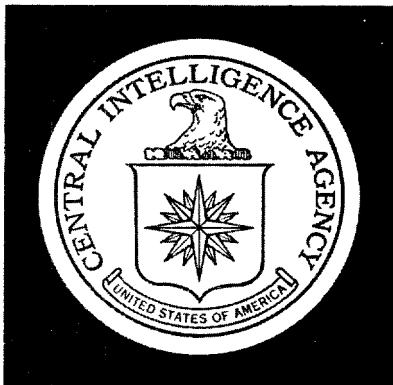


**Secret**



DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# *WEEKLY SUMMARY*

## *Special Report*

*Status of the Angolan Insurgency*

**Secret**

39

3 February 1967  
No. 0275/67B

25X1

Approved For Release 2006/04/13 : CIA-RDP79-00927A005600070003-3

Approved For Release 2006/04/13 : CIA-RDP79-00927A005600070003-3

SECRET

25X1

## STATUS OF THE ANGOLAN INSURGENCY

Long-quiescent African nationalists have recently mounted new attacks in three areas of Angola, including regions previously free of insurgents. The attackers have generally operated in larger bands than before mainly from bases in neighboring Congo (Kinshasa) and Zambia. However the forays are competing, rather than coordinated, in nature and have been limited to hit-and-run raids and small ambushes or acts of sabotage--far from the "three-front" military campaign of the rebels sometimes alluded to in the press.

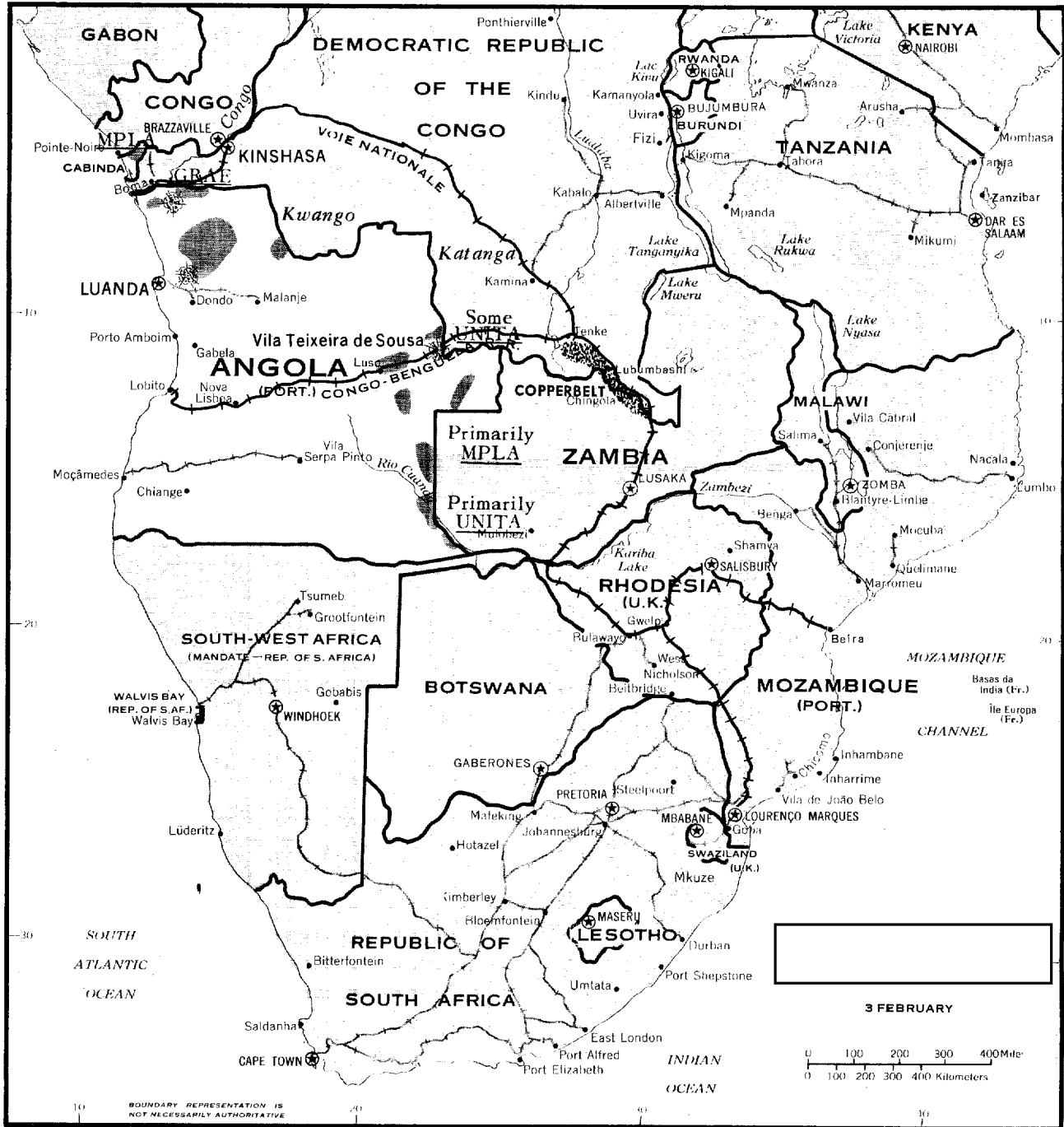
The new guerrilla activity almost certainly arises as much from political and morale factors within the Angolan nationalist movement as from any present hope of evicting the Portuguese. Portuguese resources should be more than adequate to handle the new activity, which so far is well below the level of insurgency achieved during 1961 when it took Lisbon six months to restore control. In addition to stepping up direct action against the insurgents, the Portuguese have reminded the governments of Zambia and the Congo--whose active support is essential to the Angolan insurgents--of the economic stranglehold provided by Portuguese control of strategic transport routes serving those countries.

