new "Cold War," and its explicit African linkage. In the United States, this criticism ranged from Congressional groups to Civil Rights and African support groups. On June 6, the Congressional Black Caucus issued a press release which stressed that "U.S. policy towards Africa should be based on material respect, recognition of the rights of self-determination for all African peoples, and support for those people seeking majority rule."⁴⁷ The statement also urged the Carter Administration to take steps to recognize Angola.

United States-based lobby groups concerned with African affairs, such as the American Committee on Africa (A.C.O.A.), the Washington Office on Africa and Transafrica also issued statements about the current situation. An A.C.O.A. release said that "by emphasizing the Cold War, the Carter Administration is now repeating tragic errors of the past."⁴⁸ It also suggested that the Administration not view Africa in East-West terms, but in African terms.

Tanzania's President Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere also issued a statement which dramatically countered the Carter position towards Shaba II. Speaking to an assembled group of foreign envoys in Dar es Salaam, Nyerere explained that "The habit of regarding Africa as an appendage of Western Europe has not yet been broken."⁴⁹

Nyerere stressed that the Soviet Union and Cuba were in Angola and Ethiopia at the behest of those governments. He said, Africans "do not deny the principle that any African state has the right to ask for assistance, either military or economic from the country of its choice."⁵⁰ He also warned: "Our independent governments must not become the instruments through which foreign domination is maintained in a new form."⁵¹ Nyerere was, obviously, critical of the West and its approach, rather than of the Soviet Union and Cuba.

This world opinion made it very clear that there was strong support for: 1) Africa not being used to further East-West differences; and 2) African self-determination and autonomy being respected.

In the midst of these reactions it was obvious that 1) Congress was not going to loosen its military constraints on the President; 2) there was not enough significant domestic public opinion in support of reinvolvement in Angola; and 3) the Soviet Union and the Cubans were not going to capitulate to Carter's and Brzezinski's whims.

On June 19, Secretary of State Vance provided the first indication that the Administration would assume a moderate approach towards Angola, although his remarks were still stern in reference to the Soviet Union. While speaking before the House International Relations Committee, Vance said that the United States should not approach the Soviet Union "from the perspective of a single dimension."⁵²

Speaking firmly to the packed hearing room, Vance claimed that the United States prefers "to broaden the areas of cooperation."⁵³ But he also said, "Detente is a two-way street; the future course of our relations will depend on the choices made in Moscow."⁵⁴

As for an African policy Vance advocated "an affirmative and constructive 'approach to Africa'"⁵⁵ that included 1) "substantially increased...economic assistance;" 2) "peaceful resolution of disputes;" and 3) "continued...respect (for) the growing spirit of African independence."⁵⁶

On the following day, June 20, Vance elaborated on the United States policy towards Africa in more detail at the annual Jaycee's Convention in Atlantic City. Proceeding to outline the Carter approach to events in southern Africa (including Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, as well as the Horn of Africa) Vance stated:

*In these areas of conflicts, and in the peaceful development of the continent, we are pursuing a firm and sensitive strategy, to promote our long term interests and strengthen our ties with African nations. It combines efforts to avoid East-West confrontations and positive regional policies that respond to local realities.*⁵⁷

Vance also emphasized that "the U.S. will not enter into armed conflict."⁵⁸ But the United States "will help those who have legitimate defense requirements by assisting them with military assistance."⁵⁹

The United States did not recognize Angola; but it did dispatch United States Deputy Ambassador Don McHenry in late June to open "communications" with the Angolan Government. The United States also set up a diplomatic station in the capitol of Luanda. With these actions the Carter Administration not only carried out policies set down by Secretary of State Vance at Atlantic City, but was responding to "diplomatic feelers" from the Neto Government. Gulf Oil, which provides Angola with almost eighty percent of its annual foreign exchange from its oil operations in the Cabinda Enclave, also advocated that the United States recognize Angola.

McHenry's contacts with Neto led directly to the normalization of relations between Angola and Zaire. This was announced after Mobutu and Neto secretly conferred at the Organization of African Unity Conference in Khartoum in late July, 1978.

The immediate implications of normalization were first, the disbanding of the F.N.L.A., which secured Angola's northern borders; and second, the disarming of the F.N.L.C., which prevented, or at least delayed, a Shaba III.

