

EXCLUSIVE

AFRICA

The Real Story Of The Angola Coup Attempt

ANGOLA

The real story of the May 27 coup attempt in Angola has yet to be told. Most of the U.S. press reported that a "pro-Soviet" group which had been purged from the Angolan government, led by Nito Alves and José van Dunem, led an uprising against Angolan President Agostinho Neto for the purpose of stopping Neto's plans to establish economic ties with Western capitalism. The reality, compiled in this exclusive NSIPS report from African and European press accounts and from a series of interviews, is that the Angolan "left" putschists were a band of black racists whose ideology and direction came from exactly the same Western intelligence agencies which had earlier created the right-wing FNLA and UNITA countergangs against the Angolan revolution.

As will be detailed here, these deep-penetration agents were placed inside Angola's only legitimate liberation group, the now-governing Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) of Neto, in part through the good offices of the Second "Socialist" International, particularly its Portuguese arm, the Portuguese Socialist Party. Programmed with the synthetic ideologies of "negritude" and pan-African socialism, the viper within the MPLA set its goal of undermining the most advanced cadres in the MPLA leadership. Since at least last October, Alves and Van Dunem were actively sabotaging the already difficult economic conditions of the new republic and organizing the discontented lumpenproletariat to bring down Neto's government in a bloodbath. But as the panic-stricken leaders howled to each other on the day of the putsch, "the masses did not come out!"

The defeat of the Alves-Van Dunem operation in Angola, at the cost of the lives of a number of leading MPLA intellectuals, has far-reaching ramifications both for Africa and internationally. Angola's leadership, having weathered this broad-based insurgency, now stands as the acknowledged cornerstone of the "front-line" states which border South Africa and Rhodesia. In mopping up the remains of the ultra-left networks, the MPLA government is also demolishing the remaining credibility of the synthetic racist ideologies which have been used to mobilize Africans against African progress, a process of a significance paralleling the recent Moscow

campaign against the "pluralist" Spanish Communist Party head Santiago Carrillo. Only once the "left" anti-technology fascists are completely discredited, can the socialist movement ally itself with European and other industrial capitalists around a common program of economic development for southern Africa.

The Putsch

The predawn calm in the Angola capital of Luanda was shattered on May 27 by a grenade explosion which blew the door off the Sao Paulo prison, marking the first step in a coup attempt which was crushed several hours later on the same day. The perpetrators of the well-planned coup attempt against the MPLA government freed the putschist leaders Nito Alves and José Van Dunem, as well as the imprisoned elements of the anti-MPLA gangs, UNITA and FNLA, and common criminals. Only the white mercenaries who had fought against the MPLA during the Angolan war of liberation refused to leave the prison, though they were asked to do so by the putschists.

The coup attempt came less than a week after Alves and Van Dunem, both central committee members of the MPLA, had been purged and imprisoned for secretly organizing subversive networks. Questioning members of these networks following the coup attempt, Angolan officials discovered that a complete post-coup government had been designated.

According to the testimony of José Manuel Veloso, the chief of military operations for the putschists, "the plan was for us military to support a mass insurrection. The masses were to rise and the army would have to support the masses." The putschists counted on traitors in the Angolan army to seize control of Luanda under the cover of planned mass anti-government demonstrations. Their goal was to murder the MPLA central committee members and replace them with a "Political-Military Revolutionary Committee." One of the conspirators, Domingos Francisco, who was responsible for supplying arms and ammunition for the coup attempt, testified that the goal was to "prepare a coup d'état in order to eliminate the MPLA. There was to be physical elimination of all the members of the central committee, of the president and all members so they could take over the government. On May 26 I was contacted by Maj. Bage and told the operation was to take place the following day and the government had been appointed. Alves was to be president, Van Dunem prime minister, Imortal minister of de-

fense, and Bakalof chief of staff of the armed forces. . . . We were trying to finish with the MPLA.”

Even before their May 21 imprisonment, Alves and Van Dunem had long maintained a dissident position in the MPLA, and were removed from their official government posts last October. They maintained that the Angolan revolution was not complete, and that this could not be accomplished until all whites and mulattos were eliminated.

Alves had been Minister of Internal Affairs, and Van Dunem had been a political commissar in the army. Arrested putschists have revealed that Alves and Van Dunem began planning the coup attempt in October.

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Chief of Military Operations
— Putschists

In the words of President Neto afterward: “These fractionalist elements had constituted a political leadership. They had constituted an operational command to which elements of the women’s detachment belonged. They had mobilized certain provincial political commissars for this political activity. We have removed the provincial commissar of Luanda. The commissar of Malanje is now in prison. And we are in the process of looking for others. Certain elements of the OMA and the JMPLA (women and youth organizations) — who have disappeared — of UNTA and the FAPLA (trade union and armed forces) were their accomplices.”

Angolan chief military political commissar Pedro Fortunato played a leading role in the coup attempt. “My job,” testified Fortunato, “was to keep contact with the provincial commissioners of Zaire Province, Kwanza North, Kwanza South, Malanje and Benguela.” He added that Alves and Van Dunem had the task of maintaining “contact with the foreign embassies in Luanda. They were to promote the discrediting of the government.”

