

Letters to the Editor,
Los Angeles Times,
Times Mirror Square,
Los Angeles, CA 90053

October 22, 1990

NOT PRINTED

Dear editor,

It is not coincidental that those who smiled at Rep. Dellums's plea to "save the children" in Angola were Republicans. ("Plan to Lift Angola Secrecy Veil Rejected," Robert C. Toth, 10/18) Were those smiles intended for Dellums to see? Most likely. As the minority party in Congress, Republicans are always on the defensive, and their mood has not been improved by President Bush's recent capitulation to budget realities, which they see instead as capitulation to the Democrats.

Here, a member of the enemy camp makes a passionate appeal across all dividing lines for a demonstration of compassion for innocents. But, for those who are always "one down," and who feel betrayed by their own President, how better to show contempt for the enemy's whole being than with those familiar, slightly upturned corners of the mouth, perhaps accompanied by a barely perceptible nod toward others in one's own camp. Few moments are more savored than when such knowing smiles are exchanged.

The smiles tell Dellums that he simply does not live in the real world. Now that the Cuban soldiers who protected American oil installations for over a decade are gone from Angola, Washington's tin-horn strongman, Jonas Savimbi, might win after all. Would this have happened but for those 341,000 dead and maimed Angolans--including the 55,000 children--Dellums refers to? Should we risk Savimbi's final victory out of concern for a few more poor black children?

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Get real, Ron.

Unfortunately for all third world children, "realpolitik" is still the order of the day in Congress.

Sincerely,

Bill Becker