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CORE Says It Will Send 300 to Angola

By William Claiborne

Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Feb. 10—The Congress on Racial Equality said today that it will send 300 combat-trained black American medics to Angola in mid-March to support the U.S.-backed Angolan forces that have been fighting a losing civil war there.

Roy Innis, CORE national director, said the volunteers had been recruited from among 1,000 U.S. blacks who have been intensively screened by the civil rights organization over the past several weeks.

Innis claimed that more than 3,000 black Americans, most of them with Vietnam combat experience, have said they want to go to Angola to oppose the Soviet-backed Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and its Cuban allies.

The 300 medics, Innis said, will be the vanguard of a "large" contingent of U.S. black forces that will go to Angola "to establish military parity."

Innis, who recently returned from Angola, claimed to have a commitment from the U.S.-supported National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) to pay for the American volunteers' transportation, as long as the struggling faction has the money available.

However, Innis repeatedly sidestepped questions about how much the venture will cost — estimated by travel agents to be at least \$1,000 per recruit — or when and how CORE will receive the funds. He said CORE is financing the recruiting drive, which will be

only a fraction of the cost of actually putting volunteers on the battlefield.

The CORE director attempted to draw a sharp distinction between the combat medic volunteers, whom he called "black patriots," and the mercenaries of various nationalities who are fighting in Angola. The latter, Innis said, are "dangerous fellows to deal with. . . They are vicious, corrupt and want a license to kill without any ideology or political commitment."

The U.S. volunteers, Innis said, are willing to serve without pay, and they will be noncombatant paramedics. Their ideology, he said, is rooted in "their desire, as red-blooded Africans, to assist the majority faction."

An official of the U.S. Justice Department, when asked what federal laws apply to the private recruitment of Americans to serve in foreign wars, replied that government attorneys were studying two statutes that prohibit private citizens from enlisting in or participating in military conflicts abroad. The law provides maximum penalties of \$1,000 fine or 3 years in prison or both.

Without mentioning CORE by name, the official said the government was "looking into this recruiting business. . . There are laws on the books, and we're taking a look at them."

Innis reacted sharply to suggestions that CORE is, in effect, recruiting volunteers for an Angolan civil war faction that is supported by South Africa and, reportedly,

is covertly supported by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

"CORE has not, cannot and will not deal with the CIA. So don't give us that CIA claptrap," Innis told one questioner.

A spokesman at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va., said the government was not assisting "in any way" recruiting efforts for Angola. Of the allegation that the CORE recruitment drive is backed by CIA funds, the spokesman said, "It's a lot of baloney."

Innis said he saw no ideological conflict in supporting an Angola faction aided by South Africa, and he drew a parallel to a black man being "murdered and mugged in an alley" who suddenly sees possible help from a "cop who is known to be a vicious, racist pig."

"You don't say, 'Hey, I don't want help,'" Innis said.

The press conference erupted in fistfights when the

leader of a Harlem group supporting the Communist-backed MPLA accused Innis of being a "lackey of fascists, the CIA and South Africa."

At Innis' direction, several of the CORE leader's bodyguards—dressed in black uniforms and wearing black leather gloves—seized the protester and dragged him into the corridor, where a fight broke out.

Later, in the first-floor lobby of the building, another fight broke out when the protester, who identified himself as Drew Anderson of the African Nationalist Committee, taunted CORE officials with shouts of "Fascists."

A member of Innis' staff broke through a line of policemen and punched Anderson repeatedly, bloodying his mouth, as other policemen hustled the CORE leader outside. Anderson said later that his group supports the MPLA and accused Innis of accepting CIA funds to finance the recruiting drive.

Wanted: Ex-GIs for Angola War, \$1,500 Mo.

By Allan Frank
and John C. White
Washington Star Staff Writers

For a rendezvous with destiny, how about joining the fight for Angola? There's a guerrilla warfare recruiting headquarters in Mt. Ranier, Md., where they'll be more than happy to sign you up if you qualify.

