

A C O A
4 West 40th Street
New York 18, New York
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To: The Executive Board
From: George M. Houser

Re: Trip to Washington

On January 21st and 22nd Homer Jack, Frank Montero, Bill Scheinman, and I went to Washington in order to see a number of people in the State Department and Congress, especially on certain aspects of our observations while attending the All African People's Conference. Without going into any detail, I thought it would be worthwhile to send this brief memorandum to members of the Executive Board about that trip. The persons we saw while in Washington were as follows:

First, in the State Department, Joseph C. Satterthwaite, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs; George LaMont, Acting Director of the Office of Middle and Southern African Affairs; and Robert Ross, who I believe has the Desk for West African Affairs; and then in the Intelligence Bureau of the State Department we saw Robert Baum, Head of the Division; Ed Holmes, who was the person in charge of Intelligence on the Accra Conference; and Fred Burin.

Second, in the Senate, we saw Hubert H. Humphrey, Jacob Javits, Eugene McCarthy, William Proxmire, and Senator Clifford Case's executive assistant, Mrs. Frances Henderson. Also we saw Brigadier-General R. E. Cushman, who is Vice-President Nixon's executive assistant.

In the House we saw Frank Thompson of New Jersey, Stewart Udall of Arizona, and Frances Bolton of Ohio, and Chester Bowles of Connecticut.

Third, we saw two persons connected with the labor movement: Michael Ross, Director of the Department of International Affairs, of the AFL-CIO; and Victor Reuther, who is the UAW international representative.

In these various discussions we talked about U.S. policy as it was reflected at the Accra Conference and attitudes of Africans toward the United States; we talked about a possible tour for Sékou Touré, the President of the Republic of Guinea, to the United States; the forthcoming tour of Tom Mboya of Kenya to the United States; the possibility of United States aid to the newly independent Republic of Guinea; our plans for Africa Freedom Day on April 15th; and the South Africa Defense Fund and the treason trial in the Union of South Africa.

I can generalize on the results of our trip by saying that we were very well received everywhere we went. The persons we saw from the State Department on through Congress were uniformly very much interested and concerned about the All African People's Conference. I don't know whether a change of U.S. policy toward Africa is in the making, but I think they are getting concerned enough in the State Department to try to push

for certain liberalization in policy. The American Committee on Africa seems to be looked on as an effective and responsible organization working in the field. I think we are in a position to have a good line to key persons in Congress as well as in the State Department from this time on. We pressed the State Department pretty hard about their bungling of sending a message to the Conference from an official of the United States. They as much as admitted that they had made a mistake but had tried to recover themselves before all the damage was done, by getting the message from Nixon to the Conference before the end of the Conference.

As far as some concrete results are concerned, there are some things that can be pointed to that either were agreed upon or were almost agreed upon:

1. Senator Humphrey agreed to make a major speech in the Senate on U.S. policy toward Africa some time near Africa Freedom Day on April 15th. He wants us to help prepare a first draft of such a speech. He would like to have as part of it a proclamation by the United States Senate in recognition of Africa Freedom Day.

2. Senator Humphrey agreed to hold a high-level Senate and House luncheon in honor of Tom Mboya when he comes through.

3. Senator Javits said he would be willing to make a speech in the Senate about the treason trial in South Africa.

4. Several of the Senators and Congressmen indicated that they would press the State Department to issue an invitation for Sékou Touré to visit the United States some time soon.

5. General Cushman indicated the Vice-President's great interest in the visit by Tom Mboya and that his office might very well organize some things if we want him to.

6. Senator Eugene McCarthy put us in touch with Frank Thompson in the House, who now is apparently one of the leaders of the liberal Democratic bloc in the House, and the way was opened up possibly for one of us to appear before this liberal caucus in a report and discussion on the All African People's Conference.

7. The strong probability is that George Meany will have a special top-level dinner in honor of Tom Mboya when he is in Washington.

8. The probability further is that both through the Industrial Union Fund of James B. Carey and funds of the AFL-CIO, we should receive some special financial assistance to help with Tom Mboya's trip to the United States.

Undoubtedly there are other items that might be mentioned, but I think this will give the most important aspects of the results of our trip to Washington.