

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Southern Africa Committee: Minutes of October 2, 1965

All day meeting to plan year's activities

Background and Establishment of Position:

The meeting opened with a general discussion of procedure and agenda. Several suggestions were made: That we determine long term aims, how generally to accomplish these aims, and then what specific actions must be taken. Long range aims were defined in three areas: (1) In relation to South Africa and South Africans, (2) In relation to the United States, including government, business, churches, students, (3) In relation to other countries: (a) OAU countries, (b) economic powers in South Africa.

It was pointed out that if we are to contact other SCM's, we should use the services of the Political Commission of the W.S.C.F. under Bruce Douglas, rather than simply acting bilaterally.

Items (1) and (2) above were given top priority. One terribly central aim was spelled out concretely: Work must be done so that when revolution comes in South Africa, the U.S. will support the right side and not back anti-Communist white supremacy.

To make out present position very clear, Bill Minter outlined the general stand of the Committee:

Given the existing situation in South Africa, there is no possible solution except that of violent revolution. The relevant question is not "if" but "when". Revolution in South Africa will be hastened by revolutions in other Southern African states. Our task, in part, is to relate to and aid Southern Africans, especially those preparing for revolution. We also need to relate to South African whites who have liberal tendencies but need encouragement and prodding.

The U.S. tacitly supports apartheid. Numerous direct and indirect examples could be given: Portugal has NATO weapons. U.S. private investment in South Africa is very great. In regard to the question of sanctions, we see them as an evil, but the lesser of two evils. We would be in favor of imposing them. Yet, given political realities in the U.S., we do not expect the U.S. to take a strong stand regarding South Africa. Thus one of our tasks is to create a public awareness so that the U.S. cannot intervene on the side of the whites in the revolution. There is real danger of this, not made any smaller by Chinese support for the rebels.

Dave Robinson articulated the importance of the various roles that must be played in a revolution. We must start thinking in these terms. The National Council of Churches can work on the investment problem, on Defense and Aid money. Given the whole context of relationships, we would do well to relate to guerillas, the families of the political prisoners. No one is doing this.

It was pointed out that, while the NCC could handle the economic problem, it is going to need a great deal more prodding until it really acts effectively.

The question was raised about the meaning of 'relating to guerillas'. Mary McAnally pointed out that the Pan African Students Organization (PASOA) was going to the O.A.U. meeting to ask for united military action against South Africa. Support for this effort would be one constructive act. Dave suggested that we talk to Tucker to get money to send people to the O.A.U. Our role would be one of helping to enable Africans to do what they must do.



The question of whether we can raise money on campuses for Defense and Aid and the reality of raising money for guerrillas was raised.

Peter Brooks suggested that what we need to do is discern what is happening in the U.S., what is needed in South Africa, and then fill in the gaps between the need and the action.

NAC: Dick Vooxhes of the National Action Cadre explained his group's plans with regard to South Africa. The group grew up at the Chicago Ecumenical Institute. It is a movement to intervene in South Africa. Feeling the need for a third force to "place a table" between the two sides in a war or revolution, South Africa was seen as the place to try this method. Revolution is predicted to take place in three years. Ships will be sent to South Africa in the midst of the revolution. Symbolic figures will go; examples mentioned were the Pope, Mrs. Krushchev, various African state presidents, Martin Luther King. These would have the respect needed to be able to be a third and reconciling force in the midst of revolution. Even if the attempt failed utterly, at least an effort for peace would have been made.

The question was raised as to whether or not South Africa was really the right place for their method. The specifics of the plan were not discussed as this was not central to the meeting. We agreed to talk with Dick later about the plan.

Bill talked about priorities on the middle level. That is, having stated our basic positions, our general priorities, are concrete aid and relationships of various kinds, and the responsibility to alert our constituency, and our nation to the problem. Methodologically it was pointed out that we need to distinguish leading and following roles. We need to see that holes and act in realistic evaluation of our capabilities.