A reporter for the Paris-based magazine *Afrique-Asie* went to Luanda after the coup attempt to report first hand on the investigations underway. He reported that investigations being conducted by Angolan authorities were revealing the role played by foreign powers in the organization, financing and implementation of the operation. Intelligence services from France, Portugal, the U.S. and Belgium are implicated directly or through the intermediary of diplomats of African, Arab and South American countries because they are less suspect. *Afrique-Asie* reported that Brazil especially is spoken of in this context and added that Angolan authorities are also discovering that Chinese intelligence networks recruited participants in the coup attempt for Alves.

The coup attempt had originally been scheduled to take place on May 25, according to captured conspirators, and its immediate objectives were assaults on the prisons, the National Broadcasting Station and the *Jornal de Angola*. But Angolan authorities were aware that something was in the offing, and in addition to arresting Alves and Van Dunem, the government moved in other areas of the country to preempt possible trouble. For example, the military arrested the provincial commissioner as well as the leadership commission of the MPLA in Malanje, following discovery of their links to the Alves faction. The Province Commissar of Nie ordered the Angolan armed forces to encircle the Nito Alves conspirators there. Other provincial leaders with connections to Alves were purged one by one, without their being able to act.

Because Angolan authorities were on guard, all the Alves cells could not be mobilized in time, and the coup attempt was delayed 48 hours, until May 27. On the 26th, there was a flurry of meetings of military and civilian conspirators who had infiltrated the administration. The decision was made to dispense with the attack on the *Jornal de Angola*: “It was necessary to give the impression that it was a popular insurrection and not a coup d’etat,” admitted Angolan military police chief Jose Manuel Veloso on June 3. Veloso was the operations commander for the putschists general staff.

The putschists captured the National Broadcasting Station, with the complicity of some of the employees, and held it for three hours. Every three minutes an appeal was broadcast calling the population to regroup at the radio station, and then to the presidential palace to demonstrate.

This attempt to bring out the masses to serve as cover for the planned military takeover failed completely. Domingos Francisco testified that army political commissar Bakalof, scheduled to become chief of staff of the armed forces if the coup succeeded, sent him into Luanda to make a progress report during the early hours of the attempt. “I met some people going to work and some agitators telling the people not to go to work and to go to the palace,” he testified. “The people didn’t want to go. They insisted they didn’t want to go. They were forced. Our people fired shots into the air to intimidate them.” Elsewhere in the city Francisco observed “men being forced into trucks at gunpoint...to go to the palace.” The panicked Francisco reported back to Bakalof: “Listen, nothing is happening!” The coup’s chief of operations, Veloso, was frantically running around the city at the same time, and came across a frightened group of coup agitators. “You said the masses were going to come out but they haven’t,” he shouted to them. One shouted back: “The masses are going to come out right now!” According to eyewitness testimony, the terrified Veloso responded: “We’ve come out — but the masses are not coming out!”

Economic Sabotage

From the time the putschists began planning the coup, they had been carrying out an extensive plan to sabotage the economy of Angola to produce a high level of dissatisfaction in the population. The already disastrous

shape the economy was in, due to the sabotage by the fleeing Portuguese, and the extensive destruction caused during the war of liberation, was deliberately compounded by the putschists, primarily by sabotaging the efforts under taken by the struggling government to meet the most basic needs of the population.

In an address on May 21, the same day that Alves and Van Dunem were imprisoned, President Neto spoke directly about these difficulties: "The problem of supplies is serious. There is no manioc, no potatoes, no palm oil. There is nothing in the market. Not even fish. We passed by the "Jumbo" supermarket. We saw the long waiting lines, the crowds of people who were there to buy things that don't exist..."

Three days after the coup attempt it was discovered that vast stocks of food and supplies had been hidden away by the putschists and their networks through wholesale sabotage of the distribution networks the government was trying to set up to alleviate the worst shortages. David Aires Machada Minerva, Internal Trade Minister, was arrested after the coup when the role he played in the systematic sabotage of distribution of supplies to the population was discovered. Clandestine depots were set up to divert supplies destined for the population. Alves-linked provincial government leaders set up roadblocks to prevent trucks from transporting food to the cities from the peasant cooperatives. The rationale used by the officials for this was that there was a danger of the supplies falling into the hands of the anti-MPLA UNITA and FNLA gangs, which for the most part had been driven into the neighboring countries which have always harbored them. The shortages thus created were intended to deliberately provoke dissatisfaction, which the putschists tried to then manipulate to win the population to their side. Consciously provoking the lack of food and medicine, the putschists referred to hunger as a revolutionary weapon, according to *Vjesnik*. Captured conspirators revealed that if the coup had been successful, the day afterward these stocks would have been distributed to the population in an attempt to gain their support. Vast amounts of this hidden food turned out to be rotten and unusable.

