

The next meeting of the Board will take place on Monday, January 14, 1963

at 5:45 p.m. in the office of the ACOA.

# AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA

Executive Board

November 12, 1962

## MINUTES

Present: Peter Weiss, Chairman; Nelson Bengston, Daniel Bernstein, Winifred Courtney, Stanley Levison, Frank Montero, John Murra, Bayard Rustin, Adelaide Schulkind, Hugh Smythe, Hope Stevens. Staff: George Houser, Collin Gonze, Debby Kallen, Catharine Raymond, James Robinson.

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

2. Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Scholarship: Peter Weiss reported that in recognition of Mrs. Roosevelt's support for the work of the Committee over the years, the Steering Committee had set up the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Scholarship to assist a student from an African country still under colonial domination in attending an American school or university. Five hundred dollars had already been pledged toward the establishment of the scholarship. The Steering Committee felt that such a scholarship would combine two of Mrs. Roosevelt's greatest interests: the fight against colonialism and other forms of injustice, and young people. The Board adopted a resolution commending the establishment of the scholarship and authorizing George Houser, Peter Weiss and Daniel Bernstein to administer it for the first year. A letter would go to all members of the Board and other friends of the Committee inviting them to contribute to the scholarship.

3. Reports:

(a) George Houser will be circulating a full staff report, including items which were covered in his report to the Board (picket lines at South African consulate, visitors to the office, petitioners, conferences attended by the staff, etc.)

(b) Literature. Collin Gonze reported that backing had been obtained to print the position paper on "South African Crisis and United States Policy" in pamphlet form and that publication date would be shortly after November 15th. The last chapter of the paper was being reprinted in the December issue of Current magazine. Two other manuscripts (South West Africa and Angola) had not been edited because of lack of time.

(c) ERA. George Houser reported that Dr. Ian Gilchrist, son of a Canadian missionary in Angola is prepared to work in the Congo and Angola. It was hoped that he would get to the Congo about January 1st. ACOA now had approximately \$9,000 in the ERA account with which to cover some of the expense of maintaining Dr. Gilchrist in the Congo and purchasing medical supplies. A fund had committed itself to covering some of the maintenance costs.

(d) Office Space. The Committee will be moving to 211 East 43rd Street some time around January 1st. The rent will be less than what we are currently paying.

(e) Africa Defense and Aid Fund. Since September about \$1,000 had gone from the Defense and Aid Fund to refugees in Africa and to petitioners at the United Nations.



(f) Union Contract. A union contract with only minor changes had been negotiated for the coming year.

4. Plans for December 10th, Human Rights Day. George Houser reported that the Appeal for Action Against Apartheid brochure had been mailed out around the country and that a number of trade unions and church groups were mailing the brochure, together with the supplementary suggestions for action to their lists. Within another week's time it was expected that some 200,000 brochures would have been mailed. The Board took under consideration a memorandum outlining specific types of action to be taken on Human Rights Day, and after discussing the most effective type of picketing in New York, reached a consensus that though picketing a distributor of or a restaurant featuring South African rock lobster might not have very great financial significance, it could be important from the public relations point of view since rock lobster is the one consumer product in the United States from South Africa that is easily recognizable; and that it would nevertheless be extremely important from the educational point of view to picket at least one of the firms whose large investments are helping to buttress the South African regime, preferably one with an uptown branch. There was general agreement that a leaflet should be prepared containing information on American economic involvement in South Africa.

It was decided that the American Committee on Africa alone could not sustain an on-going campaign on sanctions and the boycott after December 10 and should therefore initiate a coordinating committee bringing a wider range of organizations into the campaign.

5. American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa--Relation of ACOA to Post-Conference Organization: Hope Stevens reported that the Leadership Conference would take place on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday immediately following Thanksgiving and that there would be approximately 100 delegates attending. The ad hoc committee organizing the conference was sorely in need of funds. The great question raised by the conference was one of creating an instrument which could serve as an effective channel for the expression of the feelings of the Negro community on African problems and American foreign policy in this area. The Steering Committee, in its last meeting, had discussed the types of changes the Committee might be willing to effect in order to be able to serve as this instrument. The Board agreed that: The American Committee on Africa welcomes the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa. The Committee is prepared to make its resources and experience available in the implementation of the objectives agreed upon by the Conference and, in this connection, to consider making certain organizational changes.

6. Budget, 1963: Daniel Bernstein presented the budget for 1963, with two amendments to the documents circulated to the Board: (1) \$5,000 would be cut from the salary item and (2) an additional \$5,000 would be raised through special efforts during the 10th Anniversary Year of the ACOA. This would mean that instead of a projected deficit of \$24,000 at the end of 1963, there would be a deficit in the neighborhood of \$14,000. Although there was a feeling that AFRICA TODAY's new and cheaper format was not desirable, it was realized that there was not much choice in view of the very serious financial situation. The Board adopted the budget with one negative vote.



7. Tax Exemption for the Africa Defense and Aid Fund: Peter Weiss reported on his and George Houser's recent meeting with special counsel, Adrian DeWind. Mr. DeWind was of the opinion that it should be possible to obtain tax-exempt status for a new organization which would, in essence, continue the functions of ADAF and ERA. The Board authorized the Steering Committee to give further examination to this and to follow up with Mr. DeWind.
8. African Issues at the UN: Because of lack of time to report on this item at the Board meeting, George Houser will include it in his staff report.
9. 1963, 10th Anniversary plans for ACOA: The Board requested the Steering Committee to study this question further and to return to the Board with more detailed plans for observing 1963 as the ACOA 10th Anniversary Year.
10. Elections and ACOA National Committee: The Organization Committee was instructed to convene as soon as possible and to prepare nominations to the Board and the National Committee for the next Board meeting, paying due consideration to the emergence of new public figures during the recent elections.