

WXPost

S. Africa Pullout Report

JAN 9 1976

Cheers West on Angola

By Bernard D. Nossiter

Washington Post Foreign Service

LISBON, Jan. 8—Western diplomats were quietly cheering today over reports that South Africa will pull its troops out of Angola by the weekend. Britain and other European nations have been urging precisely this course, asserting that it is the vital precondition for preventing the spread of Soviet influence in Africa.

There are no differences between the United States and its allies over stemming Soviet gains, but there has been a sharp, if hidden, disagreement over tactics—particularly those involving South Africa.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs William Schauffele reportedly argued in London earlier this week that any pullback by South Africans should be matched by the Soviets and their Cuban proxies in Angola.

But the Britons and other Europeans think this is too mechanical a formula and argue in favor of a unilateral South African withdrawal.

As long as South African troops are fighting with one side in the Angolan civil war, the Europeans believe, black African states have no choice but to condemn them and ignore the Soviet backing for the other side. In black African eyes, South Africa is the racist upholder of white supremacy and no other evil is comparable.

If South Africa withdraws before the Organization of African Unity meets on Saturday, the Africans will be free to condemn foreign interference generally in the civil war. The Soviet Union, in

Schlesinger to Head Policy Study Group

Former Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger Jr. has been named to head a year-long study of U.S. policy alternatives and strategy for the next 25 years.

The project, sponsored by the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and Georgetown University's Center for Strategic Studies, is expected to bring together about 17 prominent scholars and former government officials

that case, will be the target for some of the attacks that might otherwise have been reserved exclusively for South Africa and the United States.

A South African departure would enable black African states to consider Moscow as an unwanted, imperialist intruder, a role that will hardly strengthen Soviet influence.

Less abstractly, a South African pullout should lessen the dependence of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Angola on its Soviet supplier of arms and men. European specialists are convinced that the Popular Movement is as much African as it is Marxist and chafes under its growing burden of debt to Moscow. The longer South Africa stays, the argument goes, the heavier and more sophisticated the weaponry will become on both sides and the faster the political debt to the Soviets will mount.

Finally, the European diplomats see a South African withdrawal as halting the stampede of African states to recognize the Popular Movement as the sole government in Angola. Twenty of the 47 African states have already done so and South Africa's presence is said to be tilting others in the same direction. A pullout, however, enables the fence sitters to hold their place and strengthens those who favor a tripartite government of Popular Movement, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

The European diplomats do not expect a complete withdrawal but they do look for a pullback of the South African column that has been fighting deep in southern Angola.

It is expected that South African troops will continue to patrol across the border from Namibia where Johannesburg fears Angolan guerrillas aiding any independence movement in Namibia and insists on protecting a dam that is a vital source of power for the South African dependency.

A striking feature of discussion with diplomats in Europe is the surprising number of career U.S.

Foreign Service men who openly express their disagreement with Washington. They say that Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger's policy boils down to a belief that the United States must be heavily involved in Angola because Moscow is there. They think this is a remarkably oversimplified position with overtones of a dubious domino theory for Africa.

One official said he had been told by a Washington colleague that more than half the members of the State Department's African Bureau were out of sympathy with the policy. The colleague, who supports it, dismissed the majority view as an "emotional" concern over Washington lining up with South Africa.