Peter suggested that we needed to choose one central project or activity and center on it to avoid the fragmentation of the past. This would not mean that we would abdicate responsibility for our present commitments. Rather it would give us a focus for action around which to co-ordinate our activity.

#### March Emphasis:

Lave suggested that the central focus should be an emphasis on South Africa in March of 1966. It was pointed out that various groups are interested in this and yet no one has taken the responsibility for such an emphasis month. Work must be begun immediately as March is only five months away. The Committee agreed on this as its central project and suggested the following sequence: Emphasis on the local level followed by a national event in Washington and/or New York. Local groups would send representatives to the national event.

Relations: It is essential from the very beginning to free this from being an NSCF project. We would merely be responsible for initiating the project and seeing that it is carried through. The participation of a wide variety of groups would be crucial. Such groups include:

PASOA---Wanjohi Wacuma, Chairman of the Southern Africa Committee of PASOA said that his organization would welcome such an emphasis and could serve as a valuable source of information for it. The importance of communication between PASOA and our Committee was stressed. PASOA has about 100 chapters.



The Consultative Council--- Each group should be asked to do what it can do most effectively. Initial letters could be sent on Consultative Council stationery to avoid making it seem like an NSCF project. This should be investigated.

Students for a Democratic Society--- (In spite of Major Viet Nam commitment).

National Student Association

National Federation of Catholic College Students

National Newman Clubs

SCLC

SNCC

CORE

Contact in Washington would be crucial. Use Rex Threadgill, American Friends Service Committee, sympathetic senators and representatives like Frazer.

NSA and the U.S. Youth Council should be encouraged to act in Washington and to solicit foundation funds. Get suggestions from the Cleveland. Concern among women's groups should be stimulated.

Use denominational channels to get churches involved.

A prospectus for the emphasis month should be drawn up immediately. This could be sent to those persons and groups who we know are already concerned about South Africa, asking for comments and further suggestions.

Local Action: Planning for action at the local level must be begun at once. Letters should go out to General Assembly contacts and others. The March project should be explained. Groups should be encouraged to form such groups should include a cross-section of student groups--NSCF, NSA, SDS, etc. An investigation should be made concerning resources and activity regarding South Africa on the local campus. Students should be encouraged to write term papers on South Africa. The National Educational Television films should be shown. Speakers should be got for various campus groups. If the campus has a Book of the Quarter plan, inclusion of a book on South Africa should be pushed.

Then specific plans for March should be begun. Suggestions include seminars on South Africa for a day or longer; money raising for Defense and Aid, including education; examination of the school's investments and action related to this; letter writing campaign.

It was pointed out that a letter writing campaign would be more effective if it were staggered over a period of time. Our Committee perhaps could coordinate this. The American Committee on Africa has a list of speakers. If Danforth does not have speakers on South Africa, they should be encouraged to do so.

National Action: The appropriate national event was then discussed. It was again pointed out that we need someone in Washington who knows the situation there and knows South Africa, to be alert to possible action.

Bill Nelson's Social Action Committee at U.T.S. was given a mandate last spring by this Committee to have a prayer vigil. Perhaps this should happen in March. Perhaps there is a more appropriate action which that group could take.

The importance of the role of the press was stressed. They should be informed of the wide range of activities which will take place so that we can get as much coverage as possible, coverage which will connect the various actions.



Very careful thinking will have to be given regarding the appropriate national event. It was suggested by Alice that if people are brought East from very far away, there needs to be a several day seminar to make the trip worthwhile.

The following concrete suggestions were given:-

- A Rump Session of Congress:- This would include as many congressmen as necessary and would be a debate of policy and informational seminar.
- A Press Seminar: bringing together top writers to stimulate them to write on South Africa.
- A Dramatic Event: done by the performers who have taken a stand on South Africa, refusing to perform there. A reenactment of Sharpsville for example.

Perhaps these could all be combined and could include a mass rally of some sort.

A Committee headed by Bill and Dave was set up to do immediate work on the prospectus so that the discussion of the plan can begin in various groups and real work be started. Dick said he could use 25 copies of the prospectus as soon as possible. A prospectus is needed for our constituency and for other groups.