The Nationalists

The Angolan nationalist movement has undergone many changes since 1961, with some groups displaying considerable staying power and others appearing and disappearing rapidly. Three organizations have some present capability for insurgency. Holden Roberto's Angolan Revolutionary Government in Exile (GRAE) operates almost entirely in the Bakongo tribal region of northwestern Angola and the western part of the Kinshasa Congo.

Agostinho Neto's Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) has traditionally operated out of the other Congo (Brazzaville) against Portugal's Cabinda exclave but now seems to be basing itself principally in Zambia. The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) is led by Jonas Savimbi, a former Roberto lieutenant who has followers in both Zambia and the eastern Congo (Kinshasa). Together they can field only 1,000-2,000 guerrillas against Portugal's 46,000-man military establishment in Angola.

SECRET



25X1

65517 2-67 CIA

SECRET

25X1

The GRAE Rebellion

Roberto's rebels have now been fighting for nearly six years. However, within six months of their first operations in March 1961, they were successfully contained and since then have been more a nuisance than a threat to the Portuguese. In mid-December 1966 Roberto claimed 1,700 followers inside Angola fighting the Portuguese, but this figure undoubtedly is inflated.

Most GRAE activity is restricted to small mountain-jungle areas in northwestern Angola and to major infiltration routes connecting these areas with the Congo. Most of these guerrillas are isolated. Many no longer profess allegiance to Roberto and seldom contact even nearby rebel groups. They remain hidden in small bands and attack only to obtain food and other supplies or to test new government units.

Last October, encouraged by the receipt of arms from the Mobutu government in Kinshasa and driven by Roberto's perennial need to buttress his international standing, GRAE stepped up its actions in this region along the established infiltration routes. By early December at least one unit managed to get as far south as an area 120 miles east of Luanda. Two GRAE raids--by this unit and by another operating along the border--caused the heaviest Portuguese weekly casualty rate in several years: 26 killed including civilians. In all other actions in Angola during the last

three months of 1966 the Portuguese lost about 35 killed and 125 wounded.

GRAE has long planned to organize an offensive into northeastern Angola from the Katanga region of the Congo. Although GRAE's efforts in this area have shown little success, by mid-November at least one of its units managed to swing far enough east to confront Angolan forces along the border with Congo's Kwango region for the first time since mid-1965. To date, however, there apparently have been only three incidents in this frontier region.

"The Second Front"

The nationalist effort which has intrigued many observers is the new "front" in eastern Angola. Here, where Portuguese forces are spread thin, Zambia-based MPLA forces and UNITA groups operating out of both Zambia and the Congo have moved with relative freedom and have forced the Portuguese to evacuate at least temporarily a few small isolated posts.

According to imprecise Portuguese statistics, the incident rate in the area since October has risen to perhaps 15 or 20 a month. The Benguela Railroad, the only target of strategic importance in eastern Angola, seems to be the principal target of both the UNITA and MPLA organizations. Guerrillas have made several attacks along the railroad but so far have been unable to affect rail traffic seriously.

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

The first insurgents on the scene belonged to the MPLA

MPLA forces in the area may now number a few hundred. Most MPLA members have had training abroad. They appear to have ample modern, light weapons and show some organizational sophistication.

UNITA, formed in March 1966, has considerably fewer assets. While it may count some 200 insurgents, UNITA members with military training abroad may number only a dozen or two. The organization seems disorganized and amateurish, although the Portuguese have noted recent improvement. UNITA has some modern weapons, but its units must also rely on poor, homemade arms.