Also Angola agreed to open the Benguela rail line, which runs from the Shaba Province to the Angolan port city of Lobito

on the Atlantic Ocean. The rail line had been closed since the "Civil War," forcing Zaire to use a much longer and costlier route through Zambia and Rhodesia to South Africa. This move would economically help credit-starved Zaire.

These steps all had considerable benefit for the West. One wonders what might have happened in the region if the United States had taken these steps in 1975.

Angola was also important for negotiations to settle the nationalist struggle in Namibia. Angola not only borders Namibia to the South, but she also was a member of the so-called "front-line" states (Angola, Mozambique, Botswana, Zambia and Tanzania), who were involved in attempting to settle the crisis in Namibia and Zimbabwe. If a settlement with South Africa over Namibia could have been reached, Angola would conceivably have secured its southern border, and pulled the fuse on South African attacks and aid to U.N.I.T.A. This would be a basis for Cuban troop withdrawals.

The M.P.L.A. Government was still puzzled as to why the United States had not recognized it. The reason given was that the Cubans were still in Angola. But the United States had diplomatic relations with Ethiopia, and there were twenty-three thousand Cubans there!

Attacking the "Cuban presence" in Angola was a calculated ploy by the Carter Administration. The U.S. had never broken relations with Ethiopia in spite of events there; but Angola only became independent in 1975. By recognizing Angola, the "Cuban presence" in Africa would be "legitimized;" but recognition would not be utilitarian for the U.S., if it wanted to use that accusation as a pretense in any future context. Under the circumstances, even with Gulf Oil advocating that the United States recognize Angola, the Carter Administration could not.

As for Zaire, the West "literally" took over the country with its International Monetary Fund coordinated "austerity" plan, and its neo-colonial police force. Its objective was to stabilize the economy so that Zaire could pay back the nearly \$3 million in loans Mobutu had incurred from Western banks.

But by "propping-up" a corrupt regime the contradictions in Zaire will not go away. In effect, with the I.M.F.'s conservative-deflationary fiscal policies, the lid that it is squeezing on the Zairian economy will only sharpen those contradictions for a potential explosion. By demanding a surrender of national sovereignty, the West is asking for trouble.

Finally, the opprobrium aimed at the Soviet Union and Cuba by Carter and Brzezinski was for two basic reasons. First,

Brzezinski did want to "bog down" the Cubans in Angola if he could get away with it.

I.F. Stone, the progressive journalist, interpreted the events around the Shaba II invasion by saying: "Brzezinski, like Kissinger, apparently believes that the C.I.A. by covert operations in aid of rebel movements in Angola should 'punish' the Neto regime and create for Cuba a situation resembling our own Vietnam."⁶⁰ A May 25, *Washington Post* article added that "the purpose of (the) U.S. aid would be to tie down the Cubans in those two countries (Angola and Ethiopia) and make them reluctant to enter the guerilla war in Rhodesia."⁶¹

The primary reason for Brzezinski's motives is that he views political events in "globalist" terms.⁶² This view, also prescribed by Kissinger,⁶³ is based on the premise that events occurring in Africa (or any other region) are viewed only in terms of East-West politics. This means that there is specific "linkage" between the Cuban and/or Soviet involvement in Angola and/or the Horn and United States-Soviet relations. A secondary reason for Brzezinski's motives is the fact that he notoriously dislikes the Soviet Union.⁶⁴

But fortunately the accusation that the Cubans (and Soviets) were responsible for Shaba II was not significant enough in the minds of Americans, in the spring and summer of 1978, to encourage Congress to repeal the Clark Amendment. Nor did the Carter Administration go to Congress to ask for a sanction to reinvolve the United States militarily in Angola. But rather, the United States was forced to move towards "normalization" of relations with Angola.

The second reason for the opprobrium noted above was that Carter and Brzezinski lashing out at the Soviet Union and Cuba had a domestic implication rather than solely an international one. Although Carter and Brzezinski were definitely coming close to reviving "Cold War" ideology in late May, 1978, the rhetoric was really meant to appease specific conservative groups in the United States.⁶⁵

Carter (and Brzezinski) had the following objectives: 1) he assumed a "get tough with the Russians" posture in an attempt to improve his political standing with conservatives; and 2) he implied (or stressed) "linkage" with SALT II to intimidate Soviet and Cuban foreign intentions. The increased "Cold War" language was not intended to actually confront the Soviet Union, although there were members of the Carter Administration and of Congress who were willing to make it as difficult as they could for the Soviet Union and Cuba.