Undermine the Military

The same kind of deliberate sabotage was carried out in the military to undermine its loyalty. Alves-linked military superiors held back pay for their units in an attempt to stir up discontent in the army. 180,000 escudos were found in the safe of the chief of military police, Veloso, salaries which he had never paid to his unit. In the home of air commander Paulito two million Kwanzas in unpaid wages was discovered. Only one motorized unit of the army participated in the putsch, after the loyal officers were arrested. In the period just prior to the coup attempt border threats as well as a threat to destroy the Cabindan oil fields were raised by the various anti-MPLA gangs, in an attempt to draw troops out of Luanda. Neto reported after the coup attempt that the conspirators told their networks not to fight the armed

bands, which were being deployed from neighboring Zaire and South African controlled Namibia, explicitly to further disrupt the economy, but to save themselves for another "revolution."

Attempts by the government to provide health care were also sabotaged. The Health Ministry reported after the coup attempt that a vaccination campaign against infantile paralysis, undertaken for the first time in Angola in April, had also been sabotaged.

MPLA officials said that the economic and social sabotage operation was similar to that carried out in Chile prior to the coup d'état by Pinochet.

The exacerbation of the shortages of supplies induced a "psychosis of buying" in the population, reported *Vjesnik*. Whenever something was available there would be a mad scramble, with the people who got there first buying more than they needed for purposes of hoarding, fearful that no more would be available in the future. This only served to undermine the credibility of the government. The racist putschists tried to further the discrediting of the government by blaming the problems they themselves were creating on "the incapable rightist social-democratic government of whites and mulattos." MPLA officials said that the economic and social sabotage operation was similar to that carried out in Chile prior to the coup d'etat by Pinochet.

Although the "popular uprising" needed to produce the chaos and confusion necessary for the putschists never developed, the Voice of America that morning, apparently following the script, announced at 7 AM that a "popular insurrection" was taking place in Luanda.

Despite the failure, the putschists were successful in killing some high ranking Angolan leaders.

Of the more than 200 people who were killed as a result of the operation, seven were from the highest ranks of the MPLA leadership. All seven were close advisers of President Neto. A member of the leadership of the Security Department, Neto Helder, was killed when the Sao Paulo prison was stormed. Eurico Manuel Correia Gonzalves, a commander of the General Staff, and Antonio Garcia Neto, the director of Economic Affairs of the Foreign Affairs Ministry were kidnapped, murdered and burned, while a person who had been with them, but was not part of the MPLA leadership, was let go.

Anatomy of the Coup

Three commanders of the general staff of the Angolan army, Paulo de Silva Mungungu, Eugenio Verissimo da

Costa and Jose Manuel Paiva had gone into the barrios of Luanda the night preceding the coup after being alerted of signs of trouble among certain units as well as civilians who had received arms from the putschists. The following morning the three commanders, plus Finance Minister Saydi Mingas were sent at the bidding of the putschists, to talk and negotiate with the coup makers after it was clear the coup could not succeed. They never got out alive, being tortured, murdered, and then hauled away, gasoline poured on their bodies and burned. Other MPLA cadre, mostly military, who refused to join the putsch were also killed.

Had the army joined the plotters, Alves would have read a proclamation over national radio announcing the new regime had seized power, and then the Deputy Commander of the Army, Imortal, was to have followed this up by arresting and eliminating MPLA leaders. Among those scheduled to be killed, according to the captured Fortunato, were MPLA General-Secretary Lucio Lara; Defense Minister Iko Carreira; Commander Carlos Rocha Dilolwa; Commander Ludy, head of State Security; Commander Xietu, chief of the army general staff headquarters; and of course President Neto. The arrested army officer Veloso was in charge of engineering the "physical elimination" of Lara, Carreira and Dilolwa. "This list was the personal choice of Nito Alves," said Veloso. "There were others he wanted killed but we said we didn't have enough people for the job — so Alves reduced the 'action' to these three." All three are mulattos who were hated by the racist Alves.

At the central committee meeting on May 21 at which the decision was made to purge them, Alves and Van Dunem put the other members on the spot, making them state their views on the factional position of Alves and

Van Dunem. In this meeting Mingas and one of the commanders, Paulo da Silva Mungungu severely criticized the two factioneers, swinging the rest of the Central Committee behind them. Mingas and da Silva were two of those who were murdered by the putschists.

The whole murder operation was carried out by the Alves-networks in conjunction with disruptive tactics by the group of Portuguese "gauchists," both under the control of CIA Portuguese operatives. How was this operation put in place, and how could it function to the extent it did?

The MPLA: A Front Organization

The MPLA is a front, and has many more political tendencies in it, in addition to the Alves faction, although most of them now are unified around the necessity of reconstructing the country. Members of the former Angolan Communist Party (PCA) played a central role in setting up the MPLA in the mid-1950s. The PCA was founded in October 1955, and in early 1956 the PCA set up an anti-colonial party with which to organize among the Angolan people. Immediately after this, however, a plethora of disparate nationalist groups were founded, rendering impossible a unified anti-colonial political movement. As a result the young PCA members, together with other political tendencies in Angola, rapidly founded the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in December 1956. It was founded as a broad encompassing front, including several groups, and had no rigid entry requirements. This marked the beginning of a long process of forming united fronts with other tendencies, and kicking out those that tried to divert the MPLA from its goal. No operation

Angola On 'African Socialism'

The following is a release by the Cuban press agency Prensa Latina:

LUANDA, June 24 (PL) — Africa can not divorce itself from the world, for this would be equivalent to playing the game of colonialism, racism, and apartheid, affirmed the *Jornal de Angola* today.

