

Executive BoardJanuary 14, 1963MINUTES

Present: Peter Weiss, Acting Chairman; Daniel Bernstein, Winifred Courtney, Sophia Yarnall Jacobs, David Jones, Farrell Jones, Stanley Levison, Frank Montero, John Murra, Adelaide Schulkind, Hugh Smythe, Hope Stevens. Staff: Collin Gonze, George Houser, Catharine Raymond, James Robinson.

Peter Weiss gave a brief report on his recent trip to Africa: American official representatives are of a better quality than formerly and more enthusiastic about Africa and its potentialities, though there is still too little reliable information going to Washington and too little Negro membership on the staffs of American embassies and consulates. Too many African countries are still too dependent on the former colonial powers; this is less true of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Tanganyika.

1. Minutes of the last meeting: The report of the discussion on the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa was corrected to state: "The American Committee on Africa welcomes the Conference. The Committee is prepared to make its resources and experience available in the implementation of the objectives agreed upon by the Conference."

2. Olympio assassination: George Houser spoke of the cordial relations that our Committee had always had with President Sylvanus Olympio dating from the beginnings of the ACOA. Olympio was the first petitioner to come to the UN from a Trust Territory. George Houser reported that he had sent telegrams to the Togo Ambassador in Washington and to Mrs. Olympio in Lome.

3. Reports

a. Appeal for Action Against Apartheid: A summary report will be sent out to Board members. There was a successful demonstration on Wall Street with about 100 participating. The newspaper strike greatly limited publicity, though the demonstration was picked up on television. Other demonstrations and meetings took place in several churches and colleges in the New York area. Mary-Louise Hooper organized a particularly successful picketing of a ship carrying South African goods in the San Francisco harbor, which the unions observed for the day that it lasted; this got wide and favorable publicity in the press and on television. Frank Montero suggested doing the same kind of thing in New York; George Houser said he had looked into the possibility, but there was union rivalry here that made it difficult; however, the possibility will be discussed later.

b. American Leadership Conference on Africa: Hope Stevens reported that the Conference had been a great success from the point of view of a good attendance, attraction of attention, and excellent position papers; also the delegation that called on President Kennedy had a most cordial reception. However, the main problem facing the continuation of the Conference as an organization is finances.

c. Congo statement: The ACOA's statement on the UN action in the Congo was distributed to many organizations, Congressmen and Senators, UN delegations, etc. The response had been good.

d. Finance report: In view of the improved picture at the end of 1962, it was decided to postpone for six months any action in regard to cutting the personnel expense item in the 1963 budget. It was agreed that the Finance Committee should study all contributions of \$100 or more, and that special approaches should be made to large contributors and potential large contributors.

e. ERA and ADAF: George Houser reported that Dr. Ian Gilchrist is now representing the ACOA in the Congo, working with Angolan refugees; the Committee has sent him a station wagon. Funds are on hand or assured to keep him there for a year.

f. Literature: Collin Gonze reported that as a result of the October announcement to AFRICA TODAY subscribers we had received a large number of renewals, and the income of the magazine September-December was \$4,765.68. About 200 copies of "Brutal Mandate" have been sold from the office. Work is being done on new pamphlets on Angola and Southern Rhodesia.

4. Elections: James Roosevelt was added to the National Committee, and Elsie Carrington, Clarence Jones, and Andrew Norman to the Executive Board. All elections were unanimous. Andrew Norman had stated that he wished to be listed as serving for a one-year term. The other terms are for two years.

5. Office space: A report was given on negotiations with both the management of this (801 Second Avenue) building and that at 211 East 43 Street. The office is supposed to be in the new space on February 1st.

6. Affiliation of other groups with ACOA: The Northern California Committee on Africa was unanimously accepted as an affiliate. Lewis Carliner had been expected at this meeting from Washington; in his absence George Houser reported that the group there has been carrying on an active program (a good conference in October, a demonstration on Human Rights Day), but that he does not have the impression they are organized tightly enough yet for affiliation. The Board decided that it would be good to push this matter with a view to affiliating the group if possible. Collin Gonze reported that he has met with some high school students who are much interested in Africa and possibly in forming an organization. The Board wanted to encourage this action.

7. Tenth Anniversary Dinner: A committee of Peter Weiss, Stanley Levison, and Daniel Bernstein was set up, and will bring in a budget and specific recommendations to the next Board meeting. Dan Bernstein is setting up a meeting of himself, Peter Weiss, George Houser, and Jim Robinson with Bernie Mazel to discuss over-all plans for the Anniversary Year.

8. Plans for 1963: The memorandum presented by the staff outlines plans already generally agreed to by the Board. It was agreed that special attention also be given to Mozambique. Since Eduardo Mondlane, President of the Mozambique Liberation Front, is leaving this country in February to return to Africa for fulltime work in the independence movement, the Board agreed tentatively to hold a farewell affair in his honor on Friday evening, February 8th, and Adelaide Schulkind offered her home for the occasion.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be the Annual Meeting, and will be held in the new office at 5:45 on Monday, March 11th.