
Investigative Leads

Soviet build-up of Angola feeds southern Africa destabilization

The September deployment of South African Defense Force (SADF) and South West African Territory Force troops back into southern Angola against concentrated units of SWAPO (South West African People's Organization) reflects a growing South African concern about expanded Soviet engagement in Angola. Despite pipedreams from U.S. envoy Chester Crocker that nobody has to worry about the Soviet presence in Africa—they're losing ground—Angola now has an air force that is, at least quantitatively, larger than South Africa's.

The Soviet purpose in sponsoring the build-up of the Free Angola People's Liberation Army (FAPLA) is to make this surrogate country the military master of the entirety of southern Africa. The Republic of South Africa, now the military and economic power in the region, is to be crippled by the ongoing destabilization of the country. That the Soviets have nothing to offer to counter South Africa's economic importance to the black states of the region, is of little relevance. The West, through the International Monetary Fund, has offered nothing but genocide.

Since the SADF's "Operation Askari" strike into Angola in December 1983/January 1984, the Soviets have added between 28-32 MiG-23, swing-wing fighter bombers to the Angolan Air Force. During the same period, 17 more MiG-21s were added, bringing the total to between 57-85. The Angolans have 18 MiG-17's, 18 SU-22 fighter bombers, 55-59 MI-8 helicopters, 10-plus MI-17 choppers (of which 8 are the updated version), and 21-26 MI-24 heavy assault helicopters of Afghanistan fame, which are used daily in deployments against the pro-Western UNITA guerrillas of Dr. Jonas Savimbi. Almost all Angolan air bases are "hardened," with sheltering of planes making it more difficult to destroy them while they are on the ground.

In addition, the Soviets have created a sophisticated radar line along the east-west railroad track running from the Angolan port of Namibe on the Atlantic, to the city of Menongue. The Angolan Air Force operates on the classic Soviet military doctrine of the 3 Ms: mass, mix, and mobility; 70 units of mixed radar types are manned by Soviet and East German "advisors." Forty kilometers south, toward the South West African-Namibian border, another 50-60 units are de-

ployed in a saw-tooth pattern, giving the Angolans a saturation capability against any South African Air Force Electronic Counter Measures (ECM).

According to South African military sources, "Although Angolan pilots fly according to Russian doctrine, staying within their own radar cover, that cover now extends deep into northern SWA. The big worry is that they might be tempted to come south of the border with their aircraft." This area contains 50% of SWA's population, the Ovambo tribe, and is the center for SWAPO's cross-border infiltration of sabotage and assassination teams.

Thanks to the Soviets, the Angolans also have a full mix of anti-aircraft capabilities: SAM-3's along the rail line, many of 57mm, radar-guided anti-aircraft batteries brought in since Operation Askari, older SAM-2s recently unloaded at the port of Namibe, SAM-7s, "which are all over the place," and SAM-9s, mounted on tracked vehicles, with all-Angolan army brigades.

The Savimbi factor

The future, more aggressive deployment of this military capability, however, depends on obliterating the 50,000-60,000-man guerrilla army of Savimbi. The current Angolan/FAPLA advance, with support from conventionally-grouped SWAPO units, against Savimbi in southeast Angola, long-expected to take place before the late-September beginning of the rainy season, is being pursued with an unexpected intensity. The SADF strike into Angola reflects a South African attempt to take pressure off Savimbi, until the rainy season gives him the advantage for a UNITA offensive. Since the February 1984 Lusaka Agreement between the MPLA and South Africa, where a South African troop withdrawal from Angola was exchanged for an Angolan pledge to stop support for SWAPO, the SADF had restricted cross-border operations to "hot pursuit" of SWAPO units that entered SWA to abduct school classes for their guerrilla training camps, and related small scale-incidents.

Savimbi made significant gains in the earlier part of the year, controlling eastern Angola from north to south. Diamond workings, a source of important foreign earnings, have been surrounded by Savimbi and progressively shut down.

