

Executive Board Meeting  
of the  
American Committee on Africa

September 22, 1958

Present: Donald Harrington, Chairman; Nelson Bengston, Walter Carrington, Edward Gray, George E. Haynes, Sophia Yarnall Jacobs, Gilbert Jonas, Elizabeth Landis, Robert MacAlister, Frank Montero, Elliott Newcomb, Bayard Rustin, William Scheinman, Adelaide Schulkind, Hugh Smythe, William Sorsby, Phyllis Susskind, Robert Trentlyon, Benjamin Wechsler, Peter Weiss; Staff: Dale Harrison, George Houser, John Williams.

Minutes: Ben Wechsler pointed out that his protest on procedural grounds of the election of Ed Gray and John Murra to the Executive Board at the July 1958 meeting of the Board had not been included in the minutes. It was noted by the Executive Director that the words "of the majority" had been omitted inadvertently from the fourth line of the section titled "Elections Questioned" of the July 14, 1958, minutes. The corrected fourth line should read: "which provides that 'Vacancies in said Board of Directors shall be filled by a vote of the majority . . .'" With this amendment the minutes of the last meeting were approved by the Board.

Finance Report: The question of establishing a cost accounting system for the ACOA was referred to the Finance Committee for study.

The Executive Director reported that since January 1 efforts have been made to put Africa Today on a subscription basis, rather than to send it automatically to each contributor to the Committee as in the past. He noted that this would mean that the subscription list to AT would probably be cut in half, but that the magazine would be on a sounder financial basis. Since September 1 \$500 in subscriptions has come in as a result of a mailing.

The Board accepted the eight-months report of the Finance Committee. The Auditor's Report for sixteen months (September 1, 1956 - December 31, 1957) had been received by the Committee since the last meeting of the Finance Committee and is available for inspection by all Board members.

UN Committee Report: The Board moved that the report of the UN Committee be accepted and that the ACOA publish Professor Harris's manuscript on Mozambique as Africa Today Pamphlet # 2. A second motion was passed asking that the pamphlet be published after consultation between the staff and the Finance Committee, which however may not exercise a veto on publication. If necessary for financial reasons it was suggested that the pamphlet be sent to Africa Today subscribers in place of the November-December issue of the magazine.

Portuguese Colonies -- George Houser reported that the issue of Portuguese colonies was of growing importance at the UN. This issue involves the principle of reporting on non-self-governing territories to the UN. Since Portugal's admittance to the UN two years ago, she has denied having colonies, maintaining that her "colonies" were in fact overseas provinces. Last year a vote requiring Portugal to report on her "colonies" was barely defeated. However, the Executive Board and members of the Publications Committee feel that the publication of the new pamphlet might help enlarge the vote against Portugal since the pamphlet is fairly unique in that it documents allegations against Portugal that throw great doubt on her claim that her colonies are the same as metropolitan provinces. It was suggested by William Sorsby that a statement clarifying the UN issues involved be appended to the pamphlet prior to its distribution to the various UN Missions.



Algeria -- The problem of Algeria will once again be on the agenda of the UN General Assembly, the Executive Director reported. It is not yet known what form the issues will take, but because of the establishment of an Algerian government in exile, and the September 26-28 Constitutional referendum in Algeria, the debate is expected to be more bitter, and the issues perhaps more clearly defined. Possible steps for the Committee to take include urging the U.S. government to recognize the government-in-exile, and to support in the UN efforts of the Moroccan and Tunisian governments on behalf of the government-in-exile.

South West Africa -- The Good Offices Committee on South West Africa following talks with the government of South Africa during the summer has proposed that the UN adopt a scheme to partition South West Africa, the southern portion with the bulk of the country's mineral wealth and most of its white population to become part of the Union, the northern portion to become a territory under the Trusteeship Council of the UN. The recommendation will most certainly be condemned by the Afro-Asian bloc and others, and is viewed as abusively unjust by the African population of the territory concerned. The Committee should urge the defeat of this recommendation.

Racial Commission on Africa -- This Commission in a sense would be a successor to the UN Commission on the Racial Situation in the Union of South Africa (1953-1955). Its advantage would be in its wider scope of activity permitting it to investigate racial problems throughout the continent and with the further advantage of taking the spotlight away from South Africa alone. The ACOA should explore the possibilities of such a Commission.

Publicity Committee Report: Ben Wechsler submitted the report of the Publicity Committee. He urged that in the future the ACOA in its press releases and other public contacts worry less about getting the Committee's name publicized and more about shaping news so that it has a chance to be picked up by the press and other media. He said that it was our job to make the work of the news services easier, and therefore to prepare our publicity material in such a fashion that its news value can be more readily perceived and more easily adapted to the formats of the various media. Issues should be stressed, he said, and information given, and publicity will come to the ACOA incidental to this. A motion was passed that all ACOA Board members, in consultation with the staff, do what they can to publicize the Committee through the promotion of African issues in the manner suggested by Mr. Wechsler.

