Southwest Africa
Note the similarity between the Angolan Flag (left) and the Flag of the Soviet Union (right).
Angola Under Portuguese Control

- 15th century trading posts established to obtain slaves for Brazil (3 million estimated)
- 1902 Subdued the Angolan tribes and began colonization
  - Built Benguela Railroad
- 1951 Began increasing #s of European settlers
- Tiered Social Structure
  - Colonials (Portuguese)
  - Mesticos (mixed race)
  - Assimilados (educated Africans who have been given some rights)
  - Africans
Angolan Independence Movement

- In 1961 a series of uprisings against Portuguese control leads to a harsh reaction by Portugal.
- Portugal sends thousands of troops into Angola.
- Tens of thousands of Angolans killed.
- Three Different Angolan nationalist groups form in neighboring countries.
FNLA

- National Front for Liberation of Angola (FNLA)
- Led by Holden Roberto
- Operated in Northern Angola and in bases from the Congo
- Most democratic in political ideology
MPLA

- Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA)
- Led by Agostinho Neto
- Marxist guerilla group
  Trained by the Soviet Union
  - Neto being greeted by Fidel Castro (Right)
- Urban based support
  - Strongly anti-Colonial
UNITA

- Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)
- Led by Jonas Savimbi
- Trained by Maoist China
- Support among local villages
Angolan Civil War

- Portugal withdraws in 1975
  - After 15 years of fighting in Angola, Portuguese government suffers a coup and new liberal government grants colonies independence
- Portugal tries to set up a multiparty government representing all three groups
- Jonas Savimbi expected to win, but he is viewed by many as a collaborator with Portuguese
- MPLA wins elections (129 seats to 70 for the UNITA)
- Neither UNITA nor FNLA accept elections as legitimate
Angolan Civil War Continued

- Civil war rages from 1976-1991
- U.S. (CIA) Supports FNLA
  - Roberto Attacks the capital in 1975, but his forces are defeated
- China & South Africa Support UNITA
  - Savimbi conducts guerilla war
- Soviet Union and Cuba support MPLA
  - Cuba sends troops to Angola
“Democracy” Established

- With the end of the Cold War there are new attempts to form a multi-party government
- Cuba and South Africa negotiate withdrawal in 1988
- MPLA wins elections in 1991
  - USA recognizes MPLA government
  - Holden Roberto becomes leader of minority party
- Savimbi continues to wage war until he is killed in 2002
Overall Assessment

• The MPLA leader has remained in power since 2002, and Angola has made steady economic growth from massive exports of oil. Angola still suffers from the ravages of 40 years of warfare and there is a lack of government infrastructure including roads and electric power. Tens of thousands of land mines remain in the country from the period of civil wars. 36% of the population lived below the poverty level in 2013.

• During the Cold War, Angola was divided as The USA, China And the Soviet Union all supported different factions. The U.S. supported first the ineffective FNLA, which lacked broad based support, and later the UNITA, which conducted a campaign of terror and genocide, merely because they opposed the Soviet faction. Only when the Cold was over and the U.S. withdrew its support, could the MPLA, which actually won both legitimate elections in 1975 and 1991, begin the process of modernizing the country.