

CHAPTER 18

The Collapse of the Portuguese Empire and the Arrival of the Cold War in Africa

With war raging in Vietnam, instability in the oil rich Middle East, and the Soviet Red Army threatening Western Europe even as the Nixon administration pursued détente with Moscow, Nixon and Kissinger viewed sub-Saharan Africa as a relative backwater with few strategic interests at stake. Concluding that black African liberation movements could not topple white regimes in the foreseeable future, they viewed white minority governments as guarantors of a regional stability that prevented major intervention from either superpower. The administration quietly supported autocratic Portugal, a NATO ally, as it fought to preserve Portuguese colonies in Africa—the last remaining European imperial possessions on the continent. They also quietly signaled to the apartheid state of South Africa that they, unlike their predecessors, would treat Pretoria as a regional partner rather than the international pariah it had become. The Pentagon shared the White House view that sub-Saharan Africa was not a region of major strategic importance. Neither superpower had invested many resources there in the early Cold War. They had kept their interventions covert and small. Washington aimed to keep it that way. All of this changed with the collapse of the Portuguese empire and the subsequent intervention of the Soviet Union and Cuba in Angola, which rapidly transformed Southern Africa from a Cold War afterthought to a main superpower battleground.¹

As the Cold War shifted to Africa in 1975, Defense Secretaries James Schlesinger and Donald Rumsfeld sought to minimize the Pentagon's involvement there. Following a long, painful extrication from Southeast Asia, Pentagon officials had no desire to embroil the American military in another costly quagmire in the developing world. They were happy to let Kissinger and the Central Intelligence Agency take the lead. That did not mean, however, that

the Office of the Secretary of Defense had no role in sub-Saharan Africa. Officials participated in the numerous interagency meetings that led to American intervention in Angola, and Deputy Defense Secretary William Clements proved a forceful advocate of the covert assistance program. The Defense Department assisted both with the evacuation of Portuguese refugees from Angola and with the shipment of munitions to anticommunist fighters there. Funding and the initiative for operations, however, came from other agencies. The Pentagon supported rather than led.

A Cold War Backwater

In Nixon's second term, the looming collapse of the Portuguese empire caused the administration to reevaluate the U.S. position in Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa had ranked near the bottom of U.S. strategic priorities during Nixon's first term, the president had rated the region as of "peripheral" importance. On April 25, 1974, the day revolution erupted in Lisbon, Nixon ordered a study of U.S. military assistance and arms policy toward "black Africa." The study revealed that American neglect toward Africa had long predated the Nixon administration. Between 1946 and 1973, the United States had provided 14 African countries with a paltry \$235 million in grants and \$58 million in sales credits. Washington's military aid to "black Africa" totaled a mere .4 percent of the \$62.1 billion of U.S. foreign military assistance doled out worldwide during the period. Ethiopia and Zaire received the bulk of U.S. aid. Ethiopia received 181.6 million, mostly to allow continued access to maintain its only major military installation in the region, the Kagnew Station. In 1964 Washington's aid to the Congo (later renamed Zaire) allowed Gen. Joseph Mobutu to crush a powerful insurgency that threatened to create a 'People's Republic of the Congo,' which helped propel him to the Congolese presidency. In 1967, in an effort to curtail

spending in an area of the world judged marginally strategic and to prevent presidents from starting a regional arms race, Congress had imposed an annual \$40 million ceiling on grants, credits, and credit guarantees for all Africa. Absent a presidential determination, it also prohibited using such funds for sophisticated equipment such as jet aircraft and missile systems.²

American restraint failed to stem the flow of weapons into the Africa. African governments simply looked elsewhere for their military hardware. From 1970 to 1973, sales agreements between African governments and external sources exceeded \$1 billion. In 1973 alone, arms purchases by black African nations totaled \$300 million, of which 85 percent came from France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union. In November 1974 an interdepartmental group defined the options for supplying arms, ranging from a phased disengagement from all such relationships to an unrestrictive approach, in which the United States unrestrainedly offered cash arms sales to support foreign policy objectives; The administration would follow a restrictive and selective course, in which Washington would consider arms supply on a country-by-country basis when justified by national security considerations and when accounting for the political, economic, and security situation of each instance . Even as it had become increasingly apparent that black independence movements could topple white regimes, neither Nixon nor Kissinger viewed sub-Saharan Africa as an area to commit substantial U.S. resources or prestige. Nor did they expect the Soviets to do so.³

The Carnation Revolution in Portugal and Fears about Eurocommunism

Upheaval in Portugal, a NATO ally, would bring the Cold War to Africa, but not immediately. The collapse of the Portuguese empire in Africa began on April 25, 1974, in a mostly bloodless coup that brought an end to *Estado Novo* (New State), the corporatist authoritarian regime that

had ruled Portugal since 1933. Through reckless mismanagement, the autocratic Prime Minister Antonio Salazar and his successor, Marcello Caetano, had brought ruin to the Portuguese economy, leaving the country the poorest in Europe. Long, costly, and unpopular colonial wars to preserve Portugal's hold over its imperial possessions in Africa—Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Cape Verde, and São Tomé and Príncipe—added to the nation's woes and gradually sapped the Portuguese military of the will to continue fighting. The most important Portuguese province was Angola, where fighting against colonial rule had begun in 1961. Inhabited by around 320,000 Portuguese out of a total population of approximately 6.4 million, the colony had offshore oil as well as iron and diamond deposits.⁴

The cost to Portugal of maintaining its empire in Africa, however, eventually far exceeded the gains. By the early 1970s the Portuguese spent a crushing 40 percent of the government's budget and 5 percent of the nation's GDP to maintain its colonies. The cost in manpower was equally severe. Lisbon conscripted one quarter of all Portuguese men of military age to fight in Africa. Eleven thousand would die there by 1973. Disillusionment spread throughout the officer corps, leading to the formation of the Armed Forces Movement (*Movimento das Forças Armadas*, or MFA), which would topple the Caetano government in the April 25, 1974 'Carnation Revolution,' as people took to the streets and waved red carnations in support. General Antonio Spínola, Portugal's most decorated war hero and the junta's leader, led a new government that sought to end the wars in Africa and relinquish Lisbon's colonial possessions by allowing African self-determination, even if it meant surrendering the colonies to those indigenous groups that had been fighting the Portuguese. More ominously for policymakers in Washington, the MFA allowed exiled communist and socialist party members to return to Portugal.⁵

Throughout 1973 and the upheavals that engulfed Lisbon in 1974, Pentagon officials were far less concerned about the collapse of the Portuguese empire in Africa than they were about the potential for Lisbon to swing toward communism. A communist government might threaten the American hold on Lajes airbase in the Azores, which had proven vital for the airlift during and after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, when other allies had refused assistance. Although only a small number of reservists in the MFA were active leftists, they were highly disciplined. The faction grew and ousted President Spínola in September when he tried to curb its influence. By enrolling enlisted men, the MFA expanded to as many as 2,000. Although leftists remained a minority, their control of key MFA positions gave them power far beyond what their numbers suggested. Washington feared Col. Vasco Gonçalves, the prime minister, was a communist in all but name.⁶

In the event of a communist coup, Schlesinger assured Kissinger that the Pentagon was prepared to take dramatic action to secure the Lajes airfield in the Azores. The Pentagon viewed it as Portugal's most critical contribution to U.S. defense interests. At their breakfast meeting on October 7, 1974, Kissinger told Schlesinger he thought Portugal would go communist. If that happened, the defense secretary concluded, the United States must seize control of Lajes. Schlesinger thought the American Jewish community would support such a dramatic step because the airfield had been a vital link in the U.S. airlift to supply Israel during the 1973 conflict (see chapters 9 and 10). In mid-November, Schlesinger instructed JCS Chairman Brown to "keep cool" for now and not proceed with contingency planning. Late in January 1975, however, as Portuguese communists appeared likely to threaten the American hold on Lajes, the defense secretary told Kissinger that they must begin planning. On February 7 Schlesinger proposed bringing the matter before Ford. Kissinger demurred. He preferred to work through

NATO. Schlesinger then directed the JCS to send Portuguese-speaking officers to the Azores, where they would learn about the political movements seeking autonomy from the mainland. The Portuguese government, Schlesinger predicted, would come to resemble Col. Muammar al-Qaddafi's domination of political authority in Libya rather than an outright communist takeover. Such a regime would be unpredictable and could be dangerous, but it would not necessarily align with the Eastern Bloc.⁷

After the failure of a rightist coup on March 11, 1975, however, the threat of a communist takeover in Portugal appeared more genuine. Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Vice Adm. Vincent de Poix, warned Deputy Secretary Clements that parties of the center and right had been neutralized or outlawed. Thus, the director concluded that the chances were "pretty great that we will see an actual Communist regime in power in Portugal by mid-year." Kissinger worried that the regime would pursue "a more moderate course" that would set a precedent for the French and Italian communists to join their respective governments. To prevent this, he urged, "We must force them out of NATO." The administration pressed European socialist leaders to use their influence with Portuguese moderates to keep communists out of positions of power in the new government.⁸

Schlesinger shared Kissinger's fear that Portugal might soon fall to the communists. In a May 1975 conversation, U.S. Ambassador to Portugal Frank C. Carlucci told Schlesinger that the MFA was "essentially left-wing socialist, not Communist." He said that Costa Gomez, Portugal's president and armed forces chief, was a conciliator and friendly to the United States. Carlucci failed to reassure Schlesinger, who compared Portugal to Czechoslovakia in 1948, just before the communist takeover. In Washington, Carlucci responded, could rebuild moderate forces in Portugal by not being "overly enthusiastic about Portuguese developments," but instead

supporting “the Portuguese ruler’s statement that they intend to return to democratic processes as soon as possible.” Partly persuaded, the defense secretary agreed and said they should remain skeptically vigilant while mostly letting the West Europeans handle the new government in Lisbon. He accepted Carlucci’s recommendation to let the West Germans take the lead.⁹

Schlesinger was more concerned about the base’s immediate safety than securing a new long-term agreement with the new government. Prime Minister Goncalves had announced that, if another Arab-Israeli war erupted, U.S. aircraft could not refuel at Lajes. The defense secretary told Carlucci the airfield was “not indispensable” but should be retained mainly to deny that base to the Soviets. Since Americans contributed \$10 million annually to the Azores economy, Carlucci thought they had leverage to negotiate a suitable new agreement. Schlesinger did not see the need. Since Washington and Lisbon still respected the old agreement, even after it had formally expired in February 1974 and renewal negotiations were suspended, he thought it “probably best to just let the situation continue indefinitely as it is.” Schlesinger remained ready to protect the base with dramatic action if necessary. According to his military assistant’s notes, Schlesinger told the JCS chairman at a June 3 meeting: “If Portuguese forces fail to protect the base, they are in violation of [the] agreement. We could say security [is] inadequate and take over.”¹⁰

The administration’s subsequent efforts to encourage European allies to handle the Portugal situation yielded results that failed to fully alleviate U.S. concerns about a potential communist takeover. On July 7, 1975, while visiting Western Europe, Clements discussed the Portuguese situation with NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns, described as “a man of great stature, both literally and figuratively” in the deputy secretary’s briefing papers. Clements pressed Luns to do more to help Washington manage the new government in Portugal. Luns said

he had been “taking negative action” toward Portugal. Belgian intelligence had indicated that Belgium was “swarming with Portuguese spies,” and the secretary general had moved to restrict Portuguese access to nuclear information. When Clements questioned why the alliance could not do more to “help the Portuguese”—presumably the anticommunists—the secretary general asked: “Who would you help?” They could not know, Luns continued, whether to help the government or the political parties, and any help would have to be given covertly to avoid the appearance of interfering in the domestic politics of a NATO nation. Clements had a more productive discussion with West German Defense Minister Georg Leber, who indicated that he would make “personal efforts ... because if Portugal went Communist it would influence Spain, and Italy would go as well if we were not very careful.” Leber recounted his recent conversation with Portuguese Adm. António Alva Rosa Coutinho, who was confident his country would opt for the West but cautioned it was “hard to hold out with the treatment Portugal is currently receiving from the West.” Washington, Leber reminded Clements, had asked the German government to make overtures and Germany had done so. “You were the appropriate channel,” Clements replied.¹¹

In mid-June 1975, Vice Admiral De Poix relayed the growing concerns of the U.S. Military Representative to NATO and European officials that Lisbon would leak classified documents to the East. That raised the “dilemma” of protecting information without undermining anticommunist Portuguese. Clements, however, rejected the De Poix’s recommendation to place the issue on the NSC agenda. The Cyprus crisis had already strained relations with Greece and Turkey to the breaking point, and efforts to ostracize Portugal, Clements reasoned, “would cause discomfort for certain members of the Alliance.” Also, restricting access to information ran “the substantial risk of provoking unfavorable reaction in Lisbon.”¹²

In hindsight, Washington's concerns about Portugal seem excessive. Vasco Goncalves lost power in September 1975. Two months later a failed coup further discredited the Portuguese left. When the Defense Planning Committee met in December, Leber told Rumsfeld, who had succeeded Schlesinger as defense secretary the previous month, that he had visited Portugal five weeks earlier and that "he had tried to make clear to the Portuguese the implications of their choice between East and West." By choosing the West, they would find "opportunities for assistance, both commercial and public." Thus, Leber argued persuasively, the Portuguese government deserved and needed extensive support.¹³

Rumsfeld seized the opening provided by Leber and convinced Ford that the carrot of assistance would prove more effective than pressure for keeping Lisbon firmly oriented toward the West. In April 1976 OSD and the State Department approved a JCS-proposed plan for modernizing Portugal's armed forces. Washington would help with creating an infantry brigade, partially air transportable, designed primarily as a reserve for NATO's Southern Region. Ambassador Carlucci and Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Alexander Haig, urged an immediate loan of 5 M-48A5 tanks and 20 M-113A1 armored personnel carriers, and, on May 26, OSD directed the Army to ensure delivery within 30 days. Concurrently, Portuguese elections brought moderate socialists to power, which greatly lessened the administration's concerns about the threat of a communist takeover. Ford approved an OSD proposal to ask Congress for \$33 million to provide three C-130 transports. By the year's end, Lisbon committed to a NATO plan to completely reorganize the country's military establishment to revitalize Portugal's role in NATO. The most acute danger from "Eurocommunism" had evaporated.¹⁴

The Collapse of the Portuguese Empire in Africa

The collapse of the Caetano regime in Portugal proved far more consequential to U.S. policy in Africa than in Europe. Policymakers in the Ford administration, however, were slow to recognize it. Kissinger, the predominant force in national security policy in the early Ford administration, focused on sub-Saharan Africa in late 1975, just as concerns about Portugal were beginning to ebb. Unofficial cease-fires and moves toward independence had followed Portugal's Carnation Revolution. In Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, where liberation groups were unified, the transitions to nationhood proceeded fairly smoothly. Resistance against Portuguese rule in Angola, however, was fragmented into three groups (the FNLA, UNITA, and the MPLA) based more around tribal identification than political platform and Angolan independence was far messier, though this would not be immediately apparent to policymakers in Washington. In the 1950s the Salazar regime had eradicated many opposition figures or groups that might have coalesced into robust political organizations. White Portuguese dominated the professional class in colonial Angola and had done little to educate the indigenous population. Just 1–5 percent of the Angolan population was literate. Such factors caused Pentagon officials in the late 1960s to conclude that the insurgents, even if united, could not win their independence.¹⁵

Fighters from the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola*, or FNLA) came entirely from the Bakongo ethnic group in northern Angola, but their poorly educated leadership failed to provide them with coherent political goals. The group was led by Holden Roberto, who depended heavily on support and protection from President Mobutu, the kleptocratic dictator of Zaire and a relative through marriage. With grandiose regional ambitions, Mobutu hoped to use the FNLA to expand his influence in Angola,

which shared Zaire's southern border. Roberto directed FNLA operations from the safety of Zaire both before independence and during much of the subsequent Angolan civil war, which did little to enhance his reputation in Angola or with Schlesinger. In September 1974, at Mobutu's urging, the United States increased a small subsidy it had been providing to Roberto.¹⁶

