

Angola Airline Protests U.S. Ban on Sale of 2 Planes

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LISBON, Dec. 29 — Angola's commercial airline has protested that the United States revoked the sale of two Boeing 737 aircraft to the airline. It called the act "discriminatory."

T.A.G., the Angolan airline, has given a guarantee that the aircraft would not be used for "war purposes" and is urging the United States Department of Commerce to reconsider its decision, according to sources close to the company.

Official United States sources here indicated to the Angolan airline that the move was intended as retaliation for the action of the government now in control in Luanda to bring in large numbers of Cubans to fight against rival nationalist movements.

[In Washington, a State Department spokesman said that the export license for the planes had been revoked "on the basis of national security." The decision was made on the assumption that the two Boeing planes "probably would be used in the war, as other aircraft were used to ferry arms around Angola," he said, adding that the planes could not be delivered "until it is clear there is a national government in Angola."]

Planes Ordered a Year Ago

T.A.G. purchased the aircraft a year ago when Angola was still a Portuguese colony. The company, which calls itself an independent private air carrier, has substantial Portuguese capital as well as Angolan capital.

It was an \$18 million deal, with T.A.G. paying cash in advance. The two 737-200CW planes were contracted for delivery in January and February of 1976. The planes are twin-jet,

short-range airlines that can be used to transport either passengers or cargo. When used for passengers they can carry up to 135 people.

Boeing first received notification that the export license for the aircraft and related spare parts had been revoked on Nov. 14.

Angola received its independence on Nov. 11. There are two separate governments, neither of which has been recognized by the United States, Portugal or most Western countries. The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, which has Soviet support, controls the capital, Luanda, while two other movements, regarded as generally pro-western, have formed a coalition government in the central city of Huambo, formerly Nova Lisboa.

They point also to the recent decision of the Gulf Oil Company to suspend its operations in the northern territory of Cabinda, which is controlled by the Popular Movement. The decision was said to have been made under State Department pressure.

Some Planes Hijacked

"The Americans are forcing us into the arms of the Soviet Union," a Popular Movement official remarked recently. "Don't they understand we are African socialists and don't want to be subjugated by either Washington or Moscow?"

There is concern in Luanda that the United States Government might intervene to cancel another contract under which Boeing is to set up an air traffic control system in Angola, according to Portuguese businessmen who came here recently from Luanda.

The Popular Movement took over T.A.G., which is based in

Luanda, but at least three of its planes were hijacked several months ago by the rival movements.

Angolan sources are concerned about the United States ban on the two Boeing airliners and see it as part of a general plan "to destroy the Popular

Technicians May Be Problem

The United States Department of Commerce is said to have given the Angolan Civil Aeronautics Department guarantees that this program would not be affected by the ban on the delivery of two planes, but there may be a problem in providing technicians. The plans for the air traffic control system call for assignment of 60 American technicians. However, the State Department recently asked all Americans to leave Angola because of the continuing civil war.

This projects, which will also cost about \$18-million, was begun a year ago and involves radio communications and nav-

igation aids for seven airports in Angola.

The original date for completing the installation was August 1976, but work is already two months behind schedule. Work now is being carried out only in Luanda but is scheduled to begin shortly in Cabinda. Four other airports are in the hands of the rival Huambo government and the fifth has changed hands several times.