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The Unintended Consequences of Congressional Reform: The Clark and Tunney Amendments and U.S. Policy toward Angola

On 20 December 1975, the U.S. Senate passed an amendment to the Department of Defense appropriations bill introduced by John Tunney (D-CA) terminating covert assistance to anti-Communist forces in Angola. Later that winter, an amendment to the foreign aid bill, sponsored by Dick Clark (D-IA), extended the ban. The two amendments represented the high point of a congressional revolt against the anti-Communist ethos of the Cold War and executive authority in foreign policy. 1

Although the two amendments are usually paired together, they expanded Congress's foreign-policy presence in quite different ways.¹ On the one hand, the Clark amendment relied on a traditional gambit—a rider to the foreign aid bill—to unequivocally establish the principle that Congress possessed the right to oversee covert intelligence operations. The Tunney amendment, on the other hand, used the appropriations power in a different way, in a policy rider to the Pentagon budget, to suggest that defense spending matters were fair game for congressional attempts to legislate foreign policy. Both tactics were so controversial that, before the debate over Angolan policy, no clear-cut congressional implementation of either approach had occurred during the Cold War.

Once enacted, though, the amendments produced a host of unintended consequences. Their passage helped further erode the Cold War institutional structure of Congress, in which that body had sacrificed potent foreign-policy tools in deference to executive authority. But if this change represented a short-term victory for congressional liberals, subsequent developments defied expectations, based on events of the 1960s and early 1970s, that empowering Congress would lead to the adoption of an anti-interventionist, pro-human-rights foreign policy.

1. Most scholarship has treated the Clark and Tunney amendments as offering the same agendas and as representing a clear-cut victory for congressional liberals. For typical studies see Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger: A Biography* (New York, 1992), 673–85; Robert Litwak, *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine: American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability, 1969–1976* (New York, 1985), 179–90; and Thomas Franck and Edward Weisband, *Foreign Policy by Congress* (New York, 1979), 79–96.

Instead, conservatives proved as successful as their ideological foes in utilizing the revitalized congressional power. Meanwhile, the Clark amendment gradually became a symbol of reckless congressional activism and the naiveté of the liberal reformers of the 1970s. In this sense, the most long-lasting results of the efforts of Clark and Tunney came not in the ideological realm but on the institutional front: the Angolan issue improved the position of Congress in its struggle with the executive for control of U.S. foreign policy.

Attempts to fortify the congressional presence in international affairs began well before Angola emerged as a high-profile matter. Even before the expansion of the U.S. commitment in Vietnam, a congressional revolt had begun against the constitutional balance of the early Cold War, in which the relative power of the executive expanded in each of the three major areas in which the Constitution divided foreign-policy functions between the two branches.² Harry Truman's decision to commit U.S. forces to the Korean conflict, followed up by Dwight Eisenhower's practice of obtaining advanced congressional sanction for international activities, testified to the decline of Congress's role in war-making, while the dramatic growth of executive agreements produced a similar fall-off of the Senate's treaty-making power. These developments had not escaped congressional concern, and efforts to augment Congress's foreign-policy positions occurred on two general tracks. Especially after the election of Eisenhower, liberal Democrats searched for a way to criticize the president without being labeled soft on communism or questioning the administration's basic agenda. They urged a formal, symbolic role in framing policy, with the executive recognizing the principle of congressional input in exchange for Congress allowing the president freedom of action to prosecute the Cold War. As Hubert Humphrey (D-MN) candidly admitted, the party offered a "limited dissent." Meanwhile, nationalist Republicans sought to empower Congress as a way to forward an alternative ideological agenda. The most ambitious initiatives along these lines came from Robert Taft (R-OH), who challenged Truman's authority to send troops to Europe, and John Bricker (R-OH), who sponsored a constitutional amendment to prevent treaties from superseding legislation. Neither faction enjoyed much success, but the Taft-Bricker agenda, which questioned both the constitutional and ideological norms of the Cold War period, provoked the stronger resistance from presidents of both parties.³

2. For the Cold War and the balance of power between the branches, see James Sundquist, *The Decline and Resurgence of Congress* (Washington, DC, 1981); Loch Johnson, *The Making of International Agreements: Congress Confronts the Executive* (New York, 1984); and Louis Fisher, *Presidential War Power* (Lawrence, KS, 1995).

3. Hubert Humphrey to Walter Philippothal, 2 May 1955, and Humphrey to Wayne Their, 9 May 1955, both in Hubert Humphrey Papers, Box 119, Minnesota State Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota (hereafter cited as Humphrey Papers); Natalie Henever Kaufman, *Human Rights Treaties and the Senate: A History of Opposition* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1990); Duane Tananbaum, *The Bricker Amendment Controversy: A Test of Eisenhower's Political Leadership* (Ithaca, NY, 1988); Justus Doenecke, *Not to the Swift: The Old Isolationists in the Cold War Era*

While its war-making and treaty-making functions were weakened, Congress's role in its third major constitutional venue relating to foreign policy—the appropriations power—was more mixed. On the one hand, congressional involvement with foreign aid was extensive from the program's inception. At the constitutional level, the program ensured some degree of input because it so clearly flowed from the appropriations power. Politically, foreign aid's unpopularity enhanced the freedom to resist executive branch policies. Foreign aid appropriations bills thus became a favorite vehicle for policy riders on issues as diverse as human rights, expropriation of U.S.-owned property, and the foreign policies of recipient regimes. Commentator Robert Pastor correctly termed the annual foreign aid measure “the nearest thing Congress has to a ‘State of the World Message.’”⁴

On the other hand, Congress exercised its “power of the purse” far less vigorously on defense appropriations matters. Before World War II, the story was different: amendments to military spending bills helped terminate the interventions in Russia in 1919 and Nicaragua during the 1920s.⁵ But the Cold War domestic climate subjected those who voted against defense spending to charges of being soft on communism, while the spreading of weapons contracts around the country distinguished the political calculus of defense spending not only from foreign aid but also from the interwar situation. In the new environment, members of Congress rarely endorsed amendments to reduce the Pentagon budget; even less frequently did they support policy riders attached to defense bills. The decade between the end of the Korean War and John Kennedy's assassination featured only twenty-two roll-call votes—in the House and Senate combined—on amendments of any sort to defense appropriations measures.⁶ Only three of these amendments, introduced in the Senate by either William

(Lewisburg, PA, 1979); James Patterson, *Mr. Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft* (Boston, 1972); Gary Reichard, “Divisions and Dissent: Democrats and Foreign Policy, 1952–1956,” *Political Science Quarterly* 93 (Spring 1978): 51–55.

4. George Ball, “Memorandum for the Secretary: The FY 1965 Foreign Aid Program,” 4 December 1963, State Department Central Policy Files, 1963, Record Group 59, Box 3308, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland (hereafter cited as National Archives II). For various policy-related riders, see *Congressional Record* 109, 88th Cong., 1st sess., 21840–21842 (14 November 1963); *Congressional Record* 113, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 22968 (17 August 1967); Lars Schoultz, *Human Rights and United States Policy toward Latin America* (Princeton, NJ, 1981), 193.

5. William Banks and Peter Raven-Hansen, *National Security Laws and the Power of the Purse* (New York, 1994); Richard Coke Lower, *A Bloc of One: The Political Career of Hiram W. Johnson* (Stanford, CA, 1993), 117–32; Robert David Johnson, *The Peace Progressives and American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), 180–218.

6. For the relevant roll call votes, see *Congressional Record* 100, 83d Cong., 2d sess., 8441, 10174, 10177; *Congressional Record* 101, 84th Cong., 1st sess., 6247, 8714, 8705; *Congressional Record* 102, 84th Cong., 2d sess., 7982, 10975; *Congressional Record* 103, 85th Cong., 1st sess., 10814, 10821, 11246; *Congressional Record* 104, 85th Cong., 2d sess., 10306, 17743; *Congressional Record* 105, 86th Cong., 1st sess., 13281, 13316; *Congressional Record* 107, 87th Cong., 1st sess., 11508, 14518; *Congressional Record* 108, 87th Cong., 2d sess., 10378, 10381; *Congressional Record* 109, 88th Cong., 1st sess., 17813, 17880, 17889.

Proxmire (D-WI) or George McGovern (D-SD), called for scaling back funding. Each attracted fewer than five votes. As McGovern discovered, “it is one hell of a tall order to take on the brass hats and their business allies” on spending matters; amending the defense budget to shape foreign policy seemed entirely beyond the pale. In this sense, the Senate’s newly deferential institutional mindset complemented the body’s acceptance of the basic principles of Cold War foreign policy.⁷

This postwar structure began to collapse in the late 1960s. The domestic and international effects of the conflict in Vietnam, the implications of the Sino-Soviet split, skepticism about the containment theory, and the impact of the Watergate crisis weakened support for unilateral presidential initiatives and many of the anti-Communist assumptions upon which postwar executives had based their policies. In response, liberals in the Senate, often using foreign aid riders, began offering an ideological alternative centered on three principal arguments. First, they charged that policy-makers from the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations had subordinated traditional American ideals—such as support for democracy, human rights, and self-determination—to the anti-Communist dictates of the Cold War. Second, they feared that the national security apparatus associated with the Cold War state had given the military an excessive role in the making of U.S. foreign policy. Finally, they contended that a democracy required a foreign policy of openness.

The initial signs of congressional dissent came early in the 1960s, and the movement dramatically strengthened in reaction to the stalemate in Vietnam, which was cited as proof of the dangers of insufficient congressional input into policy-making.⁸ This dissent produced attacks against U.S. policy toward Latin America, Asia, and Africa, regions in which, critics contended, a misapplication of containment principles had produced policies that contradicted the United States’s image as a champion of international reform, employed military solutions to political or social problems, and allied the United States with ideologically undesirable regimes.