Jonas Savimbi, once a top lieutenant of Roberto, had broken with the FNLA in 1964 to form the National Movement for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the smallest of the three opposition groups. Considered a charismatic pragmatist by the few U.S. intelligence officials and policymakers who knew of his existence, the Swiss-educated Savimbi sought to separate himself from his rivals by boasting that he alone had remained in the bush with his troops through the most difficult days of resistance to the Portuguese. He failed to mention, however, that he owed his survival to his frequent collaboration with the Portuguese against the MPLA and FNLA. Like the FNLA, UNITA lacked a clear political ideology. Although Savimbi controlled a small force—likely less than 1,000 fighters in 1974—UNITA's close connection to the Ovimbundu, the largest ethnic group in Angola, gave it great potential.¹⁷

Born in 1922, Agostinho Neto, a Marxist intellectual, poet, and medical doctor, led the Popular Front for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the only group with a clear political ideology. Although the CIA considered Neto a psychotic drunkard, his abilities, along with his endurance of Portuguese maltreatment, had earned him the respect of his movement's adherents. His opposition to Portuguese rule had led to frequent arrests in the 1950s. In 1960 Portuguese officials flogged him in front of his family before jailing him. Although the MPLA espoused anti-imperialism and a Marxist emphasis on class identity rather than ethnicity, its membership came mostly from the Mbunda tribe of central Angola. Its message failed to spread, however, much beyond urban areas or the Kimbundu area east of Luanda.¹⁸

Responding to pressure from the Organization of African Unity, Roberto, Neto, and Savimbi met in Mombasa, Kenya in early January 1975 and agreed to cooperate and accept Portuguese diplomatic overtures. The resulting negotiations between the Portuguese and the three factions produced the Alvor Agreement signed on January 15, under which a Portuguese high commissioner would govern the country and work with a transitional government led by a presidential council, with one representative from each of the independence organizations. The Portuguese planned for national elections to take place on October 31, 1975, to elect a constituent assembly that would select an Angolan president and determine the nation's political future. Any hopes that the accord might allow for a peaceful transition soon crumbled, however. Neither superpower had much interest in coordinating closely with Portugal or operating through the United Nations to promote a peaceful transition. Instead, officials in Moscow and Washington both viewed opportunities and potential dangers through cold war lenses. Neither the Soviets nor the Americans saw Angola as intrinsically strategically vital. For Schlesinger, the country, like all of sub-Saharan Africa, barely registered as a concern. The defense secretary was far more concerned with the strategic balance between the Soviet Union and the United States. The Soviets had provided small amounts of aid in the 1960s and early 1970s, but cut off aid in 1972, when the MPLA had fractured and faced destruction at the hands of the Portuguese. The Kremlin had been suspicious of Neto, questioning whether he and his group were more pro-Chinese than pro-Soviet.¹⁹

The collapse of the Caetano regime, however, caused Soviet leaders to reassess the situation in Angola. They sought to reunify the MPLA by throwing their support behind Neto, and, in December 1974, developed plans to supply through Congo (Brazzaville) the Marxist fighters with weapons and ammunition. After the signing of the Alvor Agreement, the Soviets

aimed to give the MPLA a position of strength within the provisional government.²⁰ In March, Soviet weapon shipments for the MPLA arrived and clashes with the FNLA began. For the Soviets, it was the unexpected Cuban intervention that caused them to massively increase their aid program to install a communist government in Luanda.²¹

When Zambian President Kenneth Kuanda visited the United States on April 19, 1975, and warned Ford and Kissinger that the Soviets were intervening in Angola, he found a receptive audience. The president and secretary of state were then under withering fire from critics of détente, both within and outside the administration. Their fear that the Soviets would install a Marxist regime far from their borders, leaving the Americans appearing powerless, focused on sub-Saharan Africa. On May 26, 1975, at Kissinger's urging, Ford called for an analysis of U.S. objectives and options in Angola. By mid-June, when the NSC interdepartmental group for Africa circulated its response, Soviet shipments of arms and equipment had increased dramatically. The MPLA had driven the FNLA from areas north and east of the capital, Luanda, and moved into the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda. The NSC subgroup opted for a course of action to ensure the continued viability of the FNLA and UNITA, "with a view to preventing the MPLA from gaining power." Pentagon officials who contributed to the response, however, doubted that Washington had sufficient leverage to achieve a diplomatic solution and were unconvinced of the chosen course of action unless the CIA could sufficiently strengthen anticommunist forces in Angola to defeat the MPLA.²²

Schlesinger, who had been CIA director before his swearing in as defense secretary, doubted the agency could achieve an FNLA victory. When the NSC reviewed the options on June 27, Kissinger warned that if Neto gained control of Luanda, he would gradually receive support from other African governments. DCI William Colby discerned "great value in aiding

Roberto through Mobutu.” Somewhat callously, Schlesinger suggested: “We might wish to encourage the disintegration of Angola. Cabinda in the clutches of Mobutu would mean far greater security of the petroleum resources.” The defense secretary was skeptical about Kissinger and Colby’s advocacy for Roberto: “[I]f we do something, we must have some confidence that we can win, or we should stay neutral. Roberto is not a strong horse. The fact that he stays in the Congo [Zaire] suggests he doesn’t have the tenacity to win.” Ford brushed off the comments from his defense secretary. By summer 1975, he had developed deep misgivings about Schlesinger, based on their lack of personal chemistry and their many policy differences. “It seems to me that doing nothing is unacceptable,” Ford told the group. In an open breach with his boss, Clements sided with Ford, Kissinger, and Colby. He wanted to keep Roberto and Savimbi viable: “Give Mobutu some help and let him channel it” to Roberto and Savimbi. On the losing side of the disagreement with his deputy, Schlesinger doubted the efficacy of sending weapons to the FNLA, as they lacked the discipline to use them. He stressed the importance coordinating with Zaire to strengthen the FNLA’s discipline, but questioned whether Washington could convince Savimbi and Roberto to work together. He failed to persuade Ford. Kissinger would use the disagreement in DoD leadership to press forward his plan for Angola.²³

Ford’s acceptance of a divided OSD leadership merits some attention. Ford had tolerated an open disagreement between Schlesinger and Clements because he had a far better personal rapport with the latter than the former. He had grown tired of Schlesinger’s undisguised condescension toward him and considered him personally dishonest. He wrote in his memoir that Schlesinger’s “aloof, frequently arrogant manner put me off. I never could be sure he was leveling with me. I decided to sever my relationship with him at the earliest opportunity.” He later told OSD historians he had known Clements when they both were in Congress and knew

that Schlesinger and Clements did not get along. “That was an understatement,” Ford remembered. He added that Clements “was a good day-to-day administrator. You always knew where he stood.” In obvious contrast to his attitude toward Schlesinger, Ford recalled, “There was nothing devious about Bill Clements. I liked to work with him, because if you differed with him and your opinion prevailed, he would carry out the orders precisely. He was a good team player.”²⁴

Clements viewed his own role as more of a co-secretary of defense rather than as Schlesinger’s lieutenant, and his relationship with Schlesinger had soured considerably by mid-1975. In an oral history, Clements warned OSD historians not to trust Schlesinger’s recollection of events during his tenure: “Schlesinger is a snake.” He viewed his own authority as deputy as “unique,” as it stemmed directly from the president and not from the defense secretary. He said that he “probably could have blocked” Schlesinger’s confirmation, if he had wanted, through his connections with the Senate Armed Services Committee. He explained that while he had the deputy’s traditional authority over management, his power was far broader. According to him, “Intelligence, until Bob Ellsworth came over there, was 100 percent mine.” Not surprisingly, Clements rather than Schlesinger mostly managed the Pentagon’s role in the Angola covert action program. Had he wanted to be heavily involved with the Angolan program, Schlesinger might have pressed his views more aggressively. The lack of substantial discussion about sub-Saharan African matters in the notes of Schlesinger’s military assistants and the absence of defense secretary markings on documents related to the region, however, indicate a general lack of attention to the subject. He devoted far more time and attention to matters related to the superpower strategic balance, the military balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and the Defense budget. In Clements view, the defense secretary was obsessed with these matters.

Schlesinger, he thought, failed to recognize that real power came not from the development of doctrine within the OSD, but from influencing the White House. In 1975 that meant the impossible task of battling Henry Kissinger for Gerald Ford's favor.²⁵

Pleased to exploit the leadership schism at OSD, Kissinger found Clements to be his staunchest supporter at the July 14 meeting of the interagency approval group, known as the 40 Committee, when the members debated whether to commit to covert action to ensure that the Soviet-backed MPLA did not gain control in Angola. Neto's MPLA had just driven Roberto's FNLA out of Luanda. Kissinger was frustrated that his own department and many on his NSC staff opposed covert action to reverse the situation. He had rejected Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Nathaniel Davis's request to be part of the group, though he, at the beginning of the meeting, feigned not knowing that Davis had been excluded. Davis had infuriated Kissinger by recommending that Washington exert only diplomatic pressure to achieve a peaceful solution in Angola. Kissinger fumed at the State Department's pacifism: "I don't want our people giving Africans any lectures on non-violence, on love and brotherhood—lectures which to them will be nonsensical, which will sound insane to them."²⁶

Kissinger wanted to aid the anticommunist insurgents, and quickly. Colby recommended operating through Mobutu. Rather than wait for weeks or even months to transport arms directly from the United States to Angolan fighters and accept the many attendant political risks, Washington would rely on the Zairean president, who could speedily supply anticommunist forces with weapons, as long as Washington promised to resupply him. "If Mobutu is willing to help," Clements told the group, "I am in complete accord." Colby recommended promptly providing the FNLA and UNITA with U.S. dollars. They could then use this money to purchase small arms from Mobutu. By supplying dollars and not weapons, he thought they could keep

“keep Congress off our backs.” With his agency then under investigation by the Church Committee, the CIA director confessed that he was “scared of Congress on this.” Kissinger retorted: “I am scared of losing.” The secretary of state feared that by not supporting Mobutu, Zaire might tilt toward the Eastern Bloc. Even more important to Kissinger, however, were the larger cold war implications of an MLPA triumph. If, following defeat in Vietnam, Moscow successfully installed a communist government in distant Angola, the United States would appear weak throughout the region. Coming to Kissinger’s aid, Clements sought to assuage Colby’s fears of Congress: “If we give money then they can buy arms and we won’t have to send any. We can help [Mobutu] a bit.” In essence, the CIA would provide anticommunist fighters with money that they would use to buy weapons from Zaire. Washington would then give Mobutu money, which he could use to replace the arms that he had sold to the FNLA and UNITA. Kissinger thought such a clever scheme deserved to be replicated elsewhere. Arms could also be supplied from Zambia. Anticipating Ford’s wishes, he ordered Colby: “Tell [President Kenneth] Kaunda that if he cooperates he will get money. I am sure the President will approve.”²⁷

Kissinger’s State Department subordinates remained unconvinced. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Joseph Sisco told him: “I do not think our interests in Angola are significant enough to warrant covert action.” Incredulous, Kissinger asked whether he thought it acceptable to allow Angola to fall to the communists. “Yes,” Sisco responded. Not allowing ignorance to inhibit boldness, Clements interjected:

I don’t believe we should walk away from this. I don’t have the long-term background that the rest of you do, but I’ve visited this area and we can’t let the Communist just do what they want. We have Mobutu there, and we should try to help him implement his policy. Let’s get

going. If we can depend upon him with a degree of reasonable expectation, then by God we should help him do it.” The deputy defense secretary understood that Mobutu was not an ideal leader, but, he asked, “What would you get in his place?” He answered his own question: “Probably something worse.” Kissinger added that larger stakes were involved: “If all the surrounding countries see Angola go Communist, they will assume that the U.S. has no will.”²⁸

Four days later, Ford told Kissinger he would approve a covert program to assist anticommunist forces in Angola. Delighted, Kissinger told the president that Nat Davis would resign and “I’ll clean out the [African] bureau” of the State Department. Ford approved. “If we do nothing,” he said, “we will lose Southern Africa.... I won’t let someone in Foggy Bottom deter me.” Ford believed he would be able to defend the program to the public if knowledge about it leaked. Kissinger told the president that he thought as long as Washington did not publicly scold the Kremlin, the Soviets “will keep their heads down,” lest they imperil détente. The 40 Committee was informed about the president’s decision on July 21. The CIA would begin to pour weaponry into the hands of FNLA and UNITA forces in Angola. Many of the rifles shipped would be obsolete semi-automatics from World War II, to hide their U.S. origin, while the MPLA received modern fully automatic AK-47 rifles. According to John Stockwell, the former chief of the CIA Angola Task, the CIA paid the U.S. Navy \$500,000 for the use of the U.S. Navy transport vessel *American Champion* to ship weapons from Charleston, South Carolina, to Zaire and would pay the U.S. Air Force \$80,000 per flight for C-141s to deliver munitions to Kinshasa. Schlesinger, however, adamantly refused the CIA the permission to use U.S. aircraft to transport weapons directly into Angola.²⁹

Angola’s escalating civil war soon attracted many other outside participants who intervened for their own reasons. The Portuguese empire had long served as a firewall for South

Africa against the many powers hostile to it. Lisbon had allowed intelligence on the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), a Namibian liberation political movement that used guerrilla tactics to fight against South African occupation—an occupation which had been declared illegal by the International Court of Justice and the United Nations in 1971—to be shared with Pretoria and even allowed South African search-and-destroy squads to cross Portuguese colonial borders to eliminate the fighters. The collapse of the Portuguese empire in Africa threatened the apartheid government of South Africa, as the SWAPO might gain safe havens and revolution might spread southward. A white European minority—the Afrikaners—made up just 13 percent of the South African population, but, through the National Party, had dominated the nation's government and economy since 1948. Although it had become the most powerful sub-Saharan state, Pretoria's segregationist policies had caused it to become an international pariah by the mid-1970s. Black African governments condemned the apartheid state, and the Congressional Black Caucus and American civil rights leaders denounced any cooperation with it. South African leaders feared that an MPLA victory in Angola could result in a rise of insurgencies against white minority rule in Namibia, Rhodesia, and, eventually, their own country. They thus had strong motivation for intervening, and the Ford administration was not discouraging them beforehand. After the intervention the administration quietly acted to signal to Pretoria support for the continued presence of South African forces in Angola.³⁰

The available evidence suggests that South Africa intervened without a formal request by the United States government to do so, although former officials and scholars have indicated that the South Africans might have received informal encouragement. The documentary record, however, is slim. Kissinger and Colby both, rather self-servingly, denied any collaboration with South Africa in their memoirs and argue that it would have been counterproductive.³¹

Although the extent of Kissinger's or the CIA's cooperation with Pretoria remains unclear, the available evidence indicates that there was no formal collaboration between OSD and the South African Defense Force (SADF). Given Schlesinger's wariness about committing U.S. military assets to Angola directly, it seems highly improbable that he would have permitted such contact. At a February 1976 Senate hearing, Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Ellsworth denied any collaboration between the DoD and the SADF: "We have not altered our basic policies toward South Africa to cooperate in any way with the South African military as the result of that country's involvement in Angola."³² An August 3, 1976, Defense Intelligence Agency analysis of the South African military's intervention in Angola indicated the Pentagon's speculative uncertainty:

Exactly how South Africa became involved in Angola will probably never be known, but unbridled adventurism by the military may be part of the explanation. Certainly South African intervention had the sanction of the government, but clandestine contact with pro-Western forces may have planted the seeds.³³

