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06. Memcon	Memorandum of conversation between President George Bush and Dr. Jónas Savimbi, President of UNITA (5 pp.)	10/7/91	(b)(1)	S

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- P-1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
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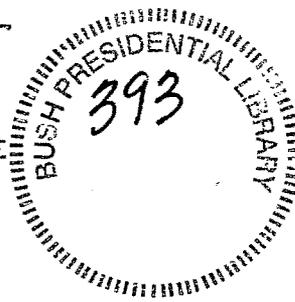
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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- (b)(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Dr. Jonas Savimbi, President of UNITA (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
The Vice President
Lawrence Eagleburger, Deputy Secretary of State
John Sununu, Chief of Staff
Marlin Fitzwater, Assistant Secretary to the President and Press Secretary
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Hank Cohen, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs
Ted McNamara, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs
Walter Kansteiner, NSC Director for African Affairs

Dr. Jonas Savimbi, President of UNITA
Jeremias Chitunda, Vice President of UNITA
Tony Da Costa Fernandes, Foreign Minister
Jardo Muekalia, U. S. Representative of UNITA

DATE, TIME: October 7, 1991, 10:20 - 11:00 a.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

President Bush: I am delighted to see you Dr. Savimbi and also very pleased by the reports at the reception which you received on your return for the first time in many years to Luanda at the end of the fighting. The reports of the crowd size and the enthusiasm of the reception were very encouraging. Is this true?
(U)

Dr. Savimbi: Yes, and I am also very pleased at the very consistent and supportive role that the U.S. has played. The U.S. assistance with the Soviet Union was particularly helpful. I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for helping out during the visit here to Washington of President dos Santos by pressing him to proceed with the Peace Accords implementation and to move toward elections in September 1992. Since the meeting in Washington there has been more talk about September and less talk of holding the elections later or delaying them. (U)

President Bush: Would September be the best time? (U)

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Dr. Savimbi: Yes, September would be the best time. (U)

President Bush: Is the Angolan government committed to the peace process? (C)

Dr. Savimbi: Yes, no one really wants to return to armed conflict which we have had for so many years and which has so hurt the country. (C)

To achieve the objective what we need from the U.S. is continuing pressure, because Angola is still a one party state. The MPLA uses their administration to pressure various organizations and people throughout Angolan society. The U.S. needs to continue to pressure the government, to commit itself to a democratic process. Only in this way would the government respond and abide the accords fully. (S)

The problem of getting troops to assembly points seems to be solved at this point. The biggest problem of the moment is the need to transform the UNITA into a political movement. It needs offices; it needs vehicles; it needs the structure of a political party. Yet this is very difficult to accomplish because much has been confiscated for example, the houses and other buildings that it had in Luanda before the civil war have been confiscated and thus far it has not been able to get this property back. (S)

I think that if this difficulty of reorganizing and getting UNITA under way as a political movement is solved then the problem of food would also be easily solved. With respect to this effort to form itself into a political party, I know that the U.S. is committed to this and is trying to help. I understand some of the restraints about aid, but we need assistance for the people. We need resources which includes even basic things such as water and electricity. (C)

President Bush: Where will you be spending most of your time and will you be located in Luanda or in villages out in the interior? (C)

Dr. Savimbi: Our main office will be in Luanda. (U)

President Bush: What about dos Santos, how is he doing? (U)

Dr. Savimbi: President dos Santos is trying to organize himself and his party in the South, but at present he is also remaining in Luanda. (C)

President Bush: This is an exciting time for Angola, a very difficult time. Is there a peaceful solution in progress and to what extent might there be leftwing resistance to any movement towards a peaceful solution? (C)

Dr. Savimbi: We originally thought the majority of the MPLA wanted a peaceful solution. But we now discover that probably the majority of the MPLA does not want it. As an example, when dos Santos came back to Luanda with the accord signed, he went to

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the same square where I had such a huge welcome and drew a crowd which was only half the size of mine. (c)

President Bush: When you were in Luanda were the supporters in the square people from Luanda? (c)

Dr. Savimbi: Yes, from Luanda. (U)

The President: Are there any Cubans left? (c)

Dr. Savimbi: There are only a few left. I estimate about five to seven thousand specialists still in Angola. This is of some concern to us because all of these personnel have military backgrounds. (c)

President Bush: Do the soldiers truly not want to return to Cuba? (c)

Dr. Savimbi: They are staying because they are afraid to return thinking about what might happen in Cuba, and what their future might be there. (c)

President Bush: They may be right. (U)

Dr. Savimbi: They have jobs. They are not engaged in combat. They are not in uniform and a substantial number of them are in Cabinda. (U)

President Bush: How are things in Cabinda? How is the oil exploration going? (U)

Minister Da Costa Fernandes: The exploration is going along rather well. The French are engaged in research and exploration. They have discovered new fields. They hope to reach 500,000 barrels a day in Angola. This represents about \$750 million a year for the government. (c)

President Bush: This is a substantial amount of money which could go for a number of programs. Hank what is our situation? (c)

Assistant Secretary Cohen: We had a request for \$28 million in money to support implementation of the Peace Accords, and we expect Congress will give us most of it. Then it would be a termination point so that none of the aid would be given after the election campaign itself begins, therefore the cutoff would be July, 1992. (S)

President Bush: We better get that aid in there before the elections. Think the elections will be fair? (S)

Dr. Savimbi: In this respect the role of the U.S. and others who would be international monitors in the elections would be very important. After 16 years of warfare against UNITA the government is certainly not going to put down power and allow it

to be at the disposal of UNITA or others. The MPLA will stall and cheat. (S)

President Bush: In what manner would the elections be conducted? Parliamentary style elections or constituencies? Will you go head-to-head with dos Santos? (C)

Dr. Savimbi: First there would be presidential elections followed by elections for National Assembly. (U)

President Bush: Do you think you can whip dos Santos? (C)

Dr. Savimbi: I believe we can. (U)

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Dr. Savimbi: The people would never support him; they would wish to defeat those who had brought Cubans into Angola. The people want to reward those that fought the Cubans. (C)

President Bush: It seems like a long time from now until September 1992 when the elections come along. (U)

Dr. Savimbi: It takes a long time to register people and to organize such an election. (U)

President Bush: This is true even here in the United States where our political structures are much firmer. I think the idea of a free and fair election is good news and progress. You have been struggling all these years. I am sure the reception you got in Luanda must have been very uplifting. (U)

Dr. Savimbi: Yes, it was good reception. It exceeded our expectations. I was pleased. (U)

President Bush: How did you get the word out about coming back to Luanda? Was it by radio or by some other means? (U)

Dr. Savimbi: Yes, radio. You know the U.S. provided us with that radio; it has a powerful reach. (C)

President Bush: What about the rest of your trip? (U)

Dr. Savimbi: I will be meeting with businessmen, the Secretary General in New York, and then I am going on to Houston. (U)

President Bush: I am going to Houston once I'm finished here in Washington. That is where I am going to retire. (U)

Dr. Savimbi: I wish you good luck in the coming elections. I am sure it is going to be a success; you are a shoe-in. (C)

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President Bush: I'm not so sure. These things can change very fast in this country. Congratulations, Dr. Savimbi, for your support for the progress in Angola and good luck in the future and in the elections. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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