Should the United States intervene to prevent a Communist takeover in Angola? Ambassador Moynihan and Dr. Kissinger, in remarks made last week, argue the need for U.S. influence, while Sen. Dick Clark (D-Iowa), in an invited response, presents an opposing view.

"Dr. Kissinger, I presume."
MOYNIHAN: "The Communists"

KISSINGER: "The U.S. will try to...

MOVYNIAN: "The Communists..."
We are dangerously close to an open-ended confrontation with the Soviet Union in a country that is of no real strategic interest to either power.

Clark: Ambassador Moynihan's statements describe the United States' strategic interests in Angola in grossly exaggerated terms. In his testimony before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, he flatly told the Foreign Relations Committee that Ambassador Moynihan was expressing his own personal views only.

At no time, then, has the Administration argued that a victory for the Soviet-backed faction in Angola would enable the Communists to either pose a serious threat to Brazil or "considerably control the oil shipping lanes from the Persian Gulf," as Mr. Moynihan asserts.

Indeed, it is difficult to conceive how the threats imagined by the Ambassador could have any basis in reality. Would the Soviet Union stretch a line of "turf" to protect its "interests" in an area vast enough to include Brazil and Argentina, plus every oil-producing state from near the North Pole to the South Pole? Would the United States sit by and accept this kind of domination? If the Soviet Union were so ambitious, would it not try to take over Cuba or the Canal Zone?

The threat of such involvement in a foreign war is deadly serious, and there is no room for irresponsible scare tactics in this debate.

Ambassador Moynihan is also incorrect in stating that the Soviet Union would control a large chunk of Africa if the MPLA wins in Angola. From discussions I have had with Dr. Neto, the head of the MPLA, I believe it is highly unlikely that the Soviet Union could ever control Angola itself if this faction wins, let alone "a large chunk of Africa."" The leaders of the MPLA and the Falangas have been friends of the United States for many years, and it is clear that they have no desire to see us become involved in a war in Angola that would increase the risk of continental war.

The fact is that the African nations are fiercely independent and resent the efforts of outside powers to dictate their policies. If we were to support a faction that was unfriendly to the United States in Angola, it would cause us great harm.

The factions the United States is backing have created serious credibility problems for themselves by welcoming the support of the South African regime. South Africa is undoubtedly vulnerable to the Soviet Union's advance in Angola, which is consistent with the policy of President P.W. Botha.

Unlike the Vietnam conflict, this conflict does not have a long and complicated history. But this is not the case. The history of United States and Soviet assistance to competing factions in Angola goes back to the early 1960's. Even more serious competition among the major powers in this conflict has already led to the destruction of many lives. This conflict is not a new phenomenon, but a serious escalation of an old conflict.

I doubt that deepening the American commitment further would persuade the Soviets to cease their intervention in Angola. It is more likely that Soviet involvement would increase as well. We are dangerously close to an open-ended confrontation with the Soviet Union in a country that is of no real strategic interest to either power.