Nevertheless, OSD had done little to dissuade Pretoria from viewing Washington as a strategic partner. Pentagon officials had, in fact, urged greater cooperation with South Africa before and during the crisis in Angola. Even before the October War and the Arab oil embargo in 1973 had exposed Western vulnerabilities concerning oil, JCS Chairman Admiral Moorer predicted to the Senior Review Group that "there would be a supertanker every fifty miles between the Persian Gulf and Western Europe and the U.S. by 1980. This gives the Russians a great opportunity to cut the jugular vein of all of NATO." Thus any closure of the Suez Canal would render the sea route around the Cape of Good Hope critical, thereby significantly increasing South Africa's strategic importance. Meeting with Moorer on May 8, 1974, South Africa's chief of Defense Staff, H. H. Bierman, offered the use of his country's ports and

airfields for sea control purposes. In return, he asked whether the United States could provide sea control equipment. Moorer was sympathetic but noncommittal. These matters rested until August 1975 as Washington and Pretoria both began ramping up covert aid in Angola. The acting chief of South Africa's Defense Staff, R. F. Armstrong, approached Chief of Naval Operations Admiral James Holloway to ask for assistance in designing and constructing a maritime command and control system. The U.S. government, he argued, need only to assure the issuance of export licenses for technical and material support. Ellsworth, then assistant secretary for international security affairs, supported Holloway's recommendation to provide strictly "facilitative" support, leaving all studies, equipment, and advice to be procured commercially. Ellsworth and Holloway believed that such a program, marginally valuable in peacetime, could have "considerable strategic import in crisis or war situations." On September 9 Clements asked the White House to agree in principle. The State Department opposed any cooperation as directly violating U.S. and UN policy, but President Ford decided to move ahead "on a very low key basis." Pentagon officials, many of whom knew about the covert program, had demonstrated a willingness to cooperate, albeit cautiously and highly restrictively, with South African president John Vorster's apartheid government while the United States and South Africa were both covertly assisting the FNLA and UNITA.³⁴

The end of Portuguese control in Africa offered Cuban communist dictator Fidel Castro an irresistible opportunity to enhance his stature within the communist world. One-third of Cubans were of African descent, which the Cuban communists reasoned, positioned them well to oppose colonialism and spread revolution in a part of the world where the Americans would least expect them to try. Cuba had sought since the mid-1960s to act as a communist vanguard of decolonization in Africa. The Cuban dictator calculated that he could risk a large-scale

intervention in Angola, because after Vietnam and Watergate, Washington would not send military forces to stop him.³⁵

No top official in the Ford administration or the Pentagon viewed Cuba as a potential major player in Angola until U.S. intelligence reported the presence of Cuban combat troops in Angola in November 1975.³⁶ Havana's past interventions in Africa had been significant but involved relatively few Cubans. Castro had sent fewer than 2,000 soldiers to Africa between 1961 and 1973. The Cubans might make trouble on the continent, but Washington did not seriously consider the possibility that they would or could deploy a large expeditionary force so far from Latin America. Between October 1975 and April 1976, however, Castro ordered approximately 30,000 Cuban soldiers into Angola, where they tipped the balance of the conflict decisively in the MPLA's favor.³⁷

As Soviet, South African, and U.S. covert aid began to further destabilize Angola, the Pentagon assisted with a humanitarian effort to help the nearly 300,000 white Portuguese flee what they feared could be a bloodbath following the end of colonial rule in November 1975. On August 20, 1975, U.S. Ambassador to Portugal Frank Carlucci promised the Portuguese president, Costa Gomes, that the United States would provide any assistance required to ensure refugees' safe evacuation of from Angola to Portugal. One week later, the Portuguese president wrote to Ford, requesting U.S. humanitarian assistance. Ford agreed to assist and tasked the State Department with directing and funding the operation. Military Airlift Command organized, with Clements oversight, the contracting of two commercial stretch DC-8 (one from World Airways and the other from Trans International Airways) after receiving an official request from the State Department along with the necessary funds. Each aircraft carried 254 passengers, which allowed over five hundred refugees to evacuate per day. In October, Kissinger doubled the aircraft

involved to increase the number of daily evacuees to between 1100 and 1200. By the time the last U.S. plane departed from Luanda on the night of November 3, with the U.S. consul and all remaining American personnel from Angola on board, a total of 31,597 refugees had been evacuated by U.S. commercial aircraft in 117 missions since September 7 at the cost of \$7.5 million. Other refugees had been evacuated by Portuguese civilian and commercial aircraft as well as those provided to Lisbon by the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, Belgium, West Germany, East Germany, and France. Aircraft contracted by the United States, however, successfully transported 68 percent of all of the refugees that had been evacuated on aircraft donated to Portugal by foreign governments. By the time of Angola's independence in November, most Portuguese colonists had returned to Europe. Their rapid departure had left Angola mostly bereft of a professional class as the nation descended into chaos.³⁸

The Collapse of Kissinger's Plan

Although small numbers of South African troops had crossed into Angola in August and September 1975 to arm and train FNLA forces, Pretoria's major intervention did not come until October 14, when the South African-led "Zulu" column, invaded from Namibia. This "Operation Savannah" had the objective of eradicating the MPLA militarily and swiftly capturing the Angolan capital. It had been approved by Prime Minister Vorster in late September. Over one hundred South African Defense Force soldiers led a force of around one thousand black Angolans in the "Zulu" column. The invaders drove rapidly into southern Angola, advancing between forty and fifty miles daily. The South African-led force easily defeated the poorly trained and equipped People's Armed Forces of Liberation of Angola (FAPLA) fighters stationed in the south. By early November, after being reinforced with armored cars and many

more South African soldiers, Zulu had pushed its way northward to the outskirts of Luanda. Meanwhile, from the northeast, Holden Roberto's FNLA moved toward the capital. From the northwest, Mobutu's soldiers along with mercenaries and Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) guerrillas, stormed across the Zairean border on November 8 to seize the oil rich Angolan province of Cabinda. On the eve of independence, Neto's movement was in imminent danger of being surrounded and crushed. Had Kissinger been truly behind the entire endeavor, as some scholars have suspected, he came extremely close to delivering a coup de grace to the MPLA. Just as Neto's fortunes seemed doomed and Kissinger's primary objective accomplished, the anticommunist forces encountered stiff resistance from Cuban forces.³⁹

Cuban leader Fidel Castro had surmised correctly that without immediate assistance, the MPLA would fall. Without first consulting Moscow, he ordered in the early hours of November 4 for an elite Cuban Special Forces unit to fly to Angola to defend the imperiled revolution there. The previous month, Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada, Cuban ambassador to the United Nations, declared: "In the face of the scandalous interference of imperialists, colonialists and racists (in Angola), it is an elementary duty (for Cuba) to offer its (the Angolan) people the effective assistance that may be required for that country to ensure its true independence and full sovereignty." Havana's Operation Carlota had thus begun. Castro informed Cuban Special Forces before they departed that he was sending them to stop the South Africans from seizing the Angolan capital. A turboprop Britannia aircraft carried 100 Cuban heavy weapons specialists to Luanda. With two refueling stops—one in Barbados and another in Bissau—the antiquated aircraft took two days to lumber to Luanda. Many more Cuban soldiers would follow.⁴⁰

The Cubans arrived just in time to help the MPLA to defend Quifangondo, a village approximately 20 kilometers northeast of Angola surrounded by marshland and accessible from

the northeast by just one bridge across the Bengo River. On November 10, ignoring the advice of Portuguese military experts, Roberto imprudently ordered his men to march directly to Luanda in hopes of entering the capital and ousting the MPLA before the Portuguese surrendered sovereignty the following day. The Cuban mortar and rocket barrage inflicted heavy casualties. The use of 122mm rockets, known during World War II as “Stalin’s organs” because of their terrifying and deafening noise, were especially devastating. No weapon system provided to the FNLA by the Americans could match the rockets in range or the ability to terrorize. Seeking to help the hapless attackers without openly revealing their collaboration with the FNLA, South African planes dropped bombs from high altitude, which rendered them inaccurate and harmless. The rockets sent the undisciplined FNLA and Zairian fighters to flight. Survivors who had fled would remember the road on which so many FNLA and Zairian fighters had been slaughtered as *Nshila wa Lufu*, or “Death Road.” Castro had ruined Kissinger’s coup de grace in Angola, but the Cuban dictator had no intention of stopping there.⁴¹

The Cubans’ luck held in the coming weeks, as Soviet aid and Cuban soldiers poured into the country. On the evening of November 10, the Portuguese high commissioner brought a humiliating end to five centuries of colonialism by hurriedly announcing at the governor’s palace in a ceremony lacking Angolans that sovereignty would henceforth reside with the “Angolan people.” He then rushed to a waiting limousine and fled the country. At midnight, to jubilant cheers, Neto declared Angolan independence and the creation of the People’s Republic of Angola. His forces then controlled one-third of the country’s people and territory, including Luanda. Much fighting remained, but the Cubans were there to assist, and in increasing numbers. The day after independence, Cuban and MPLA forces attacked the Zairian army in Cabinda and forced the Zairians along with mercenaries and FLEC to flee haphazardly back into Zaire. On

November 23 the Cubans stopped a South African push north toward Luanda. The Joint Staff then estimated that communist support for the MPLA since August 1974 totaled \$81.7 million, almost all of it for tanks, vehicles, and weapons. By contrast, U.S. aid for the FNLA and UNITA, which had also declared themselves the legitimate government of Angola, came to a mere \$24.7 million, an amount that included just \$11 million for military materiel. Such figures, however, should be viewed somewhat skeptically, as the CIA grossly undervalued the weapons they supplied and did not include the salaries of CIA officers involved. Although Zaire and South Africa also provided the FNLA and UNITA with significant support, neither appeared to stand a chance against the Soviet- and Cuban-supported MPLA.⁴²

The Ford administration refused to accept defeat, however, and when the 40 Committee convened on November 21, Clements continued to argue that American-backed forces could prevail in Angola. After Colby informed the group that the CIA estimated that 3,000 Cubans were then in Angola, the committee debated whether to launch diplomatic efforts, support the South Africans, or provide substantial increments of hardware. The Cubans had brought armored vehicles and there were reports of MiGs on Angolan airfields. These reports were later proven false, as MiGs would not arrive in Angola until early the following year. Clements became agitated after Brent Scowcroft, who had succeeded Kissinger as national security adviser on November 3, questioned whether anticommunist fighters would “break and run at a rocket attack.” “What is all this talk?” Clements demanded. Proudly displaying his dubious understanding of the region yet again, the deputy secretary declared: “I’ve visited there and these people want to fight. They are natural fighters; they even eat each other. Leadership is the main factor.” He explained neither how effective leadership could be installed nor how the fighters’ supposed cannibalistic proclivities might be most productively directed toward the MPLA’s

defeat. One week later, Ford agreed to release more money from the CIA Reserve Contingency Fund and provide Redeyes and TOWs if SA-7s and French antitank missiles were unavailable. The continued deluge of Soviet and Cuban aid, however, rendered futile the American attempt to continue the program. Three more Cuban ships carrying 1,250 men with heavy equipment reached Luanda between November 27 and December 1. Ten aircraft delivered Soviet weapons on December 6.⁴³

Facing such overwhelming forces, the administration debated escalating U.S. involvement further. On December 2, 1975, the Interagency Working Group debated a CIA paper that recommended sending U.S. military advisers into Angola to assist FNLA and UNITA fighters. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Mulcahy told the group that Kissinger did not say anything but simply grunted before leaving his office and heading to Beijing on a 10-day trip. The group debated whether the grunt signaled approval or disapproval, with several members even repeating it aloud several times. Finally, Mulcahy decided, “We better not [send advisers]. Kissinger just decided not to send Americans to the Sinai.”⁴⁴

The administration suffered a major, unexpected setback later in the month. On December 13, at the Joint Chiefs’ urging, Ford ordered another study of U.S. interests, objectives, and options in Angola. He wanted to determine whether denying the MPLA a military victory should be deemed “essential to achieving U.S. objectives.” Six days later, however, such a study became largely academic. Having obligated the entire CIA Contingency Fund for FY 1975, Ford asked Congress to approve \$28 million for FY 1976. That amount could be made available through reprogramming, by which amounts less than \$50 million were switched from one account to another within a department’s overall budget, subject to approval by the chairmen of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. The Ford administration

hoped to reallocate DoD funds to the CIA to allow the operation to continue, but neither Ford nor Kissinger anticipated the enormous congressional opposition toward the program.⁴⁵

The covert aid program leaked to the press in early fall, Congress did not move to kill it until, as Pat Holt, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee chief of staff, remembered, “the shit hit the fan.” The CIA had briefed 19 senators and 56 representatives about IAFEATURE, as the operation was called by CIA staff, between July 25 and October 31, 1975. Stockwell, however, later claimed that Colby had used the briefings to “systematically” mislead Congress about operations in Angola while simultaneously muzzling them. Once members of Congress had received classified briefings, no matter how accurate or complete, they could not go public with their concerns or criticisms. Most members were uninterested or unwilling to interfere with a covert operation in Africa. Senator Joseph R. Biden Jr. (D-DE) remarked that many of his colleagues could not distinguish “between ‘Angola’ and ‘Mongolia.’” Even the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa, Senator Dick Clark (D-IA), admitted later, “I knew nothing about Africa. I had not been there, had not studied it and wasn’t particularly interested in ... it.” As it became apparent that the IAFEATURE was failing to achieve the administration’s stated objectives, however, congressional attention focused on the operation with hostile intensity. Clark, a former professor of history and political science, had begun to doubt the accuracy and completeness of CIA briefings on the operation and decided to conduct his own research on the operation and traveled to Africa himself. After meeting with Mobutu, Roberto, and Neto in Zaire and Angola in August, Clark became convinced that the CIA briefings had been misleading. He feared that the CIA had been funneling arms directly into Angola, that Americans had become directly involved in the conflict, and that the CIA was colluding illegally with South Africa. In the wake of Vietnam and with the Church Committee

then holding a microscope over the CIA and its past misadventures, it would be embarrassing and likely electorally disastrous in the approaching presidential election year to appear complacent or to throw more money at a doomed effort. On December 19, by a 54 to 22 vote, the Senate approved the Tunney Amendment to the DoD appropriations bill which prohibited any use of funds for Angola unless specifically appropriated. It also prohibited any reprogramming of DoD funds for transfer to the CIA and their subsequent obligation for covert action in Angola.⁴⁶

Even after the passage of the Tunney Amendment, the program continued under the funding of the CIA's remaining reserve funds. Donald Rumsfeld, who had been confirmed as defense secretary in late November, continued his predecessor's course of seeking to keep the Pentagon away from Angola. When the NSC met on December 22, Ford said he found the Senate vote "mildly deplorable. I cannot believe it represents a good policy for the U.S. and it is not fundamentally the way the American people think." He thought the administration was doing "the right thing" in Angola, and said, despite congressional furor over the Angola operation, they must not "become chicken because of the Senate vote," stressing "every department should spend all it legally can" and not Kissinger agreed and argued that the Angolan crisis represented a grave threat to the United States, because for the first time, Washington could not respond to a Soviet regional challenge from a position of strategic superiority. He warned dourly: "The situation is changed, and this will present a real strategic problem, not only in a crisis, but in the way the Soviets throw their weight around. This is one reason why Angola is so important; we don't want to whet the Soviet appetite." Colby added to the gloom, warning that the Soviets might send a guided missile destroyer to Angola. Ford asked whether they should move warships into the area. Rumsfeld and Chairman Brown told Ford that there would be no military justification behind it. Although Brown recognized that "one beauty of naval forces is that they

can signal our intent,” he warned of the likely congressional backlash. Members of Congress might charge the administration of leading the nation toward an incident similar to the Gulf of Tonkin affair. Kissinger favored sending ships into the South Atlantic as a diplomatic signal to the Soviets and to explain to Soviet Ambassador Anatoli Dobrynin “that if he thinks he can keep détente on track, he is crazy.” If Washington failed to put pressure on the Soviets, “they will want to run around Africa and Europe and say: ‘The Americans can’t cut the mustard.’” Rumsfeld and Brown prevailed. Ford decided not to deploy American naval forces to the area.⁴⁷