Despite these handicaps, the Portuguese consider UNITA a greater long-term threat in eastern Angola than the MPLA. It evidently has been far more successful in winning cooperation from eastern and central Angolan tribes. For example, it succeeded in recruiting up to 500 primitive but warlike Chokwe tribesmen for a Christmas Day raid on Vila Teixeira de Sousa, a village near the Congolese border. However, the raid exposed UNITA's weaknesses as well as its strengths. The horde, reportedly led by a witch doctor, was poorly armed and suffered almost 250 casualties at the hands of the Portuguese, who had been forewarned.

In general, several major factors will probably serve to

inhibit more substantial insurgent activity in eastern Angola. The largely ignorant local native population tends to support whoever wields de facto military control, and the insurgents depend on a supply line that stretches for 2,000 miles across Zambia from Dar es Salaam. Moreover, UNITA and MPLA have so far refused to cooperate with each other. Indeed, there have been reports of armed clashes between them.

25X1

25X1

Portugal's Response

The Angolan security police, backed by very efficient networks of informants, have easily snuffed out all efforts of any potential, solely internal, political opposition to organize. Even welfare activities not totally controlled by the government are harassed and periodically closed down. Consequently, Lisbon is confident that if Congolese and Zambian help to the nationalist military effort ceases, its troops in Angola can return to the slow but effective suppression of insurgent remnants.

Portugal's greatest concern is directed at Kinshasa. Bases in the lower Congo provide three essentials absent elsewhere: they are reasonably near areas of Angola which are economically important and heavily populated by the tribes most opposed to Portuguese rule; the mountainous jungles in the region limit Portuguese employment of air power and firepower; and nationalist headquarters--in

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

Kinshasa--and the port of entry for arms and trainees can both be close to forward bases to facilitate coordination.

Lisbon's leverage against the Congo and Zambia--the only other significant avenue for aid to the nationalists--is based upon its control of the trade routes of both countries, whose economies depend on copper exports. Portugal ties unrestricted transit of their goods across Angola and Mozambique to their attitudes toward the insurgents. When diplomatic efforts are insufficient, Lisbon applies a graduated economic squeeze to obtain the desired response.

On 15 December, by "closing" the Angolan-Congolese border, Lisbon for the first time retaliated overtly against the relatively minor military aid given by the Congo to the Angolan insurgents. Several days passed before Lisbon deigned to clarify that the vital transit trade was not involved. After UNITA's large-scale but abortive 25 December raid against Vila Teixeira de Sousa, the Benguela Railroad remained closed for three days while Lisbon threatened unspecified retaliation. This permitted Angola's neighbors to contemplate the effect of a long-term break in the line.

Portugal may also be weaving military pressure on both Zambia and the Congo into its efforts to control the cross-border traffic of the insurgents. Mid-December news reports from Kinshasa--so far unverified--claimed that Portuguese forces had attacked Congolese border villages inhabited by An-

golan refugees. About a half dozen similar, small-scale Portuguese incursions have been reported along the Angolan-Zambian border since July.

It is unlikely, however, that Portugal will effect any lengthy cutoff of vital Congolese and Zambian trade routes or send sizable military units into either the Congo or Zambia. In the past, even when the Angolan insurgency posed a far more serious threat, Lisbon has managed to impress African governments with the economic facts of life by taking lesser retaliatory actions. Furthermore, Lisbon's policy toward independent Africa essentially is to encourage at least peaceful co-existence. Lisbon also is concerned that drastic action against the Congo or Zambia might--aside from bringing a loss of revenue--serve to propel more radical Africans into power there, or eventually might lead to anti-Portuguese moves by Western powers.

Meanwhile the Portuguese are shifting forces to re-establish their preponderance of military power in eastern Angola. They have sent several thousand additional troops there, and they may supplement the professional armed forces with a village self-defense program. Experiments in training small tribal groups to protect themselves have been successful.

#### Prospects for the Nationalists

The latest insurgent push has done no more than broaden the area of Angola which suffers from hit-and-run activity.

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

The nationalists need vastly increased outside help before they can threaten Portuguese hegemony in the foreseeable future, but, despite much talk about foreign bases, assistance from abroad is actually on the wane. The Organization of African Unity (OAU), disillusioned at the general ineptitude of all nationalist groups, has reduced aid handouts, and the Angolans' priority for what is still available is low.

The Mobutu government has restricted its military assistance to the nationalists to the meager proffering to Holden Roberto--one and possibly two arms shipments and possibly transport and limited funds--which enabled him to initiate the current series of GRAE raids. A concerted attempt by the MPLA to take advantage of Mobutu's pan-African flirtations in 1966 failed to win more than verbal support for nationalist unity and permission for the expansion of its small unofficial political presence in Kinshasa.

