

U.S. PLANS TO ASK SOVIET TO EXPLAIN ITS ANGOLA POLICY

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Aide Says Washington Will Ask if Soviet Seeks End of Foreign Interference

PRAVDA ARTICLE CITED

White House Puzzled by Call in Newspaper for Halt to 'Armed Intervention'

NYTimes

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 4—The United States plans to ask the Soviet Union whether an ambiguously worded article in Pravda was meant to indicate that Moscow was now ready to work toward ending all foreign interference in Angolan affairs, a senior Administration official said today.

The official said that the editorial yesterday in Pravda, the Soviet Communist Party newspaper, which included a call for the termination of "foreign armed intervention in Angola," was still puzzling to the White House and the State Department.

Although that particular segment of the article echoed an American appeal for everyone—including Russians, Cubans and South Africans—to leave Angola to the Angolans, in over-all context Pravda seemed to suggest that the Russians, and by extension, the Cubans, were not the ones guilty of "intervention."

Differing Reactions

Because of this ambiguity, some officials, such as the White House chief of staff, Richard B. Cheney, said today that they were somewhat "encouraged." But others more involved in the Angolan diplomacy, including the senior Administration official, were extremely cautious and said that it was necessary first to explore the matter with the Russians, diplomatically.

Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger was scheduled to return to Washington tonight after a 10-day vacation in Jamaica, and the senior official said he expected Mr. Kissinger to meet this week with the Soviet Ambassador, Anatoly F. Dobrynin, to discuss Angola and other issues.

The Soviet attitude toward Angola has become a crucial point of contention between Moscow and Washington. Secretary Kissinger is expected to travel to the Soviet capital around Jan. 19 for talks with

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Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Communist Party leader, aimed at achieving a breakthrough in the negotiations on limitation of strategic arms.

But Mr. Kissinger, before going on vacation, said that a final decision on his Moscow trip would be made in part on whether the Russians had heeded the Ford Administration's strong concern about the major military support they are providing for one of the three nationalist factions in Angola, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola. That faction, which controls Luanda, the capital, was recognized by Moscow and about 40 other countries as the legal government after Angola gained independence from Portugal on Nov. 11.

The Organization of African Unity will meet later this week to discuss the Angolan question and a vigorous diplomatic campaign is taking place among African states, and by the United States and the Soviet Union, to influence the outcome of the session.

William E. Schauffele Jr., the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, has just completed a trip to five African countries that are in accord with the American position of seeking a broadened government of national unity in Angola and the withdrawal of foreign military forces.

The United States has given the two factions that are opposed to the Popular Movement more than \$30 million in covert aid. The Ford Administration has contended that the aid was given to counter the Soviet military support of about \$100 million, the presence of 200 Soviet advisers and the sending of 7,500 Cuban soldiers into Angola to take part in the fighting.

President Ford said yesterday in an interview that the United States had undertaken a major diplomatic effort "with all powers, including the Soviet Union," to produce an Angolan solution. As part of his effort, the senior official said, Mr. Ford has sent letters to various leaders, including President Idi Amin of Uganda, the current chairman of the Organization of African Unity.

'Some Positive Signals'

The Americans have also discussed the issue with European countries that have influence in Africa, and with some third-world countries. The United States has received "some positive signals," the senior official said, but he acknowledged that the number of states recognizing the Soviet-backed faction, known as the M.P.L.A. from the initials of its name in Portuguese, as the legitimate government of Angola, was rising.

So far, no country has recognized either of the other factions.

Recognition of the Luanda-based group by some countries is attributed, at least in part, to the fact that it is opposed by South Africa, which has introduced some forces in southern Angola. Africans, in particular, seem more concerned about the South African involvement than about the presence of Cubans in Angola.

The Pravda editorial reflected the policy position that the Soviet Union has taken for some time: namely, that the Soviet military aid was con-

sistent with Soviet help to liberation movements, that the Luanda government, recognized by 40 countries, had asked for Soviet aid and that it has been sent.

The editorial said that the Russians did not want any bases or special rights in Angola, and asserted that the failure of the three factions there to achieve unity before the country's independence had not been Moscow's fault.

It charged that the conflict in Angola was the result of "gross unceremonious interference in the affairs of the Angola people by the imperialist forces, the racist South African regime and their mercenaries," and went on: "the maoists are also at one with them."

Later in the editorial, Pravda said: "The Soviet Union comes out firmly for the termination of foreign armed intervention in Angola. The Angolan people should be given the right to decide themselves the questions of building a new life in conditions of peace and freedom."

That paragraph, which echoed the American position, could, if taken in isolation, represent a major policy decision by the Russians. That was why it was studied at the White House and State Department with more than usual interest.

Mr. Cheney said on the CBS-TV "Face the Nation" program that "I think we're encouraged" by the Pravda editorial. He saw in the article "at least a preliminary indication" that Moscow "now endorses at least the principle that all foreigners should clear out of Angola."

But he added: "Whether or not that is a solid indication that will lead to results, that they will no longer be actively involved in Angola—nor will the Cubans—only time will tell."

The Soviet editorial seemed aimed at the O.A.U. meeting, which will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It seemed to be calling on the African organization to recognize the Popular Movement as the government in Angola, and the call for an end of "foreign armed intervention," in context, seemed to suggest that in Moscow's view Soviet aid could continue, along with that given by Cuba.

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