As the Soviets poured aid into Angola, Rumsfeld and Chairman Brown recognized that they had few good options other than to watch. Between November 1975 and January 1976, the Soviets successfully sealifted and airlifted more than 12,000 Cuban soldiers to Africa. On January 8, 1976, as the positions of the FNLA and UNITA crumbled, three Soviet ships—a guided missile cruiser, a destroyer, and a landing ship, tank—approached Angolan waters. The Pentagon again faced the dilemma of whether to deploy naval forces to the area. Officials in OSD’s Office of International Security Affairs and the Joint Staff warned Rumsfeld that there was little the United States could do in response. They opposed a naval show of force off Angola. The closest units were in the Mediterranean, 12 to 13 days distant. Only an aircraft carrier would impress the Soviets, but the display of such power would likely provoke Moscow to charge Washington with neocolonialism. Countries that had recognized the MPLA (the Soviet Union, Cuba, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Mozambique, Mali, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia, Romania, and Brazil) would protest any attempt to upset a legitimately constituted government. In the Caribbean, military posturing would likely not change Castro’s policy but might damage relations with other Latin American states. Surveillance might signal U.S. concern and give mild encouragement to the FNLA, UNITA,

Zaire, and South Africa. From bases in the Azores or Spain, P-3s could cover the cruiser off northwest Africa. Yet only confrontation could change the situation and that course would trigger strong domestic and foreign opposition. Ford ordered aerial surveillance of the Soviet cruiser and destroyer and for a submarine to shadow the cruiser. But he disapproved an SR-71 overflight of Cuba and the dispatch of surface ships toward Angolan waters. On January 13, ISA sent Rumsfeld terse advice endorsed by General Brown and senior State Department officials: "Take no action at this time which could be branded interventionism or meddling in the affairs of another state." Having no desire to reprise McNamara's escalation of a conflict in a developing world into an American quagmire, Rumsfeld heeded the advice.⁴⁸

On January 27 the House of Representatives dealt a final death knell to the already moribund program by approving the Tunney Amendment in a 323 to 99 vote. From March through December 1975, U.S. intelligence estimated, Soviet and Cuban support to the MPLA totaled \$179 million in equivalent U.S. costs. Their support escalated dramatically. In January 1976 alone, their military deliveries totaled at least \$105 million. Cuban troops in Angola numbered about 12,000, 4,500 of which had arrived in January. Soviet military shipments had started with small arms, munitions, and support equipment, but, in January, expanded to include T-54 main battle tanks, amphibious vehicles, and pontoon bridges. Another \$125 million worth of materiel, including MiG-21s, followed in February. Flights from Cuba continued every other day. Twelve Soviet and four Cuban ships arrived in February.⁴⁹

In mid-January 1976, Pretoria had begun withdrawing troops from central Angola. By early March, the South Africans had retreated to near Angola's southern border but continued to occupy the southernmost territory, ostensibly to prevent the Cunene dam from falling into their enemies' hands. Without the South Africans and their advanced weaponry, UNITA's resistance

to Cuban and MPLA advances began to crumble. Attempts to mask South African involvement collapsed after Cuban and MPLA forces captured South African regular troops and provided their photographs to the international press. With their publics now aware that the loathed apartheid regime had invaded another African country, other African nations could no longer afford to remain neutral. Pretoria's intervention and collaboration with the FNLA and UNITA, had left the reputations of both groups in tatters and forced many African states, who had quietly supported U.S. efforts to defeat the Angolan communists, to shift their support to the MPLA. When the Organization of African Unity (OAU) gathered from January 10 to 13, the delegations unanimously condemned South Africa's intrusion. Washington's pressure staved off a total diplomatic debacle, however, as the 22 votes to recognize the MPLA were matched by 22 that favored a government of national unity. The administration's relief was fleeting, however. Within six weeks, 41 of the 46 OAU members had recognized the MPLA as the national government of Angola. Castro, and not Kissinger, had won the moral high ground.⁵⁰

On February 3, when the 40 Committee discussed how best to disengage from Angola, the new deputy secretary of defense, Robert Ellsworth, was more willing to provide the group with an independent DoD position than Clements had been. The group still had \$31.7 million remaining from the CIA Contingency Fund, approved by Ford on November 28 and released by the Office of Management and Budget six days later, which had been obligated prior to passage of the Tunney Amendment. The 40 Committee debated whether to use the remaining funds or shut off everything. Ellsworth suggested exploring ways to achieve "better terms than complete surrender." He wanted the remaining funds to be aimed at influencing how FNLA and UNITA acted after Washington cut off aid entirely. Scowcroft responded, "But we don't have control and we shouldn't try to control." CIA director George H. W. Bush added, "We don't have any clout."

“What are we trying to do then?” Ellsworth asked in exasperation. “We are trying not to get clobbered,” Bush replied. The group failed to achieve an effective alternative other than to fatalistically spend the remaining funds in hopes that some resistance to the MPLA might survive. Although Roberto looked finished, Savimbi wanted to continue fighting a guerrilla struggle against the MPLA. At the next 40 Committee meeting, on February 13, Ellsworth said he favored supporting Savimbi but not until the group had established a feasible plan.⁵¹

By mid-February 1976, IAFEATURE had proven itself an abysmal failure. Earlier in the month, Ellsworth had admitted to Congress that for Washington to reverse the situation in Angola, “There would have to be, in one way or another, either the withdrawal of the Cubans or the Russians, or the introduction of large numbers of trained, experienced combat soldiers—very large numbers.” As Ellsworth knew, in the wake of Vietnam and Watergate, Congress would never grant Ford the authority to send large numbers of U.S. forces into Angola. Any hopes of a diplomatic path to avoid defeat had also been quashed. Most African governments had recognized the MPLA as the legitimate government of Angola. The Soviets had increasingly concluded that they had won a great triumph. Beset with economic crisis and the successive defeats in Vietnam and Angola, the West appeared in retreat. One Soviet official confidently boasted, “The world was turning in our direction.” However fleeting the Soviet-backed triumph might appear in retrospect, in early 1976 the Ford administration gloomily shared the Soviets’ opinion.⁵²

The operation’s evident failure caused the administration’s concerns about the region to broaden, and these focused primarily on Zaire. Approximately the size of the United States east of the Mississippi River, the former Belgian Congo was the largest country in Africa and had over 6,000 miles of borders with nine other African nations. If Mobutu fell to hostile external or

internal forces, the U.S. position in sub-Saharan Africa would be catastrophically weakened at a time when the Soviets had demonstrated a surprisingly strong interest in advancing their own. In the immediate aftermath of the fall of South Vietnam and Angola, Washington would appear in full retreat in the developing world. By mid-February the 40 Committee sought to use all remaining funds authorized for the Angola operation. All materiel sent to Zaire for transshipment had been forwarded to Angola, except the 180 M-79 grenade launchers, 700 light antitank weapons, and 18 SA-7 surface-to-air missiles. At a March 12 meeting, Kissinger vented his frustration that they could not send the remaining armaments to Zaire under the Angola program. “What can we tell Zaire,” Kissinger asked, “that we have arms but we can’t deliver them?” Ellsworth responded that the Tunney Amendment prevented use of DoD aircraft, and probably CIA charters, from delivering to Zaire arms destined for Angola. Kissinger concluded that the time had come for them to write off Angola: “I don’t necessarily favor shipping arms to Angola, I think we’ve had it with Angola, but I am concerned about Mobutu.” Rumsfeld concurred: “We’ve got to build up Mobutu’s confidence.” The administration agreed to replace whatever Mobutu forwarded to Angola by giving him the equipment already in Zaire that had been originally destined for Angola.⁵³

To end the Angolan operation, Washington needed to cancel all ordnance airlifts, discontinue requisitions of military equipment, and terminate planned logistical support facilities. Washington re-designated funds to purchase food, clothing, shelter, and resettlement costs for UNITA and FNLA fighters. By November 1976, Agostino Neto’s nascent regime had established control over the capitol and much of Angola. The MPLA gained widespread international recognition. According to U.S. intelligence, between 10,000 and 14,500 Cuban

soldiers remained in Angola. Cubans were flying all MiG fighters and helping the MPLA eliminate pockets of guerrilla activity.⁵⁴

Kissinger later described the outcome in Angola as “a debacle in which for the first time in the Cold War, the United States would capitulate to a Soviet-sponsored military adventure.” Although Kissinger blamed Congress for the defeat in Angola, scholars who have closely examined the record have concluded that, short of a major intervention by the United States, there was little chance of American success by the time Congress moved to kill the program. The Soviets and Cubans had poured more troops and supplies into the country, the South Africans decided to withdraw, and the MPLA solidified their control over much of Angola. In the wake of Vietnam, the administration lacked the domestic political support to commit the United States to another military adventure in the developing world. Conservative critics of détente, who were becoming a powerful force in the Republican Party, saw the Soviet and Cuban intervention as evidence that détente really served Moscow’s purposes. Once lauded as a statesman and strategist par excellence, Kissinger now came under scathing criticism from both ends of the political spectrum.⁵⁵

Concerned that the inability of the United States to prevent a communist victory in Angola would accelerate trends toward radicalization in Africa and that Robert Mugabe’s guerrilla war against Ian Smith’s white minority government in Rhodesia could offer the Cubans and Soviets with yet another pretext for another intervention, Kissinger toured African capitals between April 24 and May 6, 1976.⁵⁶ He visited Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Zaire, Liberia and Senegal. In exchange for a commitment by Washington to work toward majority rule, moderate black leaders agreed to refrain from requesting Cuban troops.⁵⁷

Like his predecessor, Rumsfeld had no intention of embroiling the Defense Department's assets in Angola, but he did intend to use the fiasco to promote his battle against Kissinger's détente policies. He argued that the growing threat posed by the Soviet Union, as displayed in Angola, could only be checked by an increased defense budget. American weakness emboldened the Soviets to take greater risks globally. In a March 1976 television interview, Rumsfeld warned that the "growing power of the Soviet Union and the growing expansionism of the Soviet Union" had to be checked, and he thus supported a defense budget increase that would "avoid allowing our country to move into a position of inferiority." He warned: "We are not Number One if one looks at the basic military capabilities as between the United States and the Soviet Union." Kissinger did not view a massive military buildup as necessary. Washington already wielded sufficient power to check the Soviets in Africa, he believed, but Congress prevented him from using it by canceling the operation in Angola, thereby eroding his diplomatic leverage. American unwillingness to act rather than any perception of U.S. military weakness had allowed the Soviets to prevail, in the view of the suddenly beleaguered secretary of state. To check further Soviet adventurism, Kissinger focused on ensuring the balance of power in sub-Saharan Africa favored the United States.⁵⁸

Zaire: Reassuring Mobutu

American policymakers had long understood Zairian president Mobutu Sese Seko to be a corrupt dictator who had terribly mismanaged his nation's economy, but he was nonetheless a "friendly tyrant" who could mostly be relied upon to support U.S. interests in the region. Mobutu, the army chief of staff who owed much of his early success to his close cooperation with the CIA, had seized power in the former Belgian Congo in 1965. Two years later, a U.S. airlift helped him

defeat a rebellion by disgruntled soldiers. While building his own cult of personality, Mobutu attempted to eradicate all traces of Belgian rule through a “national authenticity” campaign. In 1966, he renamed Leopoldville, the nation’s capital, Kinshasa and changed the entire country’s name from the Republic of Congo to Zaire in 1971. He banned European suits and forbade priests from baptizing children with European names. He changed his own name in 1972, regularly wore a leopard skin hat, and carried with him what Kissinger described as “a large swagger stick” everywhere he went. As his countrymen suffered endemic and persistent poverty, Mobutu enriched himself through expropriation and plunder. He constructed a massive marble palace complex deep in the equatorial jungle and entertained important guests, such as Kissinger and Rumsfeld, aboard his luxury yacht on lavish cruises down the Zaire River.⁵⁹

Before the covert program in Angola, the Pentagon had refused to fulfill Mobutu’s ever-growing wish lists for more military hardware. Early in 1973, Mobutu conveyed to Washington extensive requests for the next 10 years. He wanted 6 C-130 transports, 12 large helicopters, 15 A-4 attack aircraft, 2,000 jeeps, 2,000 trucks, and about a hundred tanks, a package that would cost between \$130 million and \$150 million. In October, Schlesinger reminded Nixon that because of the \$40 million aid annual ceiling for Africa, the administration had to limit grant aid for Zaire to \$3.5 million annually. Mobutu’s demands vastly exceeded the ceiling. Consequently, he argued, Mobutu should be encouraged to explore a straight commercial approach for financing procurements such as modern jets. In other words, if he wanted new weapons, he would have to find a way to pay for them.⁶⁰

Mobutu continued to appeal for more help and turned to the usual friendly despot method of gaining more American attention and munificence: warnings of imminent peril at the hands of the Soviet bogeyman. Moscow, he argued in 1974, might be trying to isolate and encircle Zaire

by giving military aid to its neighbors. Schlesinger refused to take the bait and rejected a full-blown survey. The Pentagon would instead provide very limited technical advice about specific elements like air defense. Between January 29 and February 20, 1975, Brig. Gen. James Rockwell led a military technical assistance team on a visit to the country to conduct a limited review. The team drafted plans for a force costing \$150 million over eight years that would include one infantry division and an air defense system consisting of radars and automatic weapons integrated with French-supplied Mirage fighters. The administration had tentatively allocated \$300,000 for grants and \$3.5 million for sales credits for FY 1975. Rockwell strongly recommended that Schlesinger indicate to Mobutu a willingness to provide more, but the defense secretary rejected this advice, on the Joint Chiefs' recommendation. The Chiefs had warned Schlesinger that they doubted whether Zaire's existing defense communications infrastructure could support the proposed air defense system. If it could not, the costs would escalate as a new network would be required.⁶¹

By fall 1975, Angola's civil war had elevated Zaire's importance for Washington. Mobutu funneled U.S.-supplied equipment to Holden Roberto's FNLA, while Cuba and the Soviet Union sent ever larger quantities of arms and advisers to the Marxist-oriented MPLA. The administration planned to seek \$9.5 million in grant aid for Zaire during FY 1976. However, early in September 1975, Sheldon Vance, the U.S. ambassador to Zaire, brought to Washington an urgent Zairian appeal for \$19 million in grant aid. Kissinger approved asking Congress for that amount.⁶²

The MPLA's victory in Angola left Mobutu sheltering Roberto and the remnants of the defeated FNLA. Late in April 1976, Kissinger visited Zaire and found Mobutu consumed by "an intense siege mentality.... Everywhere he looks he sees red or crazy regimes." Mobutu said, he

faced 350 Soviet-supplied tanks and 50 heavy lift helicopters across the border in Angola. He also feared that the 5,000 to 6,000 Katangese who had fought against him during the 1960s and fled into Angola would, with Soviet and Cuban support, invade and topple his regime. Briefing the NSC on May 11, Kissinger warned that “[i]f Zaire goes, every African state will draw the conclusion that the Soviet Union ... is the wave of the future.” He urged the DoD to promptly send a senior officer there to look at “programs that would make a real difference.” Clements offered to go with Chairman Brown. Instead, between May 19 and 28, a team led by the recently promoted Major General Rockwell visited Zaire. On June 17, General Rockwell advised Secretaries Rumsfeld and Kissinger that Zaire faced “a well-defined potential threat which will mature in one to three years.” The team recommended providing in FY 1977 an “impact package” costing \$40.1 million and including 10 M-60 tanks, 36 helicopters, and 16 antiaircraft guns. It also recommended creating, between FYs 1976 and 1982, a force costing \$465 million. Rockwell concluded that the Soviets had a “grand design” to control southern Africa. He thought it entirely plausible that they would use Angolans and Katangese exiles to oust Mobutu. He predicted that Zaire would fall into the Soviet orbit within three years unless Zaire received prompt and substantial U.S. assistance.⁶³

