

Angolan Marxists Seek U.S.

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LUANDA, Angola, Jan. 26 — The near-triumphant Soviet-backed Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola seems to be reopening the door to American technology in an apparent effort to avoid exclusive dependence on the Soviet Union.

Popular Movement spokesmen have always insisted that it was a mistake to assume that they were firmly in the Soviets' pockets. Some of them have pleaded against American actions that would force them into that position.

A spokesman for Gulf in Washington said "we have not held any talks" with the Popular Movement since Gulf closed its Cabinda operation in November.

Sources in the government set up by the Popular Movement in this capital of the former Portuguese colony say talks recently took place, possibly in Nigeria, between a Popular Movement official and representatives of the Cabinda Gulf Oil Co., which the U.S. State Department forced to stop operations in Angola last year.

The sources said Boeing, which withdrew its technicians from Angola last year partly because of State Department pressure, has cabled the Popular Movement for instructions on obtaining permits for reentry.

There are no firm indications so far of any change in official U.S. policy toward the Marxist government, which is fighting American-backed nationalist forces in the northern and southern parts of the country. But the discussions with American firms would suggest some possibility of a change, particularly in light of a December memorandum, revealed by sources here, saying that American companies could not renew technical assistance without U.S. government approval.

In Washington, State

Department sources said they had no immediate information on a change in Popular Movement policy toward Washington, "but quite possibly they were never entirely closed to us." As for the U.S. attitude, "we have never been out to get the Popular Movement," one source said. "What we opposed was the Soviet intervention."

A Popular Movement source has disclosed here that in Washington on Dec. 11, he was read a five point memo by a Boeing official and was told it "represented the feelings not only of the State Department but also of the Ford Administration."

The memo said, in part: "The MPLA (Popular Movement) would do well to heed advice that no government can plan reconstruction in post-war Angola without American and Western help. No government can obtain the technological and financial resources to stimulate economic development without official American consent.

"As anyone should be aware, access to sophisticated technology is a privilege. The case of Boeing is just one, but a good example of the advantages of having access to American technology."

The Popular Movement official said he considers the memo very arrogant, but its contents have apparently not discouraged some Popular Movement leaders. Observers here agree that there are differences of opinion within the movement on relations with the United States. But it appears that those favoring opening lines of communication have the upper hand.

The visit here of an aide to Sen. John Tunney (D-Calif.) has been used by the Popular Movement to convey its desire to reopen relations with Washington. Tunney's investigator, Mark E. Moran, met with several Popular

Movement government officials, including Prime Minister Lopo do Nascimento and the secretary of the Movement's political bureau, Lucio Lara.

Although Moran would not reveal the content of what he called "long and interesting talks," he indicated that all the Popular Movement officials he spoke to favored a renewal of relations with the United States.

The minister of economic planning, Carlos Rocha, said in an interview, "It appears that the attitude of the American Congress is not that hostile to our republic. Now this is very important."

Rocha said, "We accept the presence of private firms in our territory but they must be subject to the laws of the country. We think that in (1976) we will be signing some agreements for companies to open in our republic."

The Popular Movement-controlled radio in Luanda announced the Senate vote cutting off further CIA aid to the movement's nationalist rivals and added, "The House of Representatives is expected to do the same."

Government officials say the movement plans to invite several U.S. senators to Angola sometime in the near future. The senators would be those who had supported the Tunney defense bill amendment ending CIA support to Movement rivals, the sources said.

Popular Movement officials say that continued relations with Washington have always been their aim. Dealings between the Popular Movement and the U.S. consulate in Luanda before

Skills

independence were friendly, and the consulate had been expanding with plans to become an embassy when officials there were ordered to leave only one week before independence Nov. 11.

Members of a Popular Movement delegation that visited New York in October say they made it clear not only to U.S. government officials but to American banks that they want continued Western and U.S. economic relations.

Movement officials say telephone conversations with Boeing officials give them hope that the U.S. government may soon lift export restrictions on two 737 jets ordered by the Popular Movement last year. Boeing officials could not be reached for comment yesterday.