

Special Report:

CIA Primes Syria To Invade As War Wracks Lebanon

by **Bob Dreyfuss**

Oct. 28 (IPS) — Full-scale civil war erupted this week in Lebanon between CIA-backed right-wing militia and a coalition of leftists led by the forces of the Lebanese Communist Party and the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party. Beirut, the Lebanese capital, is nearly totally deserted as house-to-house fighting raged throughout downtown areas, with each side seeking to control key sea-front hotels and office buildings in an all-out effort to control the capital.

The seven-month-long series of clashes in Lebanon, originally provoked by U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the National Security Council to smash the pro-Soviet and pro-Iraqi Lebanese left, has reached its climax. Despite active sabotage by Palestine Liberation Organization boss Yasser Arafat and Syrian Intelligence-controlled Palestinian factions — who, in an effort to isolate the left, have sought to restrain Palestinian commandos from joining anti-fascist defense squads with leftist militia — the forces of the Communists and the Ba'ath have held out against the fascists and their government allies, and have gone on the offensive.

In response, according to a preplanned RAND Corporation counterinsurgency scheme, the CIA has drastically exacerbated sectarian divisions between semi-feudal Christian and Muslim communities in preparation for a forced partition of the country. Shaky CIA dictator Hafez Assad of Syria is prepared to intervene in Lebanon with brutal military force on Kissinger's orders — on the pretext of "defending" the largely Muslim left and the Palestinians. The radical-faker Assad, who has long-standing personal and ideological ties to the Lebanese and Syrian fascist movements, has since April been the chief coordinator, along with PLO agent Arafat, of the Lebanese civil war.

The explosion in Lebanon coincides with two other critical hot spots — Portugal and Angola — here NATO and the international gun-running and counterinsurgency apparatus run by the Rockefeller interests have provoked equally dangerous conflicts to crush the working class. This unprecedented extension of direct NATO operations into the developing sector is but an adjunct of the Rockefeller-ordered economic

warfare against the Soviet bloc and the Third World, led by Iraq and Algeria. The bloody carnage in Lebanon is the result of that policy, aimed at stopping the pro-development forces at all cost.

Proof that the Lebanon crisis is directly tied to the Portugal-Angola situation was furnished yesterday by the revelation that a CIA-linked airline, "United Air Industries," was ferrying tons of arms and ammunition from Lisbon to Beirut. According to a Reuters dispatch published in the London Financial Times Oct. 27, an unmarked Boeing 707 leased by United Air brought ten tons of 7.62 mm bullets for "standard NATO assault rifles" to Beirut just before the current outbreak of open civil war.

Lebanese Interior Minister Camille Chamoun — a Christian extremist and a supporter of the fascist Falangist party — admitted the shipments but added a cynical denial that the aircraft was "not carrying the arms on behalf of any faction" in the civil war.

Even the London Times, in an Oct. 27 editorial, ridiculed Chamoun's studied pose of neutrality, noting that the report of the arms being shipped to Beirut for the CIA-backed rightists "has a certain grim plausibility." The Times further mused that "if one were an international arms dealer" one would be now engaged in transferring presently unnecessary Lisbon arms stockpiles to "keep the Beirut market supplied."

The ICLC has already documented the extent of the Rockefeller-controlled CIA-NSC terror apparatus, including the conduiting of arms and explosives to foreign and domestic terrorists and anti-communist armies.

Communists, Ba'ath Vs. Falange, Syria

The heavy involvement of CIA, NATO, Israel, and Syria in lending support to the paramilitary Lebanese right is sparked by their fear of the powerful left and its growing ties to both workers' organizations and the Palestinian movement. Uniformly throughout the bourgeois press, the well-trained shock troops of Syria are being viewed as the only hope for halting the Communists and Ba'ath in Lebanon — before the class war spreads into Syria and topples Assad himself!

"In Western Europe we do not hear so much about the Lebanese Communist Party as we do about the Portuguese

CP," wrote a fearful London Times editor. "But it exists, and it is playing a hardly less important role, arguably with rather greater success."

While ruthlessly launching a powerful counterattack in response to continual Falangist-CIA provocations, the Ba'ath-CP forces have made tremendous efforts to restore calm whenever possible. But repeated ceasefire violations by the crazed Falangists have now sent the country to the brink, apparently beyond any hopes for a peaceful resolution.

According to yesterday's Washington Post, the Lebanese Communists are in virtual control of Sidon, a major southern port city, which is now virtually autonomous — like several other regions — of the central government. Popular committees are being set up to maintain essential services, schools are scheduled to reopen, and merchants are being watched for price gouging. The calm in Communist-run Sidon is in sharp contrast to demolished Beirut.

Syria Readies Intervention

In spite of strong counterpressure from the Lebanese left, Iraq, and the Soviet Union, the CIA-NATO plans for "Cypriotizing" Lebanon — much as Cyprus was crushed by a NATO-ordered Turkish invasion last summer — are already being implemented. The devastation of much of Lebanon has already sent hundreds of thousands of refugees streaming into Syria for protection, creating the necessary forced transfer of populations for establishing Christian and Muslim "zones." Such a scenario has been developed by the Pentagon-CIA think-tank, the RAND Corporation, which recently did a "scholarly" study of the sectarian balance in Lebanon, according to the Egyptian newspaper Rose al-Yousef.