The recruiting office is in the residence of Larry E. Mitchell, a 34-year-old black Vietnam veteran. He said his organization already has enrolled nearly 200 mercenaries from the Washington area to fight in Africa.

The recruiting, which has been going on here for nearly three months, has ties to the Congress of Racial Equality, a New York-based group which, according to Mitchell, has said it is recruiting black veterans for the war in Angola.

No one at CORE could be reached to confirm Mitchell's claim.

Another, apparently unrelated, group led by two anti-Communist Cubans claims to have recruited nearly 1,000 Spanish-speaking soldiers from the Miami area, but newspaper reporters there have been unable to verify the contention.

Mitchell, a former first sergeant, said two CORE-recruited units of undisclosed strength already are in Angola and Zaire. That statement could not be verified yesterday.

He declined comment when asked whether his operation and the CORE drive could be fronting for covert CIA involvement in the Angola fighting.

He did say, however, that he "wouldn't be surprised" if the money for the American guerrillas were coming from the CIA.

"Who else could afford something this large?" he remarked.

To a former Air Force early warning radar observer who answered an ad in yesterday's newspapers for "VETERANS WANTED — Medical and technical skills and willing to travel. 277-1938," a job interview with Mitchell reminded him of the armed forces induction center at Ft. Holabird, Md.

MITCHELL, A nine-year Army veteran of intelligence and special forces medical work in Vietnam, spoke with the same even tones used by military instructors outlining the beginning of boot camp.

Discipline among mercenaries? Mitchell said any man caught mo-

lesting African women or committing war atrocities "will think a big Washington building fell on him."

Posing as a potential recruit, the Air Force veteran, Star reporter John C. White was told by Mitchell that the job was fighting in Angola. Mitchell said he was particularly interested in interviewing veterans who had been in "strike units," men with experience in special forces fighting.

Mitchell said he and his associates hope to recruit about 500 men in the United States, train them briefly here, pay them as much as \$1,500 monthly — most of which would be deposited in Swiss bank accounts — and equip them in Africa with American-made guns and equipment.

THE AMERICANS would be fighting with UNITA, the American-backed National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, which is now being backed to the wall by the MPLA, the Soviet- and Cuban-supported Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola.

Characterizing his group as a "Lincoln Brigade" — a reference to American volunteers on the Loyalist side in the Spanish Civil War — the 34-year-old Mitchell said his outfit is calling itself the "The Afro-American Technical Assistance to Angola" group. He said he hopes to have his men in Africa by March 1.

He also said he is looking for black Americans who are "not just professional mercenaries," but also have a commitment to allowing Angolans to make their own choices about their form of government.

Mitchell said his group will begin guerrilla and medical support operations from Zaire, regardless of the potential losses by UNITA.

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MITCHELL, WHO declined to say where money for the recruiting drive comes from, said his group is trying to hire fighters from New York, Philadelphia and Los Angeles.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

American involvement in Angola deepens

By David Anable
Staff correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

United Nations, New York

The American Government, American business, and American citizens appear to be getting deeply involved in the raging civil war in Angola.

Ironically, these American elements are aiding and bankrolling opposing sides. And the administration's own reported undercover operation is the target of strong criticism from some members of Congress and, apparently, from within the State Department itself.

This U.S. involvement at varied levels is neither so well known nor perhaps so vast as Soviet and Cuban military aid to the leftist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) whose Luanda-based "government" has been recognized by at least 13 black African countries.

But its scope is becoming daily more evident:

- Gulf Oil Company, which has oil wells in the MPLA-controlled enclave of Cabinda, has confirmed that it has handed over hundreds of millions of dollars this year in royalty and tax payments to the Luanda-based "tax collector of the State of Angola."

The latest payment (about \$100 million) was made in September when the MPLA was in full control of Luanda. MPLA finance minister Saydi Mingas, according to highly reliable sources, has confirmed receipt of this payment.

- Hundreds of Americans have responded to newspaper advertisements calling for mercenaries for action in Africa. One advertiser, David Bufkin of Fresno, California, told this correspondent that he himself had dispatched nearly 100 Americans to join the Angolan liberation movements fighting against the MPLA.

