

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1975

Letters to the Editor

Angola: On America's Motivation

To the Editor:

In his essay "Communism and the War in Angola" (Op-Ed Dec. 14), George M. Houser accuses the United States Government of hypocrisy and gross distortion of the "real issues involved in Angola." While I do not contend that statements by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and other American officials are impartial assessments of reality, neither would I recommend Mr. Houser's account to a person interested in an objective evaluation of the Angolan crisis.

Contrary to Mr. Houser's suggestions, American concern for what happens in Angola has very little to do with the ideological coloration of the local factions engaged in the current struggle for power. Governmental decision-makers are not as disturbed with the spectrum of Angola becoming "another Cuba" as they are over the possible establishment of Soviet naval and air bases in the South Atlantic. One may well take issue with the legitimacy of such a position (as Mr. Houser does) or with the tactics followed by the U.S. (as did former Assistant Secretary of State Nathaniel Davis), but it serves no purpose to distort American motivation in Angola. As Mr. Houser correctly points out, growing Soviet influence in other African countries has not provoked such major American retaliation. What is vitally different about Angola is its potential strategic value and the implications that it portends for the international balance of power.

Finally, one may ask why Mr. Houser is so selective in his mention of foreign intervention in Angola. The Cuban forces—the only non-Africans now fighting in Angola—are mentioned but once, and there isn't a

single reference to the extensive support provided by the People's Republic of China to the F.N.L.A. (Front for the National Liberation of Angola) and to UNITA (the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola). In an article purporting to clarify the issues, such obvious partiality has no place. (Asst. Prof.) JOSE M. SANCHEZ
Political Studies, Adelphi University
Garden City, L. I., Dec. 15, 1975

To the Editor:

The steady erosion of the power of Kissinger has been highlighted by the Angolan situation. It is clear that his past diplomatic and covert actions through the C.I.A., which have been mainly successful in Europe and the Middle East, have been cut off in full power by the recent Senate vote, 54-22. This will effectively stop covert aid to this strife-torn country.

It is further obvious that the African countries most involved are more concerned with a South African presence than Soviet influence there.

Kissinger's steady cold-war posturing about U.S. "credibility" with the Russians or our "strategic needs" (nonexistent) did not convince the Senate. It is hoped that after the New Year the House will confirm the Senate vote.

History sometimes moves forward with the slowness of a glacier and sometimes with the rush and speed of a torrent. The Russians cannot stop this torrent of independence in Angola. This failure of Kissinger to perpetuate the now-discredited cold-war mentality signals the eventual end of his power. Let us bring on the elections of 1976 and Kissinger's departure.

GLENN A. MCLAIN
East Weymouth, Mass., Dec. 23, 1975