Throughout the early 1970s, reformers aggressively used the appropriations powers of Congress in the international realm. For instance, after Augusto Pinochet’s military government assumed power in Chile, Representative Donald Fraser (D-MN) and Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) opened hear-

7. George McGovern, interview with author, 8 December 1994, Washington, DC; George McGovern to L.S. Stavrianos, 27 August 1963, Box 66A 841/16, George McGovern Papers, Mudd Library, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey; Barry Blechman, *The Politics of National Security: Congress and U.S. Defense Policy* (New York, 1990), 23–32; Barbara Hinckley, *Less Than Meets the Eye: Foreign Policy-Making and the Myth of the Assertive Congress* (Chicago, 1994), 51; Ann Markusen, Scott Campbell, Peter Hall, and Sabrina Deitrick, *The Rise of the Gunbelt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York, 1991); James Lindsay, “Congress and Defense Policy, 1961 to 1986,” *Armed Forces & Society* 13 (Fall 1987): 378.

7

8. Thomas Eagleton, interview with author, 22 October 1996; Fisher, *Presidential War Power*, 114–33; Franck and Weisband, *Foreign Policy by Congress*, 149–51; Lindsay, *Congress and the Politics of U.S. Defense*, 144.

8

ings on Pinochet's human rights abuses. Congress then enacted a series of measures to gradually end U.S. assistance to the regime. The Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 provided another opportunity to act, and Thomas Eagleton (D-MO) pushed through the Senate an amendment cutting off foreign aid to the Ankara government. Surveying the burst of activity, one European diplomat concluded, "It isn't just the State Department or the President anymore. It's Congress now."⁹

These demands for greater respect for human rights accompanied a broader congressional effort to assert the body's foreign-policy powers. As in the early stages of the Cold War, senators adopted two broad approaches. The most prominent intellectual heirs of the 1950s "limited dissent" were Stuart Symington (D-MO) and Jacob Javits (R-NY), both of whom had supported the anti-Communist foundations of 1960s foreign policy but who now urged more congressional input. Adherents of this point of view achieved their greatest triumph in 1973, when Congress passed the War Powers Act. In many ways, the measure was more style than substance. Although it theoretically restrained the president's war-making powers, it also provided a sixty-day window to send troops overseas without coming to Congress. More significant, in line with the traditional agenda of "limited dissent," its terms did not imply that involving Congress more in war-making decisions would challenge the assumptions behind containment. Amendments that sought to accomplish this purpose, such as an offering from Eagleton to include the intelligence community under the purview of the measure, were voted down.¹⁰

Eagleton's effort formed one of a number of unsuccessful liberal initiatives to bring the intelligence community more clearly under legislative oversight and replace the informal oversight procedure pioneered in the early 1950s by Armed Services Committee chair Richard Russell (D-GA), who called for accepting Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) statements "on faith." Since Russell's deference robbed Congress of even the trappings of input, his system encountered resistance from practitioners of "limited dissent," who on several occasions proposed a formal oversight committee. Reluctance to confront executive authority and a conviction that the requirements of the Cold War demanded unchecked authority for the CIA frustrated all such efforts. But the most effective arguments against establishing an oversight committee were institutional appeals, such as respecting Russell's prerogatives and fears that aggressive Senate involvement with national security issues would result in the

9. Schoultz, *Human Rights and United States Policy toward Latin America*, 178–193; Franck and Weisband, *Foreign Policy by Congress*, 62–128; Sundquist, *Decline and Resurgence of Congress*, 238–314.

10. On the limits of the War Powers Act, see Blechman, *Politics of National Security*, 183; Jean Edward Smith, *George Bush's War* (New York, 1992); Robert Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York, 1996), 499. For Javits and Symington, see Robert Schulzinger, *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941–1975* (New York, 1997), 223.

leaking of classified information or the needless restriction of the president. The power of these viewpoints confirmed how the Cold War created a new internal congressional culture that facilitated greater deference to executive authority. Those intent on using congressional power to challenge mainstream foreign policy would have to overcome this structure and refute the arguments of Russell's backers in a way that advocates of an intelligence committee had failed to do.¹¹

2

Using the traditional tactic of a foreign aid policy rider provided one possibility of achieving this goal. In 1974, Clark's colleague, Harold Hughes, pushed through an amendment, sponsored in the House by William Ryan (D-NY), prohibiting covert operations unless deemed by the president to be "important to the national security." The amendment also altered the balance of power within Congress by expanding the number of committees eligible to receive briefings on intelligence matters. But the offering passed only after Hughes and Ryan accommodated demands from more moderate colleagues, most notably by dealing with the leak issue through a provision preventing any member of Congress from publicizing any information received in an intelligence briefing. Even Hughes conceded that the amendment would fulfill his goal of checking "the wide-ranging power of the CIA" only if it was accompanied by an altered congressional culture characterized by a "greater congressional willingness to play its oversight role." Similar compromises characterized other efforts to restrain the activities of the intelligence community. In early 1975, although the *New York Times* correctly described the overwhelming vote of the Senate Democratic caucus to establish a select committee to examine the intelligence community as "the end of an era," the chair of the resulting select committee, Frank Church (D-ID), had no choice but to moderate his probes of past CIA activities to ensure continued bipartisan support for his efforts. Perhaps J. William Fulbright's (D-AR) judgment that the inability to effectively utilize its appropriations power concerning intelligence issues had reduced the legislature's role on such matters to a "nullity" was too harsh, but attempts to establish some formal congressional oversight role on intelligence matters had met with, at best, mixed success.¹²

11. Loch Johnson, *A Season of Inquiry: Congress and Intelligence* (Chicago, 1988), 5-11; Frank Smist, *Congress Oversees the Intelligence Community* (Knoxville, TN, 1990), 1-18; Thomas Paterson, "Oversight or Afterview? Congress, the CIA, and Covert Actions since 1947," in *Congress and United States Foreign Policy*, ed. Michael Barnhart (Albany, NY, 1986), 157-58; Blechman, *Politics of National Security*, 141; Gilbert Fite, *Richard B. Russell, Jr., Senator from Georgia* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1991), 167-90.

12. Harold Hughes to Robert Hart, 31 October 1974, Box S83, Harold Hughes Papers, University of Iowa Library, Iowa City, IA; *Congressional Record* 117, 92d Cong., 1st sess., 18429 (7 June 1971); Dick Clark, interview with author, 27 January 1997, Washington, DC; Eagleton interview; Pat Holt, telephone interview with author, 29 May 1995; *New York Times*, 21 January 1975; Franck and Weisband, *Foreign Policy by Congress*, 117-31; Smist, *Congress Oversees the Intelligence Community*, 24-27, 167-201; Sundquist, *Decline and Resurgence of Congress*, 272-314; Hoyt Purvis, "Tracing the Congressional Role: U.S. Foreign Policy and Turkey," in

The newly aggressive congressional climate carried over to one other aspect of U.S. foreign policy: consideration of national security appropriations bills. As with intelligence issues, Senate liberals sported a mixed record on defense questions. On the one hand, the amendment process, dormant for the first two decades of the Cold War, was suddenly revived. Between 1971 and 1975, the Senate alone voted on 193 amendments to defense bills. In another departure from Cold War precedent, a host of these amendments related to policy issues, including the size of the army, the number of U.S. troops in Europe, ending the conflict in Vietnam, sanctions against the white minority regime in Rhodesia, bombing in Southeast Asia, policy toward the Middle East, oversight of the CIA, and the fate of various weapons systems. On the other hand, limits to the revolt against the unspoken rules of the Cold War era remained. While Senate reformers offered seventy-two substantive amendments to the Pentagon budget in the first five years of the 1970s, only twelve won approval. Five of these addressed military policy, the most ambitious of which, sponsored by Gaylord Nelson (D-WI), required a presidential report on any foreign arms sale exceeding U.S.\$25 million. Five more restricted Richard Nixon's and then Gerald Ford's freedom of action in Southeast Asia. But a majority of the Senate proved reluctant to use the appropriations power to trim back military activities initiated by the executive without congressional sanction. The upper chamber approved only two amendments dealing with such issues between 1971 and 1975 (the Cooper-Church amendments, cutting off funds for operations in Laos and Cambodia), both in watered-down forms.¹³ As with a degree of deference to the intelligence community, then, this central characteristic of the Cold War Congress—the reluctance to use the Pentagon budget to legislate foreign policy—remained tenuously in place in mid-1975.¹⁴

The covert involvement in the Angolan civil war came to national prominence just as this congressional aggressiveness crested. Beginning in the early

Legislating Foreign Policy, ed. Hoyt Purvis and Steven Baker (Boulder, 1984), 55–56; Hinckley, *Less Than Meets the Eye*, 136–38.

13. For the relevant roll-call votes, see *Congressional Record* 117, 22840, 30032, 30309, 31510, 33094, 33315, 33668, 33958, 34014, 34223, 40775, 40778, 42932; *Congressional Record* 118, 22675, 26209, 26228, 26228, 26251, 26407, 33122, 33148, 33165; *Congressional Record* 119, 21153, 30859, 30859, 30862, 30871, 30984, 31002, 31179, 31247, 31522, 31573, 31569, 31585, 31822, 31841, 31861, 31883, 31883, 31895, 31897, 32024, 32273, 41491; *Congressional Record* 120, 17486, 17498, 17801, 17811, 17827, 17830, 18054, 18503, 18714, 18722, 29559, 29633, 30841, 33296, 33471; *Congressional Record* 121, 17053, 17083, 17086, 17412, 17443, 17447, 17595, 36543, 36549, 36754, 36762.

14. Gaylord Nelson, interview with author, 9 December 1994, Washington, DC; William Timmons to Tom Korologos, 13 August 1974, Box 31, William Kendall Files, Papers of the Congressional Liaison Office, Gerald Ford Presidential Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan; William Garrett, "Arms Transfers, Congress, and Foreign Policy: The Case of Latin America, 1967–1976" (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1982), 142–58; Hoyt Purvis, Thomas Opperman, and Tura Campanella, "Congress, Country X, and Arms Sales," in Purvis and Baker, eds., *Legislating Foreign Policy*, 107–19; Alan Platt, "Congress and Arms Control: A Historical Perspective, 1969–1976," in *Congress and Arms Control*, ed. Alan Platt and Laurence Weller (Boulder, 1978), 1–11.

