

F

American Committee on Africa
Executive Board Meeting
July 8, 1971

Present: Josiah Beeman, Robert Browne, Elsie Carrington, Winifred Courtney, Gregory Harris, Dorothy Hibbert, Dana Klotzle, Martin Mensch, Gail Morlan, Judith Ayres (visitor from the Presbyterian Task Force on Southern Africa).

Staff: George Houser, Jennifer Davis, Karen Whitmore, Ben Peterson, Dick Leonard, and Charles Hightower.

The meeting was chaired by Robert Browne and was called to order at 6:00 pm.

1. The new Board members present (Gregory Harris, Dorothy Hibbert, Martin Mensch, and Gail Morlan) were introduced.

2. The minutes of the last meeting (April 22, 1971) were approved.

3. Staff Report (George Houser)

a) George reported that Prexy Nesbitt has had to terminate his work as ACOA's Chicago Representative to devote more time to his academic work. For the next few weeks he has undertaken a special project for ACOA: preparing an annotated bibliography on southern Africa. George said that Prexy's work had been very valuable in bringing southern African issues to the Chicago community and campuses in the Chicago area.

On continuing ACOA work in Chicago, George reported that he had met with Eileen Hanson, who has worked in the Ivory Coast, traveled in southern Africa, and is completing masters study on education in South Africa. Eileen will be sending in a proposal for ACOA consideration for setting up a storefront literature and information center with an emphasis on southern Africa. Eileen would coordinate the storefront and also be available for speaking for community and college groups.

b) George also reported that Janet Hooper will be leaving in August after six years work with ACOA. The Board agreed that appropriate recognition for Janet's contributions should be planned.

4. Finance Report (Ben Peterson).

Ben reported on the revised budget estimates for the year. Projections for the whole year show an income of \$141,268 and expenditures of \$142,946. This means a projected deficit of somewhat over \$1000, but this must be added to the \$5000 deficit from 1970 that the organization is still carrying. Ben emphasized that his figures are projections and that they depend on the success of the fund raising efforts during the rest of the year.

5. Nominating Committee Report and Elections

In the absence of the Nominating Committee members, George Houser summarized the recommendations of the committee. This report is attached. George briefly described Judge William Booth's interest in ACOA's work and his recent trip to South Africa to witness court hearings for Dean French-Baytagh. It was agreed that in lieu of sufficient Board members present to amend the By-Laws to eliminate the positions of Co-Chairman, the positions would not be filled following the election of Donald Harrington and A. Philip Randolph to the National Committee. Additional nominations added to the list of nominees for the National Committee were Representatives Ogden Reid, Bella Abzug, and Charles Rangel.

The recommendations of the Nominating Committee with the additions agreed on were unanimously accepted. These included:

a) The recommendation that the present Nominating Committee continue until December 31, 1971 and that a new committee be appointed for next year's work.

b) The establishment of a Personnel Committee to conduct a yearly review of staff and salaries, and to act as a complaint board if necessary. Members are Elsie Carrington, Winifred Courtney, Dana Klotzle, Adelaide Schulkinde, and Peter Weiss.

c) A Washington Liaison Committee, including Tim Smith as chairman, Gail Morlan, Joe Beeman, Lydia Williams, and Jay Jacobson was established to perform a supportive role for the Washington Director.

d) The present Steering Committee (Robert Browne, George Daniels, Elizabeth Landis, Andrew Norman, Frederick Schwarz, Tim Smith, Robert Van Lierop, Lydia Williams, and Peter Weiss) is retained.

e) The Finance Committee will include Jay Jacobson, Andrew Norman, David Robinson, and Frederick Schwarz (chairman).

f) The following members are dropped from the Board: Donald Harrington, A. Philip Randolph, Lew Carliner, and Hope Stevens.

g) The positions of Co-Chairman will not be filled at this time.

h) The following nominations for the National Committee are accepted: Donald Harrington, A. Philip Randolph, David Jones, Frank Montero, Hope Stevens, William Scheinman, William Scott, Mason Sears (from the Africa Fund), Ralph Abernathy, Julian Bond, Shirley Chisholm, Coretta King, Ronald Dellums, Ogden Reid, Bella Abzug, and Charles Rangel.

i) The nomination of Judge William Booth for Executive Board membership was accepted.

j) Nominations for Executive Officers include:

President: Peter Weiss.

Vice Presidents: Robert Browne, Elizabeth Landis, David Robinson.

Secretary: Lydia Williams, with Assistant Secretary, Dick Leonard on the staff.

Treasurer: Frederick Schwarz.