Organization Committee Report: Gilbert Jonas reported that the Organization Committee recommends that two members each from the Organization Committee and the Finance Committee come together to determine the desirability of the ACOA's becoming a membership organization.

Elliott Newcomb moved that Max Berking, Robert H. Clampitt, Edward Gray, Joseph Jablow, John Murra, and Herbert Rose be acclaimed members of the Executive Board. The motion was passed by a show of hands, and in official secret ballot by a vote of 9 to 8. (It should be noted that between the two votes one Board member left and that the deciding official vote was cast by the Chairman in favor of the motion.) It was resolved that Messrs. Berking, Clampitt, and Gray would serve one-year terms, and Jablow, Murra, and Rose two-year terms.

Frank Montero nominated Mr. Hope Stevens to the Executive Board, and he was elected by official ballot vote, 9 to 6.

The Organization Committee recommended that the Board adopt the following interpretation of the By-Laws regarding elections: That Article 7, Paragraph 10, of the By-Laws relating to elections of members be interpreted by the Committee as follows: "Vacancies on said Board of Directors shall be filled by a majority vote of



Board members attending the meeting at which the election is held, provided that a majority of the members of the Board then in office are present and voting." The above was so resolved by the Board. The Board further moved and passed that nominations of officers as well as of Board members be made to the Organization Committee with biographies, and that the recommendations of the Organization Committee with biographies be circulated to all Board members prior to the meeting of the Board at which action is to be taken.

Staff Reports: John Williams reported that the total income from the Nkrumah dinner was \$16,118.00. Expenses were \$15,787.88, which leaves a balance of \$330.12. In addition \$320.00 is still owed.

The Board acknowledged with deep appreciation the great energies and time spent by Mrs. Peter (Cora) Weiss and Frank Montero on behalf of the extremely successful Nkrumah dinner July 29th.

The Executive Director read from a report submitted by Mrs. Weiss on the Books for Ghana project, which is sponsored by the NAACP and the National Urban League in addition to the ACOA. Mrs. Weiss noted that 515 books and several records had been shipped to Accra by the New American Library whose chairman, Mr. Weybright, was in Ghana at the time of their arrival. He made contacts for the Book Committee while there and has offered the use of his firm's publicity department to further the project. The report stated that other gifts had been pledged but that there was great need for additional people to write follow-up letters and make new contacts in order to make the project a success.

George Houser noted that W. M. Chirwa was due in New York from Nyasaland on October 6 and that he would be in New York for a week before commencing his nationwide lecture tour. He said that the ACOA was assured of income close to \$3,000 from the tour, which would probably leave us with a profit of \$1,000, since expenses are expected to run to \$2,000.

George Houser said that Dean Griswold of Harvard Law School, who will be in New York September 30 to October 1, will give a report on his South African trip at a luncheon co-sponsored by ACOA and the Sidney Hillman Foundation on October 1. Two thousand invitations to the luncheon, which will be held at the Hotel Martinique, have been sent out.

It was noted that \$49,000 has been raised for the South Africa Defense Fund since its inception in January, 1957, of which \$30,000 has been sent or is shortly to be sent to the Treason Trials Defence Fund in South Africa.

George Houser, representing ACOA, will attend the All African People's Conference in Accra from December 5 to 12.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Executive Board is on November 10th.

FINANCE REPORT — JANUARY to AUGUST, 1958

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenses</u>
General Income		
Contributions		
Mailings	24,762.56	6,130.48
Other	9,023.36	
Administration and Overhead Expenses		
Rent	2,000.00	
Salaries	4,940.02	
Postage	816.82	
Electricity	120.00	
Telephone & Telegraph	761.08	104.00
Equipment	422.08	
Stationery and Supplies	776.58	
Travel	242.83	
Bank Charges	174.58	
Hospitalization	88.40	
Bond Premium	45.00	
Interest on loan	55.00	
Miscellaneous	189.16	
Program & Printing	<u>713.39</u>	
		21,344.94
Program		
Literature	253.56	249.50
Africa Today		
Magazine	2,877.79	1,092.22
Pamphlets	957.68	173.63
Meetings & Conferences	<u>630.92</u>	555.00
		4,719.95
Defense Fund overhead	<u>2,167.62</u>	
	38,127.89	32,195.37
Net Worth		
Short Term Debt	3,355.58	
Long Term Debt	<u>3,770.00</u>	
Total Debt	7,125.58	
Cash	<u>220.14</u>	
Net Debt, August 30	6,905.44	
		12,544.48

Note:

Net Debt January 1, 1958