

MEMORANDUM FROM: George M. Houser and James R. Robinson

RE: Background on Rev. Markus Kooper and his return to Africa

Reverend Markus Kooper came to New York in the fall of 1960 to testify for South West Africa at the United Nations. He had to escape from South West Africa to make his way here. For several years he had been in exile in a remote and deserted area of his own country because he had, on behalf of his congregation, challenged the white government of the land. He will be arrested if he goes back to South West Africa. He possesses an American travel document although no passport. The closest he can get to South West Africa is Bechuanaland, and he wishes to return there for two purposes: (1) to rejoin part of his family (they plan to leave South West Africa for Bechuanaland); and (2) to give what aid he can to South West African refugees in Bechuanaland.

The Problem is: MONEY.

At a small, preliminary meeting in the American Committee on Africa office, on Thursday, March 17th, Mr. Kooper forcefully stated his desire to return to Africa. Henriette Lund of the Lutherans, Nancy Smedley of the Friends, George Houser and James Robinson all felt that we should go ahead with plans to raise money for his return.

The group set \$1,500 to \$2,000 as the goal to be raised. This would cover the \$550 air fare to Lusaka via Dar es Salaam (\$595 after May 21st), plus \$350 to cover (1) stops along the way; (2) visa costs; (3) transportation beyond Lusaka into Bechuanaland; and (4) most important, enough cash to sustain him and his family for the first few weeks in Bechuanaland. He would be living in a mud hut, but food for himself, his family, and temporary food for any refugees he would assist would come out of this sum.

Within a month after his arrival in Bechuanaland, we would set up a channel for funds to go to him. He hopes to leave by mid-April.

We express the hope that there will be a number of individuals and groups that will want to contribute toward this small sum. We suggest anywhere from \$50 to \$300. Not many are being approached so it is not expected that a larger sum than is being sought will be received. The fund will be administered, for the approximate six months we envisage as the time of responsibility, by a small committee including those mentioned above, all of whom have been working with Markus Kooper several years.

Checks should be made payable to the Africa Defense and Aid Fund, earmarked for Rev. Markus Kooper, Such checks should be sent to the American Committee on Africa, Room 705, 211 East 43rd St., New York 10017.

If there are questions, please let us know.