On June 18, before Rockwell’s report had reached him, Rumsfeld visited Kinshasa to confer with President Mobutu in the first visit to Africa by a secretary of defense. Mobutu told Rumsfeld that he was “increasingly concerned by the growing leftist orientation of African states, including a number of Zaire’s immediate neighbors.” The Soviets and Cubans had greatly increased their activities in the region, he warned. Aboard his yacht, he pointed out an island on the Zaire River where he said the Cubans would build a base. He cautioned that with the fall of Angola, the communists could cut Zaire’s narrow access to the ocean. Mobutu stressed that his

own nation's financial constraints hobbled Zaire's military. Responding to Rumsfeld's question about the state of morale within the Zairian military, Mobutu said that "a soldier can live in a tent just so long" and told the secretary of dire infrastructure shortcomings. Yet Rumsfeld responded to the supplicant who owned a luxury yacht, a marble palace, and much of his country's wealth by suggesting that U.S. military assistance would be coordinated with other nations' efforts but made no major promises.⁶⁴

Rockwell's alarmist recommendation gained little support within the Pentagon. The JCS advised Rumsfeld that they considered Rockwell's outline of a Soviet grand design to be "overdrawn." Moscow's opportunistic approach struck them as "sporadic and not without pitfalls and dramatic reverses." The Defense Intelligence Agency did not view Zaire as the focal point of Soviet objectives in Africa. In fact, DIA considered the greatest threat facing Mobutu to be internal. Economic decay could provoke unrest, which outsiders might be tempted to support. The Soviet-trained and equipped MPLA and Cubans in Angola posed a long-term threat to Zaire, but the communists would need years to consolidate their hold in Angola. Castro, American intelligence concluded, would be unlikely to risk international condemnation or a major U.S. intervention that would likely follow a Cuban invasion of Zaire. Turning to the team's recommendations, the JCS doubted whether Zaire had enough trained manpower to absorb so much equipment quickly. Without a comprehensive survey, they supported only outfitting one armored car cavalry squadron at a cost of \$15.8 million. In the transition quarter between July and September 1976, Zaire received a \$10 million credit to partially finance the ground force improvements recommended by Rockwell's report.⁶⁵

Later events indicated that the JCS and DIA were right to question the alarmism of Rockwell's 1976 report. In 1977 and again in 1978, Katangese exiles invaded Zaire from

Angola, as Mobutu had feared, but they were repulsed both times, first by the arrival of Moroccan troops and then by French Foreign Legionnaires. If the Soviets had a “grand design” to gain control over southern Africa, they executed it poorly. Enjoying U.S. support until the end of the Cold War, Mobutu’s corrupt regime stumbled forward until the first Congo War resulted in his overthrow and exile in 1997.⁶⁶

Ethiopia: Kagnev and Crisis

Kagnev Station in Asmara, Eritrea, had long been vital for U.S. defense communications and Cold War eavesdropping. Located near the equator and 7,300 feet above sea level, the station had served as a relay link in the worldwide defense communications system and as an earth terminal for satellites. Kagnev covered 3,400 acres in 10 separate tracts. It handled naval tactical communications; an atomic energy detection facility; “Stonehouse,” which monitored Soviet satellites and space probes; and “Mystic Star,” which supported presidential communications. The Pentagon had planned to withdraw from Kagnev between fiscal years 1976 and 1978, contingent upon the speed by which facilities on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean could be upgraded to provide similar functions. However, the Defense Department’s desire to cut excessive expenditures in the more austere post-Vietnam era hastened Kagnev’s closure. In April 1973 Clements informed the State Department that DoD would accept a temporary degradation of communications to save an estimated \$12 million per year and remove all U.S. military personnel by June 30, 1974. He wrote that Stonehouse, run by the National Security Agency, and Mystic Star would remain as long as the conditions in the country allowed.⁶⁷

American officials believed that the relationship with Ethiopia would remain strong for the rest of the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie, the octogenarian ruler of Ethiopia, but they were

concerned about who might succeed him. Haile Selassie had led Ethiopia since 1916, when he ruled as regent before being crowned emperor in 1930. His resistance to Italian dictator Benito Mussolini's attack on Ethiopia and subsequent exile in Britain during World War II raised his international prestige. He had hosted the first meeting of the Organization of African Unity in 1963 and served as its first chairman. The Ethiopian constitution based Haile Selassie's authority on a biblical lineage that stemmed directly from the marriage of King Solomon to the Queen of Sheba, and he was even worshipped as a living god by the Rastafari movement that began in Jamaica in the 1930s and reached the peak of its popularity in the 1970s with the music of Bob Marley and other reggae musicians spreading messages of peace, unity, and resistance against oppression. He had aligned his regime with the United States during the 1960s to speed his nation's development.⁶⁸

Although Washington cut grant military assistance from \$12.1 million in FY 1972 to \$8.5 million in FY 1973, the aid remained critical to the Ethiopian military and for providing quid pro quo for using Kagnew. Haile Selassie's government worried particularly about neighboring Somalia which, the Ethiopians claimed, had received from the Soviets Il-28 light bombers, MiG-21 fighters, and T-54 tanks. Early in May 1973, as the emperor prepared to visit Washington, the Ethiopian government compiled an "urgent list" of about \$122 million for arms and consumables and another list of major requests costing around \$335 million. Clements warned Nixon that they would probably ask for another fighter squadron or tanks to replace their obsolescent M-41s. He cautioned against more grant aid but recommended instead a credit program of around \$10 million.⁶⁹

On May 15, 1973, meeting with Nixon in the Oval Office, Haile Selassie argued that expanding Soviet influence had radically changed the regional balance of power. The emperor

said the Somalis had more advanced weapons than Ethiopia. Nixon warned that he would have difficulty getting Congress to vote for grant aid. On August 14 he approved the Senior Review Group's recommendation that DoD terminate most of its activities at Kagnev by the end of FY 1974. The president also directed that grant aid, supplemented by credits, be planned at or above the FY 1974 level. Subsequently, State and Defense proposed \$17.4 million for FY 1974, a total that included \$10.5 million in grant materiel and \$5 million in credits.⁷⁰

Early in 1974, confronted by widespread internal unrest, Haile Selassie changed his entire cabinet and accepted a constitutional monarchy. An FY 1974 package containing \$12.5 million in grants and \$5 million annually in credits for three years had been designated. Defense wanted to delay informing the Ethiopians, however, until Schlesinger decided what priority to give a request to stage P-3 ASW aircraft through Asmara. For that, the Ethiopians probably would require a quid pro quo.⁷¹

As the emperor's hold on power waned and conditions in Ethiopia deteriorated, military assistance developed into more than a quid pro quo for Kagnev Station. At a WSAG meeting on April 24, Kissinger articulated a new priority: "Do we want to remain passive and just accept the new government that emerges, or do we want to shape it?" Acting Assistant Secretary (ISA) Amos Jordan replied that the Defense Department favored helping to shape the new government through military aid, as the Ethiopian military would likely play a large role in determining the succession. Extending additional support, he said, "would be a no-cost situation for us." Washington could provide excess items like 105mm howitzers. Three days later, the White House decided to provide \$11.4 million of MAP materiel during FY 1974; increase sales credits by as much as \$6 million during fiscal years 1974 and 1975, subject to availability within an overall \$40 million ceiling on grants and credits for Africa; offer up to \$25 million worth of

equipment for cash sales, perhaps including sophisticated weapons like the Sidewinder air-to-air missile; and make every effort to deliver some items from an “impact package,” using airlift when feasible.⁷²

Jordan had correctly surmised that the military would shape the successor regime but failed to recognize which officers would lead the coup or what their motivations would be. On September 12 an Armed Forces Coordinating Committee known as the “Derg,” consisting of 108 young officers and enlisted men, arrested and imprisoned Haile Selassie and declared a provisional military government. The new regime asked Washington for extra grants and credits, but the overall \$40 million ceiling allowed only \$7 million more, which ISA officials recognized would fall considerably short of Ethiopian expectations. Late in November 1974, the executions of leaders purged from the Derg as well as officials from Haile Selassie’s regime led to a temporary stoppage of military deliveries. However, on January 30, 1975, the State Department notified its Ethiopian counterparts that FY 1975 sales credits would rise to \$20–25 million. Also, F-5E fighters, M-60 tanks, Sidewinder missiles, and Vulcan air defense systems could be sold for cash. The Ford administration hoped such aid would prevent the new regime from turning toward the Eastern Bloc for aid.⁷³

Developments in neighboring Somalia seemed to confirm the importance of maintaining ties with Ethiopia’s new rulers. At Berbera on the coastal region of Somaliland, the Soviets had constructed a facility for storing cruise missiles. Smaller cruise missiles had to be emptied and refueled every 60 to 90 days. Rather than be forced to return to Soviet ports, ships could dock at Berbera, off-load their missiles, refuel them, and return to sea. Berbera was the only place, outside the Warsaw Pact, where the Soviets had established a command headquarters controlling tactical units.⁷⁴

Soviet arms deliveries to Somalia, Uganda, Algeria, and Libya had prompted Kenya, Tunisia, Morocco, and Ethiopia to seek more U.S. assistance. However, responding to requests from these countries would require \$51 million in sales credit and \$14 million in grant aid. The Foreign Military Sales Act imposed a \$40 million ceiling but permitted the chief executive to exceed that limit when he determined that a waiver was important to U.S. security. On May 20, 1975, President Ford signed such a determination.⁷⁵

Ethiopia, however, had plunged into chaos. Insurgents controlled all of Eritrea except Asmara, its environs, and port cities. On February 12, 1975, the Ethiopian defense minister asked Washington for an emergency resupply of ammunition. When the WSAG convened two weeks later, Clements warned that the threat to Kagnew grew more serious every day. Colby worried that refusing to provide arms could trigger a coup bringing to power “people even more inimical to our interests than the present bunch.” Clements suggested giving some arms “as a symbolic gesture and let the situation sort itself out.” The administration agreed to a resupply, delivered by air and sea between April and November.⁷⁶

In May 1975 the Derg proclaimed Marxism-Leninism as the state’s official ideology. Nonetheless, the administration kept its supply line open. Washington signed a \$25 million agreement for sales credits, delivered F-5As in August, and offered to sell F-5Es with deliveries starting in November. Even so, the Derg complained that the Americans were dragging their feet. Over DoD and Air Force objections, the administration decided to provide 14 F-5Es and three F-5Fs. After eight of these Freedom Fighters had been delivered, a worsening political situation in Ethiopia led to the remaining F-5s being transferred to the U.S. Air Force.⁷⁷

On September 12 Eritrean insurgents attacked the area called Tract D at Kagnew Station, destroyed its transmitter, and kidnapped two Americans. The National Security Agency had

closed Stonehouse by then, but Mystic Star remained. At OSD's request, the JCS reevaluated the operational need to continue a communications facility at Kagnew. They advised that a requirement did exist but efforts should be made immediately to obtain rights elsewhere—in order of preference, Iran, Bahrain, Dhahran in Saudi Arabia, or Masirah Island.⁷⁸

Late in October 1975, President Ford ordered an interagency assessment of Kagnew's value and future. On December 4, Clements advised Scowcroft of DoD's position. Without Kagnew or a suitable alternative, communications reliability would be "degraded to a level which, although tolerable during normal day-to-day operations, is unacceptable during periods of increased tension or in a contingency." DoD viewed satellites as a means to increase reliability, not as replacements for high-frequency communications. Withdrawing from Kagnew, in DoD's judgment, would be seen by the Soviet Union, Somalia, and other countries in the Horn of Africa as a reduction of U.S. interest in the region. Whether to leave or stay certainly posed a dilemma, but a precipitous departure in the face of terrorists' demands would have "most undesirable" implications for U.S. facilities worldwide. Consequently, DoD strongly favored staying at Kagnew "as long as we can safely do so" while seeking an alternate site for a permanent facility. If asked to leave by the Ethiopian government, Washington should press for the latest possible departure, preferably after 1979.⁷⁹

In February 1976, when the Senior Review Group discussed Kagnew's future, Deputy Assistant Secretary (ISA) James Noyes and Lt. Gen. William Y. Smith, USAF, assistant to the chairman, represented the Pentagon. "Right now," said Smith, "fleet operations are dependent on Kagnew." Without the station, Noyes agreed, communications delays would occur 25 percent of the time. Satellites could perform some functions by 1979, but DoD did not want to rely solely upon them. Accordingly, the group saw a continuing need for Kagnew and decided that the

United States should remain as long as possible. If the Ethiopian government exerted real pressure to leave, “we could then enter into bilateral talks at a slow and deliberate pace and discuss the possibility of relocating in Ethiopia.”⁸⁰

In mid-November, Ford commissioned another analysis of assumptions and options for Ethiopia. An interagency study concluded that, even though relations were diminished and strained, disengaging from the Horn of Africa would look like a loss because Somalia had become a Soviet client state. It presented three options: (A) continue the current policy, (B) disengage from Ethiopia, and (C) follow a middle course. State and Defense supported Option C, which involved being forthcoming about military supply and economic assistance in varying degrees.⁸¹

Under Option C, Kagnew station would close in orderly fashion when no longer needed. The station had become mostly redundant. The Atlantic Gapfiller Satellite provided good coverage in the East Africa and Indian Ocean area. The Indian Ocean Gapfiller Satellite, launched in mid-October, had reached its checkout phase. Accordingly, the JCS proposed closing Kagnew by September 1977 if Mystic Star could be relocated. Rumsfeld agreed and told Kissinger. The defense secretary urged that State promptly discuss with the clearly more stable Iranian government for the establishment of a Mystic Star facility in Tehran. But events spiraled out of control after Ford left office. By March 1977, internal violence reached a point where the JCS recommended withdrawing from Kagnew without waiting for an alternate site to become operational. The last Americans left the site on April 29.⁸²

Policymakers in the Ford administration drew the wrong conclusions from their use of military assistance as a quid pro quo for Kagnew during Haile Selassie’s reign. Their attempt to continue the relationship with the Derg through grants, cash sales and credits failed miserably.

Instability spread throughout the entire region, making the pursuit of a consistent, long-term policy impossible. In 1977 Somalia invaded the Ogaden region of Ethiopia that was populated largely by Somalis. Ethiopia's leader, Mengistu Haile Mariam, appealed to Havana and Moscow. In 1978 Cuban troops who were transported, equipped and directed by the Soviets evicted the Somalis. Ethiopia became a Soviet client while Somalia's leader, Mohammed Siad Barre, expelled Soviet advisers and switched his allegiance to the West.

Uncertain Directions

Despite Schlesinger and Rumsfeld's reluctance to involve the Pentagon in sub-Saharan Africa, the region had become a Cold War battleground by the end of the Ford administration. In January 1976, the DIA noted that Moscow was providing military assistance to 17 black African nations. The agency concluded that while the Soviets had scored some successes at relatively modest cost, "newly independent states are wary of foreign domination, and Moscow will very likely suffer some setbacks as it seeks greater influence in the highly nationalistic environment of Sub-Saharan Africa." Moscow committed more military resources to the region than Washington did between 1971 and 1975 (see table 1).