Zambia's support to Angolan nationalists is even more restricted. Its government periodically instructs the MPLA and UNITA to cease operations out of Zambia, and Zambian police sometimes impound arms or detain nationalists who have ignored Zambia's strict regulations. President Kaunda, who wishes to avoid overly antagonizing Lisbon, also fears the dangers of harboring armed groups loyal to foreign leaders and interests. In addition, he is sensitive to the pos-

sibility of racial violence. The majority of Zambia's white labor force--which runs the country's economy--does little to hide its sympathy for the minority white government in neighboring Rhodesia, and racial tension has already erupted into occasional violent incidents.

Nevertheless, political developments at times encourage the Congo and Zambia at least temporarily to stretch their self-imposed restraints, and sometimes to forget unattractive realities. In Zambia a more ambivalent policy toward the Angolan nationalists developed during 1966 as a by-product of rising emotions over white rule in Rhodesia. Before then, the government had prohibited all Angolan insurgent military activities except the passage of MPLA recruits through Zambia to Dar es Salaam for military training in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. Recently, its attitude toward the return passage of arms and trained guerrillas from Dar to Angola has become unclear. In any event Zambia has not been willing to crack down on the insurgents, who continue to ignore Zambian displeasure at the use of its territory as a military sanctuary.

Mobutu's search for a pan-African image prompted his minor help to Roberto. If pan-African efforts succeed in prodding the nationalists into some kind of agreement among themselves, Mobutu might feel obligated to provide further assistance to them. Sev-

SECRET



SECRET

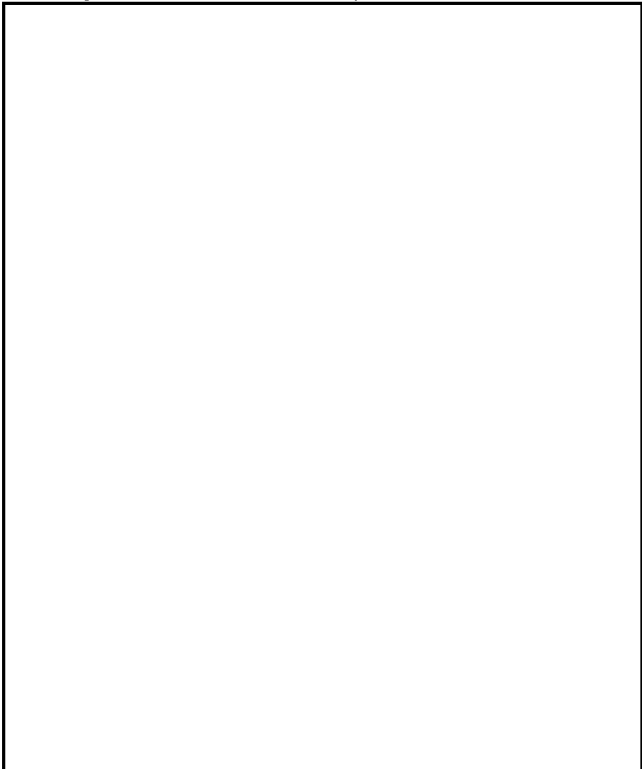


25X1

eral African states and a special OAU subcommittee are working to unify the Angolans in the hope that sufficient vitality can be restored for another major effort against the Portuguese. However, a truly concerted nationalist effort of any duration is unlikely given the divergent personal ambitions and the ethnic, regional, and ideological disparities among the three groups.

On Raising the Red Flag

While pan-African support for the Angolans remains uncertain at best, the USSR continues to provide some assistance to its long-time favorite, the MPLA.



their present effort is probably an adjunct of their propaganda effort to exploit growing

African restiveness over the southern African policies of Western powers. Moscow certainly feels it is advantageous at least to keep a hand in any significant insurgent movement, but probably is not willing to risk Western confrontation and a loss of Soviet prestige similar to that which it suffered by its massive involvement in the Congo in 1960 and 1963.

The Future

Angola seems destined to suffer insurgent harassment for the indefinite future. Those conditions which could favor more serious activity--significant steady support for nationalists based in neighboring countries, or a truly coordinated nationalist movement--do not appear to be in the cards. Emotional bursts of nationalist enthusiasm, frustration, or minor organizational changes probably will lead to occasional intensifications of the insurgency, such as that now under way.

For their part, the Portuguese are unlikely to initiate an all-out effort--within Angola or without--to eliminate all vestiges of insurgent activity. Lisbon does not now see the need and its financial resources are limited. On the other hand, however, policy changes which would satisfy the nationalists' thirst for political power are unlikely so long as Prime Minister Salazar or any of his likely successors remain at the helm in Lisbon.



25X1

SECRET

25X1

Approved For Release 2006/04/13 : CIA-RDP79-00927A005600070003-3

**Secret**

**Secret**

Approved For Release 2006/04/13 : CIA-RDP79-00927A005600070003-3

25X1

Approved For Release 2006/04/13 : CIA-RDP79-00927A005600070003-3

Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2006/04/13 : CIA-RDP79-00927A005600070003-3