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U.S. MILITARY TECHNICAL ADVISORY TEAM II
FOR
REPUBLIC OF ZAIRE

17 June 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE

THRU: THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: Military Technical Advisory Team (MTAT) Report

1. Fifteen months ago I headed MTAT I to Zaire. My personal views at that time are at Enclosure 1. I have just completed MTAT II to Zaire and the report is at Enclosure 2. Again, I take this opportunity to set down my personal views.

2. The essential difference between my findings last year and this year is the potential threat to Zaire. Last year I described the threat as rather "ill-defined." As a result, the recommendation was to "indicate a willingness to tangibly assist Zaire in modernizing its defense force through increased FMS credits and/or grant aid." That recommendation was appropriate, given the circumstances, and was implemented (FMS credits increased from \$3.5 million in FY 75 to \$19 million in FY 76 and \$28 million proposed for FY 77).

3. Today the circumstances have changed dramatically as a result of recent events in Angola. There is now a well-defined potential threat which will mature in one to three years. Additionally, to simply further increase FMS credits under current procedures would not only exacerbate the economic woes of Zaire, but would be viewed by GOZ as non-responsive to their legitimate needs.

4. Zaire will never be able to deter the potential threat without substantial outside assistance. This report is a military technical assessment of the level of effort required to deter that threat. This suggested level is substantial (approximately \$465 million between now and 1982) as contrasted to prior USG efforts in Africa, but is a modest effort

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SUBJECT: Military Technical Advisory Team (MTAT) Report

in building a modern military force, and is based on a realistic appraisal of the absorptive capacity of the GOZ. Moreover, time is not on our side since there remain in Angola 10 to 15 thousand Cuban combat troops and some 500 Soviet advisors to assist in organizing and training a modern, well-equipped military force. Further, there are reportedly some 2,000 Angolans currently training in Eastern Bloc countries.

5. My Terms of Reference asked for my "assessment as to the actual threats and related Zairian requirements." In response, I feel that the Soviets have a grand design to control Southern Africa. In fact, it may not be unrealistic to state that the USSR considers Southern Africa as an active area of operations. We saw them successfully execute a bold plan which drew Angola into the Soviet sphere. There is no doubt in my mind that, given the opportunity, they will dedicate the resources needed to violently overthrow the minority regimes in Rhodesia, and perhaps Southern Africa, replacing them with USSR-oriented black African factions. Pro-Western Zaire occupies a strategic geopolitical position in Africa. An economically viable Zaire possessing a credible military deterrent will assist markedly in countering Soviet efforts in that part of the world. Additionally, it is the only country in the region wherein relatively well-developed facilities and airfields could be made available for US contingency operations in Africa and adjacent areas. Accordingly, it seems entirely plausible to me for the Soviets to use surrogates (Angolans and ex-Katanganese Gendarmes) armed with sophisticated weapons already in Angola to insure the demise of the pro-Western regime in Zaire, replacing it with a pro-Soviet revolutionary movement.

6. In short, I believe the potential threat is a very real one and that if Zaire does not obtain substantial assistance as a matter of urgency, then the US will, in about three years, find that its only available option to prevent Zaire from falling into the Soviet orbit to be direct intervention. Militarily, then, something closely akin to the contents of this package is justified. What about the political and economic considerations?

7. Politically, in my view, the US is committed to increased military aid to Zaire. President Mobutu is looking to his old and trusted friend, the United States, as his only dependable source of military modernization. We have again

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3

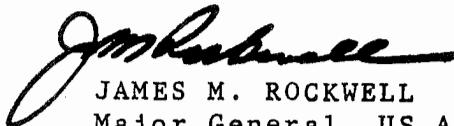
SUBJECT: Military Technical Advisory Team (MTAT) Report

raised his expectations by dispatching to Zaire, in quick succession, the Secretary of State; the MTAT; and the Secretary of Defense. In the eyes of Mobutu, that does not equate to a bottom line of status quo--nor of tokenism. It means we have signalled to him, and to the Soviets, our willingness to offer Zaire the military assistance required for its legitimate self defense.

8. In the economic sphere, we are confronted with a dilemma: How to provide assistance without adding unacceptably to Zaire's already heavy debt burden? The current formula of providing assistance under standard procedures of the FMS program would be counterproductive to US economic assistance efforts and would only postpone the future economic development of Zaire. In consequence, if we are not to turn our backs on them, and thus lose a valuable ally in Central Africa, a new approach to procedures for military assistance must be sought. It appears the only available viable options are Grant Aid or FMS credits with Waiver of Liability for Repayment.

9. In conclusion, it is my considered judgement that, in view of recent Soviet actions and long term objectives in Southern Africa, a demonstration of US resolve to assist pro-Western nations in the area will be vitally significant and a strategic imperative in the foreseeable future. The modest package proposed in this report is designed to achieve that purpose and will provide Zaire the minimum force required for a credible military deterrent.

- 2 Encls
1. Memo, 7 Mar 75
(CONFIDENTIAL)
2. Report (SECRET)



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