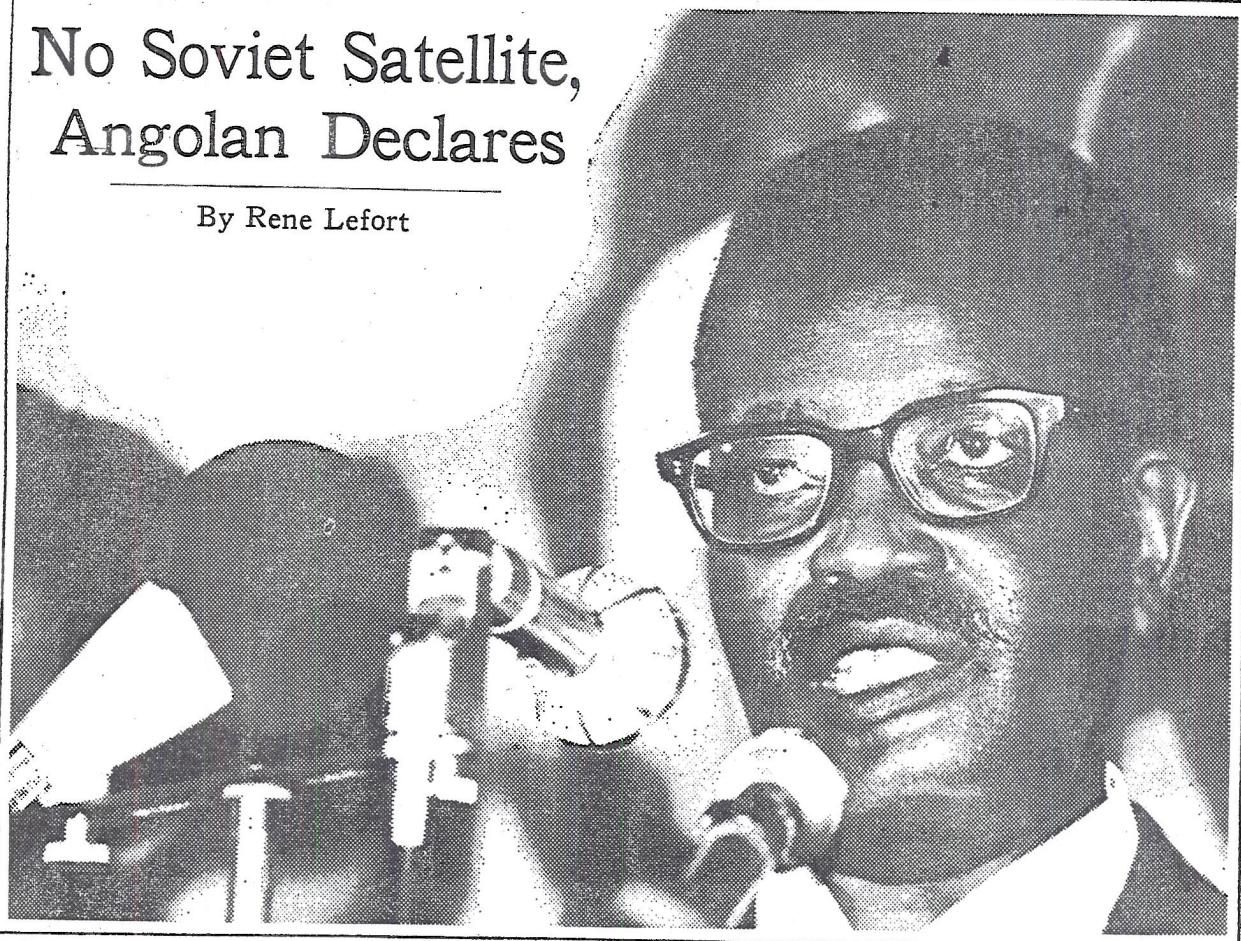


# No Soviet Satellite, Angolan Declares

By Rene Lefort



Dr. Agostinho Neto

J.P. Laffont/Sygma

Following are excerpts from an interview with Dr. Agostinho Neto, leader of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola and president of the government it has based in Luanda. This is reprinted from the Paris newspaper *Le Monde*.

**Question.** What do you think of your foes' tactics?

Neto: When the spokesmen of the UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] and F.N.L.A. [National Front for the Liberation of Angola] puppet groups talk of a government of national union, they do so for two reasons. First, as a tactical move designed to win the sympathies of countries which are perhaps unaware of their links with racist South Africa and expansionist Zaire. Secondly, because they know that, strategically, the struggle will be won by the people, hence the M.P.L.A.

As for us, we don't want to negotiate with UNITA and the F.N.L.A. or with any of the aggressors. Let them allow our country and our people to become organized. There can be no agreement with the representatives of imperialism in our country.

As regards the conference the Organization of African Unity is planning to hold in Addis Ababa, I think it will be useful for our struggle, for Angola, and for all of Africa if it examines the question of foreign aggression in our country. If it concerns itself with other problems, it will collapse.

**Q.** Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger considers that the presence of the Soviet Union in Angola is upsetting world equilibrium.

Neto: Let's get one basic point clear. All throughout the struggle against Portuguese colonialism and all the time we were subject to exploitation,

oppression and the worst brutalities, Mr. Kissinger had absolutely nothing to say. Even at that time, the Soviet Union was helping us by sending supplies of arms for our liberation struggle and for this we are very grateful.

It is when we have become independent and free, and beginning to build our state, that the United States State Department becomes worried by the fact that we have Soviet arms. Just because the Soviet Union supplies us with weapons, it doesn't mean that we have become a satellite. We've never been one. We've never asked Moscow for advice on how to set up our state. All the major decisions in our country are taken by our movement, our government and our people. Once again the State Department is operating as international imperialism's chief agent.

The South Africans want to control Angola. It's something they have been wanting for a long time. They have always maintained that their defense perimeter runs from Angola to Mozambique. They want to take over our country entirely so as to be able to insure their dominance in all of southern Africa.

One cannot therefore put the world's liberating forces which are engaged in working for the genuine liberation of people—these forces are represented here by the socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, Cuba and progressive African countries—on the same footing as forces which want to control our country and take it over.

**Q.** What do you think of the proposals to "put an end to foreign interference" in Angola?

Neto: We are a sovereign state and we seek help from anybody we please to defend our territorial integrity, our economy and the reconstruction of our land. No country has the right to accuse us on that score. When the

United States speaks of putting an end to foreign interference, what it wants is nothing more than the expulsion of the socialist forces, precisely those which are helping us to avoid becoming a new American colony.

**Q.** Aren't you afraid that the people in the area may become casualties of an escalation between great powers as has happened in other parts of the world?

Neto: An escalation of the war in Angola is possible. The interest Americans show in Angola could theoretically lead to an extension of the war beyond the frontiers of our country but I don't think that it is very probable. The balance of forces in the world is such today that we can rule out the thought of a local conflict touching off a larger war.

It's true our people may suffer even more. But we are ready for that to win our total liberation and independence. Our allies are ready to back us until we reach this goal.

And don't forget there are other instances of the pressure of world opinion forcing the United States to withdraw its forces and leave its protégés in the lurch, as did happen in Saigon, for example. We also hope South Africa's troops will withdraw, and with them its puppets, Holden [Roberto, National Front leader] and [Dr. Jonas] Savimbi [leader of the National Union].