

Soviet Indicates It Favors Angola Political Solution

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MOSCOW, Jan. 29—The Soviet Union is willing to accept a political settlement in Angola, a position shared by the Soviet-backed faction there, the Government newspaper Izvestia said today.

It was stressed that this view did not represent a change in Soviet policy. But in both wording and timing, the statement seemed to indicate a revival of Kremlin interest in a moderate solution to the civil war in the former Portuguese colony.

The article published by Izvestia was signed Observer, which is usually taken to mean a high-level official.

"The Soviet Union welcomes now, too, such a course of action that would contribute to the consolidation in Angola of all the patriotic forces working for the genuine independence and free development of their country," the article said. "It is precisely the aim of the Government of the People's Republic of Angola."

Precisely what Moscow had in mind by "patriotic forces" was not spelled out. But judging by recent conversations between Westerners and Soviet

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officials, the Kremlin foresees a need for a change of some leaders in Angola before the various factions can come to terms.

Some diplomats here think the Russians would not be unhappy if such jockeying took some time, since the Luanda forces are evidently advancing militarily. Simultaneously, Moscow may want to present a posture of "moderation" both for the sake of its reputation in Africa where many countries oppose its Angola role, and in the United States.

The significance of the article was heightened by its publication less than a week after visits to Moscow by the Foreign Minister of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola's Government in Luanda and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger.

Mr. Kissinger, who has warned repeatedly that Soviet involvement in Angola could damage detente, was said to have discussed the subject during his talks here with the Communist Party chief, Leonid I. Brezhnev, though there were no reports of substantive progress.

On Mr. Kissinger's last day in Moscow, the Foreign Minister from Luanda, José Eduardo dos Santos, spent 24 hours here and met with Boris N. Ponomarev an alternate member of the Politburo. No details on the talks were made public.

The Soviet Union has long held open the possibility of supporting a transitional government that would contain all three warring factions in Angola, but the article today was the clearest expression of that position in some months.

"The Soviet Union comes out

for peace in Angola," the article declared. "It has never come out against a quest for a political settlement in Angola.

"It is an open secret that the Soviet Union once welcomed the creation of a transitional government in that country with the participation of representatives of various movements. It is the F.N.L.A. [National Front for the Liberation of Angola and UNITA. [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] splitters who are to blame for its collapse, as they committed an act of national treachery by launching, together with imperialists and racists, armed struggle against Angola's legitimate government, against those forces of the liberation movement that for many years have been fighting for the right of their people to decide their own destiny."

The conciliatory tone of the Izvestia article also had the appearance of a response to two recent events, neither of which the article mentioned: the vote by Congress to cut off American aid to the National Front and the National Union, and the reports that South African troops have made a limited ullback.

How the words in Izvestia will be reflected in policy remains unclear.

The article contained no hint that Moscow was prepared to scale down its support for the Luanda government or to call for the withdrawal of the Cuban troops fighting there.

Izvestia made the routine attacks on Western interference in Angola, but they were more vaguely sketched than usual, omitting any direct criticism of the United States or the Central Intelligence Agency, as in the past.