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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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State Dept. review completed

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ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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TAGS: PFDR, CG, AO, US
E.O. 11652: GDS
SUBJ: WASHINGTON POST STORY ON ANGOLA-ZAIRE

REF: LUANDA 1127

1. WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT DAVID OTTAWAY CAME TO SEE ME AS PRE-FIGURED IN REFTEL ON AUGUST 15. HE TOLD ME THAT THE STORY HE WAS GOING TO FILE CENTERED AROUND HIS CONCLUSION THAT MOBUTU HAD THROWN HIMSELF COMPLETELY BEHIND THE FNLA AND THAT SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF ARMS WERE COMING FROM ZAIRE. BUT AS PART OF THAT STORY, OTTAWAY INTENDS TO REPORT WHAT HE FOUND IN ANGOLA TO BE THE MPLA CONTENTION THAT US ARMS WERE BEING SENT IN FOR THE FNLA VIA MOBUTU. HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOT SEEN SUCH WEAPONS--HE WAS ONLY SHOWN AN 81MM MORTAR SHELL WITH ENGLISH WRITING ON IT WHICH HE WAS NOT PREPARED TO SAY WAS US MADE--BUT WAS GOING TO REPORT THAT MPLA AND OTHER FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS WERE SAYING THAT THEY HAD SEEN AT CARMONA M-16'S, US-MADE 120MM AND 81MM MORTARS AND SOME "SELF-PROPELLED ROCKETS". IN ADDITION, THESE SOURCES SAID, AND OTTAWAY WILL REPORT, THAT ZAIRIAN C-130'S AND C-47'S ARE USED TO FLY THIS EQUIPMENT IN. OTTAWAY SAID HE WAS TELLING ME THIS BECAUSE HE WAS CERTAIN HIS ARTICLE WOULD RAISE QUESTIONS WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S PRESS SPOKESMAN.

2. OTTAWAY ALSO SAID THAT HE SAW HUGE QUANTITIES OF SOVIET ARMS IN THE MPLA HANDS AND THAT HE WOULD BE REPORTING THIS AS WELL. WHAT WAS SIGNIFICANT, HE

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THOUGHT, WAS THAT EVEN THOUGH THE MPLA KNEW THAT THERE WERE CHINESE ARMS IN THE FNLA'S HANDS, THEIR PROPAGANDA LINE WAS CENTERED ONLY ON THE THEM THAT THE FNLA AND MOBUTU WERE THE STOOGES OF YANKEE IMPERIALISM.

3. HE ASKED ME SPECIFICALLY IF THE ZAIRIANS HAD M-16'S IN THEIR INVENTORY. I RECOUNTED THE HISTORY OF OUR DECISION NOT TO SELL M-16'S IN AFRICA, THE SUBSEQUENT CHANGE IN SEPT 1974 WHEN WE INFORMED MOBUTU AMONG OTHERS THAT SUCH WEAPONS COULD BE PURCHASED UNDER FMS AND MY UNDERSTANDING THAT ZAIRE HAD RECEIVED SEVERAL VISITS FROM COLT AND THAT IT LOOKED AS IF ZAIRE MIGHT USE SOME OF ITS FMS CREDIT TO BUY M-16'S DIRECTLY FROM THE SUPPLIER. I SAID THAT I DID NOT KNOW IF THIS TRANSACTION HAD BEEN COMPLETED BUT I DOUBTED IT. I FURTHER SAID, CONCERNING THE MORTARS AND THE "SELF-PROPELLED ROCKETS" THAT NONE OF THESE WEAPONS WERE INCLUDED IN PREVIOUS OR ON-GOING MAP/FMS DELIVERIES.

4. IT SEEMS EVIDENT--AS I [] HAVE SUGGESTED [] -THAT USG PRESS SPOKESMAN IN WASHINGTON WILL SOON BE QUERIED AS TO THE VERACITY OF THE RUMORS THAT HAVE NOW BEGUN TO CIRCULATE IN THIS NECK OF THE WOODS.
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