1960s, three independence movements—the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Front for the Liberation of zAngola (FNLA), and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)—engaged in a complicated scramble for power in which various parties looked for support to the United States, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), China, Cuba, Zaire, Zambia, and South Africa. Until early 1975, the United States was a minor participant in Angolan affairs, extending a token amount of assistance to the FNLA, whose leader, Holden Roberto, was the brother-in-law of the closest U.S. ally in the region, Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko. In April of that year, however, a state visit by Zambian president Kenneth Kuanda, who asserted that the Soviets had dramatically increased their support of the MPLA, prompted an expansion of the U.S. role. The United States had already raised its subsidy to the FNLA from \$100,000 annually to \$300,000; now Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, prompted by Kuanda's concern, embarked on more determined action. One Republican source speculated that Kissinger hoped to rebuff criticism from congressional anti-Communists, such as Henry Jackson (D-WA), and neoconservative intellectuals of his efforts to achieve détente with the USSR. Both groups charged that the Soviets had taken advantage of détente to expand their influence in Africa and Asia. They demanded that Kissinger embrace their version of linkage, in which concrete Soviet concessions on Third World matters would accompany the U.S. willingness to lessen Cold War tensions. Given the transparent nature of outside involvement in Angolan matters, the issue was tailor-made for Kissinger's critics if he did not either compel the Soviets to back down or confront them forcefully in southwest Africa.¹⁵

Never before had Kissinger viewed Africa as significant to the international balance of power. But he did worry that the Watergate crisis and the withdrawal from Vietnam might undermine U.S. credibility. If the United States did not act, the Secretary feared, "the Southern African countries must conclude that the U.S. has abdicated in Southern Africa." Angola also represented a timely opportunity, as another Republican reasoned, "to find out if you could still have covert operations." This combination of motives caused Kissinger to overrule Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) William Colby, who worried about the potential backlash against his agency, already battered by negative publicity from congressional investigations. The Secretary also ignored his Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Nathaniel Davis, who subsequently resigned in protest, convinced that Kissinger's policy would "roll the dice against the longest of odds."¹⁶

15. Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 676–81; Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New York, 1999), 791–805; Thomas Noer, "International Credibility and Political Survival: The Ford Administration's Intervention in Angola," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 23 (Fall 1993): 771–76; Daniel Spikes, *Angola and the Politics of Intervention: From Local Bush War to Chronic Crisis in Southern Africa* (Jefferson, NC, 1993), 115–60; John Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs, 1945–1994* (New Haven, CT, 1995), 83–90.

16. Peter Lakeland to Jacob Javits, 5 February 1976, Box 63, Kissinger Folder, Series 4, Subseries 2, Jacob Javits Papers, Melville Library, State University of New York, Stony Brook,

As Davis understood, by this stage, other powers were also using Angolan affairs as a forum to obtain strategic advantage. As an outgrowth of the rivalry between Beijing and Moscow, the USSR resumed military aid to the MPLA in the spring of 1975, after the People's Republic of China increased its support for the FNLA. The situation inside Angola destabilized further when Cuba trumped Kissinger's move by sending "volunteers" to assist the MPLA, while UNITA welcomed arms and men from South Africa. In the summer, the United States upped its aid to \$14 million and extended assistance to UNITA for the first time. Colby, insistent on respecting the Hughes-Ryan amendment, ensured that Congress was informed of the plan. But while the DCI followed the letter of the law, he departed from its spirit, implying on Capitol Hill that the operation would soon conclude. Privately, he assured Ford that Church and the House inquiry headed by Otis Pike (D-NY) would not aggressively investigate the agency's habit of covert operations, lest they expose attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro during the Kennedy years.¹⁷

Unfortunately for Colby, a Senate inquiry quite apart from the intelligence inquiries, headed by Dick Clark, was already under way. Described by one observer as "a spirited and determined academic type, with a puritanical streak," Clark, a former political science professor and congressional staffer, scored an upset victory in 1972 in part by capitalizing on local reaction against the war in Vietnam. He maintained that the aftermath of Vietnam made it "a good time for a thorough re-evaluation of American foreign policy" by casting aside that "the 'answers' of the past." Beyond his critique of the Cold War consensus, the Iowa senator earned a reputation for "raising questions about the way things have always been done" in the upper chamber. He questioned whether the foreign-policy compromises of his first two years in office, such as the Cooper-Church and Hughes-Ryan amendments, would allow the Senate to achieve a meaningful voice in the making of foreign policy. Clark privately noted that "it will take more than" the War Powers Act for Congress "to reassert itself as an equal branch of government," and he worried that the "damaging effects" of the Cooper-Church amendment's compromise on the timetable of the U.S. withdrawal from Cambodia outweighed any gain that the ultimate withdrawal would achieve.¹⁸

These views placed Clark alongside other Democratic freshmen—such as Hughes, Tunney, Eagleton, and James Abourezk (D-SD)—who had distinguished themselves in their calls for a comprehensive reformulation of the basic

New York; Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 676–81; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 792, 802–12; Roger Morris, "A Rare Resignation in Protest: Nat Davis and Angola," *Washington Monthly* 7 (February 1976), 22–32; Noer, "International Credibility," 771–76; Nathaniel Davis, "The Angola Decision of 1975: A Personal View," *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1978): 123–24.

17. Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 676–77; John Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story* (New York, 1978), 54–69; Noer, "International Credibility," 777–81.

18. Clark to Kristine Kanezi, 8 March 1973, and Clark to K. E. Weber, 2 May 1973, both in Box 28, Dick Clark Papers, University of Iowa Library, Iowa City, IA; Clark to George Darland, 13 August 1973, and Clark to Mildred McConoughy, 5 May 1973, both in Box 42, Clark Papers.

tenets of U.S. foreign policy. Yet, for his first two years in office, Clark had almost no influence within the Senate on international matters. That situation changed in late 1974, when he obtained a slot on the Foreign Relations Committee that had become vacant following the defeat of the committee's longtime chair, Fulbright. Clark was assigned to head the African Affairs Subcommittee, a stepping-stone post whose last three chairs had voluntarily departed for more prestigious subcommittee chairs after serving the minimum two years. Regional expertise thus hardly ranked as a prerequisite for the position: Clark doubted that he could even identify all of the countries of Africa, much less offer a sophisticated policy critique. But, unlike his predecessors, the Iowan had an interest in African issues and so planned a series of hearings to expand his own knowledge. During most of the Cold War era, a junior subcommittee chair would have possessed little freedom to initiate an inquiry of his own. But after Fulbright's defeat, the committee's new chair, John Sparkman (D-AL), granted subcommittees more power. This instance would not be the only one when Clark would benefit from fortuitous timing.¹⁹

Clark's hearings opened with highly critical testimony from academics, arousing some Republican concern that the Iowan seemed overly prone "to criticiz[ing] the U.S. for not having contacted and assisted the 'liberation' movements in southern Africa." But GOP efforts to locate friendly witnesses "without making waves" proved so unsuccessful that the subcommittee's most active minority member, Robert Griffin (R-MI), worried that "the wrong impression could get out"—namely, that the administration was trying to conceal aspects of its policy. The Republicans eventually focused on preparing a dissent in case Clark issued a hostile report. At this stage, though, the opposition overestimated Clark's ability to raise the issue's profile among his colleagues: one senator, upon receiving an invitation to attend the hearings, remarked, "Where the hell is Angola?" Clark privately conceded some "disappointment that my hearings aren't always the most well-attended on the Hill."²⁰

When the hearings concluded, the Iowan traveled to southern Africa, where he narrowed the inquiry's focus to Angola after talks with the region's key leaders made him concerned that Kissinger's Angolan policy was fundamentally flawed and had potentially dangerous long-term consequences. During the tour, most State Department officials treated Clark with "absolute defiance," and the

12

19. Dick Moose, telephone interview with author, 23 February 1997; Marian Steiger, interview with author, 15 March 1997; Clark interview; Holt interview; Pat Holt, oral history, National Archives; Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, *The Almanac of American Politics 1976* (New York, 1975), 286.

20. Clark to Bob Holleron, 11 March 1976, Box 49, Clark Papers; Bob Turner, "Today's Mozambique Hearings," 13 June 1975, Turner, "Africa: Witnesses and Weather," 16 June 1975, and Robert Griffin, handwritten memo, 16 June 1975, all in Africa Subcommittee Box, Senate Foreign Relations Committee series, Robert Griffin Papers, Central Michigan University Library, Mount Pleasant, Michigan (hereafter cited as Griffin Papers); Spikes, *Angola*, 155; Fred Broyland, *Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa* (Edinburgh, 1986), 151–52.

CIA's station chief in Angola counseled members of the FNLA and UNITA on ways to fend off the senator's inquiries. But other agency officials, sharing Colby's concern about the public relations damage if either press reports or the ongoing Church and Pike investigations exposed the operation, supplied the Iowan's party with detailed information and even helped to arrange a conference between Clark and FNLA head Roberto.²¹

Clark returned home convinced that respecting Angolan self-determination would atone for earlier "lack of support for the struggle against colonialism." Clark's undertaking annoyed Kissinger to such an extent that one commentator joked that the Secretary had come to view all junior senators "like some small countries in that they utterly fail to appreciate the nuances of balance-of-power considerations." The Iowan, however, intensified his efforts. Hearings or investigations no longer would suffice: more aggressive action was needed. Accordingly, he introduced an amendment to the foreign aid bill to cut off all covert assistance to Angola. In using the measure to confront executive authority, Clark relied on the tactical precedents of the Cold War era. But he did not hide his expectation that adoption would end the "many years of neglect" in congressional oversight of the CIA and overcome the shortcomings in initiatives such as the Hughes-Ryan amendment. In fact, he reasoned, "one of the best ways to curb illegal intelligence operations is to find out what's going on" and then to publicize the matter. A foreign aid amendment and the subsequent congressional debate provided the perfect vehicle.²²

The introduction of the amendment alarmed not only Kissinger but also colleagues who preferred to see whether legislation such as the War Powers Act could address the situation in a less confrontational fashion. These intellectual heirs of the "limited dissent" felt a bit squeamish about Clark's challenge to the containment doctrine. Typifying the group's mindset, Humphrey, who had returned to the Senate after his tenure as vice president, argued that the shortcomings in the administration's policy stemmed chiefly from "the manner in which it was made." He qualified even this tentative stance. Ideologically, while he no longer considered himself a "cold warrior," he was not a "softy" regarding the need to confront Soviet expansionism, either. On the constitutional front, he had no more desire to "cripple" the president than he had had in the 1950s. He wanted only to replace "this business of the executive branch

21. U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on African Affairs, *Hearings, Angola*, 94th Cong., 2d sess., 6 February 1976, 143; Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies*, 85-88; Moose interview; Clark interview; Steiger interview.