In a commentary dedicated to analyzing the historical and ideological roots of the school of thought called "negritude," the daily said this has been launched by the leaders of the non-progressive countries of the continent.

The thesis of the President of Senegal, Leopold Sedar Senghor, on "African socialism" maintains that this tendency must be based on the prevalent tribal structures on the continent.

In this context, the daily indicated that now some heads of African governments, in the service of foreign interests, are trying to revive in the region the cadaver of negritude, "Bantu socialism" or authenticity, the latter headed by Zaire leader Mobutu Sese Seko.

The real reasons which motivate these

maneuvers, added the daily, are exposed in the intentions of these administrations to maintain the population in the dark, removing them from the victories that the progressive forces gained in their fight.

The struggle of Africa today does not permit the acceptance of these tendencies, because with the passage of time the camps have been defined and it is known who are friends and who are enemies, asserted the daily.

It added that at various international meetings these tendencies have been manifested by states that promote them, but have been rejected by the decision of the majority of the continent to eliminate the colonial consequences and construct a new society.

The next summit of the Organization of African Unity, which begins next July 2 in Gabon, will be another adequate scene for the confrontation between the Africans who want to be free and those who want to permanently be subservient to international reaction, concluded the *Jornal de Angola*.

to sidetrack the MPLA succeeded, but the result was a long trail of left-behind dissidents who had tried to do that but failed.

It became evident very early that the MPLA leadership could not be easily subverted. Consequently efforts to create subversive factions within the MPLA were initiated, and were complemented by the setting up of two anti-MPLA countergangs formations: first the FNLA of Holden Roberto, set up in the late 1950s, followed by UNITA in the mid-1960s headed by former FNLA official Jonas Savimbi. The most noteworthy internal factional efforts were led by Daniel Chipenda and the Andrade brothers. Chipenda, an agent of the Portuguese secret police (Pide) tried to assassinate Neto in 1972, and led an unsuccessful revolt in the MPLA after which he attempted to pull MPLA troops under his command out of the MPLA and into the FNLA. He later formed what was called the "Chipenda brigade" which accompanied the South African military invasion of Angola beginning in August, 1975 in a flimsy attempt to provide some black cover for what was a blatant South African invasion. Mario Pinto Andrade, one of the founding members of the MPLA, and his brother Joaquim, a priest, led the "active revolt" in the MPLA which surfaced after the Spinola coup in Portugal and created divisions in the membership which served as the preconditions for Pide agent Chipenda to reactivate his eastern revolt against the MPLA leadership. Mario is now in exile, while Joaquim is in prison.

Although the core of the MPLA leadership remained very solid throughout its history, following the 1974 Spinola coup many people of different political tendencies joined the MPLA, including those deployed in to carry out subversion. In addition an agent operation in the Portuguese Communist Party which Cunhal had expelled, was redeployed into Angola, along with other agent leftists to defeat the MPLA. These networks were part of the intelligence operations operating under a left cover which are run out of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington. Various elements of the MPLA were in contact with the entire gamut of the Portuguese left, opening the way for penetration operations by these "left-CIA" operations, some laundered through the Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow.

One example of this was the reasonably good ties the MPLA had in Paris prior to the Spinola coup with the then exiled Portuguese Socialist Party (PSP) leader Mario Soares, a known Atlanticist agent. Another example was the ultra-left circles in the MFA movement in Portugal, including the agent wing of the PCP, as well as the non-PCP left, both examples of left cover agency controlled by the Institute for Policy Studies.

Following the Spinola coup in Portugal, political parties in the Portuguese colonies were declared legal, in keeping with the "progressive" cover of the Spinola coup — all; that is, except for the MPLA in Angola. Due to pressure in Portugal from the PCP and other left parties, the Portuguese government was forced to reverse itself, and allow the MPLA to function openly in Angola. During the period leading to Angolan independence on Nov. 11, 1975, on through to the end of the Angolan war of liberation in early 1976, various CIA and other Western intelligence circles funded the anti-MPLA gangs heavily, and provided them arms. In these aversive conditions,

the MPLA was not selective, accepting anyone who desired a real independence and therefore opposed the CIA's, South Africa's, and others' anti-MPLA gangs. MPLA officials believe that some of the core group of coup leaders may have been reactivated Pide agents. Prior to independence, Pide had more agents in Angola than in Portugal, in addition to countless part-time agents and informers. The Pide networks in Luanda were especially thorough. Angola officials have noted since the coup attempt that the police records of some of those implicated in the coup attempt were destroyed sometime after the Spinola coup, leading them to think

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— MPLA General Secretary

that many of the coup participants were reactivated Pide agents now hooked into apparent "leftist" networks operated by the CIA and allied forces out of Portugal.

Jonas Savimbi of the South Africa-linked UNITA has long been a member of such police networks, and the British *Sunday Telegraph* reported after the coup attempt that the MPLA had discovered links between Savimbi and the Alves faction, which was one of the factors leading to their purge.

