

**ASSOCIATION OF CONCERNED AFRICA SCHOLARS**

P.O. Box 791, East Lansing, Michigan 48823  
February 19, 1982

James F. Turner  
Co-Chairperson  
Africana Studies and Research  
Cornell University  
Ithaca, NY 14850

Immanuel Wallerstein  
Co-Chairperson  
Dept. of Sociology  
SUNY-Binghamton, NY 13901

Joel Samoff, Chairperson  
Committee on Research  
SIDEAC, School of Education  
Stanford University  
Stanford, CA 94305

Nzongola Ntalaja  
Co-Chairperson  
Committee for Political Education  
African Studies Center  
Howard University  
Washington, D.C. 20059

Chris Root, Co-Chairperson  
Committee for Political Education  
1532 Swann Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009

Anne Schneller, David Wiley  
Treasurers  
P.O. Box 791  
East Lansing, MI 48823

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Bill Minter  
209 1/2 West Trinity  
Durham, North Carolina 27701

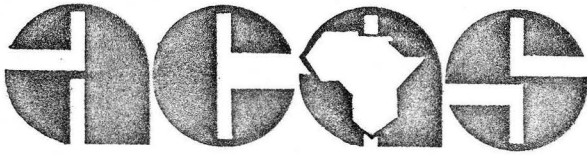
Dear Bill,

Many things have happened since we last spoke in early December, so I thought it would be useful to submit a short interim report to all ACAS Board members.

On the positive side--and there is much to be pleased about--paid membership has tripled. We now have approximately ninety paid members, almost all of whom have indicated a willingness to participate in one way or another. Their dues also enable us to remain financially solvent (although we do incur a number of recurring costs to keep the organization operating). By now you will have received the Newsletter which, in my judgment, represents quite a good beginning. Two ACAS committees are now functioning. Joel has compiled a list of some fifty people willing to write various types of papers and he has been in contact with several to get projects underway. Chairing the Research Committee has been quite demanding and Joel is currently trying to find a co-chair from the ACAS membership. The Political Education and Action Committee has put together a telephone tree which will be going out to all ACAS members within a week or so. Moreover, Nzongola and Chris have remained in contact with TRANSAFRICA and the Washington Office on Africa and we have, in a very limited way, begun to work together on some campaigns. Now that our organization is stronger, I will try to initiate more sustained working relations with a variety of progressive organizations concerned about Africa. ACAS has also played an important role in the Dennis Brutus Defense Campaign and in gaining the release of Ernest Wamba from a Zairean prison. We also sent telegrams opposing the transfers of U.S. military technology, computers, etc., to South Africa. Now we must begin to take a more serious look at the plight of Ethiopian students in the U.S.

There are, however, several problems with which the Board must deal. As the organization grows and becomes more involved the amount of work increases proportionately. Right now I am devoting about ten hours a week to ACAS and several Board members have also committed a substantial amount of time. To put it bluntly, ACAS will need greater participation from all the Board as well as from new members--several of whom have already

Allen Isaacman  
Executive Secretary  
614 Social Science Tower  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
(612) 373-2705



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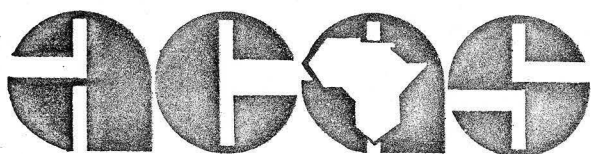
indicated an interest on working in local projects. Several positions need to be filled immediately.

1. We need a co-chair to work with Tom Shick planning and organizing the Newsletter. The next one is to be published in May and the third number in early October. It is important that we make the Newsletter first rate since it is one of the few things we give to our members in return for very substantial dues. Production of the Newsletter will continue at MSU where Anne and Dave have done a superb job.

2. We need a committee to organize ACAS panels at the A.S.A., A.H.S.A. and at other professional and political meetings. At present this is being conducted in a very ad-hoc way by Tom, Joel, Jim, Willard and myself. We have not progressed in terms of an ACAS presence at A.H.S.A., although both Jim and Willard are pursuing the possibility. With regard to an ACAS presence at the A.S.A. conference in Washington, two proposals have been raised. First, that ACAS organize a panel on political mobilization in the U.S. on African issues and invite representatives of A.C.O.A., TRANSAFRICA, the Washington Office on Africa, the Black Caucus, etc., plus someone from our organization. A second suggestion is that we have a workshop or roundtable on "Socialist Progress in Africa--Claims and Problems of Assessment." Joel has indicated a willingness to help organize such a roundtable and is anxious to receive concrete suggestions of possible participants. In the absence of some sort of "Symposium Committee," Tom has been doing some initial work but it is clear that he needs additional help immediately. In fact, I would propose that we have a formal committee with two Board members serving as co-chairs.

3. We will probably need a committee to help coordinate relations and projects with other organizations. At present I have been doing that as well as trying to keep a multitude of loose ends together. I would be happy to continue to be involved in this aspect of ACAS but it is essential that there be one or two other Board members who could assist.

I realize that you are all overextended. But ACAS can only function if the Board plays an active role and if members become engaged in either local or national projects. So, I am



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asking all of you to try and pick up a bit of the slack, otherwise ACAS, and I, will drown in success. Finally, there are still a few members who have not sent in their dues and many who have not contacted Joel about possible ways in which they could plug into the Research Committee's activities. Please do so.

My apologies that this short interim report has gone on for so long! Thanks again for all your assistance and support.

With best wishes,

Allen Isaacman  
Executive Secretary  
Association of Concerned African Scholars

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