

## SPECIAL REPORT

# Southern Africa Nears Socialist Revolution

March 12 (IPS) — “The nightmare of United States diplomacy in southern Africa,” said reporter Henry Trehwhitt in the Baltimore Sun last week, “is this: a horrifying war between the races that ends in Marxist domination while Washington, in effect, looks on helplessly.”

With the exception of the prediction of race war, this so-called nightmare is no dream — and it does not apply just to southern Africa. The effect of the socialist victory in Angola has been to remoralize progressive working-class and government leaders throughout the continent. Southern Africa is on the verge of a socialist revolution; Presidents Mobutu of Zaire and Kaunda of Zambia have already been forced to partially accommodate to the policies of the socialist countries around them, and because of their commitment to collecting Atlanticist debt by austerity programs are likely to be toppled by working-class opposition factions in their countries; the faithful geriatric reactionaries running Kenya, Senegal, and Ivory Coast are in very nearly the same position. An explicit left faction is being formed in the Organization of African Unity, after factional organizing was launched last month by President Sekou Toure of Guinea. Countries such as Nigeria are rejecting their former pro-Western role and publicly denouncing U.S. and European sabotage of their industrial development projects. And virtually every radical government on the continent is rejecting the Maoist model of slave-labor, pick-and-shovel “development” — so-called African socialism — in favor of capital-intensive investment, a tendency represented by improving relations with the Soviet bloc countries. The much-discussed Soviet intervention into Africa is actually characterized by increased economic cooperation, far more terrifying to the Atlanticists than their supplying rocket launchers to the area’s liberation movements.

### Counterrevolution

Imperialist policy makers and their propagandamongers are frantically casting about to try to formulate a policy to counter this motion. President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger, together with certain Europeans, are hysterically focusing on the situation in white-ruled Rhodesia and trying to create a confrontation with Cuba and the Soviet Union over the question. Testifying before the House Committee on International Relations on March 4, Kissinger warned Cuba to act “with great circumspection” before aiding liberation movements elsewhere in Africa, especially Rhodesia, and threatened dire but unspecified consequences if they did. “Our actions cannot be deduced from what we did in Angola,” he intoned.

The Washington Post supported Ford and Kissinger in a March 10 editorial on the “deepening penetration into black Africa by Fidel Castro’s Cuba...” backed by the Soviets. Reporting that Ford is considering a naval blockade of Cuba, the Post added, “Whether Congress is coming to its senses or not, President Ford is determined to end Castro’s free run in Africa, whatever the opinion of his foreign allies, the Third World, American black leaders, or anyone else.”

The situation is now reaching a potentially dangerous pivot point. The socialist offensive in Africa has gone far enough to terrify the Atlanticists, possibly to the point of going through with Ford and Kissinger’s hysterical threats. But African leaders have yet to take exactly those final decisive steps that Kissinger and Company are most terrified of, the steps which will destroy them: declaration of debt moratoria and the formulation of a program demanding the industrial development of Africa.

### Socialist Forces Unify

Since the socialist victory in Angola, the liberation movements and governments of southern Africa have been acting virtually as a single organization. Angola’s Popular Movement (MPLA) government is providing a base for the South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO) of neighboring Namibia, enabling them to move out of the counter-insurgent-controlled environment of their former base in Zambia, while the governments of Mozambique and Tanzania provide protection for a purge in the Rhodesian liberation movements carried out by an emerging pro-Soviet and socialist leadership against Maoist and Fabian agents. Agents Ndabaningi Sithole, Abel Muzorewa, and Robert Mugabe have been expelled from the guerrilla camps in Mozambique, and informed observers report that “moderate” Joshua Nkomo, the great white hope, has been effectively politically captured by the pro-Soviet forces.

The political tightening up that both SWAPO and the Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) Revolutionary Council are undergoing are far more important than the increase of actual military activity which the press has concentrated on. This process accelerated at the recent Soviet Communist Party Congress, attended by high-ranking delegations representing the ruling parties of all the former Portuguese colonies in Africa, all of the legitimate liberation movements of southern Africa, the Sudanese Communist Party, and leaders of the ruling parties of the Congo, Guinea, Madagascar, Somalia and formerly pro-Maoist Tanzania. At that Congress, Soviet Ambassador to Zambia Belokolas set the tone for discussions with an offer of expanded Soviet cooperation in the development of Africa, which he contrasted with the present inability of the capitalist sector to offer anything.

### Attempt To Conciliate

Some capitalists in Europe and North America, horrified at the stupidity of Kissinger’s confrontation policy, are proposing a more conciliatory approach, hoping to buy enough time in Rhodesia for the installation of a “moderate” government, and at the same time trying to take the pressure off the governments of Zambia and Zaire. Last week, for example, the British Labour government proposed in Parliament giving financial aid to Mozambique, to “offset the effects” which that country suffered through the closing off of its border with Rhodesia. The Conservatives immediately demanded that the price on the aide package be a Mozambican pledge not to allow guerrilla activity from their soil. At a March 10 European Parliament meeting, British Con-

servative Derek Walker-Smith proposed that the European Economic Community make aid agreements with Angola conditional on the withdrawal of the Soviet and Cuban technicians now there, and that European countries keep a close watch on possible transfers of Cuban troops from Angola to Mozambique, according to the March 11 Financial Times.

