

The Battle for Angola's Oil

By KHADIJA SHARIFE

Resource-rich Angola was once known as the scene of Africa's longest-running civil war. Today, life expectancy hovers around 44 years—not unlike that of an average Briton living in the 1800s. Over 70 percent of the population lives in poverty, and the country has one of the highest child mortality rates in the world. And the nation's lifetime dictator of 30 years, Jose Dos Santos, leader of the liberation-party-turned-permanent-government, the MPLA, does not appear to have lost his lust for the throne.

Under Dos Santos's watch, since 1993, Angola's oil reserves have flowed into the coffers of the regime's corrupt wabenzi elites as well as multinationals via opaquely structured oil-backed loans. The MPLA initially justified these loans as a means of securing arms and revenue to fight UNITA, an armed movement led by U.S.-backed warlord Jonas Savimbi, also aligned with Portugal's secret police and apartheid South Africa. Today, the corrupt ruling party is devouring the nation's resources and its future.

Despite the civil war, during which the United States sought to politically destabilize the government, the MPLA nevertheless provided the United States with cheap oil via U.S. multinationals like Gulf, which supplied 65 percent of Angola's export earnings during the Reagan years. The MPLA, meanwhile, invested 60 percent of its oil revenues into arms and much of the remainder went into private gain. Presently, oil revenues account for 80-90 percent of export earnings, with oil chiefly exported to China and the United States. The oil money that flows in and out of Angola remains shrouded in mystery.

Angola is no longer officially a killing field, but the economy remains dependent on enclave industries, with oil and diamonds comprising 99 percent of exports. Though the government has embarked on developing domestic industries and sectors devastated by war, such as infrastructure and agriculture, these

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policies appear to lack the necessary political will. As such, the profits from exports don't reach the majority of the population.

THIRSTY CHINA

Through the Export-Import Bank, China has provided over \$24 billion in loans to Africa, chiefly through a barter arrangement that emphasizes resource extraction. In return, China has exported skilled laborers and materials and invested in infrastructure to facilitate the flow of resources back home. In fact, over 50 percent of all China loans through its Import Export Bank have been invested in Africa, spanning 36 countries. These projects range from mega-dams to railways, ports, and mining facilities. They are specifically designed to improve the first two links in the commodity chain—extraction and transportation—with production and distribution tactically shifted to Beijing, and consumption going to countries like the United States.

China also claims to hold 60 percent of the world's rare-earth metals within its borders. These strategic minerals—yttrium, holmium, lanthanum, thulium—are essential for an estimated \$100 billion end-user market that includes many green technologies. Beijing has called for outright bans on the export of certain minerals and urged quotas on others. This enables China to retain priority access and dominate markets. But its policy toward Africa is exactly the opposite.

China's two footholds on the



OFFSHORE: Unlike other oil-rich African nations, Angola's oil for the most part is safely located offshore. MARTIN BUREAU/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

continent are Angola and Sudan. It has extended over \$5 billion in oil-backed loans and revolving credit lines to Angola. In 2007, for instance, China offered a \$1.4 billion operating loan to Sonangol through the China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation. Since 2000, Chinese trade with Angola increased by 14-fold. China's policy of political non-interference—turning a blind eye to a country's human rights situation, for example—sets just the tone for a regime like the MPLA.

U.S. ROLE

Vying for the position of top dog in Africa is the United States. Through its new Africa Command, the United States has declared plans to access 25-30 percent of its imports from Africa by 2015. With the Persian Gulf in the middle of a politically turbulent region, Washington is eyeing the Gulf of Guinea as the "new gulf." Already, Africa contributes almost 20 percent of America's crude oil imports, supplied by oil-producing giants such as Nigeria and Angola, two primary beneficiaries of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, along with Chad, yet another petrostate governed by lifetime dictator Idriss Deby.

Military relations between the two countries have grown closer. Last year, the U.S. Navy ship *Elrod* landed in the port of Lobito, Angola to further the naval and military alliance between the two nations. One of the four main U.S. military arteries in

Africa, the International Military Education Training program has received increased funding under the Obama administration.