During lunch the UCCF-NECF Seminar on Southern Africa was discussed.

#### South Africa or Southern Africa

The Committee discussed whether or not we should continue to focus primarily on South Africa or whether we should attempt to include the whole of Southern Africa in our concern and action. It was pointed out that given the limitation of our resources it would be better for us to continue our S. Africa focus, but to attempt to create centers of concern for Rhodesia, the Portuguese territories, etc. The feeling was expressed that it was better to be narrow in focus and do the job than spread out and be unable to act very concretely.

The suggestion was made that we seek church money to enable other groups to be organized. Dave Wiley might be persuaded after his exams to travel for a month to organize around Rhodesia. There is a nucleus of South West African students in Philadelphia, Los Angeles and Rochester are also possible places for such committees.

#### African members on the Committee

This question has been raised by members of the Committee and outsiders. Bill pointed out that in the past we have not had as good relations or as much involvement with Africans as would have been desirable.

Peter pointed out that the absence of Africans was of no particular significance. We have never really recruited anyone to be on the Committee and it would be phony to recruit Africans. Peter suggested that we invite Africans to speak at our meetings to give first hand information about South Africa. However we should not expect them to be on the Committee. Africans do not know the U.S. situation well enough to be really helpful on action projects.

There was considerable discussion. Most of the members present felt that contact with black and white South Africans was terribly important, that Ken and Bob and Herbert had been of great significance to the Committee - they evoked a sense of urgency about the situation which constantly stimulated us to action.

In order for certain parts of our work to be effective we need such contacts and relationships. We will need to be trusted. We also need to be much more familiar with the various African groups PAC, ANC, etc.

Dave stated that the absence of Africans has not invalidated what we've done. We need to be goal oriented, and linked with other groups as this is appropriate. Africans who understand our situation should be included in our Committee, particularly with regard to aid to freedom movements. We could ask for a representative of PASOA to be on our committee.

#### N.C.C.

The National Council of Churches treasurer's meeting was reported on. The all day meeting was called "Economic Responsibility and the Churches". It was concerned with civil rights in the south primarily. South Africa was alluded to but not discussed.

In the meeting the question was raised concerning attendance at stock holders meetings. The church treasurers do not do this. The only example given was that of a student at the Chase meeting speaking on South Africa.

The representative from the Committee who attended the meeting recommended strongly that we keep attending this committee. It is to become a consultative council to meet on economic issues and we need to be there to push our concerns.

#### Miscellaneous items

Dave Robinson reported that if we presented a well worked out request for funds at the November Central Committee of NSCF we could expect to receive \$500 to \$1000.

The mailing address list needs to be gone over and brought up to date. The list should be checked to make sure we know everyone who is getting minutes.

N.S.A. should be contacted concerning the negotiations with Chase. We should continue to participate in these.

Dick Van Voorhis will print bibliographies and send them to U.C.C.F. Bill Corrine will do the same for the Methodists. We need to use these services.

Wanjohi Waciuna of PASOA was at the meeting in the afternoon. He articulated the limitations that African students are under in the U.S. The importance of cooperation and various roles being played by various groups was stressed.

Margaret Nash should continue to receive our mailings.

#### Committees

The following committees and chairmen were named:

1. Information and Education - Janet MacLaughlin.  
Responsible for writing articles, research, African students publications - PASOA can give us these. Communication with our Constituency.
2. Relationships to Student Groups - Mary MacAnnally, chairman  
Dick Voorhees



3. Relationships to Church Groups - Alice Simpson, chairman  
Charles Wilhelm - Methodists

4. Relationships with non student, non-church groups - Peter Brooks, chairman

People to work on NSCF-UCCF seminar - Alice Simpson - Immediate needs are for articles for various publications.

Need a permanent secretary.

The chairman, Bill Minter, reported on his work

The Next meeting will be October 8 at 12:00 a.m. Interchurch Center,  
Fifth Floor Conference Rm