

ANGOLA

The 3 Men Who Control Angola's Warring

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UIGE, Angola—In terms of their personal background, the three leaders of Angola's battling nationalist factions have a great deal in common. All three are the sons of Protestant lay preachers in a country that is predominantly Roman Catholic. All were educated in mission schools and all were part of that tiny segment of Angola's black population that had risen to middle-class respectability.

Moreover, all three have been involved in the war against colonial rule for more than a decade, at times joining as allies and then splitting in personality clashes and charges of tribal or regional favoritism.

Now, two are joined in a fragile alliance and involved, with some support from the West, in civil war with the third, which is backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba.

The two are Holden Roberto, the 52-year-old president of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola, and Dr. Jonas Savimbi, 42, the head of the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola. They proclaimed a Government at Huambo in the center of the country last month as Angola received independence from Portugal.

The third, Dr. Agostinho Neto, 54, heads the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola and of the government it proclaimed in Luanda Nov. 11.

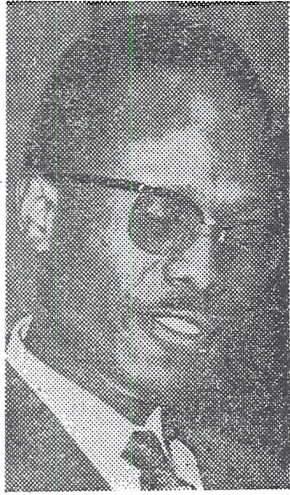
Uige, the city whose Portuguese name of Carmona was Africanized with independence last month, has been the headquarters of Mr. Roberto and his National Front. A serious, almost dour man who neither drinks nor smokes and hides his emotions behind dark glasses, Mr. Roberto has the longest tenure as a nationalist leader.

He began his formal opposition to Portuguese rule in 1952 when he founded a small political movement in this northern agricultural area, which essentially sought to improve conditions for his own Bakongo people, a tribe whose millions of members live in an area that stretches north into parts of Zaire and Congo.

Educated in Congo

Mr. Roberto was born in the northern Angolan city of São Salvador but at the age of 3 his father took him to what was then the Belgian Congo to better his son's chances of receiving an education. Mr. Roberto's ties with Zaire are very strong as a result of his having gone to school in what was then Leopoldville.

Though a much circulated story that he is a brother-in-law of President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire is untrue, he has for many years enjoyed the protection and friendship of the Zaire



Pix

Holden Roberto



Camera Press

Dr. Agostinho Neto



Camera Press

Dr. Jonas Savimbi

leader. Through a classmate, Mr. Roberto came to know the so called Binza group of Congolese activists, a faction that came to the fore during the 1961 Congolese war of secession as a force opposing Patrice Lumumba, the Soviet-backed leader of what was then usually called the breakaway province of Katanga. President Mobutu is the sole remaining member of the Binza group.

By 1958, Mr. Roberto had built an essentially regional political faction into a clandestine movement seeking independence for all Angola. At a time when Portugal was ending its centuries-long neglect of the large African colony and pouring in funds for its development, Mr. Roberto was preparing for armed struggle. He was at first backed largely by United States church groups and he often visited the United States to raise funds.

In 1961 Mr. Roberto's group of guerrillas, now calling itself the National Front, launched its first military campaign in the outskirts of this city. The group attacked and killed some Portuguese settlers. Later, as Lisbon sent more and more soldiers to attempt to suppress the hit-and-run terrorism, the National Front engaged in battles with the soldiers and ambushing of convoys in the isolated and remote expanses of Angola.

In these skirmishes, which continued for 14 years, the National Front was at times joined by guerrillas from other organizations. The outcome of these conflicts was overwhelmingly in favor of the Portuguese, yet the drain on Lisbon steadily mounted and weakened its resolve on the home front.

Mr. Roberto's current chief rival is Dr. Neto, a gynecologist and poet who even more than the other leaders represents that typically Portuguese institution of the "assimilados." The Portuguese, who are gen-

erally credited with having been the least racist of the African colonial powers, had until some five years ago a system in which full Portuguese rights and citizenship were bestowed upon those Africans deemed sufficiently civilized to merit them.

Proof of educational achievement and earnings had to be submitted to obtain assimilados status and the Netos were members of the elite, which at its highest included barely 1 percent of Angola's nearly six million black people.

Dr. Neto, who completed his medical training in Lisbon, also typifies another African-Portuguese tradition. In a land where Portuguese love and respect for language and lyrics is reflected in the daily emergence of songs and ballads, Dr. Neto's position as a respected poet gives him a romantic cachet. It was this poetry that first brought him to the attention of Portuguese authorities in the early 1950's.

He was then a young doctor with a practice near the Museques of Luanda, sprawling slums between ridges of new apartment houses, and he wrote his poems for literary journals of limited circulation. The poems, with titles like "Black Mothers" and "Farewell at the Moment of Parting," were despairing portraits of Africans under the colonial yoke. The poems were judged

sedition by the Portuguese and led to the author's first detention.

Links to Communists

By the mid 1950's after he had left prison, Dr. Neto became a member of a small clandestine group of intellectuals and labor leaders in Luanda, some of whom had links with the Portuguese Communist Party. At that time, this was more a discussion group than a revolutionary army but it formed the nucleus of what became the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola.

Perhaps the most dramatic event in Dr. Neto's career occurred in 1958 when he was arrested in his medical office. As he was led to the police station word of his seizure spread and a demonstration was hurriedly organized. Portuguese troops at the police station fired on the marchers and, though the details of the event have become hazy in legend, it is believed in Angola that as many as 12 marchers were killed. Dr. Neto was then taken to Portugal where he was kept under house arrest.

In 1960, Dr. Neto escaped from Portugal and returned to Africa, where he assumed the leadership of the Popular Movement.

Though Dr. Neto's armed units were thought by the Portuguese military to be the weakest of the liberation fac-

Factions

tions and were in fact virtually wiped out two years ago, the movement continued its organizing efforts, concentrating largely on enrolling a core of educated and skilled, mostly young people in the Luanda area.

It is the third leader, Dr. Savimbi, the head of the National Union, who is generally viewed, particularly by Westerners, as the most charismatic. He originally was a lieutenant of Mr. Roberto but broke with the National Front seven years ago because he grew to feel that its leader was too concerned with the Bakongo of the north.

Earlier this month, Dr. Savimbi reconciled his differences with Mr. Roberto, joining with the National Front in a frail coalition in the face of what he regarded as the much greater challenge posed by the Soviet arms and Cuban soldiers of Dr. Neto's movement.

However, during the days it took to apply this accord it became obvious that Dr. Savimbi was less than delighted. The major source of his annoyance was not so much Mr. Roberto as it was the National Front's vice president, Daniel Chipenda.

Mr. Chipenda, like Mr. Savimbi, is in his 40's and like him a southerner and an Ovambundu. Until last year he was leader of the Popular Movement, commanding 3,000 of its best fighters. Then he broke with Dr. Neto and shifted sides to the National Front, taking most of his troops with him. Currently those troops are in action in the southwest, an area Dr. Savimbe thinks of as his own.

According to one Angolan who has himself shifted sides several times before coming to rest in Mr. Roberto's camp, Dr. Savimbi sees Mr. Chipenda as his strongest long-term challenge. "With Neto and Roberto he knows that his time will come, they are both old, but Chipenda bothers him."

"He would like to see him out of the picture, certainly out of the south."

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