

American Committee on Africa  
Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting  
January 25, 1971

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Present: Elizabeth Landis, Frederick Schwarz, Andrew Norman, Lydia Williams, Robert Van Lierop, Robert Browne, Jay Jacobson, Elsie Carrington, Tim Smith.

Staff: Charles Hightower, Janet Hooper, George Houser, Bob Gore.

1. Finance Report: Frederick Schwarz presented the financial condition of ACOA, indicating that by virtue of special contributions in December, the committee wound up with about an \$8,000 deficit, instead of an earlier estimated \$20,000. The 1971 budget, however, has a built in \$10,000 deficit at the present rate of spending in spite of cut-backs which include a \$26,000 budget for Washington, \$3,600 for liberation assistance (from \$10,000) and limited personnel cuts. It was advised that Ben Peterson check workman compensation rules in case we are paying too much. Given the incorporated deficit, it was decided that the present budget be provisional until the April Board Meeting; that on or near April 1 Ben submit a report on income from the budget appeal mailing and that prospect appeal mailings go out early. It was suggested that we try to cut our \$8,000 deficit by one half in 1971, and thus may have to revise the personnel situation (the only part of the budget with any fat on it) if the April evaluation proves this necessary. The Steering Committee decided that adoption of the budget should wait for April Board action. (The unaudited Finance Report for 1970 and the provisional budget for 1971 are enclosed.)

2. Washington: Charles Hightower praised the restiveness of the 92nd Congress as pre-saging good actions in 1971, and he looked to the utilization of old and new handles to expose the southern African issues, from the Sugar Quota to Polaroid (the Polaroid Revolutionary Workers Movement is to meet with Diggs and other Congressmen). Another possible development is Sen. Fulbright's interest in the Angola/herbicide issue (though he is interested in proof that the herbicides are from the U.S.), and it was also suggested that any Fulbright hearings include Portuguese defectors reportedly in asylum in Sweden and Belgium. Portuguese now in Algeria, and Dow chemical records if possible. It was suggested by J y Jacobson that a speaking tour for Charles emphasizing Washington and Africa issues be considered at the appropriate time. There will be a meeting with Charles briefing the Church groups on Washington issues on February 5, at 12:00 noon.

3. The Polaroid campaign was discussed, including the issuance of a statement by ACOA, press coverage in the Village Voice, and the long article in the Washington Post. It was suggested by Frederick Schwarz that if all companies, including large ones, were pressed to adopt the Polaroid anti-apartheid verbiage, which of course would fail to manifest itself in action, it would still be a good move. It was pointed out that other groups can urge corporations to adopt the Polaroid position but that it would be inconsistent with ACOA history and outlook to do it ourselves. The PRIM is in touch with Detroit black groups, and will appear not only in Washington but also before the Special Committee on Apartheid at the U.N.

4. The ACOA position on the U.S. resignation from the U.N. Committee of 24 (on Decolonization) was discussed, stressing the angle that fighting colonialism is the issue; not the workings of the committee. The United States has found it embarrassing to be on the Committee of 24 because there are no U.S. initiatives for resisting colonialism.

5. Attention was called to the imprisonment of the Anglican Dean of Johannesburg, French-Beytagh: action is being taken by Church organizations. Action against SWAKARA (Southwest African karakul lamb raising association) was also brought up with the suggestion that we should find out more about the treatment of the karakul lambs.

6. Lydia Williams presented the report of the Subcommittee on Organization and Policy. The new suggested composition of the Steering Committee was discussed, and a motion was passed approving the structure and recommendations. The actual composition of the

Steering Committee will be the mandate of the President of the Committee to appoint until the next Board elections. Nine Board members are to be appointed.

7. There will be a Special Board Meeting on Friday, February 26 at Jay Jacobson's, 711 Columbus Avenue (between 94th and 95th Street, apt. 25N). It will begin at 6:30 pm. The content of the meeting, it was stressed, should not get into hashing over previous decisions (i.e. the decision to relate more to the Portuguese areas), but should concentrate on the ACOA position on the liberation movements within the context of Africa and the world.

8. There still needs to be selected a Personnel Committee and a Finance Committee. The appointments will be made by Peter Weiss as President.

9. Tim Smith outlined the Gulf Campaign, Round II, and it was decided to work jointly on regrouping the forces. A meeting of concerned groups will be called soon.

10. The next Steering Committee Meeting will be February 18, at 6:00 pm at the ACOA office.