

AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA

Steering Committee

Minutes: February 1, 1965

Present: P. Weiss, H. Smythe, Mrs. E. Landis, A. Norman, B. Browne,
N. Bengston

Staff: G. Houser, J. Robinson, C. Gonze, M-L. Hooper

1. In reply to a request for ACOA participation in the International Institute for Peace, it was decided that Collin Gonze should investigate the organization. It would only be an emphasis on colonialism in their program that would interest ACOA.
2. Conference on World Peace Through Law: Mrs. Eliz Landis and Peter Weiss were designated observers for ACOA at this Conference.
3. It was decided that George Houser should accept Engelhard's invitation to visit him for a discussion, Nelson Bengston to accompany him, if possible.
4. In regard to the Conference Group of U.S. National Organizations on the U. N.: since we have already become part of this group, the \$50 fee was authorized. On the question of representation, it was agreed that we would be represented only in groups dealing with issues in which ACOA is particularly interested. Suggested representation: Richard Kasden, or Andrew Norman. The person may have to change, from time to time.
5. The question of a permanent U.N. representative was discussed, since Winifred Courtney has very little time for this now. Mrs. Elizabeth Landis will try to free herself for this duty, but there was nothing definite promised or decided.
6. The coming Washington Conference on South Africa:
 - a) Continuing action after the Conference: to be carried out through the existing Consultative Council, of which a meeting will be called soon after close of the Conference.
 - b) Sponsor organizations of the Conference are to be apprised that they should submit their individual plans for action at this 'follow-up' meeting, after the Conference.
 - c) Union representation at the Conference was discussed; we are weak, so far, in this area. Peter Weiss suggested to contact Stanley Levy, of Washington CBS, who is a friend of his and knows the labor front well. Jerry Wurf's name was also mentioned for the Labor Panel.

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d) Peter Weiss urged employment of a professional Public Relations firm, to promote the Conference. It was agreed to investigate possibilities and costs.

e) James Forman: Peter is trying to get him to coordinate the "Big 4" of civil rights in making a joint statement on South Africa. It was suggested that Forman be invited to chair the Monday lunch at the Conference.

f) The question of a Conference Statement was discussed, pro and con, with no real decision. It was suggested to get the reports of the various discussion groups "What Can We Do?" (on Tuesday morning) together and compile them between 12 and 1 P.M., the time of the closing luncheon.

7. Mozambique Medical Project: Peter Weiss explained the projected medical assistance to be given Frelimo by Israel, which would include training of medical personnel, setting up of installations in the Tanzania-Mozambique border area, and the furnishing of medical equipment & supplies, to come from Israel. A survey by Israel shows that about \$57,000 is needed; it was hoped that ACOA would help Eduardo Mondlane by furnishing this amount. This figure was rejected as totally unrealistic. Peter suggested that some sort of a set-up similar to ERA for Angolan refugees be established by ACOA for Mozambique; refugees are already beginning to stream over the border, and there seems to be considerably more fighting than reported here.

George Houser suggested that we could perhaps contribute a landrover, fitted out as an ambulance, at this time, to Frelimo, as an earnest of our concern and intention to support this Mozambique freedom struggle.

8. New Staff Member; this matter was briefly reviewed. Only one name has been suggested, that of Wendell Roy, although the possibility of Rev. Wendell Foster was also mentioned. It was decided to look carefully into the record of Mr. Roy, and also to try to obtain more of a choice. Also there must be more discussion for finances and specific job assignment.

9. Re-Opening of the attempt to get tax exemption for the Defense and Aid Fund of ACOA was advocated strongly by Peter Weiss, with general agreement. He requested a Preliminary Report on this question (after consultation with lawyers) at the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

10. The next meeting will be on March 1.