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CORE Recruits 'Police Force'
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The Congress of Racial Equality has been recruiting black American military veterans for service as mercenaries in the civil war now raging in Angola, U.S. intelligence sources say.

CORE Chairman Roy Innis admits that his civil rights organization is recruiting black veterans for Angola, but said the men would serve as a "police force" on behalf of the Organization of African Unity's attempts to mediate the Angola war. The organization is a confederation of African nations.

He added that he hoped to raise the money for such a force from the black community. He denied that the plan was connected in any way with the U.S. government.

"I have talked with dozens of black veterans in New York, Los Angeles, Baltimore and Chicago," Innis said,



ROY INNIS
...denies U.S. link

"and they are excited about the idea. There are all kinds of people going to Angola to determine the fate of black Africa. We are proposing that independent Afro-Americans, not linked with the Establishment, contribute their skills in

See RECRUIT, A14, Col. 1

RECRUIT, From A1

economics, politics and the military."

CORE, which has headquarters in New York, was one of the leading groups in the civil rights struggle during the 1960s. In recent years, however, Innis has redirected the organization's efforts toward a philosophy of "black nationalism" at home and abroad.

U.S. intelligence sources, who revealed the existence of the CORE recruiting plan, said that it was another part of a growing Central Intelligence Agency operation to improve the military fortunes of two anti-Communist liberation movements in Angola — the National Front for the Liberation of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola.

Both are fighting the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, which has direct Soviet support, including advanced weapons. A drive by the two anti-Communist groups three weeks ago to oust the Popular Movement has encountered serious reverses after some early success.

A CIA arms airlift was recently stepped up to bolster the National Front and National Union drives. Both groups also have the support of several hundred mercenaries, including, the sources said, some Americans. Additionally, about 1,000 South Africans are fighting beside National Union forces.

Innis denied that CORE's recruitment plan was linked in any way to the CIA. "I would not accept federal funds (for the recruitment program)," Innis said. "The CIA can't be trusted."

Innis said the veterans interviewed by CORE were asked about their military experience and their political opinions.

The names of those favorably considered for possible service, Innis added, were placed on file for future contact. All the men interviewed were former

enlisted men and Vietnam veterans, Innis said, adding that he was also looking for former black officers.

"I tried to persuade them," Innis said, "that they had been a hired gun for the U.S. in Korea and Vietnam. We were offering them a chance to fight in one just war for black Africa."

Although Innis called his prospective force a "neutral force" and a "brigade for peace," the CORE chairman also said that he did "not look forward at all to a Soviet takeover in Angola." Innis added that the Popular Movement, which now holds the dominant military position in Angola, was "Soviet-dominated."

"I know the aggressive nature of the Soviets," he said. "They are grabby and pushy. I am discouraged that key military advisers to the MPLA are Cuban or Soviet."

Additionally, Innis confirmed reports that Solomon Goodrich, his chief assistant, was sent to Angola to participate in Angola's independence celebration Nov. 11. While there, Innis said, Goodrich held meetings with the National Union, the most avowedly pro-Western liberation group in Angola with strong CIA connections.

Innis is a close friend of Uganda President Idi Amin, who has strongly protested Soviet involvement in the Popular Movement. Amin is also head of the Organization of African Unity, which has attempted to mediate the Angolan civil war. The organization has also protested what it calls "outside interference" in the war.

"I will offer our services to Amin as chairman of the OAU," Innis said. "The force would be operating under an OAU mandate. We will await the green light from Angola and the OAU before acting." A spokesman for the OAU Secretariat at the United Nations said he would not discuss the CORE plan and a spokesman for the Ugandan U.N. mission said he knew nothing of the plan.

Innis hinted that he has already recruited a team of former military-medical personnel for service in Angola. "I would like to send the medical men early next year, sometime before the spring," he said. "I hope that the OAU has decided by then. I'm looking for some good riflemen...the key military adviser to the FNLA is a Portuguese colonel, but I think they need some black colonels."

(At a press conference yesterday, Innis said CORE is recruiting experienced combat medics and would consider sending black U.S.

Army veterans to serve as combat advisers in Angola.

(He denied that these men would be sent to bolster the anti-Communist forces. Any of the three Angolan groups could request help from CORE, Innis said. So far, CORE has contacted only one of the three, UNITA, and has been asked only for medical supplies, he added.)

(Innis said CORE would form an "objective and neutral force, a peace brigade" to stand between the warring factions in case the Organization of African Unity managed to arrange a ceasefire.

("We are not mercenaries,"

he said. "We are Africans abroad. The Cubans, the Russians, the South Africans, the CIA — they are the mercenaries.")

There are at least two other efforts now under way in the United States to recruit mercenaries for service in Angola, although the sponsors of the efforts are unknown. One, in Fresno, Calif., offered up to \$1,200 a month to white military veterans willing to fight in Angola. It was not specified which side the mercenaries would fight on, but one source said the recruitment was for the National Union.