

A Letter by Ford  
Angers Nigerians

Press Says Appeal on  
Angola Situation Was  
an Insult to African  
Intelligence

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Lagos, Nigeria,  
Jan. 7 (Reuters) -  
Government-owned  
Nigerian newspapers  
today accused Presi-  
dent Ford of having  
insulted the  
intelligence of  
African nations with  
a letter urging them  
to help bring about  
a quick negotiated  
end to the Angolan  
civil war and a  
government of all  
factions there.

The letter,  
addressed to Brig.  
Murtala Muhammed,  
the Nigerian chief  
of state, and made  
public by the  
Government here,  
said that the  
Popular Movement for  
the Liberation of  
Angola "should not  
be allowed to assume  
total power by force  
of Soviet and Cuban  
arms."

It reportedly was  
similar to other

It reportedly was similar to  
other letters from President  
Ford to African leaders in ad-  
vance of a discussion of the  
Angolan civil war at a meeting  
of the 46-nation Organization  
of African Unity later this  
week in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.  
[In Washington, a White House  
spokesman said that the letter,  
being a private communication,  
would not be made public by  
the United States but he  
termed the text as transmitted  
by Reuters accurate.]

Supporter of Luanda

The strong Nigerian reaction  
served to underline the Govern-  
ment's recent campaign on be-  
half of the Angolan government  
proclaimed by the Popular  
Front in Luanda on Nov. 11,  
the day of independence from  
Portugal.

Nigeria wants the O.A.U. to  
recognize the Luana authorities  
as the sole government of the  
country, and the Nigerian Ex-  
ternal Affairs Commissioner,  
Col. Joseph Garba, said on leav-  
ing for Addis Ababa that his  
delegation would seek to con-  
vince the others to resist United  
States pressure for the with-  
drawal of all foreign troops  
from Angola.

Nigeria's present position is  
a reversal of its stand in the  
first days of Angolan independ-  
ence, when it pledged to sup-  
port any O.A.U. efforts to end  
the fighting if all rival Angolan  
liberation movements were rep-  
resented.

Then on Nov. 27, after six  
generally left-leaning African  
countries had recognized the  
Luanda government, Nigeria  
also gave its endorsement. Since  
it is one of the most powerful  
black African countries eco-  
nomically and militarily, its step  
appeared to deal a strong blow  
to the O.A.U. position that all  
three Angolan factions should  
form a government of national  
unity.

The Nigerian reaction served  
to underline the Government's  
campaign on behalf of the Lu-  
anda authorities on the eve of  
the opening of a discussion of  
the Angolan civil war at a  
meeting of the Organization of  
African Unity in Addis Ababa,  
Ethiopia.

After the Popular Movement  
proclaimed the establishment of  
a government in Luanda on  
Nov. 11, Nigeria first said it  
would back any mediation ef-  
forts if all three Angolan na-  
tionalist movements took part.

Then on Nov. 27, after a  
number of African countries  
had recognized the Luanda gov-  
ernment, Nigeria said it did  
also. Since then, Nigeria has  
been insisting that the African  
organization formally endorse  
the Luanda government.

'To Hell With America'

The Nigerian reaction to the  
Ford letter amounted to the  
fiercest attack on a foreign gov-  
ernment since the new military  
Government came into power  
last July.

The mass-circulation Daily  
Times carried the headline  
"Shut Up."

The Nigerian Herald used  
half its front page for the  
words "To Hell With America"  
superimposed on a photograph  
of Mr. Ford. A brief editorial  
said Africa must stand up  
squarely to the crude bullying  
and insulting logic of the U.S.  
Government. President Ford's  
double quick march to the right  
wing for the purpose of a Presi-  
dential election cannot be done  
at the expense of innocent An-  
golan people. Nor could Henry  
Kissinger give substance to his  
cosmetic diplomacy that failed  
in Indochina and the Middle  
East by trampling like a rogue  
elephant on the independence  
of Angolans."

Such comments were appar-  
ently prompted by the final  
passage in President Ford's  
letter, which described the  
coming O.A.U. meeting as po-  
tentially "extremely impor-  
tant in promoting an early end  
to the fighting and a peaceful  
settlement" in Angola.

The passage said also that  
the United States hoped that  
the O.A.U. would "insist on a  
prompt end to all foreign in-  
volvement in Angola" and  
bring about negotiations be-  
tween the Popular Front and  
its rivals, the National Front  
for the Liberation of Angola  
and the National Union for the  
Total Independence of Angola.

The letter promised that the  
United States would "urge  
South Africa to end its in-  
volvement" in the Angolan  
civil war if an end to foreign  
intervention was supported  
also by "ther distant powers,"  
meaning the Soviet Union and  
Cuba.

"We cannot, however, stand  
idly by if the Soviet and Cuban  
intervention persists," the let-  
ter declared.