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SOON FORGET THE MATTER. INDEED, WEST MIGHT DRAW THE LESSON THAT SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD WERE MORE BENIGN THAN SOME THOUGHT AT PRESENT."

3. DURING COURSE OF SAME CONVERSATION, ZHURKIN ALSO HAD CLAIMED THAT SOVIETS HAD NO TROOPS OR MILITARY ADVISORS IN ANGOLA, SOUGHT NO BASES OR ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES, AND WOULD NOT SEEK TO IMPOSE A PARTICULAR GOVERNMENT. EVENTUAL GOVERNMENT MIGHT CONSIST OF MPLA ALONE OR BE A COALITION, HE ADDED. THE DECISION ON ANGOLA WOULD BE FOR THE OAU, ZHURKIN SAID. EVERYONE INCLUDING THE USSR, WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT IT.

4. IN CONVERSATION WITH PRESS ATTACHE SAME DAY, TASS CHIEF OF FOREIGN INFORMATION YURIY KORNILOV TOOK SOMEWHAT HARDER LINE, BUT ALSO ENDED ON AMBIGUOUS NOTE RE FOREIGN INTERVENTION. KORNILOV CLAIMED JAN 3 PRAVOA ARTICLE REPRESENTED NO CHANGE IN SOVIET POSITION AND WAS IN LINE WITH PREVIOUS STATEMENTS AND JAN 6 IZVESTIYA EDITORIAL. ANGOLA WAS "IDEOLOGICAL" QUESTION, A MATTER OF "PRINCIPLE" FOR USSR, SAID KORNILOV, AND THEREFORE SOVIET POLICY COULD NOT CHANGE. LIKE ZHURKIN, KORNILOV CLAIMED SOVIETS HAVE NO MATERIAL OR MILITARY INTERESTS IN ANGOLA, BUT, WHEN PRESSED, HE AGREED THAT DEGREE OF SOVIET AND ESPECIALLY CUBAN SUPPORT PLACE ANGOLA SITUATION "IN A DIFFERENT CATEGORY", AND HE OPINED THAT WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES (WHICH HE THOUGHT HAD ALREADY BEEN ANNOUNCED) COULD BE KEY TO PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF CONFLICT.

5. ON PUBLIC SIDE, PRAVOA JAN 9 USES REPORT BY ITS CORRESPONDENT KOROVNIKOV FROM ADDIS ABABA TO CITE SOUTH AFRICAN "SUNDAY TIMES" TO EFFECT THAT "RACIST GOVERNORS HAVE ALLEGEDLY AGREED TO WITHDRAW THEIR FORCES FROM ANGOLA ON THE CONDITION THAT THE SECURITY OF SAR INTERESTS IN NAMIBIA AND QUIET ON ITS FRONTIERS WILL BE GUARANTEED." THRUST OF SURROUNDING TEXT IS THAT SOUTH AFRICANS PRIMARILY MOTIVATED BY DESIRE TO KEEP HOLD ON NAMIBIA, BUT THERE IS NO EXPLICIT COMMENT ON POSSIBILITY OF SAR WITHDRAWAL.

6. FINALLY, JAN 9 CENTRAL PRESS CARRIES TEXT OF AUTHORIZED TASS
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STATEMENT DENYING PRESENCE OF SOVIET MILITARY VESSELS OR EXISTENCE OF "SPECIAL" MOVEMENTS "NEAR" ANGOLA COAST. DENIAL DOES NOT OF COURSE TREAT NON-MILITARY VESSELS OR MILITARY VESSELS AND MOVEMENTS WHICH ARE NOT SPECIAL OR NEAR COAST BY SOVIET DEFINITION, BUT IT DEMONSTRATES SENSITIVITY ON INTERVENTION ISSUE AND SHOULD MAKE IT marginally HARDER FOR SOVIETS TO PUT PRESSURE ON ANGOLA FROM THE SEA.

7. COMMENT: NONE OF THESE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS COMMIT SOVIETS TO ANY SPECIFIC COURSE OF ACTION, BUT ALL SUGGEST THEY ARE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR IMAGE ON EVE OF OAU SUMMIT. IN ANY CASE, AT THIS POINT THEY APPEAR TO HAVE LITTLE TO LOSE BY ADOPTING MORE REASONABLE PUBLIC POSTURE.

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