In the United States, the Africa Bureau at the State Department, full of British sympathizers, is in an uproar over Kissinger's hard-line policy. Paralleling the British Labourites, the Africa Bureau has also proposed giving aid to Mozambique in an apparent fantasy return to the early 1960s when Jack Kennedy's winning smile and open pocketbook was enough to keep even the likes of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's "radical" Prime Minister, out of "Moscow's clutches."

The impotence of these conditional aid proposals was pointed out to the international socialist movement by the Minister of Defense and the President of the People's Republic of Angola in separate statements last week. Defense Minister Henrique Carreira branded imperialist aid proposals an attempt to "weaken our revolutionary spirit," and to infiltrate Angola's urban petty bourgeoisie. President Neto, in a statement in the March 10 East German magazine *Horizont*, added, "If the imperialist countries think they can destroy Angola by economic boycott, they are wrong. They forget the existence of the socialist countries and the lessons of Vietnam and Cuba. In their fight against the socialist camp... they tremble at the thought that Angola will be another country closed to their exploitation."

Whether a belligerent or conciliatory policy is followed, even the "liberal" imperialists are faced with the fact that in order to survive, they have to collect the Third World's debt. While the Anglo-American liberals are dreaming about buying off Angola and Mozambique, the International Monetary Fund is demanding murderous and politically near-impossible austerity policies in already pro-Wall Street Zambia and Zaire. Imports to both countries have dropped virtually to nothing, as have foreign exchange reserves due to the collapse in the price of copper (which accounts for the vast majority of foreign exchange revenues — 95 per cent in Zambia). Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda has already been forced to raise basic food prices 100 per cent, and the IMF is demanding similar measures in Zaire, where a cholera epidemic is already raging. The so-called aid to these countries consists of a \$200 million IMF loan to Zaire, in return for still more murderous austerity measures, and continued rollover of Zaire's estimated \$6 billion debt. Similar measures are being arranged for Zambia. In both countries, the working-class-based opposition is becoming better organized and more powerful every day, and there is no policy to contain it. One banker interviewed recently was sure that Zairean President Mobutu's "charisma" would keep the population in line until "Zaire's economy starts to breathe again in 1978 or 1979." Another, less cuckoo, said, "I never had any confidence in Old Joe (Mobutu). The political future is going to be shaky... very shaky... very frightening..."

### **Beyond the South Nigeria**

Outside the political maelstrom of southern Africa the political wind is changing almost as swiftly, and, to the imperialists, in an equally amazing manner. The paradigm is the situation in Nigeria, where the British-trained career

military officers who run the government of this, the most populous (80 million people) and richest country in black Africa, are swiftly and bitterly rejecting their assigned role as Anglo-American satraps. This political left turn began with the recognition last November of the Popular Movement government of Angola by the new military government in Nigeria which came to power in a bloodless coup last summer. The left turn is largely a response to Atlanticist sabotage of Nigeria's attempts to use her enormous petroleum revenues, which began rising in 1973, for full-scale industrial development. Their sponsorship of the creation of ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, represented a potentially formidable regional alliance to realize this development idea.

The latest round of sabotage against development came last year when enormous "irregularities" by Nigerian and European middlemen in the shipment of large orders of cement to Nigeria resulted in Nigeria's main harbors at Lagos being clogged with up to 300 ships at a time, each demanding \$4,000 per day in demurrage charges. The government's refusal to pay these illegitimate demurrage claims and to honor illegitimate letters of credit for cement shipments has provided a pretext for all but a few U.S. banks to cut off short-term trade credits to Nigeria, and for lawsuits by several European and American companies who count among their lawyers top Atlanticists George Ball and former Attorney General Clark Clifford.

In a direct assault on the Atlanticists, the Nigerian government recently allowed the Zairean Marxist movement headed by Antoine Gizenga to set up headquarters in Lagos for the avowed purpose of overthrowing CIA-favorite President Mobutu. This is perhaps the greatest irony among those which have left the Atlanticists stupefied, inasmuch as several of Nigeria's present leaders were members of the notorious United Nations peacekeeping force which was complicit in putting Mobutu in power in the first place and in assassinating pro-Soviet leader Patrice Lumumba at the same time.

The Nigerian government's firm resistance to Atlanticist assaults, their sponsorship of the formation of ECOWAS, and their leadership in the move to muster continental support for the Popular Movement government of Angola, all have designated Nigeria as perhaps the most important leader of black Africa — a role that the present government has publicly accepted. However, they have so far failed to take advantage of a radicalization process, similar to their own, that has occurred over the past year in most of the rest of West Africa. If Nigeria, supported by Guinea, Ghana and one or two other West African countries, called for a regional declaration of debt moratorium and the formulation of a common regional development program, they would be hard-pressed to find opponents. Only Senegal and Ivory Coast could be expected to temporarily organize against such a proposal, and both countries are run by doddering French puppets already on their last legs who face enormous internal unrest and could easily be isolated and pressured in the same way that Zambia and Zaire have been surrounded and neutralized by the Congo, Angola, Mozambique and Tanzania. In addition, Senegal and Ivory Coast would face pressure from the French Gaullists who are presently touring African countries to marshal support against their common Atlanticist enemies, Senegal's ruling Progressive Union party, furthermore, has already been forced to allow the Senegalese Communist Party and two other political opposition parties to organize within the country.