The MPLA has been well aware since the end of the war that the standards of the organization had to be raised to deal adequately with the task of reconstruction of the country. In the words of Lucio Lara, MPLA General-Secretary, in a pre-May 27 interview: "When the MPLA became legal, a large number of new members joined, but their political conviction rarely was as strong as we could have wished. They often had opportunistic or emotional motives. We have not yet managed to do very much about this opportunism. We have called for watchfulness, and we have made a certain selection among the applications for membership, but the methods have not been very effective so far. From now on we will be much stricter when accepting new members. We will even purge within the movement."

Lara added: "We now attach less importance to the number of members and stress quality instead...During the guerrilla stage people joined the MPLA almost instinctively, and there was no selection worth mentioning

— now we build up the movement more systematically and on a scientific basis.”

Alves

Immediately following the victory by the MPLA in the war of liberation, Alves and his controllers set out to subvert the revolution. The key aspect of this operation was the use of racialism to split the base of the MPLA. The “pan-African socialism” and “negritude” ideologies used to carry out this subversive activity were created from the inception specifically for subversion. CIA conduits in the press have attempted to cover up the operation carried out by Alves with the silly story that Alves was pro-Soviet. The history of the Alves group shows not only that he is not pro-Soviet, but was an agent from the beginning.

As soon as the liberation war was won, Nito Alves began a constant factional battle within the MPLA, attacking the leadership for allowing whites, mulattos and assimilated (educated) Africans in leadership positions, and instead called for more positions to be given to “authentic Africans,” attempting to reduce the MPLA and the Angolan government to some variant of “pan-African socialism.”

Prior to the May 27 events Neto accused Alves of leading a “black racist faction,” and the explicitly racial approach used by Alves is what he has in common with all the other operations that have been thrown against the MPLA. The common thread running through Alves, Holden Roberto, Savimbi, and Chipenda is an avowed racism, in the guise of trying to attain a pure pan-African ideal, an authentic, untainted African regime. The western backers of the anti-MPLA forces became livid with rage when the MPLA invited the Cubans to come to their aid, because the arrival of the Cubans guaranteed that the counterinsurgent, black racist environment being created by Western intelligence networks to eliminate the intellectual leadership of the MPLA could not succeed. Both because of what the Cubans represented politically, and because of their own racial mixture.

Nito Alves joined the MPLA resistance fighting against the Portuguese in the first military region in 1966. The Portuguese secret police, Pide, and the black counterinsurgency force, *flechas*, trained by Pide, were very effective, isolating the guerrillas from the MPLA leadership which was able to exist only in eastern Angola and in exile at that point. The fighters of the first region were also completely cut off from the clandestine networks in Luanda. The CIA’s FNLA force in northern Angola also sabotaged and attacked the MPLA, while the Zaire army of President Mobutu has as its task intercepting the MPLA so its fighters could not get in contact with its members in neighboring countries such as the Congo.

In these aversive, isolated conditions, the fighting cadre didn’t always develop according to any policy lines of the MPLA leadership. The MPLA leadership in the liberated zones and in exile was experiencing lively debates, and undergoing an outstanding evolution. Alves by this time had risen to a leadership position in the first region, northeast of Luanda. Many of the Angolan of-

ficials and military men who participated with Alves in his putsch attempt had served with him in the first region also.

Alves was sent to Luanda in 1974 to hook up with the clandestine MPLA network there. It is at this time that he met José Van Dunem, in addition to some PCP cadres. These PCP cadres pushed Alves, claiming that he was an enlightened leader, and continued to support him despite the fact that these PCPers had been disavowed by PCP leader Alvaro Cunhal. The disavowal by Cunhal immediately brands these so-called PCPers as part of the networks run out of the IPS in Washington.

Liberal Fabian profilers in the U.S. characterize Alves as an opportunist without an ideological line, and note that some of the people in his circle are on the right fringe of the MPLA. Intellectuals in the MPLA referred to him as a Frantz Fanon-type for his virulent anti-white, anti-mulatto tirades, which was mixed with a mumbo-jumbo of socialist and Marxist phraseology. He claimed that “the blacks were the only real proletarians in Angola,” called the whites and mulattos in the leadership of the MPLA and the government the “new bourgeoisie,” and because he championed the complaints of the lumpen elements of the population, claimed himself to be more pro-Soviet than Neto and the other leaders of the MPLA. It is interesting to note that before independence an MPLA cadre once asked Alves what he thought about Marxism-Leninism. Alves, now touted in the Western press as the leader of the pro-Soviet faction in Angola, replied: “I’m only experimenting with the idea of Marxism-Leninism.”

Despite maintaining a racist-factional position starting with the first interregional conference on Angolan territory after the fall of Caetano, Alves had his biggest impact in organizing groups in the neighborhoods of Luanda to resist the FNLA. In these neighborhoods marginal types, lumpenproletarians on the borderline of criminality, and young ultrarevolutionary students rubbed elbows. In this layer of the population there was a sentimental adherence to simple slogans, to a notion of the MPLA as liberator, and to Neto as symbolizing the end of the Portuguese colonial nightmare. But any in depth politicization of this layer was difficult to accomplish. He built his following with easy demogogy and simple dogmatism, building himself up as an idol for his base. His actions were a cause for concern in the MPLA leadership.

