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Ex-C.I.A. Man Charges Agency Misled Congress on Angola Role

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By SEYMOUR M. HERSH

A former intelligence agent, in a secretly published book, has accused high-level officials of the Central Intelligence Agency of misleading Congress and the public about the scope of United States involvement in the 1975 Angolan civil war.

John Stockwell, former chief of the C.I.A.'s Angolan task force, writes in his book, "In Search of Enemies," that the agency, initially without the knowledge of the White House, Congress or the State Department, used Americans as military advisers in Angola. There was no immediate response from the C.I.A. yesterday.

Mr. Stockwell, who resigned in disillusionment from the C.I.A. in 1977 after 12 years as a clandestine operative in Africa and Vietnam, also says in the book that the C.I.A. was secretly underwriting various efforts around the world to recruit mercenaries to fight on behalf of two United States-supported factions in Angola—a charge that the C.I.A. had previously denied.

More than \$39 million was authorized by President Ford in 1975 and early 1976 in covert support of the two groups: the National Front for the Liberation of Angola, headed by Holden Roberto, and the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola, led by Jonas Savimbi.

Marxist Group Triumphed

A third faction, which eventually gained control over most of Angola after independence from Portugal was declared in November 1975, was the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, headed by Dr. Agostinho Neto, a Marxist intellectual who is now president.

The C.I.A.'s secret operations inside Angola came at a time when the agency was undergoing intense public and Congressional scrutiny for its illegal domestic spying activities and its assassination attempts against foreign leaders.

Because of those inquiries, it was all the more disillusioning, Mr. Stockwell writes, that William E. Colby, then the Director of Central Intelligence, repeatedly "misled Congressmen about what we were doing in Angola."

"He was feeling them patently false information about the ongoing Angolan operation," Mr. Stockwell adds of Mr. Colby, "depriving them of the full information which they needed to perform their Constitutional role."

No Response From C.I.A.

There was no immediate response from the agency yesterday. Mr. Colby, its former director, could not be reached for comment. Mr. Stockwell writes that the C.I.A.'s decision to begin using American advisers on the ground was in defiance not only of Congress but also of the 40 Committee, the high-level Government group that approves all intelligence operations.

"The 40 Committee wanted no Americans directly involved in the fighting, but we did it anyway," Mr. Stockwell writes.

"For cover purposes" inside the Government, he adds, the C.I.A., in its cables, called the advisers whom it had placed inside Angola "intelligence gatherers," although their intelligence effort was always subordinate to their advisory activities."

To Be Published Today

The Stockwell book which is 285 pages, will be published and distributed to bookstores today by W. W. Norton & Co. It was not submitted to the C.I.A. for prior review. The Justice Department is now seeking civil damages from Frank Snapp, author of a C.I.A. exposé last December whose book also was written and published without prior clearance.

The current Director of Central Intelligence, Adm. Stansfield Turner, has repeatedly expressed concern about the inability of the agency to enforce secrecy agreements with authors. It could not be learned whether the agency had received any advance word from any source about the publication of the Stockwell book.

Mr. Stockwell's sharpest comments came when he described what he considered to be the constantly deteriorating integrity of C.I.A. officials.

Agents Lied to Each Other

"In the Angolan operation," he wrote, "we were now lying to each other, even while we read and wrote cables which directly contradicted those lies. In fact, there were several levels of untruth functioning simultaneously, different stories for different aspects of our activities; one for the working group, another for unwitting State Department personnel, yet another for the U.S. Congress."

"By this point in our careers," he added, "we would not falter as we switched from one story to the next." At the time, Mr. Stockwell asserted, many of those involved did not even consider themselves to be lying "and Colby might have passed a lie-detector test while he was giving the Senate essentially false briefings."

The misleading and lying seemed to reach its culmination, Mr. Stockwell suggested, when Senator Dick Clark, Democrat of Iowa and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on Africa, visited Angola in August 1975. The Senator was accompanied by Richard M. Moose, a committee aide who now is Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.

In advance of his meeting, Mr. Stockwell wrote, C.I.A. headquarters sent a cable instructing senior C.I.A. officials in neighboring Zaire, parts of which served as a support base for the agency's Angolan operations, to insure that the Senator learned only what the agency wanted him to learn.

Can't 'Trust Senators'

Mr. Stockwell wrote that when he complained to his colleagues about such steps, he was told that "you couldn't trust senators" and that "if Clark was going to mess around our program, talking to Africans, then we damn well better see that our own agents put their best feet forward."

He learned of the special circumstances surrounding the Clark visit, Mr. Stockwell wrote, only upon reading what the C.I.A. calls a "soft file" on the Senator. He explained that a "softfile" is considered unofficial inside the agency and thus could not be turned over to outsiders under the Freedom of Information Act.

"Such files are not registered in the agency's official records system," Mr. Stockwell added, "and hence can never be disclosed."

Senator Clark left Africa highly suspicious about the true role of the C.I.A. in Angola, Mr. Stockwell wrote, but was unable to "disprove our cover story." He also was hesitant to do so, Mr. Stockwell wrote, because he had been given a highly classified briefing about some of the C.I.A.'s covert supply of arms and other activities in support of Mr. Roberto and Mr. Savimbi, the pro-Western Angolan guerrilla leaders.

Entrapment by Information

"He could not precipitate a public debate because he was now muzzled by the C.I.A.—he had given his tacit oath not to expose the information he received," Mr. Stockwell wrote. "Dozens of other legislators were similarly entrapped, as Colby methodically continued his briefings throughout the program—35 briefings altogether between January 1975 and January 1976."

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