

French Intervention On Behalf Of Carter Prepares U.S.-Soviet Showdown In Africa

President Valery Giscard d'Estaing's April 10 announcement of French military support for the rapidly crumbling regime of Zairean President Mobutu is an act on behalf of the Trilateral Commission — one which could place Africa in the center of a U.S.-Soviet thermonuclear showdown. The announcement has prompted a storm of protest in France and around the world, and this outrage is expected to grow as it becomes clear that Giscard's aim is to recreate for the U.S. the NATO-African coalition that unsuccessfully sought to crush the Angolan revolution during 1975.

The military buildup in Zaire was revealed by Giscard when he announced his unilateral decision to order a French military airlift to carry Moroccan troops and supplies to Zaire, ostensibly to put down a rebellion in Zaire's copper-rich southern province of Shaba. French planes are also bringing in trucks and artillery, while French and Belgian officers are trying to put some backbone into the collapsed Zaire army by bringing in mercenaries to provide the necessary secondary leadership to handle the more sophisticated heavy weapons. There is also a contingent of about 50 French pilots with a squadron of Mirage jets, operating from the Kolwezi airport, who are flying bombing missions against the insurgents, as well as across the border into Zambia.

There are now over 100 French military men in Zaire, according to Agence France Presse, and it is being reported that the French-led Moroccan troops are reconnoitering and deploying for battle around the southern Zaire town of Kowlezi, preparing to move

forward on the offensive in about a week. The Zaire government has already barred all foreign correspondents from the southern Zaire regions as this offensive is prepared. The French action caps a month-long Atlanticist press campaign to bill the Shaba rebellion as an incident of Soviet and Cuban intervention.

The immediate target of the French intervention — which bears an eerie resemblance to the beginning of the war in Vietnam — is the socialist government of Angola which won its independence after a long and bitter fight against U.S. and French forces and their allies in Zaire and South Africa. The current military preparations strongly suggest to a plan to drive the insurgents into Angola and then attack Angola itself, making the situation a point of Western confrontation with the Soviet Union.

The Angolan Politburo has recognized this potential and issued a statement April 12 through Politburo Secretary Lucio Lara: "The concentration of imperialists in Zaire is aimed at preparing an aggression against Angola and at preventing the development of the struggle for liberation in southern Africa.

The U.S.'s top ally in the area, South Africa, is giving flanking support to the Zaire-based drive on Angola. Three villages in southern Angola were the scene of fighting between government troops and rebels associated with the UNITA countergang, which is known to have South African links, according to the Washington Star April 13. The fighting is reported along the border with Namibia, which is under South African military occupation.

Declarations of Angolan involvement in Zaire "are psychological preparations for the realization of a military action with the aim of destroying the Angolan revolution and installing in the Popular Republic of Angola a neocolonial regime" — *Angolan Foreign Affairs Minister Almeida to the French Government April 12.*

Africa Divided

The French intervention has immediate implications for the stability of the rest of Africa. Africa has begun to polarize between "conservative" and "radical" states — a process that, unless halted, will irrevocably split the continent and aid the Carter regime in forcing Western Europe to back the Zairean adventures of Giscard and Moroccan King Hassan II. Limited support for the French role has already been expressed by Tunisia, Senegal, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Gabon, and Kenya. Some of these nations have reportedly granted overflight and landing rights to French aircraft ferrying men and war material to Zaire.

Right-wing Arab and African leaders, and certain states duped into cooperating with the Carter-NATO forces, have pledged their active support for fomenting a crisis in Zaire, despite Angolan protests to the

Organization of African Unity (OAU). Besides Morocco, which has committed troops to Zaire, both Egypt and Sudan are reportedly considering military assistance. President Numeiry of Sudan, whose foreign minister spent last week closeted with Carter aides in Washington, warned that "any danger to which Zaire is subjected will have direct effect on Sudan, its security, and its national unity." The Egyptian press quickly picked up the refrain, with the daily Al Akhbar commenting that "everything which threatens Sudan threatens Egypt also."