22. Clark to Pam Kringler, 26 November 1975, and Clark to John Haguran, 17 December 1975, both in Box 44, Clark Papers; U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on African Affairs, *Hearings, U.S. Policy toward Southern Africa*, 94th Cong., 1st sess., 16 June 1975, 70-119; *ibid.*, 14 July 1975, 235-58; U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Foreign Assistance, *Hearings, Foreign Assistance Authorization: Arms Sales Issues*, 94th Cong., 1st sess., 5 December 1975, 538-40; *Washington Post*, 12 December 1975, 18 December 1975; Holt interview; Moose interview; Steiger interview; Mary McGrory, "Kissinger's Red Nuisance," *Chicago Tribune*, 31 March 1976.

deciding willy-nilly what it wants to do” and informing the Senate after the fact.²³

Fearful that Clark’s effort might result in a showdown with the administration, the Minnesotan proposed an alternative which “could be generalized rather than specifically applying to Angola.” Humphrey, described by Kissinger as his “favorite” member of the Foreign Relations Committee, teamed with Adlai Stevenson (D-IL), who believed that “Congress is poorly suited for a major role in the formulation and implementation of policy.” The duo offered a weak substitute expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States should call on all nations to withhold military support from the three Angolan factions, urge the Organization of African Unity to mediate the conflict, and consider economic sanctions against countries that continued to intervene in Angola. They reasoned that the measure, which contained only recommendations and did not affect funding, would send a message that while Congress did not “believe we should pick up the gauntlet in Angola itself, . . . we do not propose that we should simply ignore this Soviet challenge.” Moreover, it satisfied Stevenson’s belief that Congress ought to “give the President free rein so long as his power in foreign affairs is not abused.” In contrast, commentator Mary McGrory dismissed the effort as “almost groveling.”²⁴

By this stage, however, outside events had undermined efforts to chart a middle ground. In September, a *New York Times* exposé by Leslie Gelb outlined the scope of covert involvement by the Great Powers, while the *Washington Post* probed the extent of South African aid for UNITA. White House officials privately admitted the “obvious” fact that such reports, by comparing Angolan events to the early stages of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, had made Angola an “extremely sensitive” issue. Still, despite the criticism of Kissinger’s tactics, the mainstream media sided more with Humphrey and Javits concerning policy suggestions. The *Post*, for instance, recommended only that the administration abandon its covert policy; it did not oppose “modest open” assistance for the Angolan anti-Communists.²⁵

Clark, however, still entertained hopes of prevailing in the ideological struggle. In November, in yet another piece of ill fortune for Ford’s policy, funds for the covert operation ran out, requiring an emergency supplemental appropriation. With the entire Foreign Relations Committee on hand, CIA deputy

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23. Humphrey address, University of Southern California, 12 January 1976, Legislative Records, Subject Files, FR 150.6.2, Humphrey Papers; *Congressional Record* 121, 94th Congress, 1st sess., 41203–41204 (17 December 1975).

24. Humphrey and Stevenson, “Dear Colleague,” 17 December 1975, Legislative Records, Subject Files, FR 150.6.2, Humphrey Papers; U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Foreign Assistance, *Hearings, Foreign Assistance Authorization: Arms Sales Issues*, 94th Cong., 1st sess., 5 December 1975, 542; Clark interview; McGrory, “Kissinger’s Red Nuisance”; Stevenson, quoted in Sundquist, *Decline and Resurgence of Congress*, 293.

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25. Unsigned memorandum, 25 September 1975, Box 121, Ronald Nessen Papers, Ford Presidential Library; *New York Times*, 23 September 1975; *Washington Post*, 22 November 1975; Spikes, *Angola*, 274–76.

director William Nelson continued the pattern evident in Clark's African visit of agency openness, confirming that covert assistance had ballooned to \$32 million. Edward Mulcahy, Davis's successor as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, appeared next. Late to the hearing, and thus not privy to Nelson's disclosures, Mulcahy claimed that the level of U.S. involvement had not changed from 1974, compromising the administration's credibility to such an extent that the committee unanimously reported Clark's amendment to the floor. This move all but ensured that the amendment would win approval when the full Senate considered the foreign aid bill the following January. Most members, however, acted less from sympathy with Clark's beliefs—which, as one staffer noted, continued to be viewed as “rather radical”—than from their disgust with Mulcahy's duplicity. The committee vote confirmed the lesson of the War Powers Act and the initiation of the intelligence investigations: the Senate now supported, at a minimum, an executive-legislative relationship of the type demanded by adherents of “limited dissent” in the 1950s. What remained unclear, however, was whether Angola would also become the issue to rally a Senate majority behind an alternative ideological agenda or to overturn the foreign-policy structure that Congress had adopted early in the Cold War.²⁶

Since he attached his offering to the foreign aid bill, Clark avoided the second of these issues. Most like-minded colleagues warmly praised his work—Joseph Biden (D-DE) credited him with “getting our colleagues to distinguish between Angola and Mongolia”—but they also preferred a more aggressive tactical approach. For most Senate liberals, the expansion of the covert operation without sufficient oversight confirmed that the institutional norms of the Cold War era, which exalted the powers of Armed Services and Appropriations Committees, prevented effective congressional action against executive power. But, since Mulcahy's actions seemed to provide a political opening to persuade more moderate colleagues to strike a blow against the foreign-policy culture of the Cold War Congress, liberals decided to use the Angolan issue to press forward in this aspect of their agenda.²⁷

In this, the second stage of the congressional involvement in Angolan affairs, Tunney made his mark. The son of heavyweight boxer Jack Tunney, the senator had enjoyed a privileged upbringing, attending elite private schools, Yale, and the University of Virginia Law School, where he roomed with Edward Kennedy. His service as an Air Force lawyer brought him to California, and he was elected to the House of Representatives in 1964. Young, handsome, wealthy, and politically well connected, he immediately set his sights on a seat in the Senate. In

26. Clark interview; James Buckley, interview with author, 24 March 1997; Moose interview; Robert Turner, “Yesterday's Angola Hearings,” 17 June 1975, Africa Subcommittee Box, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Series, Griffin Papers; Noer, “International Credibility,” 776–77; Neil Livingston and Manfred von Nordheim, “The U.S. Congress and the Angolan Crisis,” *Strategic Review* 5 (Spring 1977): 37.

27. *Hearings, Angola*, 6 February 1976, 171–73.

1970, he bested fellow Representative George Brown, an early and outspoken opponent of the Vietnam War, in the Democratic primary and then cruised to victory over incumbent George Murphy. The triumph, however, left some political scars. The fight with Brown alienated antiwar activists, who remained suspicious of the senator, despite a voting record that placed him at the left fringe of the Senate. Moreover, Tunney's transparent ambition and lack of intellectual depth—he was the rumored model for the movie *The Candidate*—saddled him with a reputation as a legislative lightweight, which persisted despite a fairly solid record during his first four years in office. From Tunney's point of view, leading a charge against Kissinger's Angola policy would identify him as an effective legislator while simultaneously appealing ideologically to liberals crucial to his renomination.²⁸

Washington and Sacramento pundits recognized the political implications of Tunney's sudden interest in a region about which he had admitted in early December that he knew "little or nothing." One California observer asked, "How many votes are there in Angola?" Another scoffed that the senator "no doubt thought Angola was a sweater" before "the place hit the front pages."²⁹ Regardless of his motives, however, Tunney's actions had effects well beyond California politics. Like Clark, Tunney had regularly voted to check executive authority and to back a more reform-minded foreign policy, although, like Clark before the emergence of the Angola issue, he had enjoyed little influence on national security matters. In late 1975, however, he decided to act, prodded by two of his staff members, Bill Coughlin and Mark Moran.³⁰ Tunney then used his friendship with Kennedy and his California colleague Alan Cranston (D-CA) to persuade other liberals to allow him to take the lead position in the fight, thus satisfying his political needs. Fittingly, given his agenda, Tunney's first salvo came not against the administration but in a demand that Appropriations Committee chair John McClellan (D-AR) reveal the amount the 1976 defense budget contained for the covert operation, a figure by custom available only to the senior members of the Appropriations and Armed Services Committees. As Russell had before him, the Arkansas senator responded with institutional appeals that avoided the ideological issue at hand. Supported by Stennis, he demanded a closed session. The duo, "outraged that anybody should ask them questions," then cited the danger of leaks and refused to disclose the total. They instead recommended trusting executive judgment.³¹

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28. Barone and Ujifusa, *Almanac of American Politics*, 49–52.

29. In many ways, this criticism was unfair: Tunney had championed independence for Portugal's African colonies while in the House, and, in 1973, had introduced a Senate resolution urging the United States to pressure its NATO ally to move faster in the decolonization process.

30. Moran, who worked closely with staffers of other liberals and was touted by friends as a future secretary of state, played a particularly important role in bringing the Angolan issue to Tunney's attention.