The United States is making other inroads in Angola in agriculture, economic reform, and health care. One example includes Angola's partnership with USAID, which uses aid to promote U.S. multinationals like Chevron and technologies such as genetically modified organisms. Unlike the oil-rich Niger Delta, Angola lacks the organized, collective resistance to threaten the powerful combination of state and multinationals. In contrast to the Delta, where the bulk of extracted oil is inland, Angola's tapped oil for the most part is safely located offshore.

During the Cold War, Angola was the site of a proxy war waged by the United States, Cuba, and the Soviet Union. Today, the superpowers are still interested in the country, but they are fighting for control of Angola's vast oil wealth in a different way. Whether Angola can play the calm offensive of the United States and China off one another to its own advantage—and whether the already largely mortgaged oil wealth will ever benefit the Angolan population—remain key unanswered post-Cold War questions.

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AIDS Takes Increasing Toll on Women

By DR. CÉSAR CHELALA

NEW YORK—AIDS is increasingly becoming a serious threat to women, particularly in developing countries. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), AIDS-related illness is the leading cause of death and disease among women of reproductive age in low and middle income countries, particularly in Africa.

While in 1985 there were as many HIV-infected men as women in sub-Saharan Africa, women's infection rate has steadily increased and now the number of HIV-infected women is larger than HIV-infected men. To date, approximately three quarters of all women with HIV live in sub-Saharan Africa.

There are several reasons for this vulnerability. Women and girls are particularly susceptible to be infected due to biological, social, cultural, and economic factors. The female genital tract has a greater exposed surface area than the male genital tract, making it more prone to infection with every exposure. Younger women may be even more vulnerable because they are more often victims of coercive or forced sexual relations with men who may already be infected.

Women who are victims of sexual violence are at a higher risk of being exposed to the infection. According to a South African study, women who were dominated or beaten by their partners were much more likely to be infected with HIV than women who were not. Abusive husbands were more likely to be infected with HIV than non-abusive husbands, according to a study in India involving 20,425 couples.

Women's lower socio-economic status may also lead to high risk behaviors and make them less able to seek information they need to keep themselves safe. Globally, only 38 percent of young women were able to describe the ways to avoid infection and less likely than men to know that condoms can protect against the HIV infection. Particularly in sub-

Saharan Africa, HIV prevalence is generally higher among adolescent girls aged 15-19 than among their male counterparts.

In addition, many young girls enter into sexual relationships with older men who are more sexually experienced, more powerful, and are more likely to be infected and thus able to infect them. "We need to help young people develop the skills for mutual consent in sex and marriage and put an end to violence and sexual coercion," stated Michel Sidibe, Executive Director of UNAIDS.

It has been shown that violence, or even the threat of it, can lead women to avoid HIV prevention, treatment, and care and support services. The problem of violence against women is exacerbated in countries at war, where in many cases rape is used as a "tool of war." In some cases, women have been intentionally infected with HIV, so as to provoke a "slow death."

In many societies, women are at an economic disadvantage with regard to men. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, property is generally owned by men, and even when they are married, women don't have as many property rights as their husbands. Lack of property also means limited economic stability and, as a result, an increase in the possibility of sexual exploitation and violence.

As a response to the greater risk faced by women, international development organizations have stepped up their work on the promotion of women's basic rights. Recognizing and challenging stereotypes and harmful gender roles is crucial to preventing the spread of HIV. It is important to understand, however, that programs that focus on men and the need to change their stereotypical behavior also need to be implemented. Defeating HIV and AIDS is everyone's responsibility.

César Chelala, MD, PhD, is an international public health consultant and the author of "AIDS: A Modern Epidemic," a publication of the Pan American Health Organization.

The 'Nine Commentaries' is the book that is disintegrating the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and changing China. This award-winning Epoch Times editorial series discloses the true history and nature of the CCP. Now it is serialized here.

Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party

Commentary One

On What the Communist Party Is

FOREWORD

For over 5,000 years, the Chinese people created a splendid civilization on the land nurtured by the Yellow River and the Yangtze River. During this long period of time, dynasties came and went, and the Chinese culture waxed and waned. Grand and moving stories have played out on the historical stage of China.