Concurrent with Numeiry's statement (which was very similar to anti-communist ranting from Egypt's President Anwar Sadat during his visit to Washington two weeks ago), Ethiopian radio reported April 12 that aggressors armed by Sudan and supported by Sudanese artillery have invaded Ethiopia. Ethiopian President Mengistu responded with a call for a national mobilization to counter "an aggression supported by foreign forces." Thus the crisis in Zaire, and the diplomatic pressure and blackmail aimed at weak African leaders, have already spread the danger of a regional explosion into the Horn of Africa, comprising Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya.

On April 13, Mirage jets from Zaire bombed villages in neighboring Zambia, triggering an official protest by the Zambian government to Zaire, and threatening an extension of the danger of fratricidal wars throughout Africa.

The bellwether state of Nigeria, which is so far officially uncommitted, will probably swing the balance. Should the Nigerians act quickly to denounce the French intervention as a U.S. plot to destroy Africa's potential to lead the fight for the new world economic order, then the entire OAU will most likely follow suit, as it did during the Angola war in 1975-76. But so far the Nigerians have only hedged; in fact, last month they helped set up Angola by agreeing to a request from Carter to "mediate" between Zaire and Angola — a hoax that only served to give credibility to NATO charges that Angola and its Cuban allies are behind the Zaire "invasion."

However, Nigerian External Affairs Minister Col. Joseph Garba indicated a possible alignment with Angola when he met with the German Democratic Republic's Vice President Horst Sindermann, on April 14. Garba reaffirmed after his meeting that Nigeria valued socialist solidarity highly, and practiced this principle especially with African liberation movements.

France vs. The EEC

The critical danger of the French adventure in Zaire is Giscard's preposterous claim that he is acting not only France alone, but "in defense of the West." In a television speech April 12, Giscard boasted that the French-Moroccan action was "a signal of security and a signal of solidarity to Europe's friends in Africa." Under tremendous pressure from the French left and other European countries, Giscard defensively claimed that he had "informed in advance" France's Common Market partners — but did not dare to claim European support the action. This controversy has been further fueled by revelations that the airlift had been planned in advance,

Former Green Beret Organizing U.S. Mercenary Operation

New Solidarity International Press Service has learned that Robin Moore, the author of *The Green Berets*, and himself a former Green Beret in the U.S. Special Forces, is now in New York for a meeting of the leaders of the U.S. mercenary networks to recruit for large-scale interventions into Africa. Moore, who has a long history in military intelligence and is now a colonel in the Rhodesian armed forces, reportedly told a confidante that Africa "is going to blow up." Col. Moore and his fellow conspirators were involved in recruiting mercenary forces for the war in Angola, for which several American and British prisoners were later executed by the Angolan government.

with "dry runs" and other preparations being made two weeks before the decision was announced — suggesting that the move was unilateral on the part of Giscard. The EEC foreign ministers are scheduled to meet on April 18 to discuss, among other matters, the crisis in Africa.

A statement from the Soviet news agency TASS made the EEC's choice extremely clear: either condemn the French-sponsored effort to ram Carter's foreign policy down the collective throat of Europe, or face the prospect of a U.S.-Soviet confrontation. The conflict in Zaire is "strictly internal," said TASS, denying U.S. charges of Soviet backing to the Zairean insurgents. "The leading circles of the Soviet Union deem it inadmissible for any external force to interfere in the internal struggle of Zaire."

The crucial European country in this regard, West Germany initially stalled on the question. The foreign ministry issued a carefully worded statement, saying: "We were informed and we fully understand the reasons for the intervention of the French. We will follow the developments in Africa very carefully." However, in what could be an important harbinger of future West German policy, that government sent a planeload of medical supplies to the Zaire government on April 14, an act important for its symbolic value.

TASS: Foreign Intervention In Zaire 'Inadmissible'

The following official statement by the Soviet news agency TASS was printed in all the Soviet dailies April 13:

For the last several weeks in Zaire, as is known, disturbances have been occurring: in the southern region of the country (the former province of Katanga) actions began against the authority of the central government. It

seemed that the situation was perfectly clear — that this was a purely internal conflict which should not concern anybody at all outside the country.

