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By Ernest Volkman

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Congress of Racial Equality Chairman Roy Innis charged in New York yesterday that the Central Intelligence Agency is attempting to destroy CORE's drive to recruit black combat veterans for service in Angola.

Innis called a press conference in CORE's Manhattan headquarters in reaction to a report in Newsday yesterday that revealed the existence of the CORE recruitment program. The story quoted U.S. intelligence sources as saying that CORE is recruiting black veterans for service as mercenaries and that the program is part of an overall CIA effort to bolster the sagging military fortunes of two anti-Communist factions in Angola's civil war.

Innis denied that his program had any link with the CIA, but admitted that such a recruiting program is under way. In a prepared statement, Innis said the program consists of "recruiting black brothers with combat experience to assist in whatever way possible the tragic victims of the Angola civil war." He added that CORE has been actively recruiting black veterans for two months.



AP Photo

Roy Innis

"We are not mercenaries," he said. "Mercenaries are the South African thugs and Cubans fighting for the factions. I am so ashamed that there are Portuguese, South African and Cuban colonels leading the troops in Angola that I would volunteer some black American officers to take their places."

In the Newsday article, Innis was quoted as denying reports that the recruitment drive has any connection with the CIA. In his press conference, he repeated that denial, and charged that the CIA deliberately had leaked details of the program in order to destroy it. "The very fact that the CIA has leaked such a connection to the press is proof that it's fabricated," he said. "The CIA has deliberately linked the efforts of CORE to aid our brothers at coming to a peaceful settlement to the clandestine and dirty role of the CIA in Angola. The CIA has found that its strongest weapon in destroying relationships between Africans and African-Americans is to simply manufacture a link with the agency."

The Newsday report quoted U.S. intelligence sources revealing the existence of the program and reported that the same sources said it was linked with CIA operations in Angola. A spokesman for the CIA said yesterday, "The agency has no connection whatever with the CORE program." As for Innis' charges of a CIA attempt to sabotage the program, the spokesman said, "I don't know what he's talking about."

It was unclear exactly what role Innis wanted the CORE recruits to play in Angola. He said that the organization hopes to recruit between a battalion (500 men) and a regiment (2,000 men) to serve on what he described as a "peace-keeping police force." However, a CORE spokesman earlier yesterday said that the organization was "only collating names of volunteers with some medical expertise and preferably some military background whose involvement would be strictly in the form of medical assistance." However, he added, there was a possibility the group would be armed.

A State Department spokesman said he knew

nothing of the CORE program, but added that if true, it may run afoul of federal laws prohibiting U.S. citizens from fighting for foreign powers. Such involvement, he said, could lead to loss of citizenship, although such decisions are made usually on a case-by-case basis.

Innis emphasized yesterday that the projected force would be sent to Angola "only at the invitation of the OAU," the Organization of African Unity, a coalition of African nations. "If the OAU is unable to put a peace-keeping force together, we want them to know we have this force ready to provide police functions in the event of a cease-fire." A spokesman for the OAU Secretariat in New York said it would not discuss Innis' comments nor answer any questions relating to the CORE program.

Kissinger Warning on Angola

Brussels (UPI)—Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger said today that the United States "will try to prevent" the Soviet Union from becoming dominant in Angola through massive Russian arms shipments there.

At a news conference, Kissinger repeated earlier warnings that the Soviet arms shipments to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola threatened to upset detente. Referring to the Soviet Union, Kissinger said: "The United States will try to prevent one party, by massive interference, from becoming dominant." Kissinger, however, declined to spell out what specific actions the United States might take and refused comment on reports that the Ford administration was considering \$50 million in aid for Angola. Kissinger spoke about Angola at the end of a two-day session of the NATO foreign ministers during which the situation in that African country was discussed along with the state of East-West relations, the strength of the Atlantic alliance and other issues. (NATO story on Page 12.)