In conclusion, Sen. Clark holding steadfast to the

Turner-Aaron proposals, Congressional constraints and world opinion combined to prevent U.S. reinvolvement in Angola. But similar factors may not prevent U.S. overt and/or covert military intervention in a Third World nation and/or region in the future.

It is inevitable that nationalist struggles, aimed at breaking Western political and economic hegemony, will intensify in the 1980's. The United States Government, in turn, will also endeavor to subvert those struggles in order to maintain hegemony. It is certain that an increased military presence and/or intervention will be considered as options. To establish those options, the President will continue to manipulate public opinion and provoke crises in the manner examined in this paper.

The claim Carter made in early September, 1979, that there were Soviet troops in Cuba,⁶⁶ and the "Iranian Crisis" are more recent examples of this manipulation.⁶⁷ It is also certain that for a majority of the American people economic conditions will worsen in the 1980's, increasing their susceptibility to manipulation. It is clear, witness the anti-Iranian "backlash" following the take-over of the U.S. embassy in Tehran, that future Presidential propaganda ploys will be more convincing to Americans intent on venting frustrations exacerbated by the economy. This would provide the President a "sanction" for military intervention. Hopefully, this paper can serve as a warning to the Third World, and Americans of that possibility.

Notes

1. The F.N.L.C. were members of the Lunda ethnic group, who have resided historically in what is now called Angola and Zaire. After the "gendarmes" escaped from Zaire (Congo) in 1964 they stayed among their kin in northeastern Angola.

When Portugal fought against the three Angolan nationalist groups (M.P.L.A., U.N.I.T.A. and F.N.L.A.) in the 1960's and early 1970's the "gendarmes" collaborated with them. After Angolan independence on November 11, 1975 the "gendarmes" fought with the M.P.L.A. and the Cubans against the Western-backed F.N.L.A. and U.N.I.T.A. Fidel Castro states that the F.N.L.C. fought with the M.P.L.A. because "if South Africa and Zaire had taken control of Angola...the Katanganese refugees would have been exterminated." (See transcript of ABC's "Issues and Answers," June 18, 1978.)

In the Spring, 1977 the F.N.L.C. invaded the Shaba Province (Shaba I) and easily repulsed the undisciplined Zairian regulars while liberating sections of the Shaba Province. President Mobutu claimed Soviet, Cuban and Portuguese

collaboration with the F.N.L.C., but there was no evidence presented to substantiate the accusation.

The F.N.L.C. were defeated after an eighty-day war by a massive influx of outside forces. Major assistance to Mobutu was provided by France, the United States, South Africa and Morocco. The bulk of the fighting was by 1,500 Moroccan surrogate troops. While the French supplied advisors, material and transport equipment, the United States responded with \$13 million in aid to Zaire.

Once defeated the F.N.L.C. retreated back to northeastern Angola. Over two hundred thousand Lunda's critical of Mobutu also fled into Angola.

The Mobutu regime, which was installed by the C.I.A. twice in the early 1960's, is highly unpopular in Zaire and notoriously corrupt. The regime has severe economic problems. Yet Zaire is a mineral-rich nation and is therefore important to the West. The economy was also facing a potential default, while it owed Western banks over \$3 billion in loans.

These factors established the objective conditions for a potential overthrow of the regime. But since Mobutu had been a "friend" (to the West) "over the years," and since there were no "trustworthy" alternatives on the scene, the thought of the F.N.L.C. overthrowing Mobutu was considered unthinkable by the West.

For an analysis of the Shaba II invasion see: Stephen Jessel's "The West Debates Mobutu's 'Moderation'" in *The New Statesman* (June 9, 1978); and "Buoying Mobutu" in *The Wall Street Journal* (August 2, 1978). Also see: Galen Hull's "Mobutu's Regime Crumbles: West to the Rescue," in *In These Times* (June 7-13, 1978) and Jon Steinberg, "The Battle for Zaire," in *Seven Days* (June 16, 1978).

