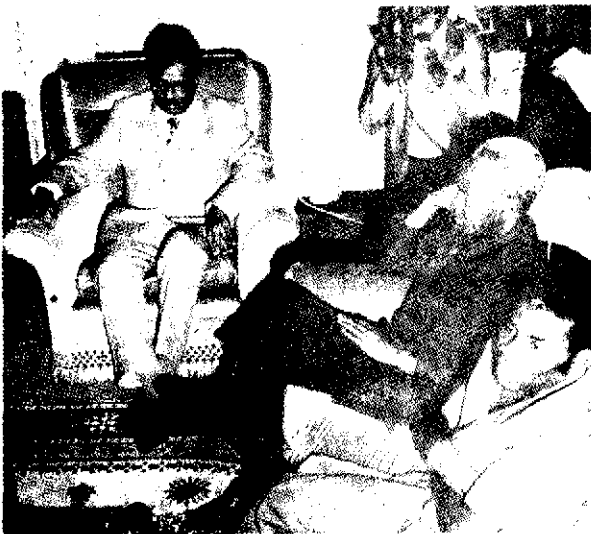


portugal and africa

angola

MPLA RESOLVES LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS

In August MPLA held its first Congress in 12 years in Lusaka having as its critical task the working out of internal divisions among the leadership of three separate factions. It was more than a month before settlement was reached, and this was not accomplished without considerable pressures from the heads of state of Tanzania, Zambia, Zaire and the Congo People's Republic. (*Africa News*, Sept. 9, 1974) The 400 delegates attending the Congress were divided along factional lines representing the three tendencies within MPLA. The present leadership group led by Dr. Neto and the 'eastern rebellion' group led by Daniel Chipenda were each represented by 165 delegates and there were 70 delegates representing the 'active rebellion' group of Pinto de Andrade (*Times of Zambia*, Lusaka, Aug. 15, 1974) After 2 weeks of meetings it appeared that the Congress had become mired in irreconcilable conflict and that talks had broken down. (*Daily News*, Dar es Salaam, Aug. 29, 1974) Later at the Ninth Summit Conference of the Heads of State of East and Central Africa held in Brazzaville August 31 to September 2, the leaders of the three tendencies were persuaded to reach a unity agreement by Presidents Nguabi, Nyerere, Kaunda and Mobutu. At the same conference a resolution (now referred to as the Brazzaville Declaration) backed by member states pledged full support for the complete independence of Angola. (*Africa News*, Sept. 5, 1974)



At the summit conference in Brazzaville left to right: Dr. Agostinho Neto, MPLA, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and President Marien Nguabi of the Congo

An MPLA communique issued on September 2 outlined the new leadership—the president of MPLA remains Dr. Agostinho Neto, with two vice-presidents, Daniel Chipenda and Pinto de Andrade. A Political Bureau composed of nine members is to consist of three members from each group, and a Central Committee of 39 members which will have 16 members from Neto's group, 13 from Chipenda's faction and ten from de Andrade's group. (MPLA communique, Brazzaville, Sept. 2, 1974)

The full political background and implications of the divisions within MPLA is not yet completely clear. Neto charges the split emerged with an assassination plot against him in March 1973 which he claims was a conspiracy led by Chipenda. (*Jeune Afrique*, Paris, Sept. 14, 1974) Neto was reported to have been prepared to resign if any merger with FNLA occurred (*Southern Africa*, October 1974), however "tactical unity" with FNLA now seems one of the points on which there is some agreement among the leaders of the three factions. Neto is now on record as favoring a united front with FNLA as long as MPLA is not forced to make too many concessions. Chipenda had complained that Neto's leadership has become "elitist" and "dictatorial" and that democratic principles have not operated under his presidency. On the other hand Chipenda credited Neto with being largely responsible for sustaining the struggle over the years, but said Neto must "abandon his autocratic rule". (BBC interview, "This Week in Africa", August 24, 1974) In another interview, with *O Provincia de Angola*, Chipenda said he believed MPLA to be the vanguard of the Angolan people, but added that he recognized that a common political front with FNLA and other groups was necessary to achieve independence. (*Daily News*, Dar es Salaam, Aug. 23, 1974) In contrast Neto has said he would not accept any of the new political organizations which have emerged in Angola since the Lisbon coup. (*Times*, London, Aug. 26, 1974) Chipenda has also indicated that his faction favors the recognition of the right of self-determination of the people of the Cabinda enclave, and may present another point of contention. (BBC interview, "Focus on Africa", Sept. 3, 1974)

The clash between Neto and Chipenda has been interpreted as largely personal and the emergence of the de Andrade faction is seen as an appeal for the democratic airing of differences within MPLA. (*Jeune Afrique*, Paris, Sept. 14, 1974)

The Black African press has lamented the divisive atmosphere which pervades Angolan liberation movement politics at this critical time in the nation's history, and many fear the road to independence is even less certain given the present realities. (*Daily News*, Dar es Salaam, Aug. 29, 1974)