31. Tunney, "Statement on Angola (closed sess.)," 17 December 1975, Box 2, John Tunney Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California (hereafter cited as

Arguments of this sort had effectively shielded the intelligence community from congressional oversight throughout the Cold War. But no longer. Rather than concede defeat, Tunney met with Clark, Kennedy, Cranston, and Murray Zweben, the Senate parliamentarian. Zweben assured them that an amendment to the Pentagon appropriations bill to prohibit further assistance and to reduce the defense allocation by \$33 million (the amount estimated already spent in Angola) would be germane, even though both chambers already had passed the original measure. Moreover, since the conference report on the bill was pending business in the Senate, the upper chamber would have to consider the issue at once. Finally, unlike the foreign aid bill, national security and political factors all but eliminated the prospects of a presidential veto. Tunney's move forced the Senate to squarely confront its disinclination to legislate foreign-policy issues through defense-spending amendments.³²

Clark, however, questioned the wisdom of tying the anti-interventionist effort to the defense appropriations bill. Foreign Relations Committee staffer Richard Moose agreed, noting the long odds of a strategy that required overcoming not only the hostile staffs of the Armed Services and Appropriations committees but also the more general reluctance to amend defense bills. Tunney countered that the Pentagon measure provided "exactly the right vehicle to take us where we wanted to go." He gambled that Angola's superficial resemblance to the early stages of the involvement in Vietnam would attract support for the amendment from senators generally reluctant to overturn the traditions of the postwar Senate.³³

Tunney's move had one unintended but notable parliamentary effect: the legislative timetable of the Clark amendment gave Republicans time to downplay the Vietnam analogy and frame the involvement as a step to prevent communist expansion. The administration's response to the Church investigation, overseen by the newly created Intelligence Coordinating Group (IGC), provided a model of this tactic: a combination of public skepticism, international setbacks, and skillful administration manipulation of public opinion had produced a swing against the reformers' agenda. Given time, Kissinger believed that he could achieve the same result concerning Angola. But, the Secretary privately fumed, Tunney's effort was "not minor league stuff," since it denied time to react: indeed, Kissinger realized, the administration might actually lose in the showdown. Reasoning that a setback could cause North Atlantic Treaty

Tunney Papers); *Long Beach Press Telegram*, 4 February 1976, and *Escondido Daily Times Advocate*, 27 March 1976, both in Box 7, Tunney Papers; Moose interview; *Washington Post*, 26 November 1975, 16 December 1975, and 17 December 1975; *New York Times*, 17 December 1975; Stokes, *Politics of Intervention*, 85–86.

32. "Explanation of Tunney-Brooke Angola Amendment," n.d., Box 6, Tunney Papers; *New York Times*, 17 December 1975; Livingston and von Nordheim, "The U.S. Congress and the Angolan Crisis," 37–40.

33. Clark interview; Steiger interview; Moose interview; Franck and Weisband, *Foreign Policy by Congress*, 52.

Organization allies to wonder how Americans could defend Europe “if they can’t hold Luanda,” he belatedly mobilized a lobbying effort, asking Minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-PA) to assemble a meeting to discuss the matter. Reflecting the mores of a different era, the Secretary anticipated a small gathering. Instead, Scott invited nearly two dozen senators, understanding the newfound influence of junior members like Clark and Tunney. Kissinger conceded that the United States possessed few strategic interests in Angola per se. But—with tears in his eyes to demonstrate his passion—he contended that the covert operation would confirm U.S. international resolve and thus uphold the balance of power. This justification persuaded few undecided senators, many of whom instead found the Secretary ill-informed. The “traumatic” four-hour conference ended after Tunney refused to withdraw his amendment and Kissinger rejected demands for a timetable to end the operation.³⁴

Kissinger’s arguments confirmed his difficulty in demonstrating how détente would handle issues such as the Angolan matter. But they also fell short because the Secretary failed to address either the legacy of Vietnam or the question of retaining the foreign-policy culture of the Cold War Congress. Senate traditionalists refused to concede defeat and successfully maneuvered to consider the amendment in a rare secret session, which convened for two hours on the morning of 17 December. But they enjoyed few other victories. As the lead-off speaker in the debate, Tunney cited the dangers of excessive deference to the executive branch and to senior senators. Both the war and the Angolan involvement also showed that “Congress, if it is to fulfill its responsibilities, must be informed about our foreign commitments and about financing covert operations.” But, unlike champions of “limited dissent,” Tunney’s concerns extended beyond “the procedure used to determine our role in Angola.” Perceptively selecting his historical analogies, he chose to “paraphrase former Senator Taft,” the best-known defender of the Senate’s international prerogatives in the name of questioning the assumptions of the Cold War consensus. Despite their differing belief systems, Tunney praised Taft’s earlier warnings against giving “the military adventurists what they wanted,” a policy that “has gotten us repressive right-wing dictatorships as allies all over the world.”³⁵

The amendment’s rapid emergence frustrated the efforts of Tunney’s opponents to overcome the Vietnam analogy, although a few Republicans tried to do so. Reiterating his continued belief in the containment doctrine, James

34. “Memorandum of Conversation,” *The Nation*, 29 November 1990; Steiger interview; Clark interview; Buckley interview; Livingston and von Nordheim, “The U.S. Congress and the Angolan Crisis,” 38–39; Isaacson, *Kissinger*, 682–83; Smist, *Congress Oversees the Intelligence Community*, 74–81; LeRoy Ashby and Rod Gramer, *Fighting the Odds: The Life of Senator Frank Church* (Pullman, WA, 1994), 368–75.

35. Tunney press releases, 15 December and 17 December 1975, Tunney, “Statement on Angola (closed sess.),” 17 December 1975, and Tunney, “Dear Californian,” January 1976, all in Box 2, Tunney Papers; Tunney, “Dear Colleague,” 16 December 1975, Box 6, Tunney Papers.

Buckley (R-NY), the amendment's most eloquent critic, asserted that the United States remained a "serious power" whose disinclination to contest Soviet expansionism in one area of the world would have serious repercussions in another. Griffin, the GOP whip, took a more personal course. Stating the obvious, he noted that Clark was "more knowledgeable on the region" than his colleagues. But, the Michigan senator contended, understanding the threat from Soviet expansionism did not require a detailed background in Angolan history. The efforts of both Griffin and Buckley were of little avail, however. Convinced that the legacy of Vietnam made even some conservatives unwilling "to listen to reason," Buckley bluntly conceded that "no hope" of his side prevailing existed if debate remained centered on the lessons of the conflict in Southeast Asia.³⁶

Lacking an alternative, administration supporters urged blocking the amendment in the name of upholding the Senate's established procedure on international issues. Ironically, then, they helped Tunney achieve his desire of transcending Angola and making the amendment a referendum on the culture of the Cold War Congress. Using familiar arguments, they stressed the need to respect the established committee process, the dangers of legislative haste, and the Senate's awkwardness in handling international matters. Stennis, for instance, denied that "a little limitation on an appropriation bill" could settle this type of issue, while Griffin denounced "attempts to conduct foreign policy with intrinsically heavy-handed yanks on the federal purse strings." But, demonstrating what Pat Holt, chief of staff of the Foreign Relations Committee, described as the "powerful political earthquake" after Vietnam, the most ardent supporters of the Tunney amendment confronted the attacks forthrightly. Conceding the "tricky" nature of Congress "trying to participate in foreign policy decisions through the use of the purse strings," Tunney detected a "larger meaning" for his amendment: it would restrict executive authority, either "directly or indirectly," over military policy. As the *Washington Post* recognized, the reformers desired, not a symbolic restoration of Congress's foreign-policy role, but the Senate assuming "a large measure of responsibility for what now happens in Angola." The upper chamber then could use policy toward southwestern Africa as an example of its preferred approach to international affairs in general.³⁷

36. Griffin notes, n.d. (December 1975), and Griffin draft speech, "The Stakes in Angola," 18 December 1975, both in Angola Folder, Africa Box, Griffin Papers; Buckley interview; *Congressional Record* 121, 94th Cong., 1st sess., 41198, 41202 (17 December 1975), 42216 (19 December 1975); *Washington Post*, 16 December 1975. 18

37. McClure to Cassandra Street, 4 May 1976, Box 6-2, Foreign Relations Series, James McClure Papers, University of Idaho Library, Moscow, Idaho (hereafter cited as McClure Papers); Griffin speech, "The Stakes in Angola," 18 December 1975, Angola Folder, Africa Box, Griffin Papers; Holt interview; *Congressional Record* 121, 94th Cong., 1st sess., 42217 (19 December 1975); *New York Times*, 17 December 1975; *Washington Post*, 23 December 1975. 19

With their ideological and institutional appeals checked, the amendment's opponents employed one last set of arguments. Hoping to attract senators chiefly interested in the principle of congressional input, Tunney's critics cleverly denounced the amendment as redundant on the grounds that recently passed legislation would ensure a future congressional voice in policy toward Angola. Griffin predicted that the precedent of the Cooper-Church amendment (which, after the fact, cut off funding for the secret invasion of Cambodia) would deter Ford from ignoring congressional will. More to the point, Buckley reasoned that charges of the administration dragging an unwilling Congress into sending troops to Angola implied a loss of "any confidence in the . . . war powers law, which was supposed to have prevented us from any such possibility." The New York senator admitted that he "deliberately" highlighted this point in the hopes of cracking the antiadministration coalition.³⁸

Buckley's line of reasoning exposed the ideological fault line between Tunney, Clark, and their supporters and senators such as Javits, who, as one of the architects of the War Powers Act, maintained that fortifying its constitutional role on war-making and treaty-making issues represented the most effective way for the Senate to reclaim its foreign-policy influence. Javits agreed with Buckley that addressing questions such as the Angolan matter constituted the main reason "why we passed" the 1973 legislation. He did not hide his scorn for either Tunney's beliefs or his tactics. On the ideological front, Javits worried that Clark and Tunney, by viewing the issue in "black and white" terms, had underestimated the implications of the Cuban intervention. Regarding institutional matters, Javits envisioned a "partnership" between the executive and Congress, rather than the "embarrass[ing]" tactics selected by Tunney. He noted that even if the amendment passed, policy-makers could still obtain funds for the covert operation from agencies outside of the Defense Department. But even Javits admitted that Congress, "having opened the door" to using the power of the purse, "should now walk through it." Accordingly, he introduced a perfecting amendment to include a "basic prohibition" on any funds for the Angolan operation. But he exacted a price, removing Tunney's \$33 million punitive reduction in Pentagon funding.³⁹

Recognizing that he had prevailed on the point of principle, Tunney did not oppose the Javits amendment. The California senator conceded that his original offering would not prevent the transferring of funds. But, to confront the problem, he preferred to strike even more directly at the culture of the Cold War Congress by introducing a supplementary amendment to block Senate

38. Buckley interview; *Congressional Record* 121, 94th Cong., 1st sess., 41196-41197 (17 December 1975), 42216 (19 December 1975).

