

AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA

Executive Board

November 18, 1963

MINUTES

Present: S. Levison, Acting Chairman; D. Bernstein, E. Carrington, W. Courtney, A. Norman.

Regrets: N. Bengston, J. Farmer, D. Harrington, J. Jablow, S. Jacobs, D. Jones, F. Jones, J. Marcum, J.H. Robinson, B. Rustin, W.X. Scheinman, A. Schulkind, H. Stevens, P. Weiss.

Staff : C. Gonze, G. Houser, D. Kallen, J. Robinson

1. Minutes of September Meeting: Approved as circulated.

2. Reports

a. Defense & Aid Fund and ERA: George Houser reported that since September \$4,32 had been disbursed by the Defense and Aid Fund, largely to petitioners to the United Nations, some to students who were in immediate need of at least a small amount of money, and some to assist with legal defense costs.

Dr. Gilchrist still has \$1,000 or so on hand. His expenses each month are minimal. A Land Rover is being purchased for use on trips to the border areas, but the transaction is being made outside of the Defense and Aid Fund.

b. Petition Campaign: George Houser reported that the petition to the President calling for sanctions had been widely circulated by the Committee, and that a number of labor unions and other organizations had cooperated in this task. Over 5,000 names had come in, including those of a number of prominent Americans. It is hoped that a small delegation, including A. Philip Randolph, Donald Harrington, and one or two other persons will be received by Ambassador Stevenson to accept the petitions at the time of the opening of the Security Council debates on the South African issue.

c. Demonstrations: George Houser reported that a successful one-day demonstration had been held on October 10th, at the Brooklyn docks. 75 to 100 pickets had joined the line protesting American trade with South Africa. The Brooklyn local of the ILA had cooperated by not crossing the line, but it appears that it will be difficult to get their immediate cooperation for further demonstrations. They were subjected to great pressure from union members as well as the South African Marine Corporation, owners of the ship that was boycotted.

On October 29th, the day on which 11 opponents of apartheid were brought to trial in South Africa, a demonstration was held in front of the South African Consulate. The turnout was excellent -- over 200 people during the two hours from noon to 2 p.m.

d. Special Issue of Africa Today: Collin Genze said that the special 10th Anniversary issue of the magazine would cost around \$3,000. Advertising had come in to the amount of \$2,593. A suggestion was made that a return envelope be pasted inside the magazine, reminding people to contribute to it, and making it possible for them to do so easily.

3. Issue of South African Membership in the United Nations: In view of the fact that this issue was not being pressed at this time, the item, which was carried over from the September Board meeting, was tabled for the present.

4. Kenya Independence: Approval was given to a suggestion that a symbolic presentation of American freedom records be made to Kenya, perhaps to Jomo Kenyatta, on behalf of the Committee. The records would then be donated to a community center or school in Nairobi.

5. Finance Matters:

a. Resolutions: Three resolutions were submitted by the Treasurer, Daniel Bernstein, to the Board for its approval. The first "RESOLVED that the Executive Board ratifies the loan of two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) by Africa Defense and Aid Fund to the American Committee on Africa (operating account), made November 13, 1963. One-half of this loan must be repaid to ADAF by December 31, 1963. Beginning January 1, 1964, the 25% overhead contributed by ADAF to ACOA, while continuing to accrue, shall not be paid over until this loan is completely repaid." The second resolution "RESOLVED that Frank C. Montero's signature be removed from the account and that his name be deleted from list of officers on file with the Bank." It will be remembered that Mr. Montero resigned from the Board in September following his appointment to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations.

The third resolution would close the ADAF checking and savings accounts now held in Chase Manhattan, transfer the checking account to Chemical New York and the savings account to Harlem Savings Bank. The Board ratified all three resolutions.

b. Budget: Dan Bernstein stated that we had started the year with a large deficit, and that, although during the first quarter of the year it appeared that this deficit would be wiped out, the picture had begun to change since May, and it now appears that we will end the year at least \$5,000 in the red. In addition, the outlook for 1964 is not good. Two factors make the Finance Committee pessimistic: in an election year people will be donating to more immediately domestic political causes, and the continued attention bound to be given to the civil rights struggle may reduce the contributions received by ACOA. The 9-month report, the provisional budget for 1964, and a proposed budget for a special campaign against apartheid are attached to these minutes.

The Board gave provisional approval to the 1964 budget, requesting that the Finance Committee review the situation in January. If the picture remains substantially what it is at present, a resolution passed last year requesting the staff to reduce expenses by \$5,000 should be implemented.

6. Items Growing Out of Special Steering Committee Meetings: In view of the small attendance, it was decided to postpone examination of the suggestions emanating from two special meetings of the Steering Committee until the January Board meeting. However, some

time was spent in a discussion of the proposed special campaign against apartheid, since it would be necessary for the staff to begin to look for funds over and beyond the budget in order to be able to mount the campaign. George Houser reported he had been in touch with Victor Reuther about this campaign. A memorandum had been submitted to Reuther, outlining how such a campaign could be carried on under the auspices of the ACOA, what goals would be set, and how they would be achieved. In two subsequent discussions, Reuther expressed his wholehearted approval for the idea.

A draft memorandum and covering letter inviting outstanding Americans to sponsor the campaign was circulated to the Board. The staff felt that the campaign should have its own letterhead and its own list of sponsors. It was hoped Walter Reuther would be one of the signers, and that others would join him. The UAW may be willing to give its financial support to such a campaign, and might also help to find additional funds from trade union circles.

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The next Board meeting will take place on Monday evening, January 13th.