In the elections following those nominated for Board officers were unanimously elected and Judge William Booth was elected to the Board.

6. Amilcar Cabral

George Houser reported that Amilcar Cabral, the President of the P.A.I.G.C. in Guinea-Bissau will be coming to New York in September for the U.N. General Assembly session and that it may be possible to set up some speaking engagements for him then.

7. Visit of Sahnoun of the O.A.U.

George also mentioned the short visit of Mohammed Sahnoun, the Deputy Secretary of the O.A.U., who is arriving in New York now for the U.N. Security Council session on the International Court of Justice decision on Namibia. There will be a meeting with lawyers concerned about the Namibia case and it may be possible to arrange a small informal session with him before he leaves.

8. Research Report (Jennifer Davis).

Jennifer reported that the research files are being developed to the point where they are an increasingly important asset for research on the southern African countries and the U.S. corporations operating there. Over the past year they have been used by a number of students and groups and also for preparing material for the O.A.U. and U.N. and Congressional testimony. This is in addition to their regular use as an ACOA resource for such work as the two special issues of Africa Today and the Fact Sheets that have been prepared this spring.

She recommended, however, that the work involved in maintaining and improving the research resources demands another person to work in this area. She will be working up a specific proposal that can be used by the Africa Fund for raising the needed funds. It was suggested that the possibility of employing a college student on a work-study plan be investigated.

9. Washington Report (Charles Hightower)

a) On the South African Sugar Quota, Charles reported that the battle against the quota in the House was lost after the largest anti-apartheid vote ever (168-213) was mustered. The Sugar Bill will be out of the Senate Finance Committee very soon and a close vote is expected on the Kennedy Amendment to remove the South African quota from the Sugar Bill. Charles and Judy Ayres of the Task Force on Southern Africa had lists of some of the uncommitted Senators and an appeal will go out to ACOA supporters asking for letters to these Senators. It was agreed that Board members would try to write three letters apiece on this issue. If the South African quota is defeated, the Bill will go to a House-Senate Conference. Charles also noted that Senator Kennedy had, in a press conference, spoke strongly in favor of U.S. disengagement from South Africa.

b) Charles met briefly with professional golfer Lee Elder, who was invited to play in South Africa by Gary Player, and plans to be meeting with him again about the invitation. Elder had at first announced his acceptance of the Player offer, but as groups and individuals have contacted him about the implications of such a trip, he has since said that no final commitment for the trip has been made.

c) The Black Caucus in Congress had a very successful fund-raising dinner and will be setting up an office with staff in the fall.

d) Charles' trip to Zambia, which was postponed in June, is on again and he hopes the definite arrangements can be made soon.

e) Finally, Charles noted that there had been testimony recently before the Senate Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements by an executive of a specialty steel producer (Mr. Blair Bolles of Crucible, Inc.) concerning his laboratory's analysis of chrome imported from the Soviet Union. He testified that the titanium content of Soviet chrome exported to the U.S. was similar to that of Rhodesian chrome, whereas other Soviet chrome had a different titanium content, the implication

being that the Soviets could be buying Rhodesian chrome and selling it to the U.S. Winifred Courtney and Martin Mensch said that they would try to check on this issue with friends having some knowledge of metallurgy.

10. Disengagement Issues

a) George noted that the Polaroid "experiment" in South Africa is half over and also that GM has talked about making "significant" improvements in wages for their non-white workers. We will be watching developments over the coming months.

b) Dick Leonard reported on the Gulf Boycott meeting in Dayton, Ohio over the July 4th weekend. It was organized by a local group, the Gulf-Angola Committee of the Congregation for Reconciliation, and attended by about 15 people from church and student groups. It was agreed that while the group in Dayton would serve as a clearing-house for boycott information, local groups will be responsible for developing boycott activities in their areas. After the conference, there was a rally at a local Gulf station to start the Dayton Boycott.

c) There were brief reports on several sports and cultural issues. George reported on the action of the Boston NAACP, which is calling for an end to the participation of South African athletes in Massachusetts sports events, unless they repudiate apartheid. Specifically, they are planning protests at the Massachusetts Golf Classic and the Longwood Pro Tennis Tournament, both in August.

Karen Whitmore reported on the invitation to Aretha Franklin to South Africa to perform for black audiences only, reportedly extended by Chief Buthelezi during his visit here. Prexy Nesbitt has issued a news release in Chicago calling for her not to go. Contact with her manager in New York indicated that she has made no definite arrangements, so this will be followed up. Karen will be working on a Fact Sheet dealing with the issue of cultural and sports ties with South Africa.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30. No definite date was set for the next Board meeting, but it will be in the early fall.