2. The election of Jimmy Carter in 1976 held the promise that United States policy towards Africa would differ from that of the Nixon-Ford Administrations. Henry Kissinger, who influenced foreign policy during the eight years of Republican rule, had based his policies on a "globalist" perspective, whereby events occurring in Africa were viewed only in terms of East-West politics. Consequently Kissinger almost totally ignored the concerns and realities of Africa.

The Carter Administration appeared to establish a new approach towards southern Africa (and the Horn). Ted Lockwood, Director of the Washington Office on Africa, described this approach as "...open decision-making by consent." This policy was outlined by Secretary of State Vance in a speech

on July 1, 1977 at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.) Convention in St. Louis. The policy presented differed dramatically from Kissinger's "globalist" policies.

For more on this issue read: Kissinger's *American Foreign Policy*; Mohamed A. El-Khawas and Barry Cohen, eds. *The Kissinger Study of Southern Africa: National Security Study Memorandum 39*; Edgar Lockwood, "The Future of the Carter Policy Toward Southern Africa," in *American Policy in Southern Africa*, edited by Rene Lemarchand. Dr. Gerald Bender has written three invaluable articles about Kissinger's policies towards Angola between 1974 and 1976. See: "Kissinger in Angola: Anatomy of Failure," in the Lemarchand book; "Angola, the Cubans, and American Anxieties" in *Foreign Policy* (Summer, 1978); and "Angola: A Study of Stupidity" in *The New York Review of Books* (Dec. 21, 1978).

3. *The Washington Post*, March 18, 1978.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. The final stage of the struggle for national liberation in Angola began in 1961. There were three nationalist factions that fought against Portugal. They were the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (F.N.L.A.), led by Holden Roberto; the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (M.P.L.A.), led by Augustinho Neto; and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (U.N.I.T.A.), led by Jonas Savimbi.

The three groups have a very complex history. For example, at one time U.N.I.T.A. was receiving aid from China, France, West Germany, North Korea and South Africa! F.N.L.A. also received aid at various times from China, the United States and Zaire.

Regardless, after the coup it is correct to say that F.N.L.A. and U.N.I.T.A. were Western-backed and would have set up a domestic capitalist structure, while M.P.L.A. was supported by the Soviet Union and Cuba and was socialist.

For a definitive history of the liberation struggle in Angola see both volumes of John Marcum's *The Angolan Revolution*. Also see the Bender articles.

8. John Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies: A C.I.A. Story* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978), p. 67.

Stockwell says that Brenda MacElhinney (a fictitious name for an actual person), a C.I.A. Angolan desk officer told him in mid-1975: "You are suffering from a bad case of 'party line....' The Soviets did not make the first move in Angola. Other people did. The Chinese and the United States. The Soviets have been a half-step behind, countering our moves."

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

10. *Ibid.*

11. This quote was taken from the transcript of an interview Cuban President Fidel Castro had with Richard Valariani (NBC), Ed Rabel (CBS) and Barbara Walters on June 16, 1978. The interview was televised on ABC's "Issues and Answers" on June 18, 1978.

The transcript was published in the Summer, 1978 issue of *Cuba Update*, a publication of the New York-based Center for Cuban Studies.

12. On November 7, 1975 the *New York Times* "leaked" the "essence" of C.I.A. Director William Colby's and Undersecretary of State Joseph Sisco's testimony on November 6, before a closed session of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The testimony elaborated U.S. covert activities in Angola. (See: Bender.) By early December even Kissinger admitted to the C.I.A. operation.

Sen. Dick Clark (D.-Iowa) immediately introduced an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act to cut off aid to Angola. But President Gerald Ford vetoed it. On Dec. 19 the Senate voted 54-22 in favor of a similar amendment to the Defense Appropriations Bill that had been introduced by Sen. John Tunney (D.-Cal.). The amendment states: "funds from a particular account in the Military Procurement Act cannot be used in activities involving Angola." On January 19, the House voted 322-99 for the amendment.

The Clark Amendment was passed later in 1976 as part of the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act. It is more comprehensive than the Tunney Amendment because it "prohibits any kind of American military involvement in Angola without Congressional approval."

The Tunney and Clark Amendments were part of a number of bills and amendments that were passed by Congress in the

early 1970's which placed constraints on the Executive Branch. This legislation was in response to two interrelated issues. The first issue was the growing opposition in the United States to the war in Southeast Asia; a war that had not been legally declared by Congress, and had been escalated by covert means.