Paralleling the population transfer, the government itself has begun to harden along sectarian lines, with the Syrian-backed CIA Prime Minister Rashid Karami seeking to rally Muslim nationalist support for his faction against the Christians, represented in the regime by Interior Minister Chamoun and pro-Falangist President Frangieh.

A statement in the Iraqi Ba'ath party daily newspaper Ath-Thawra today denounced the "attitudes expressed" at the meeting of 50 Arab progressive organizations in Damascus this week-

end, according to Prensa Latina, the Cuban news agency. The meeting, called by Assad, was designed to give Syria a mandate to intervene in Lebanon in supposed defense of the left. The Iraqi statement reiterated support for the unity and integrity of Lebanon, according to Prensa Latina.

Partly due to Iraqi pressure, the left has begun to awaken regarding the issue of Syrian treachery — especially

as they find themselves increasingly fighting both the Lebanese rightists and the commandos of Arafat's Fatah and Assad's Saiqa Palestiniana groups. Le Monde reported Sunday that Assad's intervention in Lebanon has "served to pacify, greatly deceiving certain formations of the left, who saw in the Syrian Ba'ath (Assad's breakaway faction — ed.) a natural and very active ally."

MPLA Counterattacks Multi-Front Invasion of NATO-CIA Forces

Oct. 29 (IPS) — The pro-socialist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) has turned back the northern invasion of CIA-backed Zairean and National Front (FNLA) troops into Angola. The MPLA is contending with a four-front NATO onslaught into Angola, as the Nov. 11 date for Angola's independence from Portugal nears.

The NATO forces, including Zairean and South African regular forces, are attempting to prevent the pro-Soviet MPLA, which has the support of most of Angola's population, from being recognized as the official Angolan government on Nov. 11. NATO, with no hope of overthrowing the MPLA, is attempting to exhaust the MPLA forces in a multi-front war and then envelop the country in an endless war of brigandage and destruction.

The success of this all-out effort to prevent an MPLA victory is seen by NATO planners as vital to the outcome of the related NATO destabilization operations underway in Portugal and Lebanon. The NATO invasion — operating under cover of a near total blackout in the western European and American press — was planned at the highest levels of the major NATO governments, and has the active support of Maoist China.

French President Giscard d'Estaing, Belgian Prime Minister Leo Tindemans, and State Department Africa expert Sheldon Vance — all top NATO leaders — visited Zaire during the late summer and fall for planning sessions.

According to well informed diplomatic sources, Giscard conferred directly with the FNLA politburo in Zaire, and has diverted arms ship-

ments originally destined for South Africa to the FNLA.

West German neo-Nazi and former Defense Minister Franz Josef Strauss coordinated the South African invasion plans and the Chinese aid to the FNLA. Strauss, who calls Angola "a strategic priority for NATO and the BRD," spent fully three weeks this summer in South Africa on a "private visit" and subsequently went to see his good friend Premier Chou En Lai in China.

Northern Invasion Repulsed

Despite the extent of NATO preparations, the MPLA has managed to contain and turn back the northern onslaught of the FNLA and the Zairean army.

Over the weekend, the MPLA drove the FNLA-Zairean forces from the town of Quifangando, north of the capital of Luanda and the location of Luanda's water reservoir. The MPLA is reportedly preparing a counteroffensive in that zone, according to a diplomatic source in Europe. The MPLA also repulsed FNLA attacks on the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda last week. Cabinda is controlled by the MPLA and separated from Angola proper by a small strip of Zaire.

Zairean troops which invaded the diamond-rich Lunda and Malanje provinces were also beaten back, according to the Portuguese daily *Diario de Noticias*, and MPLA forces are advancing on the so-called stronghold of the second-string NATO countergang UNITA in the central highlands city of Nova Lisboa.

Reports from both diplomatic and

press sources state that both Holden Roberto, head of the FNLA, and Jonas Savimbi, head of UNITA, are making moves toward suing the MPLA for peace.

Spinola, South Africans Invade South

The attack in southern Angola, by a South African mercenary force, which includes representatives from most NATO countries and is spearheaded by exiled Portuguese President Spinola's fascist Portuguese Liberation Army, represents the most serious danger. Styling itself the "unified armed forces," the heavily armed gang of thugs has seized the important southern crossroads town of Sa da Bandeira, with the aid of French-made South African armored cars and helicopters, according to West German press reports.

The MPLA responded to the onslaught on Oct. 23 with a call for a total mobilization of men and women aged 18 to 35. The call has received overwhelming support. Long lines of recruits formed at recruitment centers in Luanda early the next morning, according to the Portuguese daily *O Seculo*, and the MPLA has been able to marshal 30,000 troops in Luanda alone.

Those unable to fight are being deployed to boost up the economy, under the slogan "Production is Resistance." Moreover, 10,000 white Angolans rallied on Oct. 22 in Luanda to wish the NATO-run Azevedo government in Portugal "ill health and a speedy demise," according to *Diario de Noticias*, and affirmed their unconditional support for the MPLA.

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