



ANNUAL REPORT

American Committee on Africa

June 1, 1960 to May 31, 1961

Introduction

WHEN THE NEW BUILDING to house the United States Mission to the United Nations was dedicated, Ambassador Adlai Stevenson announced that his offices would be decorated with an African motif. Not Asian or South American, asked an aide? "No, African," said Mr. Stevenson. "This is Africa's year." And so it is.

In 1953, when the American Committee on Africa was incorporated, there were four independent states in Africa. Now, in 1961, there are 28. In 1953 the rallying cry for Africans was Freedom in our Lifetime. In 1961 the cry is bolder, more urgent: Freedom Now, Africa—freedom not ten years hence, not five years hence, but now. Africa is the impatient continent.

Nineteen-sixty was Africa's year too. In that year 17 new African countries were born. By the end of 1961, 28 African states will be represented in the United Nations. Even now the once-dark continent constitutes the largest single bloc of nations in that august body.

The Fifteenth Session of the UN General Assembly was dominated by issues relating to Africa and colonialism. In the halls of the austere building on the East River, the color revolution made itself felt:

The Republic of the Congo was born in great travail, throwing into sharp relief the lack of foresight of Belgian colonialism; its tragedy split apart the African states and plunged Africa into the cold war. A divided UN was less than effective in meeting the challenge created by the power vacuum in the Congo; Lumumba was murdered; American Negro demonstrators stormed the Security Council gallery as Ambassador Stevenson's face shattered into lines of astonishment and disbelief. . . .

Apartheid became the subject of fierce UN debate when 72 unarmed Africans were killed by South African police at Sharpeville; in 1960 it became increasingly difficult to ignore the fact of evil in Dr. Verwoerd's government. . . .

A resolution was passed decrying colonialism and calling for a speedy end to domination of one country by another. It was passed overwhelmingly; it had the

complete and heartfelt backing of all Africans, but the United States abstained. . . .

"End domination of one country by another." . . . Did this refer as well to Portugal's relationship to Angola and Mozambique? Yes, said the General Assembly. Portugal's African territories were not "overseas provinces"; Portugal was called upon to acknowledge Angola and Mozambique as non-self-governing territories, and required to submit reports on her colonies in keeping with the (much violated) UN Charter. The U.S. abstained on this 1960 resolution. . . .

The Algerian war dragged bloodily on, but there was hope for a settlement. The UN asked for recognition of the right of self-determination of the Algerian people, though the idea of a UN-sponsored plebiscite was voted down.

The Congo — Sharpeville — colonialism — Portugal — Algeria — the birth of nations. These have been the big African issues during the past year.

“AMERICAN PRESTIGE is low in Africa and at the UN because your country just does not seem to understand that this is a new era for the world. The black man has become a man and American foreign policy refuses to accept this fact of life.” With this conclusion a hitherto friendly African delegate to the UN summarized the effect of the US vote on most African (and Asian) nations. American abstention on the compromise colonialism resolution (which passed with no opposition and nine abstentions) was perhaps the most harmful. Many Africans hoped that the Kennedy administration would change the downward trend. Although it is too early to make a judgment, one thing may be said with certainty: American support for the UN resolution (1961) urging Portugal to make drastic changes in her administration of Angola was a welcome sign of health.

How has the American Committee on Africa met the challenge of Africa's Years?

The historical role of the Committee has been to keep the conscience of Americans alive to the issues at stake in Africa—to gain sympathetic support for the aims of self-government and equality. When the Committee was organized there were very few independent African countries. Today, on the other hand, the non-independent countries are the exceptions.

ACOA has continued to give program emphasis to those areas of Africa not yet independent: we must never forget the struggles and suffering of the people of South Africa, South West Africa, Angola, Mozambique, the Rhodesias, Algeria.

Following are some of the specific actions planned and carried out by the American Committee on Africa during the program year:

South Africa

Following the Sharpeville massacre in March 1960, ACOA embarked on a vigorous program of protest and aid. A special drive to raise funds for the Africa Defense and Aid Fund to help the victims of Sharpeville and their families has sent over \$19,000 to South Africa. An Emergency Action Conference on South Africa resulted in a booklet called "Action Against Apartheid," which was widely circulated among concerned groups and individuals, demonstrating how to translate into action feelings for the oppressed in South Africa.