The second issue was the declining credibility of the President as felt by a majority of Americans. This was perceived not only because of Vietnam, but also because of President Richard Nixon and Watergate.

Responding to this climate of opinion the Congress began placing various constraints on the President. Some of them were prohibitions against economic assistance to specific countries. These restrictions were basically conservative actions against specific countries.

Besides the Angolan legislation there were two general military constraints that were passed by Congress. The War Powers Act (1973) required that the President remove armed forces from any country within sixty days if war had not been declared, if Congress did not extend the period, or physically was unable to meet because of any attack on the United States.

The Hughes-Ryan Amendment, sponsored by Sen. Harold Hughes (D.-Iowa) and Rep. Leo Ryan (D.-Cal.), required that no covert operations be carried out unless the President deems them important to the national security and that they be reported "in a timely fashion" to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House International Relations Committee.

These military constraints were obviously aimed at preventing any more Vietnams.

For a discussion of Congressional constraints see: *The Congressional Quarterly*, December 20, 1975, p. 2833 and June 3, 1978, p. 1411. The weaknesses of those constraints are discussed in Bender's "Kissinger: Anatomy of Failure." Sen. Clark explains the "Clark Amendment" in "Reaffirming the Clark Amendment," *The Nation* (August 5-12, 1978).

13. See: "Congress Scores First Victory on Angola; Other Battles Lie Ahead," *Africa Action* (published by the Washington Office on Africa) (February, 1976) and Steve Talbot, "Recruiting Mercenaries for Angola: Esprit de Corps" *San Francisco Bay Guardian* (February 13-20, 1976).
14. See: "Four Faces of Angola," *West Africa* (February 2, 1976), p. 130. Also *The Guardian*, May 24, 1977.

15. *The Washington Post*, May 17, 1978.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *The Washington Post*, May 21, 1978.
18. Jon Steinberg, "The Battle for Zaire," *Seven Days* (June 16, 1978), p. 18.
19. Dick Clark, "Reaffirming the Clark Amendment," *The Nation* (August 5-12, 1978), p. 111.

Sen. Clark was defeated in November, 1978 in a bid for re-election to the Senate. He was also attacked by "anti-abortionists" for his pro-abortion stance.

But the most subversive aspect of the anti-Clark move was the fact that the South African Government pumped money into Iowa against Clark. They also sent speakers to Iowa criticizing his African interests.

In January, 1978 he issued a Senate report documenting U.S. corporate involvement in South Africa. For the remainder of the year he kept a relatively low profile, until the Shaba II incident, when he criticized Carter's handling of the situation.

20. Elizabeth Drew, "A Reporter at Large (Zbigniew Brzezinski)," *The New Yorker*, May 1, 1978, p. 115.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
22. *The Washington Post*, May 5, 1978.
23. *The Washington Post*, June 27, 1978.
24. See the Drew article on Brzezinski.
25. *The Washington Post*, May 24, 1978.
26. *Ibid.*
27. See: "United States-Angolan Relations." Hearing before the Subcommittee on African Affairs of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, May 25, 1978, p. 14.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
29. *Ibid.*

30. *The Washington Post*, May 26, 1978.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*
33. Brzezinski's visit to the People's Republic of China was a major step in the process toward recognition of China. But some observers see these actions as another step in Brzezinski's anti-Soviet Union philosophy.
34. *The Washington Post*, May 29, 1978.
35. This quote by National Security Advisor Brzezinski is from a transcript of his "Meet the Press" interview on May 28, 1978.
36. *Ibid.*
37. Although Carter claimed that the Cubans were proxies of the Soviet Union, it was clear in many political circles that the Cubans were not proxies. For example, James Nelson Goodsell, writing in *The Christian Science Monitor* (March 21, 1978), quoted a World Bank Cubanologist who said, "The desires of both Cuba and the Soviet Union may coincide, and Cuba may be providing the troops that the Soviet Union is not, would not provide. But Cuba would not be there if it didn't want to be."

Brigadier General James A. Williams, Deputy Director for Estimates in the Defense Intelligence Agency, certainly not an impartial observer, said at a 1978 House of Representatives hearing, "I think, sir, that some of this zeal on the part of the Cubans who see themselves as the model for the Third World and developing nations and truly believe that theirs is the way to go." (See: "The Impact of Cuban-Soviet Ties in the Western Hemisphere," Hearing before the House International Relations Inter-American Affairs Committee, held March 14, 15; April 5, 12, 1978; p. 14.)

