

ANGOLA: THE VIETNAM ANALOGY

WHY ARE WE THERE?

Vietnam

"The principal objective of United States policy in Southeast Asia is simply to maintain the integrity and independence of the non-Communist nations in that area."

-- Robert McNamara
Secretary of Defense
January 29, 1964

"Whereas the United States is assisting the peoples of Southeast Asia to protect their freedom and has no territorial, military or political ambitions in that area but desires only that they should be left in peace to work out their own destinies in their own way..."

-- Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, Approved
August 10, 1964

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES IF WE DON'T INTERVENE?

"Overnight the United States would cease to be a power in the world's greatest ocean. Our ships and planes could thereafter circumvent the globe only with Communist permission."

-- Richard Nixon
August, 1964

"To fail to respond ... would reflect on our nation, would undermine world-wide confidence in our courage."

-- Lyndon B. Johnson
April 20, 1964

WHAT ABOUT OUR ALLIES AROUND THE WORLD?

"We cannot turn our backs on these embattled countries. U.S. unwillingness to provide adequate assistance to allies fighting for their lives would seriously effect our credibility throughout the world as an ally."

-- Gerald Ford
January 29, 1975

Angola

"The United States has no other interest except the territorial integrity and independence of Angola."

-- Henry Kissinger
Secretary of State
November 10, 1975

"Therefore, the issue is not whether the country of Angola represents vital interests to the United States; the issue is whether the Soviet Union, backed by a Cuban expeditionary force, can impose on two-thirds of the population its own brand of government."

-- Henry Kissinger
Secretary of State
December 24, 1975

"... 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."

-- Patrick Moynihan
Ambassador, U.N.
December 18, 1975

"The Senate decision to cut off additional funds for Angola is a deep tragedy for all countries whose security depends on the United States."

-- Gerald Ford
December 19, 1975

"But our deepest concern is for global stability. If the United States is seen to emasculate itself in the face of massive, unprecedented Soviet and Cuban intervention, what will be the perception of leaders around the world as they make decisions concerning their future security?"

-- Henry Kissinger
January 29, 1976

"If when the chips are down, the world's most powerful nation - the United States of America - acts like a pitiful, helpless giant, the forces of totalitarianism and anarchy will threaten free nations and institutions throughout the world."

-- Richard Nixon
April 30, 1970

BUT OUR LEADERS KNOW BEST ...

"This is no time for consensus government. It's time for leadership. The average citizen doesn't know what the stakes are in Vietnam."

-- Richard Nixon
February 11, 1965

WHAT IS THE WAR REALLY ABOUT?

"I strongly resent the implication that the war in Vietnam is in any sense a civil war. It is the most flagrant case of outside aggression and intervention."

-- Robert McNamara
Secretary of Defense
April 20, 1966

"Let us assume we lost Indochina. The tin and tungsten that we value so greatly from that area would cease coming. So when the U.S. votes \$400 million to help that war, we are not voting a giveaway program. We are voting for the cheapest way to prevent the occurrence of something that would be of the most terrible significance to our power and ability to get certain things we need from the riches of Indochina."

-- Dwight Eisenhower
1953



"How can the United States, the greatest power in the world, take the position that the Soviet Union can operate with impunity many thousands of miles away..."

-- Gerald Ford
December 19, 1975

"Mr. Kissinger said the money for Angola - \$27 million has been spent this year - was arranged clandestinely 'because we did not want to have a public confrontation if we could avoid it.'"

-- Henry Kissinger
NY Times, Dec. 24, 1975

"We developed a national consensus during the period of the Vietnam war that in wars of national liberation which have a largely local origin, that the United States will not become involved simply because it prefers one group over another." "/In Angola/ you are essentially dealing with a foreign intervention at very... long distances..."

-- Henry Kissinger
January 29, 1976

"Zaire is facing internal and external threats... /Our national security/ is a projection of our own influence, an extrapolation also of our need for resources over the next twenty-five years, the resources we will need in the future."

-- W.P. Clements
Deputy Assistant
Secretary of Defense
November 11, 1975

"The railways from Zaire and Zambia go through Angola, and these are vital. In this situation, we do believe it is important to make it clear to Zaire that we are prepared to be of assistance."

-- Henry Kissinger
November 6, 1975

Prepared by: Center for National Security Studies and Washington Office on Africa