According to Mr. Bufkin, a California crop duster, most of these combat veterans headed for Angola via South Africa. A few went via Zaire. The initial funds (about \$300 to \$1,200 per person travel costs), he said, came from Africa. He reckoned a total of about 300 Americans had left for Angola over the past month or two.

American officials say that the FBI is investigating the matter. Recruiting American citizens to serve in a foreign army is illegal under Title 18 of the U.S. Code.

- The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) also has been recruiting Americans with combat experience, in this case, blacks, to go to Angola. But Arthur Fitzjohn, head of CORE's international department, insists that the aim is solely to provide medical assistance — "It's entirely peaceful, non-military, humanitarian involvement."

Mr. Fitzjohn estimates that some 500 to 600 unpaid volunteers will be recruited as "medics" at a cost to CORE of from \$100,000 to \$1 million. He categorically denied a Newsday (Long Island) report that said that Central Intelligence Agency sources claimed CORE was recruiting for the CIA.

- According to a New York Times story published last week, a high-ranking U.S. Government official said that the United States has already sent \$25 million in arms and support funds to Angola over the last three months and plans to send another \$25 million.

The funds and military supplies were said to have been distributed by the CIA via Zaire to the two uneasily allied factions fighting the MPLA — the FNLA (National Front) and UNITA (National Movement). State Department sources subsequently would neither confirm nor deny the report. The official U.S. position remains as enunciated by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger Nov. 28: "The United States will not intervene militarily in Angola."

However, a further New York Times report Sunday said that the August resignation of Nathaniel Davis, head of the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs, was made in protest against the Kissinger-sponsored growing U.S. covert involvement. Mr. Davis's recommendation of a purely diplomatic approach to Angola was said to have been rejected.

The Gulf Oil concession agreement with Angola calls for royalty and tax payments this year of some \$300 million — about half Angola's total foreign-exchange earnings in a normal year.

The company's 120 Cabinda wells have been pumping at near-normal rates (about 140,000 barrels a day) most of the year despite the war. About 100 foreign personnel, including some 50 Americans, are at work there. MPLA troops occupied the installations for only one day and now control the area from outside them.

Gulf spokesmen deny that the company's quarterly payments have been made to the MPLA. But that is clearly the effect, at least for the September payment. At the time of earlier payments Angola had a shaky "transitional" coalition government of all three factions plus the Portuguese. But the MPLA's Mr. Mingas was finance minister then, too.

Mr. Mingas is reported to have remarked recently that MPLA's relations with Gulf were "very good." And Gulf is said to have quietly communicated to the State Department its concern about U.S. intervention on the other side.

Gulf now has a major problem on its hands: what to do about the next quarterly payment due at the end of this month? Since the September payment, the MPLA has declared independence (Nov. 11) and set itself up as the official government in the capital, Luanda. There is no longer any conceivable doubt as to who would receive the next check — if it goes to the usual address in Luanda.

The U.S. administration also has a problem, in this case of maintaining its alleged covert supply of funds and materiel to the anti-MPLA forces. Concerned both about a burgeoning, possibly Vietnam-type U.S. entanglement in Angola and about too-close U.S. identification with South African aid to the anti-MPLA groups, some U.S. senators and representatives are voicing opposition.

The Senate foreign-relations subcommittee on assistance is scheduled Tuesday to debate an amendment by Sen. Dick Clark (D) of Iowa to the Government's security-assistance bill. This would have the effect of bringing any such CIA disbursements under congressional control.

CORE, too, is finding Angola a prickly assignment. Mr. Fitzjohn says that Core wishes to retain a neutral mediatory stance throughout its involvement.

Yet the plan to send hundreds of black volunteers into Angola flowed from a CORE official's attendance at the UNITA-FNLA independence celebrations. CORE did not attend the MPLA celebrations, although Mr. Fitzjohn says that it is in contact with the MPLA, too.