The injustice of apartheid was dramatized in 1960 by the exclusion of Africans from the South African Olympic team, in direct violation of the Olympic constitution, which outlaws discrimination. Under the direction of our Committee, hundreds of American individuals and organizations urged Avery Brundage, the American Chairman of the Olympic Games, and the Executive Committee, to take action against South Africa for her violation of the constitution. (Americans do not have to await the occasion of a Sharpeville to act.)

Algeria

Last fall, in the seventh year of the Algerian war, 121 French intellectuals addressed themselves to what they considered the disgrace of France, declaring: "We respect and consider justified the refusal to take up arms against the Algerian people." The American Committee on Africa also addressed itself to the question of the costly and tragic war. A statement drafted by the Committee called upon the United States to support a UN-conducted plebiscite in Algeria on self-determination. Among the 88 prominent Americans who signed the statement were Senators Jennings Randolph and Frank E. Moss, Congressmen Charles C. Diggs and Adam Clayton Powell, Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, Walter Reuther, and Van Wyck Brooks. The statement received wide publicity, especially abroad, thus serving to accomplish one of the primary aims of the Committee: to convince those in other lands that there are Americans who are truly concerned with the fate of the peoples of Africa.

At the United Nations: South West Africa, South Africa, Portugal

The educational program of ACOA is carried as far as the Security Council. The distribution of publications is timed to fit the agenda. Thus "South West Africa: The UN's Stepchild" was circulated among all the delegates to the General Assembly at the time of debate on South West Africa; three scholarly

memoranda considering the advisability of declaring sanctions against South Africa, and evaluating the legalistic and economic aspects of sanctions, were widely distributed at the United Nations at the appropriate time; at the time of debate on Portugal's colonial policies, Homer Jack's pamphlet on Angola was circulated, as was a memorandum which analyzed the question of transmission of information on non-self-governing territories as it applied to Portugal. It is rewarding that these publications and memoranda have frequently been quoted by UN delegates in the course of debate.

United Nations Petitioners and Visitors

Many of the most vital men on the African continent—vital to the development of freedom—have come to the United States, via dangerous escape routes, to petition the United Nations on behalf of their people. They come with much determination, but with limited funds, and, in most cases, with little know-how of the machinery of the world body it has been their goal for many years to reach. ACOA has worked closely with petitioners and representatives from South West Africa, Angola, South Africa, the Congo, and Ruanda-Urundi, in finding housing accommodations, introducing petitioners to UN officials and to officials of our own Government and of African states, helping them prepare material, providing emergency financial aid through the Africa Defense and Aid Fund.

The Committee has also been called upon to help visitors secure visas for entry into the United States. Oliver Tambo, Deputy President of the African National Congress in South Africa, was helped in this way, as were Mbyiu Koinange, a leader of the Kenya African National Union in exile, and the Reverend Michael Scott, Director of the Africa Bureau in London and a petitioner for the people of South West Africa. Mr. Tambo has personally presented the plight of his people before audiences throughout the US, and Mr. Scott will embark upon a speaking tour for the Committee some time in 1961.

Working with Government

We are the American Committee on Africa, and it is one of our most urgent concerns that our Government's policy reflect individual Americans' respect and sympathy for the aspirations of all Africans not yet free. Thus, representatives of the Committee appeared before Congressional committees and political party platforms several times in the past year: Vice-Chairman Peter Weiss represented ACOA at the hearings on the Mutual Security Act conducted by the House Foreign Affairs Committee; Executive Director George Houser appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in special hearings to reevaluate American policy toward Africa; Associate Director Homer Jack spoke before the platform committee of the Democratic Party; and Dr. Arthur Falls, a member of the National Committee of ACOA, appeared before the Republican platform committee. The Executive Director and two members of the Executive Board had an opportunity for fruitful discussion with Gov. G. Mennen Williams before he took office as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. At the height of the Congo crisis the Committee com-

municated with the Government, urging the strongest possible position in seeking physical protection for the arrested Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, and support for a round-table discussion in the Congo with the participation of all Congolese leaders. Just before taking office, Ambassador Adlai Stevenson was presented with a carefully researched analysis of the United States voting record in the UN, pointing up what African delegates consider to be its grave weaknesses, and suggesting remedial steps. It is the fervent hope of the American Committee on Africa that our Government may more and more reflect, in her actions toward Africa, our own heritage of liberation from colonial rule.