Alves accused Neto of being a class collaboratorist for calling for national unity of workers and peasants, while Alves postured as a partisan of brutal class confrontation, as a revolutionary that did not compromise. The vast majority of the Angolan population is peasant and Neto continuously warned that “for the MPLA, isolation of the working class would be a disaster.” Alves was known as the leader of Luanda clandestine circles, as opposed to cadres in the liberated regions or in exile. The intellectual influence of the latter two overshadowed Alves, not allowing him to play the hegemonic role he sought. To this he reacted with a growing sense of frustration.

At the same time that Alves came to Luanda in 1974 to hook up with Van Dunem, Van Dunem’s wife, Vales, an Angolan of Portuguese birth, returned to Angola, presenting herself as a member of the PCP. Vales made

no secret of her goal of imposing a more dogmatic stance on the movement. While the PCPers disavowed by Cunhal continued to champion Nito Alves, Vales played a preponderant role in the organization of the clandestine structures for the putsch. A secretariat in the Department of Mass Organizing (DOM) had been set up, and was directed by Vales. Out of the DOM she recruited and gave special training to activists, after which they began rigorously clandestine organizing, especially in the armed forces and the mass organizations.

Van Dunem set up clandestine networks among prisoners while imprisoned by the Portuguese in Sao Nicolau prison, which contained 10,000 Angolan prisoners. He gained the personal allegiance of 6,000 of the prisoners, all of whom were released on April 25, 1974, the day of the Spinola coup.

Alves, Van Dunem and Vales were the three key operatives through whom the coup networks were organized and put in place this May.

As soon as the war of liberation was won, Alves began organizing demonstrations by his lumpen networks,

To avoid an economic collapse of the economy, Neto did everything possible to get the industrialists to remain in Angola. However, Alves did just the opposite.

demanding a bigger participation of blacks in the government. Alves never accepted the fact that the MPLA accorded Angolan nationality to whites and mulattos, all of whom were considered former colonialists by Alves and his backward lumpen base. It was on this question that Alves and Van Dunem fought with the MPLA leadership at the first interregional conference of the MPLA after the Spinola coup. As a result of this organizing by Alves and his networks, the situation in the poorer districts of Luanda began to deteriorate. The weekly *Jeune Afrique* reports that the defense groups that had been organized by Alves were never tightly *politically* organized into the MPLA command structure, and were merely being further pulled away by Alves. With the economic troubles, it was easy for Alves to demagogically convince the lumpens that the whites and mulattos in leadership positions were to blame. In actuality, the lumpens and others in Alves' base being organized to protest did not have the qualifications necessary to fill these positions, due to Portugal's dismal policies as a colonial power.

The local defense groups organized by Alves in the slums, called Poder Popular (PP) had played a key role in preventing the FNLA from getting established in Luanda during the war. However Alves consciously resisted all efforts by the MPLA to politicize the PP. He pulled out the political cadre to turn them into self-help local-control social service organizers devoid of any

crucial political role. Alves manipulated the childish disappointment of this layer of the population regarding all their desires that were not immediately met once the war was won. They were therefore very undisciplined and always a potential trouble spot for the MPLA.

During the summer of 1975 the "gauchists" arrived from Portugal, and gave direction to this discontent, blaming the leadership of the MPLA for their misery. Alves, who had been very critical of ultra-left circles before, adapted himself very quickly to their line, championing it to the receptive lumpen layers. At this point the MPLA tried to dissolve Alves' militias since they were refusing orders, refusing to go to the fighting front, but were unable to do so because of the following he gained among the unpoliticized lumpens with his ultra-revolutionary phraseology minus a clear political line.

He molded this strong base which carried out systematic agitation which resulted in instability. When the MPLA named Alves the Minister of Internal Administration, all authority over police forces was nevertheless withheld from him. However he profited from his position to place his partisans in important posts in the administration: many of the provincial governors were loyal to him. A segment of the secret police followed him. And he took advantage of the rapid expansion of the army to get his people in, and also used the incentive of promotions to bring men to his side. In November, 1976, after Neto had returned from a trip to Moscow, Alves and Information Minister Joao Felipe Martins, one of his strong supporters, were relieved of their ministerial positions, and Alves was not elected to the political bureau. Shortly thereafter the security apparatus was cleaned up, and some of his close followers were arrested by the end of 1976. Confronted with the possibility of losing their extensive personal networks, it was at this time that they began planning the coup operation — before their networks could be uprooted entirely.

Another key aspect of sabotage carried out by Alves involved the Portuguese industrialists located in Angola before independence. To avoid an economic collapse of the economy, Neto did everything possible to get the industrialists to remain in Angola. *However, Alves did just the opposite.* He stirred up the workers, and carried out other acts designed to make the industrialists think that the situation would be most unstable. Alves succeeded, most businessmen left, confronting Neto and the MPLA with a still more serious economic collapse to turn around. Alves consistently used his influence against the Cuban presence, and tried to turn popular sentiment against them by calling for "African solutions to African problems."