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His policy has been to offer the Soviet-backed government a truce with subsequent free elections, on condition that the 30-35,000 Cubans leave after signing the truce.

The last ten years of war, death, and economic destruction in the region can be laid squarely on the shoulders of Henry Kissinger. In 1975, during Operation Savannah, the South Africans and UNITA were at the doors of Luanda, ready to impose on the government a solution to be worked out with UNITA. Kissinger told them to get out, and the Cubans came in. As one South African military official put it: "In 1975, the Americans were all over the place pushing us to get involved in Angola. We went in, the Americans disappeared, and Kissinger ordered us out."

Joint Soviet/Kissinger activities to maintain the region in deadly, perpetual crisis, are reflected in the activities of South Africa's black-opposition African National Congress (ANC) and SWAPO. The ANC is currently trying to build up a guerrilla-war capability for cross-border operations into the northern Transvaal. Within South Africa, the ANC is directly responsible for the unspeakable brutality of youth mobs that have attacked and murdered black elected officials and their families in the townships, burned down schools, and engaged in other senseless violence, the purpose of which is to destroy any potential for a peaceful end to apartheid.

Anyone who has seen the film clips of the New Brighton murders, where, among others, a young daughter of a black official was beaten senseless and then burned alive by mobs of children, knows with what stuff the South African Communist Party-dominated ANC is playing.

Zulu war on the ANC

It is this unspeakably savage ANC terrorism *against portions of South Africa's black population* that has provoked Zulu Chief Gathshela Buthelezi to declare war on the ANC and its front, the UDF (United Democratic Front).

Up until the recent period, Buthelezi kept an olive branch out to the ANC, provided they refrained from violence. But now, he has attacked the ANC in a speech before 10,000 in Umlazi, near Durban, as "exiles who sit in secure places, drinking whiskey and formulating plans, so written, as to how one can lead more black South African children to slaughter even more black South African children."

SWAPO's policies are following the same, Soviet-directed lines as the ANC. With its operations largely stymied due to the decreasing survivability of 2-3 man units sent over the border from Angola into Ovamboland in northern Namibia, it is preparing terrorist and assassination operations. In September, 300 kg of explosives were found in Windhoek; it was to be used to blow up a hotel and the post office there. Prominent black officials like Peter Kalangula, head of the Ovambo district, are targeted for assassination.

The KGB's Zambia station

The Soviet embassy in Lusaka, Zambia, housing one of the highest-ranking KGB officials in Africa, is the control point for Angola, SWAPO, and the ANC. In May of 1984, when representatives of the SWA Multi-Party Conference (MPC) sat down in Lusaka for negotiations with SWAPO, under supervision of Zambia's Kenneth Kuanda and the South African Administrator General, the Soviets ordered SWAPO not to sign the joint communiqué, a document they themselves helped write! The Soviets have also ordered SWAPO to help train the ANC for limited guerrilla war, precision terror, and murder activities. The dwindling SWAPO Peoples Liberation Army (PLAN) has also been ordered to throw its units into the battle against UNITA. In 1978, SWAPO had 16,000 guerillas; now it has only about 8,300.

On June 17 of this year, South Africa's administrator general of SWA inaugurated a transitional government toward an independent Namibia, including eight black and two white ministers selected by the Multi-Party Congress. The rail system and South African shares in the Roessing uranium mine were transferred from South African hands to respective authorities of this transitional government, demonstrating their seriousness in speeding the process toward independence.

The major complication in the process leading to independence, outside of the ever-present Soviet capability to tear apart the potential new nation, is the continuing United Nations boycott of this process, based on the demand that SWAPO be recognized as the sole representative of the Namibian people. Figures like West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher play a prominent role in sabotaging the ability of this transitional government to function as a bridge between South Africa and black African nations. He has played a prominent role in trying to make SWAPO acceptable to the 30,000 South West Africans of German descent. For Genscher and his like, South West Africa/Namibia is but an expendable pawn on the chess board of New Yalta accommodations to growing Soviet power.