Literature Program

AFRICA TODAY doubled its circulation in 1960. The entire printing of "Action Against Apartheid" was sold out. Our other new pamphlet of the past year, "Angola: Repression and Revolt in Portuguese Africa," by Homer Jack, has also sold very well. We continue to receive many requests for literature from students, from teachers, and from groups and individuals seeking to create awareness of the importance of Africa in their communities. Our literature program is a vital tool in our educational work.

Speakers Bureau

Supplementing and complementing the literature program is the speakers bureau. Face-to-face confrontations between African speakers and American audiences often clarify issues and impart a sense of immediacy in a way that the printed page cannot. We have, during the past year, arranged speaking tours for Alan Paton, South African author and leader of the Liberal Party there; Vusumzi Make of the Pan-Africanist Congress, also of South Africa; Kenneth Kaunda, President of the United National Independence Party of Northern Rhodesia; and Oliver Tambo. These men presented the story of the struggles of their people before unions, churches, schools, and community groups. The Committee receives requests for almost more speakers than it can provide; in addition to bringing speakers to this country specifically for tours we also arrange engagements for resident Africans. Further, members of our own staff and Board speak dozens of times each year before groups and on the air.

Africa Freedom Day, Other Special Events

"Let the defeat of colonialism in the greater part of Africa be an inspiration to the forces of freedom and let us be determined to fight relentlessly more than ever before until the last remnants of colonialism . . . have been completely removed from the African continent."—Chief Hosea Kutako, South West Africa. "Your meeting today is symbolic of America's dedication to . . . freedom everywhere, and reflects again the welcome which Americans have throughout their history accorded to champions of human liberty."—President John F. Kennedy. These greetings were typical of the many received on the occasion of our observance of the third Africa Freedom Day in April, with the theme "Till All Africa is Free." Some of Africa's most distinguished and eloquent leaders were present: Kenneth Kaunda of Northern Rhodesia, Tom

Mboya of Kenya, and, representing parts of Africa not yet free, Holden Roberto of Angola, Oliver Tambo of South Africa, Mbrumba Kerina of South West Africa. The audience rejoiced with H. E. Tucker of Sierra Leone, whose country would, in a week's time, be free. Senator Hubert Humphrey and author James Baldwin ('no white man is free until every black man is free') rounded out the speaking program.

Less spectacular but in their way as important were other special events sponsored by ACOA, such as a public meeting at which 1,000 people heard Alan Paton speak, and a conference on US Policy toward Africa.

Because these special events often receive good press coverage, they are a fine means of publicizing the goals of the American Committee on Africa. To reach the press more directly, several press conferences have been held: among others, Oliver Tambo and Vusumzi Make of South Africa, Holden Roberto of Angola, Tom Mboya of Kenya, and Kenneth Kaunda of Northern Rhodesia have thus had an opportunity to explain their positions to the American people.

George Houser, Executive Director of ACOA, was one of three Americans present at the third annual All-African People's Conference, held this year in Cairo. His account of the Conference appeared in the April issue of AFRICA TODAY.

African Students

Although our Committee does not place primary emphasis on work with African students, we are very often called upon for help. In the summer of 1960 ACOA found employment for 25 students, and in many cases we have located appropriate housing. As always, we have answered hundreds of letters from students in Africa needing information about scholarships and travel to the United States.

Organization, Staff, and Office

ACOA is growing. Each year many hundreds of names are added to our list of supporters. George Houser has completed nearly six years as Executive Director. A good deal of reorganization has taken place during the last year: Ann Morrissett left the staff in August, and Homer Jack in October. C. Sumner Stone served during part of 1960 as Associate Director and then left to become editor of the *Washington Afro-American*. Staff members at present include Barbara Grizzuti Harrison, Dale Harrison, Ethel Mingo, Catharine Raymond, Mary Robinson, Suzanne Seidman, and Emma Thomas. Last summer all non-executive staff members joined the Community and Social Agencies Employees Union Local 1707.

Officers and Committees

Chairman: Donald Harrington; Vice-Chairmen: Frank Montero, Hope Stevens, Peter Weiss; Secretary: Elizabeth Landis; Acting Treasurer: Nelson Bengston. Executive Board members: Edward Gray, Harold Isaacs, Joseph Jablow, Sophia Yarnall Jacobs, Stanley Levison, John Murra, Jeanne Noble, Victor Reuther, Cleveland Robinson, James H. Robinson, Bayard Rustin, William Scheinman, Adelaide Schulkind, Hugh Smythe. Honorary Vice Chairman: The Rt. Rev. James A. Pike; General Counsel: Robert Delson. New members of the National Committee: Congressman Seymour Halpern and Dr. George Shepherd, Jr.

