

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 5 & 1CHICAGO TRIBUNE
29 January 1986

Angolan rebel leader starts lobbying for U.S. aid

J By Terry Atlas
Chicago Tribune

WASHINGTON—Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, called a "freedom fighter" by President Reagan and a "terrorist" by Angola's Marxist government, was scheduled to arrive Tuesday for 10 days of personal lobbying to win American moral support and military aid for his guerrilla war.

He will be embraced by the Reagan administration and applauded by conservative groups, which want the U.S. to give open support to what they say is his anticommunist crusade. Critics oppose aid to Savimbi on the grounds that it would undermine American credibility in much of black Africa because of Savimbi's ties to the white-minority government of South Africa.

Savimbi comes here as the debate over military aid has intensified in Congress and the administration.

"Savimbi's personal visit and appeal may well make the difference between aid going to him or not," said Jeffrey Gayner of the conservative Heritage Foundation.

The administration plans to give Savimbi a warm public welcome while reportedly favoring a plan

for covert military assistance to what it calls his "legitimate nationalist organization."

The administration wants to give Savimbi "more than just moral support" but opposes legislation authorizing overt military aid, State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb said Monday.

Secretary of State George Shultz will meet Savimbi Wednesday, a day before the guerrilla leader is to meet with Reagan at the White House. He also will give a private briefing to the White House National Security Council staff on battlefield conditions in Angola, where his forces face an estimated 30,000 Cuban soldiers and 1,200 Soviet advisers.

Next week he will meet with congressional leaders to lobby for at least \$27 million in overt military aid to his pro-Western National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, known as UNITA.

"Everybody wants to meet with Savimbi," said Christianne Lemmon, executive director of the American Angolan Public Affairs Council, one of the groups that has been making preparations for his visit.

The biggest problem is, "When you say Savimbi, people say,

"Who?" " said Jose Sorzano, president of the Cuban American National Foundation and formerly Jeane Kirkpatrick's deputy when she was U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

To remedy that, Savimbi has a busy schedule of media interviews and speaking engagements with conservative groups, such as the Heritage Foundation and the American Conservative Union, where he is certain to get an enthusiastic reception.

He also will hold seminars with a number of think tanks, including the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The visit is being coordinated by the local lobbying and public relations firm of Black, Manafort, Stone and Kelly, which has a \$600,000 contract with UNITA.

The White House said Monday that it hasn't yet made a final decision on whether to seek military aid, either overt or covert, for Savimbi.

The State Department has been concerned that overt aid for UNITA would further complicate the already difficult negotiations underway to broker a broad re-

gional settlement that would include the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and the pullout of South Africa from neighboring Namibia, which it controls in defiance of a 1978 UN resolution.

The administration favors covert aid to UNITA, through the CIA, of \$10 million to \$15 million.

The administration needs no congressional approval to provide such aid, but it is required to notify members of the Senate and House intelligence committees in advance, which it reportedly has done. Opponents can seek legislation to block covert aid.

Savimbi's conservative supporters want him to get overt military aid, to demonstrate publicly that the U.S. is prepared to confront Soviet influence in Africa.

"It's a right-wing issue," said a House critic's staff member.

Conservative Rep. Mark Siljander [R., Mich.] has signed up more than 100 cosponsors for legislation that would give UNITA \$27 million in open military aid. Senate Republican leaders failed last month by a vote of 39-58 to win passage of a resolution calling for material assistance to Savimbi if the Angolan government refuses to negotiate with UNITA.

"Congress will decide whether or not Savimbi will be given aid and, if so, will it be overt or covert," Lemmon said.

Conservatives have made aid to Savimbi a top issue on their foreign policy agenda, putting pressure on Reagan to follow through on his pledge to help "freedom fighters" around the world.

The Conservative Caucus is spearheading a campaign to pressure Gulf Oil Corp., now part of Chevron Corp., to end its Angolan oil production, which is a major source of revenue for the government there.

Critics of aid to UNITA include congressional liberals such as Howard Wolpe [D., Mich.], who is chairman of the Africa subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and a number of black leaders, such as Jesse Jackson. They warn that American backing for Savimbi, who now gets most of his outside aid from the white-minority government of South Africa, might turn much of black Africa against the U.S. and increase Angola's reliance on Soviet and Cuban support.