The interests of the two countries do "parallel," but the reason Cuba is in Africa is its commitment to "international proletarianism." A radical critique of politics defines that capitalism is a world system, and that the "struggle" for revolutionary change, although in each country it assumes unique national forms, is a confrontation between the international bourgeoisie (owners) and the international proletariat (workers).

Throughout the world there are nationalist movements "struggling" with the objectives of altering unequal terms

of trade and inequitable internal economic distribution. The concept of "international proletarianism" therefore explicitly means the "struggle" for change in each country is an international "struggle," and it is one's "duty" to assist in that "struggle." In the 1960's Latin America was closed off to Cuba after the United States established the Alliance for Progress, but in the 1970's Africa has not been. (For a thorough analysis of "international proletarianism" from the Cuban perspective read "Cuba's Foreign Policy: Proletarian Internationalism" published by the Center for Cuban Studies in the Winter, 1976. The Center is located at 220 East 23rd St., New York, 10010.)

Cuba's role has not been that of aggressor. Cubans have gone only when they have been asked by the "host" African country. Even in the Horn of Africa, Castro tried unsuccessfully in early 1977 to mediate with contending forces in the area (Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea) to form a socialist federation. Cuba then fought, with Ethiopia, against Somalia's claim of the Ogaden.

Gerald Bender, an Angolan expert who has close ties with the M.P.L.A., claims in the Summer, 1978 issue of *Foreign Policy*, that "many (Cubans) are performing innocuous and important civilian functions" in Angola, such as education, agriculture, construction and medicine.

On a 1977 CBS television interview Ambassador Andrew Young said that "There is a sense in which the Cubans bring a certain stability and order to Angola." A remark that Young has received special criticism for from conservatives. But, in reality, the Angolan situation has proven that statement valid. The Cuban role in Angola is to protect the country from attacks from South Africa and Zaire, and to assist the M.P.L.A. consolidate its regime.

The M.P.L.A. Government has been cooperating with Western corporations, like Gulf Oil. And there are several thousand Cubans in the Cabinda Enclave protecting Gulf's operations. They are defending Gulf from a French-Zairian-backed secessionist group known as F.L.E.C. (Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave). A *Washington Post* report claims "The Cuban troops are in Angola to make sure the oil and revenue keep flowing." (June 18, 1978.) An official for Gulf Oil has said of Angola, "There is every indication that Angola would welcome other U.S. private investment, just as it provides a favorable atmosphere for Gulf's continued operation in that country." (This is a quote from a letter written by Mr. Nestor C. Ortiz, Director of International Affairs for Gulf Oil, dated June 9, 1978. It was addressed to Rep. Charles C. Diggs, who was former

Chairperson of the House of Representatives International Relations' Subcommittee on Africa. The Ortiz letter was included in the record of that subcommittee's hearing on "United States-Angola Relations" held May 25, 1978, pp. 37-39.)

38. See: Stockwell, p. 67.

39. *The Washington Star*, May 27, 1978.

There is a definite consensus in the direction of President Carter's foreign policy. But it is obvious there is also a great deal of disagreement in methodology and approach to foreign policy making.

Carter is directly influenced by Brzezinski, Vance and (before his resignation) Young, who all have divergent approaches.

Brzezinski is fundamentally a "globalist"; Vance is more moderate, assuming a "regionalist," and a "non-interventionist" approach. Young, often "shooting from the hip," was about as far left as a liberal could be and still be liberal. Rather than determine policy Young created a particular climate to keep up with the vast structural changes in the world system, and to negotiate with Third World nations.

Brzezinski, as National Security Advisor, had the opportunity to lobby his views to Carter every day at their 7:45 A.M. meetings. (See: Drew article in May 1, 1978 *New Yorker*.) But as is evident in this case study, as specific opinions critical of intervention in Angola emerged Carter shifted from Brzezinski's emphasis to Vance's.

40. *Ibid.*

41. See: I.F. Stone's article in *The New York Review of Books* on July 20, 1978.

42. *The Washington Post*, June 10, 1978.

43. See: Fidel Castro's interview of June 16, 1978.

44. *Ibid.*

45. *The Washington Post*, June 10, 1978.