Progressive CIA Faction Deployed From Portugal

President Neto announced on June 12 that there were foreigners among the conspirators arrested, some of them Portuguese. He denounced them as extremists who were "incapable of making a revolution in their own country," and thus "tried to come and do it in Angola." While not naming their origins, he was referring to the international Eurocommunist and ultra-left networks which have been deployed into communist and workers

movements to destroy them.

Neto was referring to a sizeable contingent of Portuguese ultra-left "gauchists." These "workerist" elements were primarily Portuguese soldiers in the left-wing of the Armed Forces Movement set up at the time of the Spínola coup. Following the fall of the pro-Communist Gonçalves government in 1975, a group of these types, numbering in the hundreds, went to Angola to reinforce the agent wing of the party, which had been renounced by PCP head Cuhai, and was vigorously supporting Alves as an "authentic" revolutionary.

The "gauchists" primary operation was to destabilize the small and therefore crucial layer of skilled and semi-skilled urban workers. They attempted to organize strikes, denouncing Neto for exploiting the workers, and criticizing Neto for not being responsive to the workers' demands. According to the Yugoslav daily *Vjesnik*, the gauchists instigated the workers' incredible demands, such as 300 percent wage increases. *Vjesnik* added that the infantile ultra-lefts' sabotage activity especially affected the port, disrupting the economy further, and feeding into the efforts of Alves, et al. to provoke discontent among the population by sabotaging the distribution of basic goods. David Aires Machada, the Internal Trade Minister arrested for his participation in disruption of food distribution, at an earlier point was the Angolan Labor Minister, and actually participated in organizing urban workers against the government.

Just like the Alves crew, the ultra-left crowd agitated without articulating an alternative political program. Both Alves and the ultra-lefts blamed Neto's economic cooperation with the West as the reason he was not able to satisfy workers' demands, and the reason the economy was in trouble. The ultra-lefts and Alves made three demands designed to isolate Angola and exacerbate its economic crisis. They called for: 1) no multinationals in Angola (aimed at destroying Angola's collaboration with Gulf Oil Co. to exploit Angola's oil, its primary source of foreign exchange, and aimed also at preventing similar collaboration to gear up production in Angola's mining sector); 2), no diplomatic relations with the West; 3) no warming of relations with Portugal. Neto and the Angola government have been trying to do just the opposite of these three demands in order to get the economy moving.

Ten agents of Portuguese nationality have already been expelled from Angola, and many more have been arrested as the mop up of the Alves and ultra-left networks continues. Some of the key operatives who coordinated both the Alves and ultra-left operations have already been arrested:

* — Valera Joao Gomez, a leader in the Portuguese Movimento dos Forças Armadas (Armed Forces Movement), was reported arrested by the June 4 East German daily Neues Deutschland. Valera Joao Gomez went to Angola when the Gonçalves government fell in Portugal. When Carvalho staged his Maoist insurrection in Portugal on Nov. 25, 1975, Valera Joao Gomez was back in Portugal in the thick of the operation. The Carvalho coup attempt was staged merely to provide the pretext for a sharp right turn politically in Portugal, as soon as the operation had served its purpose, Valera Joao Gomez returned to Angola.

* — Another plotter detained in Angola is a former Portuguese law student, Ruy Coelho, according to a

Reuters wire of June 12. He has confessed to beginning his political activity in Lisbon, first with the Maoist Movement for the Reorganization of the Proletariat Party (MRPP) and then with the PCP. He said he had served as one of the main "ideological advisers" to Nito Alves.

* — On June 11 the Angolans announced the arrest of former Portuguese Labor Minister Jose Ignacio da Costa Martins in connection with the coup attempt. He worked in Angola as an adviser, and was one of the many Portuguese arrested for alleged implication in the abortive coup.

Into The Future

The Angolan government is now carefully investigating and digging out the remnants of the Alves and associated networks. The day after the coup attempt President Neto announced that the government was going to tighten up control, emphasizing that all mass organizations would have to submit to direction from the MPLA. He also pointed out that with respect to various forms of dissidence, for months "we spoke of tolerance. But this tolerance was not interpreted in the correct sense. Now we are going to have to proceed in a firm and tough manner." The Government has also formed an office specifically charged with overseeing the supplying of food and other basic commodities to ensure no further sabotage in this area. Van Dunem and his wife Vales have been arrested, while the search still continues for Alves and other of the conspirators.

Neto also made it very clear that Angola's alliance with the Soviet Union and Cuba was not going to be brought into question: "The Soviet and Cuban comrades have been accused of coming here not to help us, but for other reasons. I reaffirm to the Angolan population that the Soviet comrades have always manifested, in our regard, sentiments of solidarity and friendship and that they have contributed to the formation of our armed forces to help us with our national reconstruction."

"If there is any people, any party, any government which is in this movement alongside us, it is really Cuba. The contribution of Cuba is so great that we will never in our lives be able to forget it."