Table 1. Value of U.S. and Soviet Military Deliveries to Sub-Saharan Africa, 1971–1975

(in \$ millions)

	United States	Soviet Union
Congo (Brazzaville)	--	3.9
Ethiopia	58.5	0.9
Mali	0.1	12.2
Nigeria	39.2	7.5
Somalia	--	131.7
Uganda	--	48.0
Zaire	19.7	--
Zambia	--	5.0

Source: Memo, DepSecDef Ellsworth for SecDef, 19 Jul 1976, subj: Communist and US Military Equipment Shipments to Africa, folder Africa 1976, box 64, Acc 330-79-0049.

For all Africa, in FY 1976, the Ford administration sought \$12 million in grants and \$86 million in sales credits. The heightened need to assist “moderate” states coincided with a 50 percent decrease in the dollar’s purchasing power since Congress imposed that ceiling in 1967. Thus, as he had for FY 1975, President Ford signed in June 1976 a determination that waived the \$40 million ceiling.⁸³

Kenya, a “moderate” state, was one of the few countries on Africa’s east coast that allowed U.S. Navy port calls. Its leaders felt threatened by Somalia and Uganda, whose Soviet-equipped forces outclassed their own. Neither Moscow nor Washington supplied Kenya with arms. In May 1976, following his trip through sub-Saharan Africa, Kissinger asked the Pentagon whether some F-5As might be provided to Kenya until superior F-5Es became available. Clements replied that no F-5As were available. Because training enough pilots and maintenance personnel would take at least 18 months, he advised against committing to deliver F-5Es before March 1978. On June 16, 1976, before visiting Zaire, Rumsfeld stopped in Nairobi for brief discussions with Kenyan defense officials. Defense Minister James Gichuru likened his nation to

an island surrounded by unfriendly countries. He particularly wanted A-4 attack aircraft.

Rumsfeld replied that a credible defense provided the best deterrent and touted the F-5E fighter as far superior in that respect.⁸⁴

The Entebbe crisis further raised regional tensions. On June 27, an Air France aircraft with 248 passengers was hijacked by Palestinian and German Revolutionary Cells terrorists and flown to Entebbe Airport in Uganda. Ugandan soldiers would join the hijackers. On July 4, Israeli commandos rescued hostages from the hijacked airliner and killed the hijackers. In freeing the hostages, the commandos also killed Ugandan soldiers. The Israeli commando Yonatan Netanyahu, brother of future Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, was killed during the raid. Because Israeli aircraft refueled in Kenya on the way to Entebbe and when returning from it, the murderous and volatile Ugandan dictator Idi Amin threatened retaliation. Washington reacted by positioning a P-3 in Nairobi and scheduling a frigate visit to Mombassa. Chairman Brown recommended providing Kenya, through sales credits, with a small package of antitank and antipersonnel weapons. ISA officials opposed doing so because Kenya had not requested such aid, and the British were accelerating their deliveries. Rumsfeld agreed. The Kenyans also worried about an attack by Ugandan MiGs, but the OSD advised the White House that supplying Redeye missiles would entail security risks. Amin decided not to retaliate and the crisis passed.⁸⁵

With the Cold War at full fury in parts of Africa, the Ford administration failed to form a coherent, consistent response. Kissinger had blundered his way into an intervention in Angola, and Congress blocked his efforts to escalate a covert program that had gone awry following an unanticipated intervention of Cuban combat troops. Throughout the program, neither Schlesinger nor Clements had suggested the direct employment of U.S. military forces to prevent an MPLA

takeover. The DoD-managed evacuation of Portuguese civilians from Angola was done with State Department authorization and funding. The Pentagon merely managed the contracting of civilian aircraft rather than use military transports. The defense secretary might have been a more forceful opponent of the covert program in the interagency meetings. What little Schlesinger said in those meetings he attended on Angola, however, was discounted by Ford, who disliked the defense secretary, and ignored by Kissinger. Clements, however, as the highest-ranking DoD representative at 40 Committee meetings on Angola, provided Kissinger with consistent support for the covert action program. Whether Clements alone could have derailed Kissinger's program will never be known, but he certainly made it easier for the secretary of state to pursue his chosen course.

With the support of the Joint Chiefs and ISA officials, Rumsfeld moved to ensure that Kissinger would not be able to use the military to bolster U.S. credibility in the aftermath of the covert operation's failure. Both Schlesinger and Rumsfeld showed restraint when Mobutu's regime in Zaire requested vast amounts of military aid. Both secretaries deemed the threat to Zaire overblown and deemed the Zairean military and infrastructure incapable of absorbing more than modest amounts of military assistance. In Ethiopia, the Defense Department supported the use of military aid to influence the government that succeeded Haile Selassie, but the plan proved a colossal failure. Rather than turn toward Washington, the Derg began a "red terror" in Ethiopia and a turn toward Marxist-Leninism. Under the leadership of Maj. Mengistu Haile Mariam, the Derg would lead Ethiopian to famine and, with Cuban and Soviet support, war with Somalia.⁸⁶

Although Castro had planned to withdraw most Cuban forces from Angola in 1978 and leave only a remnant to support the insurgents fighting for independence in South West Africa,

persistent threats to the MPLA's position caused him to delay the Cuban withdrawal. In 1978 South African forces launched a successful attack against Namibian insurgent strongholds in southern Angola. Three years later, they again occupied border areas in southern Angola and helped turn UNITA into an aggressive, well-equipped militia. In response, the Cuban presence grew to 50,000 by 1983. Pressured by President Ronald Reagan, Congress repealed the Clark Amendment and lifted the restrictions on aid in 1985. American money and South African organization preserved Savimbi's protracted insurgent struggle. After Cuban and South African forces fought to a stalemate, a 1988 agreement provided for Cuban withdrawal in exchange for South West Africa becoming independent Namibia. The last Cubans left Angola in June 1991, after several thousand Cubans had died. Kissinger's fears about the stakes involved in Angola were exaggerated. By cutting off the operation, Congress had not provided Moscow and Havana with decisive advantages in the Cold War. The world may have seemed to be turning the Kremlin's direction at the end of the Ford administration, as officials in Moscow optimistically believed, but it would turn back.⁸⁷

Endnotes

1. Thomas Borstellman, *The Cold War and the Color Line* (New York: Harvard University Press, 2001), 233–337.
2. *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. 28, *Southern Africa*, ed. Myra F. Burton (Washington, DC: GPO, 2011), 57. In 1963 the UN Security Council had imposed arms embargoes against South Africa and the Portuguese colonies. Seven years later, Nixon granted export licenses to items mostly for civilian use, such as Lear jets and twin-engine Cessnas), but denied them to any items with clear combat or internal security applications, such as Lockheed’s Orion P-3Cs and L-100 transports). *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:29–54 (doc 54), 69–70 (doc 23), 115–116 (doc 40). President Joseph Mobutu renamed “Congo” as “Zaire” in 1971. After his ouster in 1997, it became the “Democratic Republic of the Congo.” For a brief overview of DoD’s view of U.S. policy in Africa and how it changed in the 1970s, see memo, Acting ASD (ISA) James H. Noyes, 28 Apr 1976, folder South Africa 1976, box 82, Acc 330-79-0049, OSD Records, WNRC; NSSM 201 to SecDef et al., 25 Apr 1974; “U.S. Military Assistance and Arms Supply Policy in Black Africa,” 1–6, attached to memo, Staff Secretary, NSC for SecDef et al., 14 Nov 1974, folder Africa 1974, box 56, Acc 330-78-0011, OSD Records, WNRC; *FRUS 1964–1968*, vol. 24, *Africa*, ed. Nina Davis Howland (Washington, DC: GPO, 1999), 214 (doc 141, fn. 2); Foreign Assistance Act of 1967, Public Law 90-137, 90th Congress, S. 1872, 14 Nov 1967.
3. NSSM 201 for SecDef et al., 25 Apr 1974; subj: U.S. Military Assistance and Arms Supply Policy in Black Africa, 1–6, attached to memo, Staff Secretary NSC for SecDef et al., 14 Nov 1974, folder Africa 1974, box 56, Acc 330-78-0011.
4. Of Portugal’s African colonies the historian Tony Judt wrote: “The general standard of living was more characteristic of contemporary Africa than continental Europe: per capita annual income in 1960 was just \$160 (compared with e.g. \$219 in Turkey, or \$1,453 in the US). The rich were very rich indeed, infant mortality was the highest in Europe, and 32 percent of the population was illiterate.” Judt, *Postwar*, 511. Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 481; John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, vol. 2, *Exile Politics and Guerrilla Warfare (1962–1976)* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978), 241; John Marcum, “Lessons of Angola,” *Foreign Affairs* 54, no. 3 (Apr 1976): 408. On Angola, Piero Gleijeses has noted, “Portuguese statistics were notoriously unreliable, but in 1974 Angola’s population was probably around 6.4 million, including 320,000 whites.” Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa: 1959–1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 233.
5. Following Portugal’s entrance into the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) in 1961, the Portuguese had lost much of their value as export markets for the metropole. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 218–219; Judt, *Postwar*, 511–513; Memo, Kissinger for Nixon, 29 Apr 1974, *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. E-15, pt. 2, *Documents on Western Europe, 1973–1976*, ed. Kathleen B. Rasmussen (Washington, DC: GPO, 2014), 461–462 (doc 132). Most of the nearly 100,000 Portuguese soldiers fighting in Africa were conscripts drafted for four-year tours and were led by an overstretched officer corps. In a desperate effort to improve morale, Lisbon responded with a decree in July 1973, granting noncareer officers who lacked formal military education but had fought in the colonial wars, the same rank as professional officers. The measure backfired. Police killed four protestors, but the MFA allowed the regime to flee the country unharmed. Judt, *Postwar*, 513.
6. Memo, Deputy Director for Intelligence MG Lincoln Faurer for Director of Defense Intelligence Agency General Daniel O. Graham, 24 Jun 1975, subj: Armed Forces Movement, folder Portugal 1975, box 77, Acc 330-78-0058; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 629–630.

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7. MG Wickham Notebooks, entries for 7 Oct 1974, 16 Nov 1974, 22 Jan 1975, and 7 Feb 1975, box TS-5, Schlesinger Papers.
8. *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. E-15, pt. 2, 497 (doc 147), 508 (doc 148); memo, DirDIA for DepSecDef, 22 Mar 1975, subj: Portugal, folder Portugal 1975, box 77, Acc 330-78-0058; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 629–630, 626–627; memcom, Wed., 2 Apr 1975, National Security Adviser’s Memoranda of Conversation Collection, Ford Library online.
9. Schlesinger’s briefing papers for a European trip explained: “the US can use the strategic Azores to support NATO but US unilateral access and operational rights formally expired in February 1974. However, we are continuing unilateral operations on a de facto basis pending negotiations toward a new agreement.” See Paper, “Instability in the Southern Region,” attached to “Secretary Schlesinger’s Trip to Great Britain, Denmark, and the Federal Republic of Germany and France, September 23–October 1, 1975,” n.d., folder Europe 333 1975, box 63; memcon, 7 May 1975, subj: SecDef-Ambassador Carlucci Meeting, folder Portugal 1975, box 77: both in Acc 78-0058. In August, responding to NSSM 221, State, Defense, and CIA concluded that “now, and into the foreseeable future, the Azores remain an essential and irreplaceable link” for missions involving antisubmarine warfare and aircraft staging and enroute support. *FRUS 1969–1976*, E-15, pt. 2:513 (doc 151), 537–540 (quote, 538) (doc 159).
10. Memcon, 7 May 1975, subj: SecDef-Ambassador Carlucci Meeting, folder Portugal 1975, box 77, Acc 330-78-0058; MG Wickham Notebooks, SecDef-JCS Meeting, entry for 3 Jun 1975.
11. Memcon, 7 Aug 1975, subj: Meeting with Secretary General Luns of NATO, folder Europe 333 1975, box 63; memcon, 22 Jul 1975, subj: Meeting with Minister of Defense Leber, folder Germany 300-399 1975, box 64; memo for the record, 7 Aug 1975, subj: Trip Report—28 June to 12 July 1975, folder Europe 333 1975, box 63: all in Acc 330-78-0058.
12. Memo, DirDIA for DepSecDef et al., 12 Jun 1975, subj: Security Problems Involving Portugal; memo, DepSecDef for DirDIA, 15 Jul 1975, subj: Security Problems Involving Portugal: both in folder Portugal 1975, box 77, Acc 330-78-0058. In August, President Ford approved a small covert action program designed to support moderates and resist attempts by communists and radicals to impose totalitarian rule. Memo, Scowcroft for Ford, subj: Covert Action Proposals for Portugal, undated, *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. E-15, pt. 2:567 (doc 168).
13. Leber told Rumsfeld that he had visited Portugal five weeks earlier as an “outgrowth” of President Ford’s discussion with Chancellor Schmidt. Memo for the President, 11 Dec 1975, subj: FRG Minister of Defense Leber’s Comments on the Situation in Portugal, folder Portugal 1975, box 77, Acc 330-78-0058. An attached note reads, “SecDef handed this to the President on 11 Dec. He did not sign it, however.”
14. Msg, SecState to US Mission NATO, 100023Z Apr 1976; ltr, Acting SecState to DepSecDef, 7 May 1976; memo, DirDSAA and DepASD(ISA) Security Assistance for SecArmy, 26 May 1976, subj: Impact Package for Portugal; memo, ASD(ISA) for SecDef, 30 Sep 1976, subj: Request for C-130 MAP Funds for Portugal; memo, ASD(ISA) for SecDef, 4 Dec 1976, subj: Allied Military Assistance to Portugal: all in folder Portugal 1976, box 81, Acc 330-79-0049.
15. John Marcum wrote: “As a consequence, surviving nationalist movements shared common weaknesses. Their leadership ranks would have been thin in any case, coming as they did from the politically aware portions of a tiny elite.... But they were additionally handicapped by travel restrictions, police harassment and lack of funds. Their ranges of action, life-spans and political vision were limited. Thus, they remained parochial; most were unable fully to transcend the bounds of primary ethnic or regional loyalties, or of class and racial ties.” Marcum, “Lessons of Angola,” 409. Marcum produced the most rigorous academic history of pre-independence Angola. Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, 2:234.
16. John Stockwell, the former chief of the CIA Angola Task Force later recalled that compared to the MPLA, “the FNLA, Holden Roberto’s crowd, had few educated men at the top—no intellectuals—and

had spent much of its history in the cocktail parties of Kinshasa.” John Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story* (New York: Norton, 1978), 64. The Polish-British sociologist first used the term “kleptocracy” in his 1968 study on modernization in Africa, *The Africa Predicament*, to describe a government in which “the use of public office for private enrichment is the normal and accepted practice.” As quoted in Crawford Young, *The Postcolonial State in Africa: Fifty Years of Independence, 1960–2010* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 24. Marcum went so far as to characterize the FNLA as “largely an extension or branch of Zairean politics.” Marcum, “Lessons of Angola,” 410. Cable, U.S. Embassy in Zaire to State Dept., Mobutu’s Opening to the Left and Portugal, 1645Z 9 Feb 1973 (doc 257); memcon, Nixon and Mobutu, n.d. (doc 258): both in *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. E-6, *Documents on Africa 1973–1976*; NSC, meeting minutes, 27 Jun 1975, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:269 (doc 113). Roberto had received weapons from China in 1973, and Chinese advisers began training FNLA fighters in May 1974. Although Roberto refused to discuss Chinese activities with the CIA, the agency began providing him with small funds in July 1974 to secure a small stake in Angola’s post-independence future. Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 64, 67; *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:233–234 (doc 100).