Africa Defense and Aid Fund

In 1956 the South Africa Defense Fund was established to channel American contributions toward legal and welfare costs for the 156 defendants of the Treason Trial. Late in 1959 this Fund was expanded to become the Africa Defense and Aid Fund to send help to all parts of Africa—as well as to South Africa—where people are oppressed for racial or political reasons.

All monies for the ADAF come through voluntary contributions, primarily from individuals, but from trade unions, church and community groups as well, and from special benefits. On the West Coast, the Fund's representative, Mary-Louise Hooper, has raised a significant amount of money. Office space and staff time are contributed by the ACOA, so that overhead is kept to a minimum, and contributions are used maximally in areas of need.

The Africa Defense and Aid Fund is administered through a separate account by the American Committee on Africa and has its own Board of Trustees. International advisers: Archbishop Joost de Blank, Dr. Hastings Banda, Kenneth Kaunda, Amino Kano, Gikonyo Kiano, Prof. Z. K. Matthews, Tom Mboya, Julius Nyerere, and Bishop Ambrose Reeves.

Allocations During 1960

(in round figures)

SOUTH AFRICA (\$19,000): Funds were expended for legal aid, to defend those arrested under the emer-

gency laws which came into effect after the Sharpeville massacre of March, and for welfare aid. Direct assistance was provided for many who were forced to flee South Africa and take refuge in British protectorates. Several hundred dollars were allocated for the education of the children of one of the Sharpeville victims. The Treason Trial Defence Committee in Johannesburg also received continued support.

SOUTH WEST AFRICA (\$2,400): The Fund helped to provide for exiles and refugees, several of whom are in New York to petition the United Nations on behalf of their people.

CENTRAL AFRICA (\$9,250): Emergency regulations were enforced in Nyasaland and in Northern and Southern Rhodesia, during 1960. Major African political leaders were arrested and organizations banned. Provision has been made for welfare assistance to families, and for medical attention for one of the Southern Rhodesian leaders.

EAST AFRICA (\$2,580): A portion of this disbursement was used for legal defense, and the remainder to aid East African students in the United States who needed emergency help. UN petitioners from Ruanda-Urundi with insufficient funds were also aided.

ANGOLA (\$500): Funds were used to aid petitioners from this Portuguese colony; with the current civil war raging in Angola funds are being allocated for the thousands of refugees fleeing from the country.

ACOA Finances for 1960

Income

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Contributions | \$83,617.10 |
| AFRICA TODAY | 6,046.39 |
| Literature and Pamphlets | 2,977.25 |
| Staff Speaking Engagements | 763.74 |
| Visiting Speakers (Kaunda, Make, Tambo, Chieme, Nkomo, etc.) | 3,736.74 |
| Meetings (Jazz at Village Gate, luncheon for Garfield Todd) | 2,006.19 |
| TOTAL | \$99,147.41 |

Expenses

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Organizational growth: soliciting new members, fund appeals, distributing brochures, etc. | \$19,579.96 |
| Program expenses: Publication of AFRICA TODAY, printing and reprinting of pamphlets, staff travel, meetings and receptions | 48,161.11 |
| Office expenses: Rent, telephone and telegraph, postage, unallocated salaries, etc. | 30,141.48 |
| TOTAL | \$97,882.55 |

Bank Balance: \$4,447.20
Deficit (unpaid invoices) \$13,066.86

ADAF Finances for 1960 (net)

Income

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Contributions | \$28,698.74 |
| Speakers' Honoraria (Banda, Kaunda, Tambo) | 828.07 |
| Meetings: Emergency Action Conference on South Africa, Alan Paton meeting, Bleecker Street Cinema Benefit | 5,231.74 |
| Income from West Coast Office | 5,753.87 |
| TOTAL | \$40,612.42 |

Expenses

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Organizational growth: New contributors, fund appeals, distribution of brochures, etc. | \$1,899.31 |
| Printing (brochures) | 661.91 |
| Staff Travel | 366.00 |
| Education and Public Relations (newspaper ads, etc.) | 1,821.63 |
| Office Expenses: telephone and telegraph, postage, taxes, etc. | 2,271.54 |
| TOTAL | \$7,020.39 |
| MONIES SENT TO AFRICA: | \$33,742.80 |

AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA
801 Second Avenue, New York 17, N. Y.