The MPLA will also continue with its efforts to establish a *political cadre party*. In an interview at the end of 1976, MPLA General-Secretary Lucio Lara discussed why this was necessary: "The struggle between the classes in Angola has not as yet reached its most intensive phase. A movement like the MPLA, where all classes are represented, can not solve class conflicts and build up socialism. In such a case we would have conflicts between ourselves and that would prevent us from realizing our political aims. Already we must think of creating a party that can become an instrument for the working classes and with the help of which we can build up socialism. The MPLA could never be such an instrument, even if it has filled — and during many years to come will fill — a very important place as a front organization. But in order to build up a socialist Angola it is necessary to have a party that is clearly defined in terms of classes."

At the Central Committee meeting last November it was decided to hold a congress in 1977 to study the

question of forming a party, and discussions have already been initiated at the local level of the MPLA organization. Lara: "There are various opinions about what such a party should be like and what place it should fill, and for that reason congress has to decide this. Earlier on the dominant opinion in the Central Committee was that the MPLA should be transformed into a party. But now more and more members seem to think that the MPLA should continue to exist as a movement, and at the same time a completely new party should be formed. In that case it will be a Marxist-Leninist cadre party. We feel that it would be politically unwise to abolish the MPLA, which has such a good reputation among the population of this country, in order to turn it into a party."

The May 27 coup attempt was probably the second most serious threat that has ever confronted the MPLA, surpassed only by the war. Despite the continued fragility of the economy, the demise of a major subversive network embedded in the country leaves the MPLA in a better position. Without such a subversive network in place, the military threats represented by the CIA's anti-MPLA gangs squatting on Angola's borders have only a nuisance value and do not represent a significant threat.

By successfully marshalling its forces against overwhelming odds to defeat attempts to destroy it on several occasions, the MPLA leadership has established itself as the cornerstone of the frontline African states, and by

doing so has changed entirely the geometry of the southern African situation. None of Henry Kissinger's or Zbigniew Brzezinski's schemes to break Angola have succeeded, and consequently the other frontline states have remained firm.

The inability of South Africa's traditional ally, the U.S., to subvert the frontline states and therefore guarantee the continued existence of South Africa as it is presently constituted, combined with the pledges of military aid to the frontline states from socialist and African countries, has changed the strategic picture completely for South Africa. If South Africa wants to avoid a suicidal war and develop economically, it will have to reorient towards non-Wall Street forces in Europe and the Soviet Union. It is precisely to prevent this from happening that the same forces ultimately behind the Alves coup attempt in Angola, the Rockefellerers, are now inciting race riots in South Africa.

The continued existence of Angola will serve as the basis for liberating the rest of Africa. Ever since independence in the 1960s the CIA has used counterinsurgent synthetic ideologies to keep African countries controllable. These ideologies of "negritude" and "African socialism," variations of which were used by Alves as well, are now being attacked openly by the Angolan leadership, and they have promised to carry this issue to the Organization of African Unity as a whole (see box page 4).

—Douglas DeGroot

OAU Recognizes Patriotic Front

The Organization of African Unity summit meeting in Libreville, Gabon on July 4 gave exclusive recognition to the Patriotic Front liberation movement which is conducting the guerrilla war against the white minority regime of Ian Smith in Rhodesia. The pro-socialist Patriotic Front already has the exclusive backing of the five "frontline" states bordering or near Rhodesia.

The OAU's action is a serious defeat for the counterinsurgency campaign — politely referred to as a "peace initiative" — being conducted on behalf of the Carter Administration by British Foreign Secretary David Owen, since it removes from consideration the State Department-allied Rhodesian nationalists Bishop Abel Muzorewa and the Reverend Mr. Ndabaningi Sithole. The removal of Muzorewa and Sithole precludes any attempt to rerun the Angolan civil war scenario where U.S. arms, funding, and mercenaries were conduited to the CIA's liberation groups the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) in an effort to prevent the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) from becoming the government.

The Patriotic Front has already rejected two out of three of Dr. Owen's melodramatically introduced "final proposals" for a peaceful transition to majority rule in Rhodesia, including his proposal for a British Commonwealth military force to maintain law and order during the transition. A Patriotic Front spokesman

recently noted that the precedent of the United Nations peacekeeping force in the Congo in the 1960s — which resulted in the death of the Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba, and ultimately the installation of Rockefeller puppet Mobutu Sese Seko — was a "bad experience" which his organization did not wish to see repeated.

Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda, who introduced and organized for the resolution to recognize the Front, also replied to Dr. Owen's constant requests to "tone down" the guerrilla war for the sake of his plan in a comment after the resolution was passed. "We will not stand in the way of the Anglo-American initiative," said Kaunda, omitting any hint of endorsement, "provided they do not stand in the way of our own strong support for the armed struggle in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)."

The endorsement is also a serious blow to Ian Smith's position. Smith is now beset by a rapidly collapsing economy, a rapidly deteriorating military situation, and a rapidly disintegrating political base. One of his former Ministers, Wickus de Kock, has resigned from Parliament and is packing to leave the country. Smith's chances of getting any credible outside support for a separate settlement with Muzorewa and Sithole have been diminished by the OAU's action, although he may still try. He is left now with the choice of capitulating, or provoking such a bloodbath that, he hopes, the West or South Africa will have to step in.

OAU Resolution

The resolution passed by the OAU expresses