17. For a more complete discussion of the three groups, see Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 235–242. Stockwell recalled that although the CIA knew little about Roberto, “We knew even less about Savimbi—our alliance with him was based solely on his opposition to the MPLA.” Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 64. Piero Gleijeses determined that Savimbi owed his survival to collaboration with the Portuguese after carefully reviewing Portuguese documents. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 239–241. Marcum also suspects that Savimbi collaborated with the Portuguese to survive. Marcum, “Lessons from Angola,” 411. See also Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 314. His charisma, moreover, was highly persuasive to U.S. officials. Having been captivated by Savimbi’s many tales of heroic resistance against the Portuguese, John Stockwell, the former chief of the CIA Angola Task Force, admired him as “that rare coincidence of history, a throwback to the great tribal leaders of Africa—Tchaka Zulu, Msiri, and Jomo Kneyatta—a far cry from the conflicting values and goals of America, and of the CIA in its middle-aged mediocrity.” Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 50.

18. Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 65; Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 235–237.

19. The agreement stipulated that during the transition period, military forces in Angola would be kept to 48,000 with 24,000 Portuguese remaining, until they would gradually be withdrawn between October 1, 1975, and February 29, 1976, and 8,000 from each of the liberation movements. *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:210–211, 227 (doc 101, editorial note); 28:233–234 (doc 100); Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 242–243; Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, 2:255–257; “Sec Kissinger Testimony-1/29/76, Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa” (sections B-3 and B-4), folder Angola 092 (Feb-Dec 1976), box 64, Acc 330-79-0049.

20. A spike in global oil prices in the 1970s combined with an increase in Soviet oil production to increase the Kremlin’s hard currency revenue from oil and natural gas exports by an astounding 2250 percent in the 1970s, which allowed Moscow to finance their aid program. Vladislav Zubock, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 249–251.

21. Westad, *Global Cold War*, 230–234.

22. Memcon, Kuanda, Mwaanga, Ford, and Kissinger, 19 Apr 1975, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:236–243 (doc 103); Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 285–286; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 791–792; NSSM 224, 26 May 1975, subj: United States Policy Toward Angola, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:245–246 (doc 105); Response to NSSM 224: United States Policy toward Angola, 13 Jun 1975, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:253–255 (doc 109); “Sec Kissinger Testimony-1/29/76,” B-4; A footnote to the description of Option B an addendum to the response to NSSM 224 stated: “DoD questions whether we have sufficient leverage to influence the Portuguese and Soviets to make this course of action feasible.” Addendum by AF/IG to

Response to NSSM 224, attached to NSC Meeting (briefing book), 27 Jun 1975, Policy Toward Angola (NSSM 224): all in folder Angola 092 1975, box 58, Acc 330-78-0058.

23. Schlesinger's and Chairman Brown's talking points for the meeting stated, "DoD recommends that an assessment be made by CIA on the feasibility of an intensive covert action program which will effectively strengthen the FNLA and UNITA." Joint 8 for Secretary of Defense and Chairman JCS for meeting of NSC (Scheduled 27 June 1975), attached to NSC Meeting (briefing book), 27 Jun 1975, Policy Toward Angola (NSSM 224), folder Angola 092 1975, box 58, Acc 330-78-0058; *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:265–270 (doc 113) (quotes 268 and 269). In an interview with OSD historians, Ford recalled he had a "good relationship" with Clements. Schlesinger, however, he said was "not a very humble person." When Ford was asked whether there was any truth to a report that Schlesinger had sought to remove Clements, Ford responded: "I don't recall that, but if it had been proposed by Schlesinger, I would have opposed it. I recall it being an issue while I was in office." Gerald Ford, interview by Alfred Goldberg and Maurice Matloff, New York, New York, 5 Dec 1990, OSD/HO, 10.

24. Ford, *A Time to Heal*, 324; Gerald Ford, interview by Alfred Goldberg and Stuart Rochester, Washington, DC, 23 Mar 1993, OSD/HO, 25.

25. Clements's quotes, interview with Alfred Goldberg and Roger Trask, 16 May 1996, Dallas, TX, OSD Historical Office, 10–12. Clements spoke somewhat dismissively about Schlesinger's preoccupation with nuclear strategy: "Schlesinger couldn't do anything about [nuclear strategy and strategic doctrine] without going through the National Security Council. Everything he would have to do with respect to the nuclear situation had to be cleared in the White House, under Henry's chairmanship. He and Schlesinger hated each other. It was obvious and everybody knew it. So Schlesinger spent a lot of time in an academic sense concerning himself with the nuances of nuclear exchange. In my judgment it was an absolute waste of time. The idea of mutually assured destruction was not going to change, the targeting had already been done, and MAD ... prevailed. All these other fine points and nuances that he would like to debate endlessly with his court, was a bunch of baloney." *Ibid.*, 17.

26. In February 1970, through NSDM 40, President Nixon changed the name of the covert action approval group to the 40 Committee. Members included the national security adviser as chairman, the deputy secretary of state for political affairs, the deputy secretary of defense, and the director of Central Intelligence. *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. 2, *Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy, 1969–1972*, ed. David C. Humphrey (Washington, DC: GPO, 2006), 418–419 (doc 203); *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:xxxv–xxxvi. At the beginning, Kissinger inquired whether Davis would be joining them. Under Secretary of State Joseph Sisco told Kissinger, "I don't invite people." Kissinger responded, "Well, he's not here. I just wanted to be sure that he was invited." Sisco responded: "It's his area and he should have been." Memo for the record, 40 Committee Meeting, 14 Jul 1975 (quotes), *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:276 (doc 115). Multiple scholars have found that Kissinger had purposely excluded Davis from the meeting. See Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 292; Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 676–677; see also Minutes (Kissinger quote), 14 Jul 1975, 40 Committee Meeting, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:276 (doc 115). Kissinger later expressed his frustration with the African bureau at the state department in his memoir: "Insulated as the bureau was from the Cold War, it provided the ideal sort of environment for the promulgation of a rather inflexible version of Wilsonianism: one basing stability on economic progress, peace on democratic institutions, and international relations on multilateral diplomacy and international law." Because they were not involved in major policy, they developed a "siege mentality in which they transmuted their isolation into a claim to moral superiority, casting themselves as the defenders of moral idealism." Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 800.

27. Chaired by Senator Frank Church (D-ID), the United States Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities was popularly known as the Church Committee. Robert Gates wrote in *From the Shadows*: "Nineteen seventy-five was the worst year in CIA's history." In addition to dealing with a new government in Portugal and civil war in Angola,

Washington faced numerous crises, including the collapse of South Vietnam and the *Mayaguez* incident. During this time, “Colby was constantly testifying, often several times a week, before a number of congressional committees on virtually the entirety of CIA’s history.” See also Gates, *From the Shadows*, 60. Had Nat Davis been at the meeting, he would have argued forcefully against supporting Savimbi. He had warned Kissinger in a May 1, 1975 memo that Savimbi sought arms from “everywhere.” Savimbi’s opportunism would likely cause any covert assistance to quickly be disclosed. Moreover, he warned: “The South Africans have expressed interest in providing financial assistance.” Thus, by covertly aiding the same group, Washington risked appearing to collaborate with Pretoria, which would provoke outrage among majority-ruled Sub-Saharan states. He also cautioned: “We might find ourselves drawn in deeper very fast, as the fighting produces more intense pressures for arms and ammunition—as well as money. The political price we might pay—as reports of bloodshed and alleged atrocities multiply—would, I believe, exceed the possibility of accomplishment.” Davis quoted from his memo in Nathaniel Davis, “The Angolan Decision of 1975: A Personal Memoir,” *Foreign Affairs* 57, no. 1 (Fall 1978): 111.

28. *Ibid.*, 111; Minutes, 40 Committee Meeting 14 Jul 1975 10:30 a.m., *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:276–281 (quotes, 278–280, 286) (doc 115).

29. On July 27, Ford approved a program with added funding. Memo, Executive Secretary of the 40 Committee (Ratliff) for Colby, 28 Jul 1975, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:293 (doc 122). Stockwell explained why the CIA relied on World War II-era weaponry: “Often, the CIA will deliver obsolete American weapons, arguing that World War II left so many scattered weapons around the world they are no longer attributable to the U.S.” Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 59, 78, 86, 208. Stockwell concluded that based on his observations inside Angola, a pair of C-47 gunships (known as “Puff the Magic Dragon” during the Vietnam War) would have been sufficient to break MPLA morale before the Cubans and Soviets dramatically increased their assistance in November. His superior, however, rejected a recommendation to provide these aircraft and the matter was never brought before the 40 Committee (79). Kissinger later recalled in his memoirs not knowing that Stockwell had, “violating orders, visited the Angolan battlefronts and reached the conclusion that the war was winnable.” Had he known, he said that he would certainly have approved Stockwell’s recommendation to “go in quickly with tactical air support and advisors [to] take Luanda and put the MPLA out of business before the Soviets could react.” Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 813–814. Kissinger quotes from Stockwell’s memoir *In Search of Enemies*, 158.

30. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 273; Westad, *Global Cold War*, 208. For instance, at a 40 Committee meeting, Scowcroft announced: “The President has decided to give the South Africans an ocean surveillance system, and this is a departure from our posture.... We are not going to advertise it as a change, but the South Africans will see it as a new position.” Memo for the record, 14 Nov 1975, subj: 40 Committee Meeting, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:341 (doc 137); Arthur Klinghoffer, *The Angolan War: A Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980), 43. After the South African intervention, top officials in the executive branch were interested in keeping South African forces in Angola but were conscious of the political and diplomatic fallout that would aid become public. At a February 13, 1976 40 Committee meeting, for example, JCS Chairman General George Brown asked: “What position is South Africa taking? Are we encouraging them to do more? They may be our only hope. I was told the other day that there are more Cubans in Angola—percentage of the population, that is—than there were Americans in Vietnam at the peak. If the South Africans will stay we ought to help them.” Deputy CIA Director for Operations William Nelson said: “We are talking to them, but have offered no aid.” Scowcroft said, “They’ve asked for enough equipment to choke a horse.” Brown responded, “We can’t touch it.” Scowcroft added, “It wouldn’t go with Congress, and if we went up there with it, it would only set fire to the issue.” Joseph Sisco asked, “What is left that we can put in?” Nelson responded “with some reprogramming we can free” some funding but it was not clear precisely what the target of such funding would be. Memo for the record, 13 Feb 1976, subj: 40 Committee Meeting, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:439 (doc 175).

31. Odd Arne Westad writes, “The governments in Zaire and South Africa intervened, with covert US support, sending troops into Angola to fight against the MPLA.” Westad, *The Cold War: A World History*, 483. John Marcum wrote: “Although Secretary Kissinger denied any ‘collusion’ with them, Pretoria officials insisted that South Africa’s intervention was based upon an understanding with American officials that the United States would match any weaponry made available to the MPLA. To the question of whether Washington had ‘solicited’ South African involvement, Prime Minister Vorster subsequently responded that he would not call anyone who said that a ‘liar.’” Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, 2:271; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 820; William Colby, *Honorable Men: My Life in the CIA* (Simon & Schuster: New York, 1978), 422; Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 298–299; Chester Crocker, *High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood* (New York: Norton, 1992), 49.

32. Neither the notebooks from Schlesinger’s military assistant, Maj. Gen. John Wickham, nor the OSD files consulted by this researcher have uncovered evidence that Schlesinger or his subordinates encouraged the South African Defense Force to intervene in Angola. Stockwell wrote in his memoir about the lack of good air transportation to transport weapons from Zaire to Angola: “The obvious solution of using U.S. Air Force tactical air transports was constantly sought by the agency, but here the magic phone calls didn’t work; they inevitably reached the desk of the secretary of defense, James Schlesinger, who steadfastly said no. Ours was a controversial, covert, CIA program, and Schlesinger wouldn’t let traceable U.S. Air Force planes and crews enter the Angolan airspace.” Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 208. See also Statement by Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Ellsworth, Before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on African Affairs, *Angola: Hearings*, 94th Cong., 2nd sess., 3 Feb 1976, 65 (quote). Later, after being asked directly by Senator Clark whether the Military Attaché’s Office in South Africa shared analysis or information about Angola with the SADF, Ellsworth responded firmly: “The answer to that is no.” When asked whether there had been any coordination with South Africa on Angola, Ellsworth responded: “There has been no coordination that I am aware of, certainly none on the military level.” See Ellsworth testimony, 3 Feb 1976, 77–78.

33. Defense Intelligence Agency, “South Africa: Role of the Military Establishment,” 3 Aug 1976, folder South Africa 1976, box 82, Acc 330-79-0049. The report went on to say: “The rapid political changes in southern Africa, which began with the Portuguese collapse in 1974, may well have prompted the South African military to act more independently and test the limits of political tolerance for its freedom of action.”

34. Moorer quoted in Poole, *JCS and National Policy 1973–1976*, 363, 287. South African and U.S. cover aid for the FNLA and UNITA had begun flowing into Angola in August. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 294; memo, ASD(ISA) for SecDef, 3 Sep 1975, subj: Assistance for South Africa (quote); memo, DepSecDef for DepATP(NSA), 9 Sep 1975, same subj; ltr, DepSecState to DepSecDef, 1 Oct 1975: all in folder South Africa 091.3 1975, box 4, Acc 330-78-0059; memo, Clements for Scowcroft, subj: Assistance for South Africa, 9 Sep, 1975, 186–187 (doc 78); memo, Kissinger for Ford, subj: Cooperation with South Africa on Ocean Surveillance, 8 Nov 1975 (doc 79) (Quote from Harold Horan, NSC Senior Staff Officer for Africa on Ford’s decision found in footnote 4, 187); memo, Scowcroft for Clements, subj: Cooperation with South Africa in Ocean Surveillance, 31 Dec. 1975 (doc 80); memo, Granger and Horan for Scowcroft, subj South African Ocean Surveillance, 15 Jan 1976 (doc 81): all in *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:186–192.

35. Westad, *Global Cold War*, 177. Piero Gleijeses, author of the best scholarly account of Cuba’s role in the Angola civil war, wrote of the Cuban rationale for intervention in Africa: “In Africa, Cuba incurred fewer risks. Whereas in Latin America Havana was operating against legal governments, flouting internal law, and facing the condemnation of the governments of the hemisphere, in Africa it was confronting a colonial power or defending established states.” See also Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 377, and Klinghoffer, *The Angolan War*, 115–116. In October 1967, with the CIA’s assistance, Guevara was hunted down and summarily executed by the Bolivian army after trying to spread a communist insurrection throughout South America. Westad, *Global Cold War*, 178.

36. On October 31, the Interagency Intelligence Memorandum reported: “Several hundred Cuban ‘volunteers’ recently arrived at an MPLA-controlled port.” But the memorandum went on to emphasize they would “probably be used in support and advisory roles” rather than engage in combat themselves. Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, 31 Oct 1975, subj: The Short-Term Outlook for Angola, folder Angola 092 1975, box 58, Acc 330-78-0058.

37. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 9.

38. Memcon, Ford, Antunes, Themido, Kissinger, and Scowcroft, 10 Oct 1975, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:323–336 (doc 131); memo, DoD Foreign Disaster Coordinator Frank Nelson for Clements, 28 Aug 1975 subj: Point Paper: Movement of up to 300,000 Refugees from Angola to Portugal; ltr, Portuguese President Francisco da Costa Gomes to Ford, 27 Aug 1975, received by cable on 2 Sep 1975—see msg, “Foreign Disaster Relief, Angolan Refugees,” 022256Z Sep 1975; memo, Nelson for Clements, 2 Sep 1975, subj: Point Paper: Angolan Refugees; memo, Nelson for Clements, 4 Sep 1975, subj: Angola Refugees”; memo, Nelson for Clements, 10 Oct 1975 subj: Airlift of Angolan Refugee: Status Report; memo, Nelson for Clements, 14 Oct 1975, subj: Airlift of Refugees from Angola to Portugal: Status Report as of 14 October 1975; memo, Nelson for Clements, 4 Nov 1975, subj: Wrap-Up of the Airlift of Angolan Refugees; Status Report, Nelson for Clements, Airlift of Angolan Refugees, 10 October 1975: all in folder Angola 1975, box 58, Acc 330-78-0058.

