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WASHINGTON TIMES
29 July 1985

ANGOLA

Peculiar playmates in Angola's oilfields

WILLIAM P. CHESHIRE

This is the story of how a nice little oil company, Gulf, bought itself a nice little Marxist country, Angola, and exerted its substantial skill and influence to mooch off the American taxpayers, who have become unwitting partners in the enterprise.

Even before the old Portuguese government toppled, Gulf was a major supporter of the Communist revolution, reportedly feeding the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) a million dollars a month to keep the war away from the company's Cabinda oil fields.

Little has changed, except that Gulf's contribution has grown. The Cabinda Gulf Oil Company, jointly owned by Gulf and the Luanda government, earns the Communists \$800 million yearly in taxes and royalties and another \$1.5 billion in exports.

Sixty percent of this revenue goes for military purposes, which include paying for the Soviet and East German advisers and the 25,000 Cuban troops that, along with Gulf, keep the regime afloat.

"Were it not for the burgeoning oil industry, which registered an increase in production from 140,000 barrels a day in 1982 to 220,000 in 1984," wrote Margaret A. Noviki in a slavishly pro-regime article for *Africa Report*, "the Angolan economy would have likely collapsed. . ."

Among those helping the Angolan oil industry to burgeon is the U.S. Export-Import Bank, which has extended more than \$100 million in

development loans to the Angola regime — this despite prohibitions written into the Export-Import Bank Act.

That law forbids loans to "a communist country" unless the U.S. president, in a separate determination for each transaction, determines that such loans "would be in the national interest."

President Reagan has not made such a finding with respect to Angola because, oddly enough, Angola is not listed as a communist nation in the Foreign Assistance Act, as amended in 1981, even though Angola has had a communist government since 1975.

Not only has Washington supplied Angola's Marxists with low-interest loans; until this year it also prohibited, by means of the Clark amendment, any U.S. support of the Jonas Savimbi, whose anti-Communist Unita forces are seeking to overthrow the Marxist regime.

Gulf officials, meanwhile, have been at great pains to obscure the undeniable. In congressional testimony four years ago, Gulf's president of exploration and production used such far-fetched terms as "businesslike and non-ideological" to describe the Soviet-dominated Angolan regime.

"For some time now," he said, "Angola has been anxious to develop an opening to the West."

If so, the courtship certainly has proceeded in a perplexing fashion.

In the United Nations, Angola opposes the U.S. position nearly 100 percent of the time — a record of anti-Americanism matched only by Marxist Mozambique.

It harbors, in addition, a substantial army of Cubans, Soviets, and East Germans, and while it talks about having them leave, it continues to make them welcome.

It has allowed the Cubans, in the

furtherance of Soviet interests, to use Angola as a staging area for expeditions throughout southern Africa.

The only opening to the West that Angola seems to desire is the one through which gush Ex-Im Bank loans.

David Rockefeller and the Chase Manhattan Bank also have been shilling for the Angolan regime. Mr. Rockefeller has intervened personally with the White House, urging a new look at the administration's policy toward Angola — no bad idea, though not in the way Mr. Rockefeller means.

And Chase Manhattan has distributed a newsletter to its customers and affiliated banks, praising "the liberal investment code and sound economic management of the [Angolan] government" and suggesting that Angola's economy "could be poised for a takeoff."

In fact, Angola's economy is flat broke, despite help from Gulf and the U.S. taxpayer.

Under the Portuguese, Angola was a food exporter; today food is the country's second-largest import.

"In Luanda city," according to a report in the *Windhoek Advertiser*, "about 60 percent of all stores are closed. Those that are open have little to sell."

The *Advertiser* added this interesting footnote to the history of the Clark amendment:

"In 1975, with interests locked into MPLA, it was Gulf financing that helped push through the Clark amendment denying covert CIA support to Savimbi, thus virtually delivering Angola to the Soviet bloc on a plate."

Multiple choice question:

When the communists are hanging the last capitalists, who, according to Lenin, will be found at the foot of the gallows, haggling with the hangman on the price of the rope?

- (a) David Rockefeller.
- (b) The president of Gulf Oil.
- (c) Deng Xiaoping

For the correct answer, keep watching this space.