46. This is also a view supported by I.F. Stone in his *NYR of Books* piece.

47. This is from a press release issued by the House of Representative's Congressional Black Caucus on June 6, 1978. It was titled "Congressional Black Caucus Denounces Cold War in Africa."

The statement also urged the Carter Administration to recognize the People's Republic of Angola and "to promote talks between the governments of Zaire and Angola toward achieving mutual respect for territorial integrity."

48. This quote is from a policy statement, titled "New Directions of U.S. Policy on Africa," issued by the American Committee on Africa on June 14, 1978. The A.C.O.A. is located in New York City.
49. President Nyerere's comments played a very important part in indicating what the progressive African position was on the events in Zaire and Angola and the international response by the West.

Copies of the statement can be obtained from the Tanzanian Embassy in Washington, D.C. or from the Washington Office on Africa, also located in Washington. *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* had accounts of the speech on June 9, 1978.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*

52. This quote is from the text of Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's "Opening Statement" before the House International Relations Committee on June 19, 1978, p. 1.

This is an apparent indication that Secretary of State Vance's approach to Angola prevailed.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

56. *Ibid.*

57. This was taken from a transcript of Secretary of State Vance's Atlantic City speech of June 20, 1978 which was printed in the Department of State *Bulletin* (August, 1978), p. 12.

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*

The policies set down by Secretary of State Vance at Atlantic City are similar to those he presented in a speech on July 1, 1977 at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.) Convention in St. Louis.

The St. Louis speech was supposed to represent a break by the Carter Administration from the "globalist" policies of Kissinger. But the Carter and Brzezinski rhetoric in 1978 indicated perhaps a shift back to "globalist" politics.

For a transcript of the Vance St. Louis speech see the *State Department Bulletin*, August, 1977.

60. I.F. Stone, "Carter, Africa, and SALT," *The New York Review of Books*, July 20, 1978, p. 23.
61. *The Washington Post*, May 24, 1978.
62. See: Elizabeth Drew's article in *The New Yorker*, May 1, 1978.
63. See: Henry Kissinger's *American Foreign Policy*.
64. See: Drew's article.
65. For analysis of Carter's response to Shaba II which states its domestic implications, see: Alan Wolfe's "Domestic Uses of Foreign Policy: Carter Plays at Hawks and Doves," *The Nation* (June 24, 1978), pp. 753-757.

Wolfe's thesis is that President Carter's anti-Soviet rhetoric is not part of his foreign policy, but rather part of his *domestic* policy.

Wolfe believes the anti-Soviet rhetoric was meant to appease conservatives who want to see an increase in military expenditures, while the apparent "ransom" of SALT is simply a ploy. A climate is created to justify increased expenditures of "conventional" weapons, while Carter actually in the long run supports a cut in strategic weapons (SALT II). This was to appease elements in the Administration who support disarmament.

66. In September, 1979 Carter accused the Soviet Union of having a battalion of combat troops in Cuba. A similar type of scenario that emerged during the Shaba II incident also emerged here. The Administration claimed that the troops had been recently deployed, the Soviets claimed the troops had been in Cuba for seventeen years and they were only

training Cuban personnel, Fidel Castro called the entire episode a "complete comedy."

An analysis of Carter's motives would include the following:

- 1) He was trying to appease specific conservative interests while appearing to ransom SALT. This point follows Wolfe's thesis that this was part of Carter's domestic policy. Carter was also attempting to gain political favor to guarantee his re-election.
 - 2) He was also trying to create a political climate which would influence increased military expenditure; the Defense Appropriations Bill was being considered in Congress at the time.
 - 3) Carter was planning to establish an increased military presence in the Caribbean region in response to events in Nicaragua, Grenada and El Salvador.
 - 4) The timing of Carter's accusation was also intended to "distract" the "Non-Alignment Movement" Conference that was being held in Havana in early September.
67. It is clear that President Carter knew full well what the political responses would be in Iran if the deposed Shah was admitted into the United States. According to Jack Anderson's November 15, 1979 radio commentary, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance was opposed to the decision because there was a good chance the Tehran embassy would be attacked. But Carter complied with the views of the "Shah's Lobby" (David Rockefeller, Brzezinski and Kissinger) and admitted the Shah into the United States.