WASHINGTON POST

CORE Recruiting Force for Angola

CORE Recruits 'Police Force'

By Les Payne
and Ernest Volkman
Newsday

The Congress of Racial Equality has been recruiting black American military veterans for service as mercenaries in the civil war now raging in Angola, U.S. intelligence sources say.

CORE Chairman Roy Innis admits that his civil rights organization is recruiting black veterans for Angola, but said the men would serve as a "police force" on behalf of the Organization of African Unity's attempts to mediate the Angola war. The organization is a confederation of African nations.

He added that he hoped to raise the money for such a force from the black community. He denied that the plan was connected in any way with the U.S. government.

"I have talked with dozens of black veterans in New York, Los Angeles, Baltimore and Chicago," Innis said, "and they are excited about the idea. There are all kinds of people going to Angola to determine the fate of black Africa. We are proposing that independent Afro-Americans, not linked with the Establishment, contribute their skills in economics, politics and the military."

CORE, which has headquarters in New York, was one of the leading groups in the civil rights struggle during the 1960s. In recent years, however, Innis has redirected the organization's efforts toward a philosophy of "black nationalism" at home and abroad.

U.S. intelligence sources, who revealed the existence of the CORE recruiting plan, said that it was another part of a growing Central Intelligence Agency operation to improve the military fortunes of two anti-Communist liberation movements in Angola — the National

Liberation of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola.

Both are fighting the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, which has direct Soviet support, including advanced weapons. A drive by the two anti-Communist groups three weeks ago to oust the Popular Movement has encountered serious reverses after some early success.

A CIA arms airlift was recently stepped up to bolster the National Front and National Union drives. Both groups also have the support of several hundred mercenaries, including, the sources said, some Americans. Additionally, about 1,000 South Africans are fighting beside National Union forces.

Innis denied that CORE's recruitment plan was linked in any way to the CIA. "I would not accept federal funds (for the recruitment program)," Innis said. "The CIA can't be trusted."

Innis said the veterans interviewed by CORE were asked about their military experience and their political opinions.

The names of those favorably considered for possible service, Innis added, were placed on file for future contact. All the men interviewed were former enlisted men and Vietnam veterans, Innis said, adding that he was also looking for former black officers.

"I tried to persuade them," Innis said, "that they had been a hired gun for the U.S. in Korea and Vietnam. We were offering them a chance to fight in one just war for black Africa."

Although Innis called his prospective force a "neutral force" and a "brigade for peace," the CORE chairman also said that he did "not look forward at all to a Soviet

added that the Popular Movement, which now holds the dominant military position in Angola, was "Soviet-dominated."

"I know the aggressive nature of the Soviets," he said. "They are grabby and pushy. I am discouraged that key military advisers to the MPLA are Cuban or Soviet."

Additionally, Innis confirmed reports that Solomon Goodrich, his chief assistant, was sent to Angola to participate in Angola's independence celebration Nov. 11. While there, Innis said, Goodrich held meetings with the National Union, the most avowedly pro-Western liberation group in Angola with strong CIA connections.

Innis is a close friend of Uganda President Idi Amin, who has strongly protested Soviet involvement in the Popular Movement. Amin is also head of the Organization of African Unity, which has attempted to mediate the Angolan civil war. The organization has also protested what it calls "outside interference" in the war.

"I will offer our services to Amin as chairman of the OAU," Innis said. "The force would be operating under an OAU mandate. We will await the green light from Angola and the OAU before acting." A spokesman for the OAU Secretariat at the United Nations said he would not discuss the CORE plan and a spokesman for the Ugandan U.N. mission said he knew nothing of the plan.

Innis hinted that he has already recruited a team of former military-medical personnel for service in Angola. "I would like to send the medical men early next year, sometime before the spring," he said. "I hope that the plan has been decided by then. We are looking for some good rifleman...the key military

adviser to the FNLA is a Portuguese colonel, but I think they need some black colonels."

(At a press conference yesterday, Innis said CORE is recruiting experienced combat medics and would consider sending black U.S.

