

AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA

Executive Board

May 13, 1963

MINUTES

Present: Donald Harrington, Chairman; Nelson Bengston, Daniel Bernstein, Winifred Courtney, Sophia Yarnall Jacobs, David Jones, Farrell Jones, Frank Montero, Andrew Norman, Adelaide Schulkind, Hugh Smythe, Hope Stevens, Peter Weiss.

Staff: Collin Gonze, George Houser, Catharine Raymond, James Robinson.

1. Minutes of the last meeting: Accepted as circulated.

2. Reports

a. Houser Africa trip: George Houser outlined his forthcoming trip to Africa. He read a draft message to the Conference at Addis Ababa which was accepted in principle, and the staff was left free to make editorial changes. Hope was to be expressed for a unified Africa. ?

b. Africa Freedom Day: It was felt that the meeting had been significant, although, as was pointed out, neither the cost nor the income had been on as great a scale as formerly.

c. Makeba benefit: Jim Robinson reported that as of April 20th, \$389.50 had been received for tickets; several new people had bought tickets who are now on our contributors' list. He considered the effort neither an unqualified success nor a failure but pointed out that the concert itself had been very good and that those who had bought tickets seemed pleased and would probably therefore support another benefit of the same sort.

d. Finance Report: Daniel Bernstein reported that as of this moment we are in the black. He thought that much of the credit for this situation should go to the appeal letters that have gone out. Jim Robinson suggested that we are now profiting from last year's gains in the mailing lists since we have been using mostly our own lists.

e. Literature and pamphlet on U.S. economic aid to Africa: The magazine subscription list is in a fairly healthy condition. Two authors have been lined up for a new pamphlet on US economic aid to Africa who are to collaborate. A special issue of AFRICA TODAY is planned for the fall in connection with the Tenth Anniversary celebration. Ads are to be solicited for this. ?

f. ILA action on South African ships: George Houser reported that he had made contact with Anthony Scotto of the Brooklyn ILA and action against South African ships had been approved in principle. CORE will cooperate in any action taken.

g. Cable from Neto: George Houser read a cable sent to the ACOA. On his trip he expects to see representatives of both Angolan groups, who will undoubtedly be in Addis Ababa.



h. Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Fund: George Houser suggested getting in touch with the large Fund based at the UN. Mrs. Jacobs and Frank Montero thought there was not much hope that any arrangements could be worked out with it. It was however agreed that we ought to clear with this group since it is more or less officially approved by the family for the use of Mrs. Roosevelt's name. Photostats of correspondence should be sent to it.

i. UN Special Committee on Apartheid: Mary Benson and George Houser have testified before the Committee. We are trying to arrange for Martin Luther King to appear. The Committee is anxious to have him, and he has agreed, but the present situation in Birmingham is keeping him fully occupied. The Chairman of the Committee has gone through our material on sanctions and boycotts and the Committee will follow up on our suggestions about implementing a boycott.

3. Election of Officers: In the absence of any objections, the Chairman ruled that the thirteen Board members present constituted a quorum for purposes of election. The Board members nominated were then elected, and the officers also. Both officers and Board membership remain the same.

4. Appointment of Committees: Assignments were made as listed (see attached) except that John Murra, who is leaving the country for an extended period, was omitted from his assignments.

5. Pamphlet on US policy toward Portugal: This pamphlet, to include sections on Portugal itself, the Portuguese Empire, and US policy in regard to Portugal, is scheduled for publication in the fall. It is to be written by Collin Gonze, George Houser, and one other undesignated person.

6. Dan Smoot Report: George Houser reported on having received a copy of an extreme right-wing sheet from Texas which, among other things, attacked the ACOA as a CP-inspired group. It was suggested that we should be in touch with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which has been under considerable pressure from Portugal.

7. Defense and Aid Expenditure: Peter Weiss raised a question about how applications for aid are handled. It was stated that the separate report (which had been mailed) of the D and A Fund was designed to explain its expenditures.

8. Southern Rhodesia issue: George Houser reported that a special session of the General Assembly was due to start tomorrow. It is hoped that it will be possible to get a discussion of the Southern Rhodesia situation in this session. A letter to the US Delegation urging support for inclusion of this item was read, and its immediate dispatch was approved. It was also agreed that we should try to get other organizations to write to Stevenson and also work on officials in Washington. Meetings of organizational representatives in both New York and Washington were suggested. Chuck Stone might be able to get Congressman Diggs to work on the problem.

9. U.S. aid to Africa: It was agreed that Peter Weiss should seek an opportunity to testify before the appropriate Congressional committee.



10. Kaunda affair: It was reported that Kenneth Kaunda will be in New York, specifically to receive an honorary degree from Fordham University. He will arrive on May 19th. An ACOA meeting with him is planned for Friday the 24th at the home of Dr. Vera Rubin. (This was subsequently cancelled because of Mr. Kaunda's extremely crowded schedule.)

11. Tenth Anniversary: On his trip to Africa George Houser will try to get testimonials from African leaders about the work of the Committee. In relation to an award, Peter Weiss mentioned having read of a theatrical producer who had refused to put on a show in South Africa. It was agreed that this lead should be further investigated.