39. Kelly, *America’s Tyrant*, 217; Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 292. The exact number of South African soldiers is unclear from the available sources. One South African source states that there were 150 South Africans, but Gleijeses wrote that the exact number is unverifiable and the Zulu column was rapidly reinforced by more South African soldiers: “It is likely that by the end of October more than 1,000 SADF soldiers were in Angola (most with Zulu, the others with Foxbat) and their number was rapidly increasing (301).” After World War I, Namibia, or South West Africa, became a mandate of South Africa. In June 1971, however, the International Criminal Court declared Pretoria’s continued occupation of South West Africa illegal and the United Nations Security Council endorsed the ICC ruling in October (Gleijeses, 273).

40. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*, Revised and Expanded Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 329; De Quesada quoted in Report Prepared by the Working Group on Angola, Cuban Involvement in Angola, 22 Oct 1975, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:327 (doc 132). The question about what motivated Castro to intervene has been the subject of scholarly debate. Garthoff writes persuasively: “It is probably more useful to see the major Cuban and South African escalations as roughly coincidental in time, but independent in execution. The political effect, however, was clear; in the eyes of most Africans the South African intervention excused the Soviet-supported move by Cuba. It was also seriously damaging to the FNLA and UNITA movements supported by the United States and China.” Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, 569. For a more thorough discussion of the Cuban operation, see Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 305–308.

41. Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 214.

42. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 305–308; Joint Staff, “Talking Paper on Angola,” 25 Nov 1975, folder Angola 1975, box 58, Acc 330-78-0058. The total approved CIA program was \$31.7 million. Working Group on Angola Report, “Military Materiel Sent to Zaire Under the Angola Covert Paramilitary Program,” 20 Feb 1976, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:453 (doc 181); Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 350–351. John Marcum estimated that when the undervaluation is taken into account, the total program cost amounted to double the amount officially acknowledged. Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, 2:263. Stockwell wrote: “The total budget of \$31.7 million was applied only to the procurement of arms and for IAFEATURE operations. The salaries and operational expenses of the hundreds of CIA staff employees and the CIA facilities involved in the program, certainly totaling several million dollars, were charged to the CIA’s FY76 personnel and support budget, and were not included in the \$31.7 million.”

Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 206. Telegram, State Department to All Diplomatic Posts, Angolan Recognition, 8 Nov 1975, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:331 (doc 135); telegram, State Department to All Diplomatic Posts, 13 Nov 1975, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:333 (doc 136); Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 305–311, 316–317.

43. Stockwell wrote that MiGs did not appear in Angola until March 1976, “when they destroyed a UNITA supply flight at Gago Catinho in eastern Angola.” See Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 182, and memo for the record, 21 Nov 1975 (Clements and Scowcroft quotes), *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:349 (doc 139). The Redeye was a shoulder-fired antiaircraft missile; the SA-7 was a similar Soviet weapon. The TOW (tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided) was an antitank missile. Memo for the record, 21 Nov 1975, subj: 40 Committee Meeting, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:347 (doc 139); see also Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 317–318.

44. It is unclear from the sources whether the “military advisors” CIA recommended would be under CIA or DoD control. See also Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 22 (quote), and Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 679.

45. Memo, Scowcroft for SecState, SecDef, JCS Chairman, DCI, 13 Dec 1975, subj: National Security Study Memorandum 234, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:377 (doc 148).

46. Oral history interview as quoted by Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 332. In a front-page story on the *New York Times* on September 25, Leslie Gelb reported on the existence of U.S. covert aid in Angola to counter a much larger Soviet program, but it had attracted little attention from the public or from other newspapers. Gelb, “U.S., Soviet, China Reported Aiding Portugal, Angola, *New York Times*, 25 Sep 1975, 1. See also Gleijeses’s discussion of the failure of the Gelb article to attract much attention. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 362–365. Gleijeses wrote that the CIA had briefed 19 senators and 56 representatives about IAFEATURE between July 25 and October 31, 1975. Few seemed interested. Biden and Clark quotes found in Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 331. See also Kelly, *America’s Tyrant*, 231–232. According to Stockwell, the chief of station in Angola was instructed to “advise Mobutu and Roberto that Senator Clark had been briefed in very general terms about our program to help Angolan liberation front leaders and to resupply Zaire. Therefore, the two African politicians should be encouraged to promote their interests in Angola, confident that Senator Clark could not turn the conversation to the CIA program.” Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 227–229. Memo for the record, 11 Dec 1975, subj: 40 Committee Meeting, 368–377 (doc 147); memo, Scowcroft for SecState, SecDef, JCS Chairman, DCI, 13 Dec 1975, subj: National Security Study Memorandum 234, 377–378 (doc 148); both in *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. 28; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 826–832. The Amendment’s sponsor was Senator John Tunney (D-CA). Robert David Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (Cambridge, 2006), 221–223.

47. National Security Council Meeting on SALT Options, 4:30 p.m., 22 Dec 1975, 1, 12–15, National Security Adviser’s NSC Meeting File, Ford Library online.

48. Telegram, State Department to All Diplomatic Posts, 13 Nov 1975, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:333 (doc 136); memo, Acting ASD(ISA) for SecDef, 8 Jan 1976, subj: Angolan Policy Option; memo, Brent Scowcroft for the President, 8 Jan 1976; memo, Acting ASD(ISA) for SecDef, 13 Jan 1976, subj: U.S. Options to Reduce Cuban Intervention in Angola: all in folder Angola 092 (Jan) 1976, box 64, Acc 330-79-0049. Scowcroft had advised the president that aerial surveillance not followed by a surface ship deployment “would have to be portrayed as more or less normal monitoring, thus losing any value as a signal.”

49. Soviet long-range AN-22s began airlifting Cubans across the Atlantic after Barbados and Guyana, under U.S. pressure, withdrew landing permission. See Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 367. See also NIO Memo, 12 Feb 1976, subj: Soviet and Cuban Aid to the MPLA from March 1975 to January 1976, box 64, Acc 330-79-0049; Report Prepared by the Working Group on Angola, 2 Apr 1976, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:467–468 (doc 186).

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50. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 325–328; memo, Colby for Kissinger, 23 Dec 1975, subj: South African Decision to Withdraw from Angola, 414 (doc 165); Intelligence Alert Memorandum, 2 Jan 1976, 418 (doc 167); telegram, Department of State to Certain African Diplomatic Posts, 15 Jan 1976, 425 (doc 171); all in *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. 28. See also Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 341, and Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 233.
51. Memo for the record, 3 Feb 1976, subj: 40 Committee Meeting, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:428–436 (doc 173).
52. Ellsworth testimony, 3 Feb 1976, 74; Westad, *Global Cold War*, 241 (Soviet official quote).
53. Background Notes on Zaire, Department of State, January 1975, folder Zaire 092 25 May 1976, Acc 330-79-0049; memo. John Reed, Jr., Director Africa Region, ISA for DepDir, Security Assistance Plans and Requirements, 2 Dec 1976, subj: President’s Tentative Mark for Security Assistance, FY 1977–1979, folder ISA 1976, box 37, Acc 330-79-0037; Report Prepared by the Working Group on Angola, Military Materiel Sent to Zaire Under the Angola Covert Paramilitary Program, 20 Feb 1976, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:453–454 (doc 181); memo for the record, 40 Committee Meeting, 3 Feb 1976 4 p.m., 428–436; Operations Advisory Group, meeting minutes, 12 Mar 1976, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:454–461 (doc 182).
54. Ltr, George Bush to Chairman of House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense), 18 Mar 1976, *FRUS 1969–1976*, 28:462 (doc 183); memo, background paper for SecDef, 12 Nov 1976, subj: Cuban Activities in Angola, folder Angola 092 (Feb-Dec) 1976, box 64, Acc 330-79-0049.
55. Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 831 (quote); Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 333–334.
56. Meredith, *The Fate of Africa*, 323; DeRoche, *Black, White, Chrome*, 210–211.
57. See Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 916–957. NSC, meeting minutes, 11 May 1976, “Secretary Kissinger’s African Trip,” 2–3, 10, National Security Adviser’s NSC Meeting File, Ford Library online. The moderate Africans were Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Samora Machel of Mozambique, and Seretse Khama of Botswana.
58. Rumsfeld, interview on ABC-TV *Issues and Answers* (quote), 28 Mar 1976, box 1, folder 000.77 SD 1976, box 1, Acc 330-79-0049.
59. “Friendly tyrant” quote in Meredith, *The Fate of Africa*, 307. The Republic of Congo (Leopoldville) gained its independence from Belgium on June 30, 1960. For a good survey of the violent transition from a Belgian colony to Mobutu’s dictatorship, see Meredith, *The Fate of Africa*, 93–115. Meredith devoted a chapter to Mobutu’s reign and revealingly titled it “The Great Plunderer.” He had been born Joseph-Desire Mobutu before changing his name to Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga in 1972. When translated from Ngbendu, the name meant “the warrior who knows no defeat because of his endurance and inflexible will and is all powerful, leaving fire in his wake as he goes from conquest to conquest.” See Sean Kelly, *America’s Tyrant: The CIA and Mobutu of Zaire* (Washington: American University Press, 1993), 193–198; Meredith, *The Fate of Africa*, 299.
60. Memo, ASD(ISA) for SecDef, 20 Feb 1973, subj: A Personal Message from Zaire’s President Mobutu; memo, SecDef for the President, 4 Oct 1973, subj: Visit of Zaire’s President Mobutu: both in folder WXYZ 1973, box 91, Acc 330-78-0001.
61. JCSM-136-75 for SecDef, 18 Apr 1975, folder Zaire 091.3 (X-1211) (18 Apr 75), box 86, Acc 330-78-0058; *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. E-6 (docs 265 and 271); Poole, *JCS and National Policy 1973–1976*, 291–292.
62. *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 283).
63. *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. E-6 (docs 294 and 298); NSC, meeting minutes, “Secretary Kissinger’s African Trip,” 11 May 1976, 5, 8–10, National Security Adviser’s NSC Meeting File, Ford Library online; Poole, *JCS and National Policy 1973–1976*, 293–294.

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64. Msg, Kinshasa 5279 to SecDef, 191824Z Jun 1976, folder Zaire 1976, box 88, Acc 330-79-0049.
65. Memo for DepDir Security Assistance Plans and Requirements from John Reed Jr., Director, Africa Region, ISA, 2 Dec 1976, subj: President's Tentative Mark for Security Assistance, FY 1977-1979, folder ISA 1976, box 37, Acc 330-79-0037; Poole, *JCS and National Policy 1973-1976*, 294-295; ISA, "Follow-Up Actions-Visit to Zaire," 20 Oct 1976, folder ZAIRE 1976, box 88, Acc 330-79-0049.
66. Betrayed by his own military and sick with cancer, Mobutu escaped Zaire on a cargo plane owned by Jonas Savimbi and fled to Morocco, where he died four months later. Meredith, *The Fate of Africa*, 534-536. In 2011, *Time* magazine would recognize Mobutu as the "archetypal African dictator." Ishaan Tharoor, "Down with Dictators: Mobutu Sese Seko," 20 Oct 2011, http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article0,28804,2097426_2097427_2097458,00.html.
67. Memo, SecNav for SecDef, 22 Mar 1973, subj: Closure of Kagnev Station, Ethiopia; ltr, DepSecDef to DepSecState, 17 Apr 1973; memo, DepSecDef for the President, 5 May 1973, subj: Kagnev Station, Ethiopia: all in folder Ethiopia 323.3 1973, box 66, Acc 330-78-0001.
68. Westad, *Global Cold War*, 254.
69. Memo, Rear Adm. Murphy for Staff Secretary NSC, 29 Mar 1973, subj: Developments in Ethiopia; memo, Acting SecDef for the President, 2 May 1973, subj: Visit of Emperor Haile Selassie: both in folder Ethiopia 1973, box 66, Acc 330-78-0001.
70. *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (docs 88 and 93); NSDM 231 for SecState and SecDef, 14 Aug 1973; memo, ASD(ISA) for DepSecDef, 6 Sep 1973; subj: Reply to Ethiopia's Request for Security Assistance: both in folder Ethiopia 973, box 66, Acc 330-78-0001.
71. *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 101). P-3 staging was not pursued.
72. *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 108); memo, Kissinger for SecDef and DepSecState, 27 Apr 1974, subj: United States Assistance to Ethiopia, folder Ethiopia 1974, box 61, Acc 330-78-0011.
73. *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (docs 112, 116, 119 and 131). Haile Selassie died in captivity on August 27, 1975.
74. *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 140).
75. *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 141).
76. Poole, *JCS and National Policy 1973-1976*, 298; *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 137).
77. *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 143). In October the administration notified Congress of its intent to sell 16 F-5Es (doc 149). See also memo, DirDSAA for DepSecDef, 10 Oct 1975, subj: System Program Director's Report on International Fighter Program, folder 452 (F-G) 1975, box 49, Acc 330-78-0058.
78. Poole, *JCS and National Policy 1973-1976*, 298-300; ltr, ASD(ISA) to DepUsecState for Political Affairs, 22 Sep 1975, folder Ethiopia 1975, box 63, Acc 330-78-0058. The kidnapped Americans were released on January 9, 1976.
79. NSSM 233 for SecDef et al., 23 Oct 1975; memo, DepSecDef for ATP(NSA), 4 Dec 1975, subj: The Future of Kagnev Station, folder Ethiopia 1975, box 63, Acc 330-78-0058. NSSM 233 is printed in *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 150).
80. *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (docs 154 and 156).
81. NSSM 248 for SecState et al., 13 Nov 1976, subj: U.S. Policy Toward Ethiopia, attached to memo, Staff Secretary NSC for DepSecState et al., 11 Dec 1976; memo, SecDef for ATP(NSA), 16 Dec 1976, subj: US Policy Towards Ethiopia: all in folder E 1976, box 67, Acc 330-79-0049. Documents also printed in *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol. E-6 (docs 167, 170 and 171).

82. JCSM-401-76 for SecDef, 6 Dec 1976; memo, ASD(ISA) for SecDef, 21 Dec 1976, subj: Ethiopia-Kagnew Station; ltr, SecDef to SecState, 23 Dec 1976; both in folder E 1976, box 67, Acc 330-79-0049; Poole, *JCS and National Policy 1973–1976*, 301.

83. DIAAPPR 4-76, DIA Intelligence Appraisal, 9 Jan 1976; memo, DepSecDef Ellsworth for SecDef, 19 Jul 1976, subj: Communist and US Military Equipment Shipments to Africa: both in folder Africa 1976, box 64, Acc 330-79-0049; *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 50). The Soviets supplied their clients with MiG aircraft. Although 1967 legislation prevented the United States from providing similar weaponry, pro-Western governments were able to acquire sophisticated equipment from European sources. Thus, Zaire arranged a \$100 million purchase of French Mirage jets.

84. *FRUS 1969–1976*, vol. E-6 (doc 50); ltr, SecState to DepSecDef, 17 May 1976; ltr, DepSecDef to SecState, 28 May 1976; memcon, subj: Meeting between Kenyan Defense Minister James S. Gichuru and SecDef, 1100, 16 Jun 1976, folder K 1976, box 73, Acc 330-79-0049.

85. CJCS Brown to SecDef, 8 Jul 1976; note by Rear Adm. Holcomb to SecDef, 10 Jul 1976 with SecDef handwritten notation, “OK DR”; memo, Rear Adm. Holcomb for ATP(NSA), 12 Jul 1976, subj: Short-Term US Military Assistance to Kenya: all in folder K 1976, box 73, Acc 330-79-0049.

86. Meredith, *Fate of Africa*, 243–245.

87. Clive Foss, “Cuba’s African Adventures,” *History Today* 60, no. 3 (Mar 2010): 14–16.