

WXXPost DEC 18 1975

The Angola Issue

*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.”

By Wright for the Miami News

MOYNIHAN: "The Communists would considerably control the oil shipping lanes from the Persian Gulf to Europe."

KISSINGER: "The U.S. will try to prevent one party from achieving dominance by massive introduction of outside equipment."

The Soviet Union has, with its proxy armies of Cuba, invaded the Southwest region of Africa, just as they are beginning to set up their facilities on the northeast coast, in Somalia. They have Cuban troops up and down the west coast, and they have an army with heavy equipment, with advanced technology, in Angola. What are they doing there?

(Question: Does the description of the United States as aligning itself with South Africa give you pause?)

Yes. The journalists who wrote that we are aligning ourselves with South Africa were describing our action in terms that are hardly tenable. The Secretary of State said there is no contact even with the government of South Africa on the subject. "Aligning with" suggests that one party actively tries to get a synchronous relation with

another party. Like I line up next to you; I see where you are and I get there. It seems to me that there is a convergence in policy. We are both doing the same thing, sort of. Although evidently there are said to be South Africans in Angola.

(Question: If it looked as if we were aligning ourselves, using your definition, would you urge us not to do that?)

If it turns out to be defined that way, it becomes impossible for the United States to proceed properly, the Communists would take over Angola and will thereby considerably control the oil shipping lanes from the Persian Gulf to Europe. They will be next to Brazil. They will have a large chunk of Africa, and the world will be different in the aftermath if they succeed.

C 1975, International Dialogue

The United States cannot be indifferent to massive Soviet supplies of arms.

The United States would support a solution in which no outside power participates, and in which the Organization of African Unity will cooperate with the parties inside Angola to find an African solution. The United States did not become concerned until there had already taken place substantial Soviet involvement, and the introduction of massive outside equipment and later the introduction of Cuban forces. There should not be a war by proxy of the great powers. I do not think it is a situation analogous to Vietnam, because in Vietnam the conflict had a much longer and more complicated history, but the United States cannot be indifferent to what is

going on in Angola.

The United States favors a solution in which all of the parties in Angola can negotiate with each other free of outside interference, and in which the problem of Angola is handled as an African issue. Failing that, the United States will try to prevent one party from achieving dominance by means of massive introduction of outside equipment. This cannot but affect relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, if the Soviet Union engages in a military operation thousands of miles from Soviet territory, in an area where there are no historic Russian interests and where it is, therefore, a new projection of Soviet power and Soviet interests.

C 1975, International Dialogue

CLARK.

"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."

Ambassador Moynihan's statements describe the United States' strategic interests in Angola in grossly exaggerated terms. Administration representatives have repeatedly assured me over the last several months that the United States has no significant strategic interest in the outcome of the Angolan conflict. On Tuesday, Administration spokesmen 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 battleships across the Atlantic to form a blockade? Would they launch missiles from Angola toward Brazil?

The issue of United States 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." Dr. Neto believes in non-alignment. His economic and political philosophies—like those of the leaders of the other two factions—are those of an African socialist.

I believe that Angola will strive for non-alignment and look primarily to other African states in its foreign policy under any of the competing leaders.

The fact is that the African nations are fiercely independent and resent the efforts of outside powers to dictate their policies. Recently, for example, the newly independent government of Mozambique—to which the Soviet Union also gave generous assistance during its struggle for independence—denied the Soviets base rights and publicly accused them of pushing too hard.

I do not believe we would gain in the long run by responding to Soviet intervention in Angola with equal counter-intervention. Like the Soviets, we would be resented and distrusted as a major power that refused to respect the independence of a country that has already fought thirteen years for the freedom to control its own affairs.

There is also more to United States association with South Africa in Angola than mere rhetoric, as Ambassador Moynihan so casually dismissed it. State Department spokesmen reportedly have stated that the United States is sharing intelligence regularly with

South Africa. It is hard to determine where such "sharing" ends and where coordination begins.

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 involved in Angola out of fear that an MPLA government would put pressure on her to give up her illegal occupation of Namibia (South West Africa) and to change her racist policies. For us to be associated with this effort could be extremely damaging to our relations with the independent nations of Africa for years to come.

As for Dr. Kissinger, he is apparently under the impression that, unlike Vietnam, 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 part of the world goes back to the Congo crisis. Zaire, which has been receiving substantial United States military assistance for years, has in turn provided heavy assistance to the FNLA, one of the Angolan factions now fighting the MPLA. Thus, current United States and Soviet involvement in Angola 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.

I believe the United States should make a full scale effort to persuade the Soviet Union to join us in ending all outside intervention in Angola. If detente means anything, the two super powers should be able to work together to avoid an escalating conflict that will have tragic consequences for the people of Angola and destabilize the entire region. But the United States needs to approach the Soviet Union honestly on this issue, recognizing that major power competition in this area does go back several years and that the Soviet-backed faction in Angola is confronted not only with American involvement, but with Zairean and South African involvement as well.

Even if all efforts to bring an end to foreign intervention in Angola fail, I am convinced that the best way to counter Soviet "influence" there is for the United States to stop its own intervention and to make it clear that we respect the independence of Angola and seek good relations with whatever government comes to power there.

If the Soviet Union then persists in its intervention, it alone will be jeopardizing its relations in that region by interfering in the internal affairs of an independent nation.