39. Javits quoted in "Legislative Notice: U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee," 18 December 1975, Angola Folder, Africa Box, Griffin Papers; Javits staff memorandum, 24 January 1976, "Reasons for Angola Vote on 12/19/75," Angola 1975 Folder, Series 4.2, Javits Papers; *Congressional Record* 121, 94th Cong., 1st sess., 41203 (17 December 1975), 42776 (18 December 1975); *Hearings, Angola*, 29 January 1976, 44.

subcommittees and committees from approving any request to reprogram or transfer funds for covert activity. Its adoption, he claimed, would provide a “full recognition of the constitutional right of the Senate” to shape foreign policy. More important, by limiting the power of hostile committees such as Armed Services and Appropriations, it would enhance the strength of the upper chamber’s liberal minority.⁴⁰

On the point at hand, reformers also challenged Javits’s belief that the War Powers Act would ensure a credible congressional voice in Angolan policy. In fact, they advocated the Tunney amendment’s passage on exactly the opposite grounds, arguing that it would redress the shortcomings of legislation, like the War Powers Act, which focused exclusively on constitutional issues without challenging the ideological principles of Cold War foreign policy. Clark, for example, touted the initiative as an antidote to measures that had saddled Congress “with the illusion of co-responsibility.” Eagleton, meanwhile, blocked in his earlier bid to extend the War Powers Act to intelligence operations, championed Tunney’s measure as a backdoor way to close a major “loophole” of the legislation.⁴¹

As recognized most clearly by Buckley and Eagleton (from opposite ideological poles), different philosophies motivated the War Powers Act and the Tunney amendment. In the form adopted, the War Powers Act established a framework for Congress to respond once the executive branch initiated hostilities. The Tunney amendment, on the other hand, represented an attempt to seize control of the policy agenda itself. Moreover, contrary to Clark’s fears, Tunney’s tactics were actually beneficial, since they ensured a speedy debate in which the liberals did not have to spell out the full implications of their policy suggestions. After a last-ditch filibuster organized by Griffin collapsed, Kissinger met with the Senate leadership in the office of Mike Mansfield (D-MT) the night before the scheduled vote. He pleaded with them to sidetrack the amendment, reiterating his objectives: a cease-fire, an end to the bloodshed, the withdrawal of all outside forces, and negotiations among the three Angolan factions. Although Humphrey suggested that “we should give the Secretary a chance,” the votes were not there. The next day, on 19 December, the amendment prevailed by a tally of 54 to 22. Tunney had gambled and won: for the first time since the interwar era, a policy rider to a defense bill had passed the Senate without being weakened. The Senate then passed the full Pentagon funding measure, and the House followed suit.⁴²

40. Tunney, “Dear Colleague,” 7 January 1976, Box 2, Tunney Papers; Spikes, *Angola*, 283–86.

41. Clark address, “Frustration,” 29 January 1976, Box 49, Clark Papers; Clark interview; Eagleton interview; *Hearings, Angola*, 29 January 1976, 31.

42. Bob Wolthuis to Max Friedersdorf, 16 December 1975, Box 3, Robert Wolthuis Files, Ford Congressional Relations Office Papers; Clark interview; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 831; Spikes, *Angola*, 285–88; Livingston and von Nordheim, “The U.S. Congress and the Angolan Crisis,” 37–42.

After the controversy associated with the Tunney amendment, congressional approval of the Clark amendment less than a month later was almost anticlimactic. Yet the Iowan's effort had equally important policy and institutional ramifications. While the Tunney amendment cut off funds for the current operation, it did not apply beyond the scope of the 1976 defense appropriation bill. The Clark amendment, on the other hand, made permanent the ban on covert assistance in the most unequivocal congressional assertion of control over the intelligence community since the start of the Cold War. Clark predicted that the amendment's approval would be "indicative of future efforts by the Congress to take part in our foreign policy." He accordingly outlined an ambitious African agenda for 1976, calling for assistance to the liberation struggles elsewhere in colonial Africa, opposition to South Africa's continued occupation of Namibia, and consideration of economic sanctions against the South African regime. These initiatives would end "political and military interference in the internal affairs of other countries," confirming that in the foreign policy of a democracy, "openness should be the rule, secretiveness the exception—not the other way around." "In a word," Clark admitted, he advocated "the ethical element in foreign policy," placing the United States on a higher moral plane than its international rivals.⁴³

The victory likewise emboldened Tunney in his crusade against the culture of the Cold War Congress. Most prominently, he continued his battle to restrict the power of proadministration committees. In "the strongest and most unequivocal language possible," Tunney also demanded a prominent role for the Senate in future Angolan policy and dispatched Mark Moran and Bill Coughlin to Angola, where MPLA representatives assured them that the country would not become a Soviet satellite. Framing his activism as broadly as possible, he contended that Angola proved that "as a matter of policy, the United States should not involve itself in civil wars" and should avoid covert military assistance. On a more personal level, Tunney also continued to sense that African issues would provide maximum political advantage. He called for South Africa to withdraw its troops from Angola and recommended sanctions against the white minority government of Rhodesia, further phases "in the awakening of our policy toward Africa that began when Congress approved my initiative."⁴⁴

43. Clark to Gordon Mitchell, 23 January 1976, and Clark to editor, *Sioux City Journal*, 12 January 1976, both in Box 49, Clark Papers; Clark to John Sparkman, 30 December 1975, Box 42, Clark Papers; Clark, "Basic Foreign Policy Speech," 13 May 1976, Box 117, Clark Papers.

44. Tunney press releases, 4 March 1976 and 28 April 1976, and Tunney, "Dear Californian," January 1976, all in Box 2, Tunney Papers; Tunney address, "The Meaning of Détente," American University, 5 February 1976, Box 7, Tunney Papers; Tunney to Gerald Ford, 16 January 1976, and William Kendall to Tunney, 11 February 1976, both in Box 6, Country File, White House Central File, Ford Presidential Library; *New York Times*, 24 January 1976, 26 January 1976; *Hearings, Angola*, 163, 6 February 1976, 165.

By further weakening the reluctance to use the Pentagon spending measure to influence policy development, the Tunney amendment laid the groundwork for a more prominent congressional presence on future institutional matters. But, contrary to expectations that Congress would support a more liberal foreign policy than the executive, the most important effect of the growing legislative activism was to make U.S. foreign policy less predictable. The Angolan affair illustrated the point. The steady congressional involvement intensified the importance of issues—including the split between the CIA and the State Department, the timing of Clark's chairmanship, the power of the Vietnam experience as a deterrent against covert operations, tactical errors such as the Mulcahy testimony, and the ability of Tunney's gambit to ensure a speedy debate—that, a decade, earlier the administration might have been able to overcome.

The passage of the Tunney amendment ended the second stage of the congressional response to Angola. Suddenly, African events changed course, affecting the direction and balance of the ideological debate. With the Tunney amendment eliminating the chance of a U.S. military intervention in Angola, the Vietnam analogy, ironically, lost its relevance. Kissinger exploited the opportunity and looked to suggest that Angola proved that congressional activism had gone too far. The first sign of the new strategy came when the Tunney amendment went before the House of Representatives. Convinced of "certain defeat," the floor leader of the anti-amendment forces, Appropriations Committee chair George Mahon (D-TX), sought to "'low key' the vote as much as possible to reduce the damage." Instead, White House officials concentrated on a high-profile "presentation of the Administration's case." The President led the way, publicly accusing the legislature of lacking "guts." Ford also issued an executive order overhauling existing procedures for intelligence-gathering to counter claims that the Angolan operation resulted from excessive CIA autonomy.⁴⁵

To the *New York Times*, such confrontational tactics "succeeded only in magnifying the Administration's defeats." But, in fact, the response formed part of a cleverly conceived effort to transform the public view of Angola into a case of communist aggression facilitated by reckless congressional activism, in the hopes of discrediting the foreign-policy alternative offered by reformers like Clark. The next step came when Kissinger appeared before Clark's subcommittee. Unlike the case in 1975, the Iowan no longer needed to worry about attracting publicity. After Ford's press secretary, Ronald Nessen, lobbied for

45. Ford to Carl Albert, 27 January 1976, Box 10, Max Friedersdorf Files, Congressional Liaison Office Papers, Ford Presidential Library; Max Friedersdorf, "Memorandum for the President," 22 January 1976 and 23 January 1976, and Cathie Bennett to Brent Scowcroft, 20 January 1976, all in Box 32, National Defense Series, White House Central File, Ford Presidential Library; *Public Papers of the Presidents* (Washington, DC, 1976), 1678; *New York Times*, 21 December 1975; John Robert Greene, *The Presidency of Gerald R. Ford* (Lawrence, KS, 1995), 114.

network coverage of the event, CBS devoted six minutes of its evening newscast to the testimony, and the hearings also attracted front-page newspaper coverage. A confident Kissinger parried hostile questions from Clark and Biden, touted the merits of balance-of-power diplomacy, and implied that regular congressional involvement would destabilize the U.S. role in world affairs. Engaging in a bit of revisionist history, the Secretary recalled his Angolan policy as “effective so long as we maintained the leverage of a possibility military balance”; blame for any deterioration of the situation fell on Congress for depriving him of the “indispensable flexibility” necessary.⁴⁶

And conditions did deteriorate. Just as events on the ground had benefited the administration’s critics before the adoption of the Tunney and Clark amendments, African developments now had the opposite effect. In early January, an MPLA/Cuban offensive drove out most South African forces. In quick succession, Zaire reduced its support for the FNLA, UNITA head Jonas Savimbi dispersed his troops and planned for guerrilla war, and the Organization of African Unity admitted Angola, as represented by the MPLA, as a new member. The Cubans, meanwhile, profiting from the power vacuum created by the U.S. pullback, showed no signs of withdrawing their troops. This latter point proved particularly difficult for critics of Kissinger’s policy to overcome; as Humphrey admitted in a March meeting with the Secretary of State, there was “anger in the country about what the Cubans are doing in Africa.” Contrary to Clark’s predictions, the ending of U.S. involvement had not ensured the triumph of self-determination in Africa; instead, it had opened the way for the emergence of what critics contended was a Cuban protectorate.⁴⁷

Though the collapse of the anti-Communist forces predated the congressional action, the administration gladly attributed the result to the Tunney and Clark amendments. From Angola, Savimbi held a press conference denouncing the two senators. The White House released statements from the British, French, and German foreign ministers expressing a unified sentiment against “this attempt by the Soviet Union to establish themselves by force in this new area.” Administration officials hinted that Angolan moderates “inevitably read Congress’ refusal to provide aid . . . as evidence that they cannot count on the U.S. in Africa to help maintain the power balance.” Having recovered its equilibrium, the White House also began to outmaneuver its congressional foes. The same day, for example, that Tunney held a press conference claiming that Zambian recognition of the MPLA government indicated that the new regime would not be a communist satellite, intelligence sources leaked reports of Soviet arms shipments to Zambia.⁴⁸

46. Ronald Nessen to Walter Cronkite, 30 January 1976, Box 6, Country File, White House Central File, Ford Presidential Library; *Hearings, Angola*, 29 January 1976, 8–14, 34; *New York Times*, 28 January 1976.

47. Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, 923; Spikes, *Angola*, 266–86.

48. Tunney press release, 12 February 1976, Box 2, Tunney Papers; William Kendall to Tunney, 11 February 1976, Box 6, Country File, White House Central File, Ford

Senate Republicans then broadened the assault, hoping not only to discredit Clark's policy preferences but to reverse Tunney's institutional victory as well. Dewey Bartlett (R-OK) argued that the MPLA's victory "once again gave irrefutable proof that a committee of one hundred is unsuitable for day-to-day foreign policy decisions"; indeed, the "formulation of the issue through a rider on an appropriations bill" illustrated the "careless" process that "greatly reduced" the "odds in favor of correct decisions." Striking more at Clark, James McClure (R-ID) added his hope that the MPLA's triumph would cause "those members of Congress so anxious for the United States to sit back and allow events in the world to run their course" to "have second thoughts and reconsider our responsibility as leader of the free world." Otherwise, the Idaho senator predicted, all southern Africa would fall under Soviet domination.⁴⁹

Although McClure's rhetoric was a bit overheated, it was Tunney and Clark, as one observer noted, who had "misjudged the public temper." Throughout the early 1970s, liberals—joined by what Kissinger, in his memoirs, referred to as the "McGovernite Congress"—maintained the momentum in the public debate about foreign policy, casting the U.S. involvement in Vietnam as misguided, crusading for a pro-human-rights foreign policy, and urging reductions in defense spending. But gradually the liberal surge was checked, especially by the eloquent bloc of neoconservative theorists who grew stronger as the Ford administration progressed. In fact, as historian John Ehrman has observed, the neoconservatives used Angola as the prime example of a renewed Soviet expansionism. Norman Podhoretz proved the most outspoken of the group on the issue, denouncing "the new isolationism" that caused congressional liberals to damage "the main institutional capability the United States possesses" to confront the Soviets. Neoconservatives claimed that the Cubans' emergence as the dominant military force in the region would tear away the "tissue of misconceptions and wishful thinking" that had motivated the likes of Clark and Tunney.⁵⁰

These criticisms had their effect. By mid-1976, the United States "was not even the same *country*" that, immediately after Vietnam and Watergate, had supported stripping "the cover of national security from the CIA" and efforts to wind down the involvement in Angola. Capturing the prevailing sentiment, a public-opinion survey noted that while a majority wanted to avoid "the excess of commitment that resulted in Vietnam," the public also was exhibiting a

Presidential Library; Robert McCloskey to Dick Clark, 6 February 1976, copy in Angola 1976 Folder, Series 4.2, Javits Papers.

49. McClure to W. A. Shepherd, 9 April 1976, and McClure to Pat Carney, 26 April 1976, both in Box 6-2, Foreign Relations series, McClure Papers; *Congressional Record* 122, 94th Cong., 2d sess., 608-10 (22 January 1976); *New York Times*, 9 February 1976.

50. Smist, *Congress Oversees the Intelligence Community*, 74-81, 181-90, 205-13, Kathryn Olmsted, *Challenging the Secret Government: The Post-Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996), 150-72; John Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1994* (New Haven, CT, 1995), 104-7.

“certain sense of nationalism.” Americans most wanted “to be number one once more.” While hardly incompatible with the realpolitik worldview expressed by Kissinger or the hard-line anticommunism of senators such as Buckley or McClure, this changed public mood undermined Clark’s hopes that his amendment would presage a new U.S. international approach. Even Clark’s colleague, John Culver (who had succeeded Hughes), conceded that the “genuine concern” over Soviet activities in places like Angola had resulted in the “Pentagon winning” the public relations battle.⁵¹

Less committed than Clark to a revised African policy, and with his election campaign in high gear, Tunney retreated in the face of the criticism. First, he announced that he would not oppose expanding military aid to Zaire, despite its dictatorial government, to counter any threat “arising from Soviet and Cuban forces in Angola.” Confirming the sting of Ford’s remarks, the senator added that his decision would give the lie to claims “that Congress is not displaying any guts.” Next, the Californian reached out to right-wing critics of Kissinger,⁵² attributing the MPLA’s triumph to the Secretary’s “two-faced definition of détente,” a concept that required the United States to “sit idly by while the Soviet Union openly . . . meddles on a rich continent.” Such rhetoric markedly contrasted with his questioning of Cold War assumptions only a few months earlier. The politically sensitive senator had sensed the new directions in the nation’s ideological currents.⁵³

Clark struggled in a different way to make the transition from a critic’s role. As Tunney had done, he tried to deflect blame for Angolan events away from Congress by attributing the MPLA’s increasingly anti-American posture to Kissinger’s refusals, first to press Portugal to grant Angola independence, and then to engage in a “serious dialogue” with the organization. But Clark, suddenly defensive, also began to shy away from offering a positive agenda. This approach guided his appearance on NBC’s “Meet the Press” in March, which opened with a question on whether the MPLA triumph had given him any

51. Culver, “Why Is the Pentagon Winning This Year?,” April 1976, Box 182, John Culver Papers, University of Iowa Library, Iowa City, IA; David Ignatius, “Dan Schorr: The Secret Sharer,” *Washington Monthly* (April 1976): 20; Litwak, *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine*, p. 190; Smist, *Congress Oversees the Intelligence Community*, 74–81, 181–90, 205–13.

52. Earlier, a small band of conservatives had used the Tunney amendment to vent their anger over détente. Since the Secretary envisioned a negotiated settlement ultimately ending the Angolan conflict, Jesse Helms (R-NC) asserted that “continued aid would be an exercise in futility.” The North Carolina senator reasoned that “the principal cause of our failure in Vietnam was the unreasonable restraints put upon our military strategy and tactics in order to achieve just the kind of negotiated settlement that apparently is our goal in Angola today.” Helms to Gerald Ford, 19 December 1975, Box 22, Foreign Relations series, White House Central File, Ford Presidential Papers. For further right-wing opposition to the Tunney amendment, see Strom Thurmond to Ford, 18 December 1975, Box 32, National Defense Series, White House Central File, Ford Presidential Papers.

53. Tunney, “The Meaning of Détente,” American University, 5 February 1976, and Tunney quoted in *Stockton Record*, 12 February 1976, both in Box 7, Tunney Papers; *New York Times*, 15 February 1976.

26

27

“second thoughts” about his role in terminating U.S. aid. He claimed to have opposed only the supplying of covert assistance, not the policy behind the decision. Continuing his suddenly “practical” dissent, Clark argued that the military weakness of the Angolan anti-Communists, not the policy’s ideological flaws, had doomed Kissinger’s effort. Pressed on how the United States should respond if Cuba intervened militarily elsewhere in southern Africa, the Iowa senator again offered “very careful” pragmatic rather than idealistic advice, urging “an action that we can succeed with.” This policy translated into assisting only what he called “legitimate regimes,” a term he did not define. Then, praising Kissinger’s “very strong statements in regards to the Soviet Union’s action there,” Clark concluded that “insofar as we can find realistic means to have our feelings known” to Moscow, “we certainly should do that.” Columnist Carl Rowan charitably described the senator’s answers as “unclear.” Unlike the case in 1975, Clark now sounded vague and indecisive, Kissinger and particularly the neoconservatives the reverse.⁵⁴

The reversal of fortune began a process in which the Clark amendment came to symbolize congressional recklessness and an overly idealistic foreign policy that failed to take into account national security needs. In the words of *Newsweek*, a revisionist foreign policy had “become bad politics.” With Clark and Tunney reeling before the administration’s counterattack, high-ranking Democrats privately fretted that the GOP would raise the charge of “Who lost Angola?” as the party had effectively done concerning China a generation before. Some even proposed accommodating the administration. Several House Democrats privately indicated that “if aid to Angola is as important as the Administration says it is, . . . the President should send up a request,” promising that the House Foreign Affairs Committee would hold impartial hearings even if its Senate counterpart did not. In the upper chamber, moderate and conservative Democrats similarly backed down. For instance, Dick Stone (D-Florida)—with his own political needs to satisfy—pushed for a strong stance against Cuban actions in Angola, even at the cost of ignoring the Tunney amendment.⁵⁵

These political realities prevented Angola from serving the partisan purposes that Tunney had expected it to do. His activism on the issue was not a political liability, but neither did it lessen his reputation as a legislative lightweight or shield him from a left-wing primary challenge. Although he rebuffed Tom Hayden’s primary bid, in the general election Tunney fell to S. I. Hayakawa, who sharply criticized his African position. Senate contests around the country

54. Tunney to Clark, 28 January 1976, Box 2, Tunney Papers; “Meet the Press” transcript, Box 71, Ronald Nessen Files, Ford Presidential Library; Clark interview; Moose interview; *Hearings, Angola*, 6 February 1976, 171–80, 194.