However right away hunters appeared, ready to interfere in these events. These hunters also exist in the West, in the Middle East, and the Far East. Several western countries, and also China, began shipping arms and military equipment to the central government of Zaire in no time flat. Morocco sent a contingent of its troops to Zaire. The racist regime of South Africa is also beginning to interfere in the events of this country. Recruitment of mercenaries to be sent to Zaire is going on in several western countries.

As is evident at first glance from these facts, various hands are now outstretched to Zaire, but all of them are motivated by one desire — to tie up the people of Zaire with their own affairs. These are the hands of those who would like to create a new international problem, to create yet another hotspot of dangerous tension in the world. Some people are obviously impatient to warm their hands at a fire, onto which they themselves are tossing the flammable material.

In an attempt to cover up their interference in the internal affairs of Zaire, the imperialist forces and their henchmen, for a start, put into circulation the mendacious story that there has been an invasion of Zaire by Angolan troops and Cuban soldiers. This lie did not last long. Today nobody even tries to deny that there is not a single Angolan, nor Cuban, among the rebels in the south of Zaire. And nevertheless the slanderous campaign continues, trying to cast a shadow over Angola, Cuba, and also the Soviet Union, which supposedly is behind the events in Zaire.

This is an old, worn-out device, like when the thief, to detract suspicion from himself, cries louder than everybody else: "Catch the thief!" However in politics this device does not promise success to those who resort to it. The people of Africa know how to differentiate genuine friends from foes especially from their enemies.

The Soviet Union decisively rejects as absurd any falsifications about its participation in the events in Zaire. Leadership circles of the Soviet Union at the same time consider inadmissible the interference of any

foreign forces in the internal struggle in Zaire. Each people itself — and only itself — can resolve its internal affairs. And let nobody nourish illusions that the people can be deprived of their inalienable right.

Giscard Claims French Intervention Was Made On Behalf Of Europe

The following are excerpts of French President Giscard's April 12 speech.

We wanted to give two signals... First, a signal of security. I do not want the African states, friends of France, when they are within their rights and their security is threatened, to feel abandoned. They will not be abandoned. As for the signal of solidarity, it is the fact of showing the tight solidarity which exists between Europe and Africa. Europe cannot be disinterested from what is happening on the African continent... And we wanted on this occasion to give a signal of solidarity between Europe and Africa.

First, a very important point: this is not an insurrection... These are elements which came from the outside and penetrated Zaireian territory... Infiltration took place in the south of the country, from a neighboring territory (i.e., Angola — NSIPS)... What is certain, according to observers on the spot, is that the elements which infiltrated Zaire were elements recently trained. They were not the gendarmes from Katanga coming back to their country after twelve years with their old weapons....

France has acted for its own account. And very often, in our national political debates, there is an (expressed) desire for France to have an independent policy. Here is one... I consider that the fact that the African problem was stressed in its importance by France in the name of Europe, and not by France outside of Europe, is in itself a sign of an independent and responsible policy.

The Anti-Mobutu Insurgency In Zaire

The revolt initiated in southern Zaire by the Congo National Liberation Front (FNLC) has spread rapidly to other areas of the country, leading to an accelerating collapse of Mobutu's one-man patrimonial system. The open acceptance of the insurgents by the population, and the spread of the anti-Mobutu revolt to other areas of the country have discredited initial attempts to portray the revolt as a mercenary-led secessionary movement that wanted to separate Shaba from the rest of Zaire.

The FNLC has gained control of one-third of Shaba province without doing any fighting. The rebels have been welcomed by the population, and entire units of the Zaire army have defected to their ranks. Mobutu did

attempt to send reinforcements to Shaba by train, but when it arrived half of the reinforcements had disappeared. Frantically shuffling his staff, Mobutu has removed Col. Eluki Monga Aundu from command in Shaba following the collapse of the Zaire army there, replacing him with Gen. Singa Boyenge. In addition, Mobutu has replaced his chief of staff Gen. Bumba with Major General Babia Zongbi.

While the FNLC has set up an administrative structure in Shaba, leading Mobutu to charge that they were bribing the population with food and clothing, leaflets calling for Mobutu's overthrow also began appearing in the capital, Kinshasa, and the region of Bas Zaire, 1,000 miles from Shaba.