

AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA

Executive Board

June 11, 1962

MEMORANDUM ON FUND-RAISING FOR  
ACOA, ADAF AND ERA FOR 1962-63

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After six months with the American Committee on Africa, I am beginning to evolve a system which retains parts of what was done here before, but also parts of what I have found successful in other organizations.

Thus, the break-down of our plates by year of contribution is being retained, but the break-down of our office record cards is gradually being eliminated. This will give us a master alphabetic file and a master geographic file in the office, but will keep our address plates segregated in such a way that follow-up and special purpose mailings will be facilitated.

The great majority of our supporters were receiving nothing but appeal letters and the annual report. In my first six months, they have received two mailings other than appeals: (1) the basic brochure and Statement on the Congo; and (2) Face to Africa and literature list. This should mean better retention of membership and a higher average contribution. It also costs money.

There is a second function to these mailings: they are sent out under permit 2½¢ postage with Return Requested. This gives us the new addresses of our members. On the first mailing to 15,000 people, well over 2,000 came back for changes -- which swamped the clerical staff. On the second mailing in May, the returns will probably run only 500 or 600. This will result in our losing fewer people for "left no forwarding address." It also costs money.

Two appeals have gone to our own mailing lists: (1) In late November, we did a rush letter, using old Reply-O materials and appealing on the basis of Eric Louw's attack on us at the UN. Result: Only moderately successful, but enough to keep the wolf from the door for a few weeks. (2) In February, with Donald Harrington's letter, we sent out budget cards to our list. Showing each donor what he gave last year is a large, and boring clerical job. But the results more than justify it: this mailing was the most successful appeal to our own list ever made. Amount received to May 28, 1962 was \$24,300.37.

Outside mailings. December Lutuli letter -- extremely successful, and brought in \$3 for every \$1 spent. February Eleanor Roosevelt letter -- moderately successful but so clearly on the ACOA's political line that the large number of new members resulting should renew at a very high rate (as distinguished from the lower rate expected for the Lutuli or Defense and Aid names). April Nyerere letter for political refugees (ADAF) -- not successful, but will about cover costs and will expand the mailing list. May-June AFRICA TODAY promotion: too early to tell, but we do not anticipate covering costs on subscription promotions anyway.

Projected mailings: June, to ACOA list: A follow-up to those who have not given in 1962; an ADAF appeal to those who have already given to ACOA.

Frequent follow-ups during the summer to those who have not given since 1960. June through the summer: ERA mailings to outside lists. Expect to send 100,000 pieces of mail spaced through the summer. Twenty-five per cent of the return goes to ACOA to pay overhead costs. ERA pays the costs of the mailings. The rest will, I hope, be very considerable and should lead to regular shipments of medicines to Angola.

Large-donor lists: Our big givers' list has been poorly maintained. It will be completely re-done soon. This should facilitate both letters and personal visits.

Non-mail fund-raising: We should begin to do some of this: (1) small luncheons for large donors with African guests and an invitation which makes it clear that funds will be asked for; (2) house parties, especially for ERA, etc.

E R A -- Emergency Relief to Angola, a 1962 project of ACOA

Objective: To bring medical relief to those living in the revolt zone in Angola:

- (1) medicines
- (2) medical personnel to give treatment and to train others to give treatment.

Means to Realize Objective:

Major Thrust: To raise dollars to bring medical aid.  
Subsidiary: To find an American doctor, preferably Negro, to serve for us inside Angola and at Dr. Lياهو's clinic in the Congo.

To stimulate others to collect medicines and money for the project.

To publicize the aid given, particularly the use of American medical personnel, with the objective of building the project both fund-wise and in terms of "image."

Specifically,

(1) ACOA will do large-scale mailings to raise funds. Our emphasis should be upon money. Because we are not ourselves tax deductible, solicitation of pharmaceuticals should be done through tax-deductible channels. We can purchase and ship medicines.

(2) Medicines solicited and purchased should fall into three primary categories: anti-malarials, anti-dysenteries, and anti-infection medicines (sulfas and antibiotics).

(3) Stimulation of others: The AFL-CIO contribution of drugs followed from Houser's report on conditions. Hopefully, the report going back to them from the distribution will stimulate an appeal from the AFL-CIO to its member unions. Money of this kind will usually not go through our books at all, but, as in this case, we may play a vital role in stimulating the gift and also in where to buy, to package, and how to ship.

Student groups, particularly campus groups, should be asked to raise money for this campaign. A major educational job occurs in the process of raising the funds.

Negro groups can not only raise funds and solicit medicines: they may also be able to produce some medically-trained individuals willing to work under the risks and hardships of life inside the revolt area of Angola. Any person selected from their membership will provide, on his return, the stimulation to further efforts to raise funds.

Church groups and community groups should not be forgotten. In some national churches, interest may be sufficient so that they will solicit and ship medicines completely on their own, with ACOA providing only the initial nudge. Where the interest is from local churches only, the funds can be more efficiently managed through ERA, as is true with smaller community groups.

(4) Publicizing: press releases; personal stories by any who serve in Angola; use of ACOA newsletter to keep our membership informed and interested; cocktail parties and luncheons when Angolans are in town; public meetings--and possibly a demonstration in front of a Portuguese Mission to the UN or some other Portuguese group. Also, letters to editors, etc.