Army veterans to serve as combat advisers in Angola.

(He denied that these men would be sent to bolster the anti-Communist forces. Any of the three Angolan groups could request help from CORE, Innis said. So far, CORE has contacted only one of the three, UNITA, and has been asked only for medical supplies, he added.)

(Innis said CORE would form an "objective and neutral force, a peace brigade" to stand between the warring factions in case the Organization of African Unity managed to arrange a ceasefire.

"We are not mercenaries," he said. "We are Africans abroad. The Cubans, the Russians, the South Africans, the CIA — they are the mercenaries.")

There are at least two other efforts now under way in the United States to recruit mercenaries for service in Angola, although the sponsors of the efforts are unknown. One, in Fresno, Calif., offered up to \$1,200 a month to white military veterans willing to fight in Angola. It was not specified which side the mercenaries would fight on, but one source said the recruitment was for the National Union.

Innis: CIA Tries to Stop CORE Drive

By Ernest Volkman
Newsday National Correspondent

Congress of Racial Equality Chairman Roy Innis charged in New York yesterday that the Central Intelligence Agency is attempting to destroy CORE's drive to recruit black combat veterans for service in Angola.

Innis called a press conference in CORE's Manhattan headquarters in reaction to a report in Newsday yesterday that revealed the existence of the CORE recruitment program. The story quoted U.S. intelligence sources as saying that CORE is recruiting black veterans for service as mercenaries and that the program is part of an overall CIA effort to bolster the sagging military fortunes of two anti-Communist factions in Angola's civil war.

Innis denied that his program had any link with the CIA, but admitted that such a recruiting program is under way. In a prepared statement, Innis said the program consists of "recruiting black brothers with combat experience to assist in whatever way possible the tragic victims of the Angola civil war." He added that CORE has been actively recruiting black veterans for two months.



AP Photo

Roy Innis

"We are not mercenaries," he said. "Mercenaries are the South African thugs and Cubans fighting for the factions. I am so ashamed that there are Portuguese, South African and Cuban colonels leading the troops in Angola that I would volunteer some black American officers to take their places."

In the Newsday article, Innis was quoted as denying reports that the recruitment drive has any connection with the CIA. In his press conference, he repeated that denial, and charged that the CIA deliberately had leaked details of the program in order to destroy it.

"The very fact that the CIA has leaked such a connection to the press is proof that it's fabricated," he said. "The CIA has deliberately linked the efforts of CORE to aid our brothers at coming to a peaceful settlement to the clandestine and dirty role of the CIA in Angola. The CIA has found that its strongest weapon in destroying relationships between Africans and African-Americans is to simply manufacture a link with the agency."

The Newsday report quoted U.S. intelligence sources revealing the existence of the program and reported that the same sources said it was linked with CIA operations in Angola. A spokesman for the CIA said yesterday, "The agency has no connection whatever with the CORE program." As for Innis' charges of a CIA attempt to sabotage the program, the spokesman said, "I don't know what he's talking about."

It was unclear exactly what role Innis wanted the CORE recruits to play in Angola. He said that the organization hopes to recruit between a battalion (500 men) and a regiment (2,000 men) to serve on what he described as a "peace-keeping police force." However, a CORE spokesman earlier yesterday said that the organization was "only collating names of volunteers with some medical expertise and preferably some military background whose involvement would be strictly in the form of medical assistance." However, he added, there was a possibility that the group would be armed.

A State Department spokesman said he knew nothing of the CORE program, but added that if true, it may run afoul of federal laws prohibiting U.S. citizens from fighting for foreign powers. Such involvement, he said, could lead to loss of citizenship, although such decisions are made usually on a case-by-case basis.

Innis emphasized yesterday that the projected force would be sent to Angola "only at the invitation of the OAU," the Organization of African Unity, a coalition of African nations. "If the OAU is unable to put a peace-keeping force together, we want them to know we have this force ready to provide police func-

tion," he said. A spokesman for the OAU Secretariat here said it would not discuss Innis' comments nor answer any question relating to the CORE program.