55. William Kendall to Max Friedersdorf, 4 March 1976, Box 32, National Defense series, White House Central File, Ford Presidential Library; Charles Lepper to Max Friedersdorf, 2 February 1976, Box 1, Vernon Loen and Charles Leppert Files, Congressional Liaison Office Papers, Ford Presidential Library; *Washington Post*, 7 January 1976; *Newsweek*, 9 February 1976.

offered similarly unfavorable results: although the Democrats suffered a net loss of zero seats, the darling of the neoconservatives, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, won election from New York, while hard-line anti-Communists such as Malcolm Wallop, Orrin Hatch, and Harrison Schmidt replaced supporters of the Tunney amendment in the upper chamber. The presidential contest, however, narrowly went to Jimmy Carter, who promised to support self-determination and human rights. Though Clark was “optimistic” that a Democratic administration would give “Africa the careful attention it deserves,” the new president’s policies struggled to achieve the ideals outlined in the campaign. Moreover, Carter’s hard-line National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, championed a renewed commitment to the containment doctrine.⁵⁶

In another indication of the altered ideological climate, congressional hearings on Angola during Carter’s term emanated not from Clark’s subcommittee but from more conservative subcommittees in the House of Representatives, which focused on how the Cuban intervention endangered international peace. From the executive branch, Brzezinski prevailed on Carter to continue Ford’s policy of not recognizing the MPLA regime, and he suggested repealing the Clark amendment. Moose, who had moved from the Foreign Relations Committee staff to the State Department’s African desk, mobilized State Department opposition to the latter effort. The fact that a Democratic administration would consider undoing his handiwork testified to Clark’s inability to frame the way in which policy-makers viewed the Angolan issue. Even the Iowan himself abandoned his earlier position and publicly endorsed the nonrecognition of the MPLA regime, asking only that the Senate not enact legislation forbidding the possibility in the future. He did not retreat entirely, however. Though he admitted that “the mood of America has changed, with public opinion becoming more suspicious of possible Soviet advances,” Clark insisted that the lessons of the fall of 1975 remained valid.⁵⁷

Whether his constituents agreed with this assessment formed a critical issue in Clark’s re-election contest against Republican Roger Jepsen. Asserting that “Iowans are not hicks,” the senator maintained that his devoting so much attention to African issues—even at the cost of scaling back his trips home—would

56. Thomas Brown and Martin Smith, “And the Main Event West,” *New York Times Magazine*, 31 October 1976; *Oxnard Press Courtier*, 19 January 1976, and *Petalum Argus-Courtier*, 27 May 1976, both in Box 7, Tunney Papers; Clark to Edward Ralph, 7 December 1976, Box 50, Clark Papers.

57. Clark, “Reflections on the Clark amendment,” 11 July 1978, Box 59, Clark Papers; Griffin draft speech, “Repealing the Clark amendment,” 17 July 1978, Angola Amendment (1978) Folder, Foreign Relations Committee Box, Griffin Papers; Steiger interview; Moose interview; Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor, 1977–1981* (New York, 1983), 181, 183, 187; U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs, *Hearings, Impact of Cuban-Soviet Ties on the Western Hemisphere*, 95th Cong., 2d sess., 5 April 1978, 52–77; U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, *Hearings, U.S.-Angolan Relations*, 95th Cong., 2d sess., 25 May 1978, 33–48.

not harm him politically. During a campaign debate on African policy, though, he described his record very differently than he had in 1975, announcing that he had “focused on stopping Soviet expansionism, and, at the same time, keeping Americans out of war.” Jepsen vehemently disagreed. The challenger was hardly an intellectual heavyweight. At one point he asserted that the Clark amendment imposed sanctions against South Africa, “one of our best friends”; at another he responded “no comment” when asked what policy he himself would prefer for Angola; at a third he wildly asserted that Clark had advocated granting military aid to African Communists as part of a foreign policy of “encouraging and supporting terrorists.”⁵⁸ But the MPLA triumph bolstered the Republican’s broader theme that Clark was soft on defense and supported a foreign policy reflecting “the exact thoughts of Russia,” one bent toward “appeasement and not supporting our friends and allies.” Jepsen thus featured the issue prominently in his campaign. With Clark’s base among Catholic Democrats weakened by his prochoice view on abortion and the challenger unusually well funded by national conservatives (and, rumors went, covertly from a South African government seeking retribution for Clark’s activism), election night produced a result few had anticipated: Clark lost by just over twenty-five thousand votes, 52 percent to 48 percent.⁵⁹

The defeats of Tunney and Clark, though, along with the heightened tensions with the USSR, did not resuscitate the culture of the Cold War Congress. In fact, the two trends best exemplified by Tunney’s effort—a recognition that the power of the purse offered the most certain path for Congress to influence international affairs and a challenge to the unwritten Senate rules of the postwar years—continued unabated.⁶⁰ A more flexible defense authorization process, indicative of Tunney’s ability to bypass previously unassailable colleagues such as McClellan and Stennis, generated an explosion of floor amendments concerning both policy and funding matters. Between 1969 and 1985, the number of reports requested by Congress from the Pentagon increased by 1778 percent, the instances of directed actions escalated by 922 percent, and changes in provisions to defense-related laws soared by 255 percent.⁶¹

58. One Clark staffer snidely remarked that he “doubted that Jepsen could even begin to describe” the politics of the region. Staff memo, n.d. [1978], Box 72, Clark Papers.

59. *Des Moines Register*, 16 May 1978, 21 May 1978; *Sioux City Journal*, 23 June 1978; *Daily Iowan*, 30 Aug. 1978; *Fort Dodge Messenger*, 10 May 1978; Clark, “Africa Debate: Opening Remarks,” n.d. [1978], Box 79, Clark Papers.

60. Immediately after the amendment’s passage, one Ford official presciently predicted that the Pentagon “in the years ahead will have the toughest . . . job” of any cabinet agency in dealing with congressional policy riders. Bob Wolthuis to John Marsh, 15 January 1976, Box 79, John Marsh Files, Counselors to the President Papers, Ford Presidential Library.

61. Robert Art, “Congress and the Defense Budget: Enhancing Policy Oversight,” *Political Science Quarterly* 100 (Summer 1985): 234; Lindsay, “Congress and Defense Policy,” 374; Lindsay, “Congress and the Defense Budget,” 60. The Pentagon responded to the new challenge; by 1977, it had assigned 333 staffers to handle congressional relations. Thomas Dine, “The Power of the Purse,” in Platt and Weller, eds., *Congress and Arms Control*, 66.

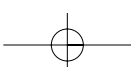
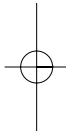
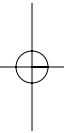
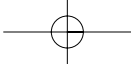
But the demise of the Cold War institutional structure did not in and of itself ensure a congressionally inspired liberal agenda. Throughout much of the postwar period, most challenges to the legislature's institutional orthodoxy had come from liberals unhappy with the anti-Communist foreign policies of the day. But, as a skeptical Javits understood at the time, the Tunney amendment "opened the door" for members of Congress, regardless of their ideological persuasions, to use the body's renewed powers to challenge the foreign policy of the sitting administration. Carter's international agenda thus came under strong attack from senators who just a few years earlier had tried to overturn Tunney's institutional victory. The late 1970s featured riders to Pentagon spending bills from the likes of Jesse Helms (R-NC) to withhold funds for abortions for military personnel, Wallop (R-WY) to mandate the construction of a laser-based missile defense system, and John Tower (R-TX) to use the defense budget bill, ironically, to weaken the War Powers Act. After Ronald Reagan's election in 1980, Senate Democrats tended to shy away from the tactic, conscious, as one staffer recalled, of the "chilling . . . examples of Senators Clark and Church." In the House, however, liberals such as Representative Les Aspin (D-WI) recognized that "to gain leverage over the executive, we needed something which the president wanted to sign, a bill which he considered essential." The most controversial such policy rider, sponsored by Representative Edward Boland (D-MA), severed aid to the anti-Communist contra rebels in Nicaragua. Building on tactics pioneered by Tunney, Boland attached his amendment to a national security appropriations measure.⁶²

Reagan's rise, however, furthered the trend toward viewing the Clark amendment as a symbol of the naiveté of the congressional liberals of the mid-1970s. Reagan's election and renewed conflict between the MPLA and UNITA prompted Cuba to strengthen its military commitment and the United States to intensify its campaign against the MPLA government. The new Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, denounced the Clark amendment as "self-defeating and an unnecessary restriction on the executive branch," kicking off the administration's crusade to repeal the measure. The Senate, in which the Republicans had assumed a majority, quickly went along, but the Democratic House of Representatives balked. Then, in 1985, after Reagan's overwhelming re-election and an MPLA offensive aided by an estimated thirty thousand Cuban troops, the House reversed itself. Reagan immediately authorized \$15 million in assistance to Savimbi's UNITA forces.⁶³

62. James McCormick, "Decision-Making in the Foreign Affairs and Foreign Relations Committees," in Ripley and Lindsay, eds., *Congress Resurgent*, 118-48; Aspin quoted in Blechman, *Politics of National Security*, 106; Barry Blechman, "The New Congressional Role in Arms Control," in Mann, ed., *A Question of Balance*, 123-38; Cynthia Arnson, *Crossroads: Congress, the Reagan Administration, and Central America* (New York, 1989), 67, 210.

63. Spikes, *Angola*, 310-24; Gerald Bender, "American Policy toward Angola," in Gerald Bender, James Coleman, and Richard Skilar, *African Crisis Areas and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Berkeley, CA, 1985), 114-22; Henry F. Jackson, *From the Congo to Soweto: U.S. Foreign Policy toward Africa since 1960* (New York, 1982), 81-85.

The repeal of Clark's initiative confirmed the waning influence of his foreign-policy vision. But the Clark and Tunney amendments were significant less for their (albeit quite substantial) impact on Angolan policy than for their effect on the Senate's institutional culture. The two amendments, in different ways, expanded Congress's foreign-policy role by fortifying the legislature's appropriations powers on international matters, which had atrophied amid the anti-Communist consensus of the Cold War. The Clark amendment established the principle that the foreign aid program could be used to effectively oversee intelligence activities, as earlier offerings such as the Hughes-Ryan amendment had failed to do. The Tunney amendment proved that Congress could exercise a key power from the pre-World War II period—policy riders to defense spending bills—without the type of compromises associated with the Cooper-Church amendments. At the same time, however, the Clark and Tunney amendments produced a host of surprising developments. Much to Clark and Tunney's dismay, conservatives used the new institutional culture of Congress to forward their agenda at least as effectively as did liberals. In addition, while the Clark amendment did become a widely discussed foreign-policy symbol, it did so in a way that its sponsor never could have envisioned. With this combination of anticipated and unanticipated consequences, the congressional involvement in the Angolan issue produced a Congress with more tools to challenge executive authority but with less predictability in the ideological and tactical approach it would take to international affairs.



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