The year 1840, the year commonly considered by historians as the beginning of China's contemporary era, marked the start of China's journey from tradition to modernization. Chinese civilization experienced four major episodes of challenge and response. The first three episodes included the invasion of Beijing by the Anglo-French Allied Force in the early 1860s, the Sino-Japanese War in 1894 (also called the "Jiawu War"), and the Russo-Japanese War in China's northeast in 1906.

To these three episodes of challenge, China responded first with the Westernization Movement, which was marked by the importation of modern

goods and weapons. China next responded with the institutional reforms in 1898 known as the Hundred Days' Reform and the attempt at the end of the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) to establish constitutional rule. China's third response, in 1911, was the Xinhai Revolution (or Hsinhai Revolution).

At the end of the First World War, China, though it emerged victorious, was not listed among the stronger powers at that time. Many Chinese believed that the first three episodes of response had failed. The May Fourth Movement would lead to the fourth attempt at responding to the previous challenges and culminate in the complete westernization of Chinese culture through the communist movement and its extreme revolution.

This article concerns the outcome of the last episode, which is the communist movement and the Communist Party. Let's take a close look at the result of what China chose, or perhaps one can say, what was imposed on China, after over 160 years, nearly 100 million unnatural deaths, and the destruction of nearly all Chinese traditional culture and civilization.

I. RELYING ON VIOLENCE AND TERROR

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can

The number of deaths caused by the CCP's violence since 1949 surpasses that of the wars waged between 1921 and 1949.

be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." This quote is taken from the concluding paragraph of the Communist Manifesto, the Communist Party's principal document. Violence is the single, main means by which the Communist Party gained power. This character trait has been passed on to all subsequent forms of the Party that have arisen since its birth.

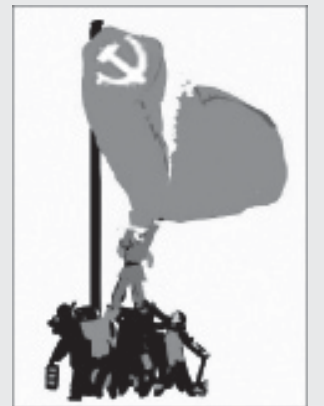
In fact, the world's first Communist Party was established many years after Karl Marx's death. The next year after the October Revolution in 1917, the "All Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)," later to be known as

the "Communist Party of the Soviet Union," was born. This party grew out of the use of violence against "class enemies" and was maintained through violence against party members and ordinary citizens. During Stalin's purges in the 1930s, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union slaughtered over 20 million so-called spies and traitors and those thought to have unorthodox opinions.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) first started as a branch of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the Third Communist International. Therefore, it naturally inherited the willingness to kill. During China's first Communist-Kuomintang civil war between 1927 and 1936, the population in Jiangxi province dropped from over 20 million to about 10 million. The damage wrought by the CCP's use of violence can be seen from these figures alone.

Using violence may be unavoidable when attempting to gain political power, but there has never been a regime as eager to kill as the CCP, especially during otherwise peaceful periods. The number of deaths caused by the CCP's violence since 1949, when the CCP had won the civil war against the Kuomintang and unified China, has surpassed the total deaths during the wars waged between 1921 and 1949.

QUITTING THE CCP



Inspired by the 'Nine Commentaries,' as of November 30, at 9:58 p.m.

64,338,296

Chinese people have announced their intentions to quit the Chinese Communist Party and its affiliated organizations on a special Web site established by The Epoch Times. Many others, unable to break through the Chinese Internet blockade, have posted their withdrawal statements on poles or buildings. Others have written them on Chinese currency. Read recent statements of Chinese quitting the Party, the latest news on the "Nine Commentaries," and more at <http://www.NineCommentaries.com>

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As of Nov. 2009, 61 million Chinese people have renounced the Chinese communist party (CCP) and affiliated organizations. Every day, an average of 50,000 more join their ranks.

The Global Center for Quitting the CCP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit which helps Chinese people to renounce the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)

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