

A M E R I C A N   C O M M I T T E E   O N   A F R I C A

ANNUAL REPORT, 1961

I. 1961 was not a spectacular year in Africa as had been the previous year. Only two states became independent--Sierra Leone on April 27, and Tanganyika in December.

Perhaps two developments are important to mention as a backdrop to the work of the American Committee on Africa. The first of these was the outbreak of the revolt in Angola on March 15th. Anoola, which only a short time previously, had been looked upon as "the kingdom of silence" suddenly developed as one of the most critical and urgent problems on the African continent. During the first few months of the revolt, it is estimated that at least 1500 Portuguese and perhaps 50,000 Africans were killed. The Portuguese claim to have stopped the revolt by October, but later eyewitness reports indicated that this was nothing but Portuguese propaganda.

A second development of great importance was the organization of right-wing elements in the United States to back specific aims in Africa. The American Committee for Aid to Katanga Freedom Fighters, under the chairmanship of Dr. Max Yergan, sprang into existence as the United Nations, backed by the United States, moved vigorously to try to bring the Katanga province back into a unified Congo. A high-pressured campaign was begun to try to undermine, not only United Nations action in the Congo, but to scuttle American support for the work of the United Nations. Furthermore, some of the same elements behind this pro-Tshombe campaign mounted an offensive to support Portugal in her "colonizing" efforts in Africa. This latter campaign, spearheaded by the public relations firm of Selvage and Lee, and doing a great deal through an organization called the Portuguese-American Committee on Foreign Affairs, had as its objective to sell Portuguese policy to the American people and to label as communist any effort to end Portuguese control. Both of these efforts signify that the role of Africa in international politics has begun to come of age. African issues have become important in American policy.

Despite the organization of ultra-conservatives on at least these two questions relating to African policy, the Kennedy Administration maintained its position both in supporting resolutions in the United Nations critical of Portugal in Angola, and in backing United Nations action towards creating a unified regime in the Congo.

II. Among specific activities of the Committee to implement general policy were the following:

A. For over a year the ACOA had been working on the case of Dr. Cassim M. Jadwat, a South African national of Indian background. He had come into the United States originally on a cultural exchange visa. Because of the precarious nature of the situation in South Africa, he did not wish to return there, but hoped that he would be able to remain in the United States on an immigrant's visa. The United States Government took the view that he would have to return to England to re-apply for entrance into the United States after a two-year period. The hospital for which Dr. Jadwat is working backed him up completely. It took a concerted

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campaign, participated in by literally hundreds of people, with the ACOA taking a leading role, that finally led to a change in position on the part of the Government. Dr. Jadwat has now been granted an immigrant's visa.

B. The Committee issued at least two statements on the Angola situation. In June, the ACOA called upon the U.S. Government to "take whatever steps are necessary" to ensure that no further American-supplied NATO arms are used in Angola against the African rebels, and to ask Portugal to "lift the ban on journalists visiting Angola" so that current reports of the war may reach the outside world.

In November, the Committee issued a statement signed by close to 100 Americans on Angola, calling upon our Government "privately and publicly to press Portugal to negotiate an end to the fighting in Angola and agree upon a timetable for self-government in accordance with Article 73 of the U.N. Charter."

C. In order to combat the effect of the work of the American Committee for Aid to Katanga Freedom Fighters, the Committee issued a statement of its own, analyzing the importance of the U.N. operation in the Congo and pointing to the disastrous effect that would follow if the continued secession of Katanga was permitted. In addition, the Committee, working with other organizations, arranged for an advertisement to appear in the NEW YORK TIMES opposing the position of the American Committee for Aid to Katanga Freedom Fighters, and supporting United States policy and UN action in the Congo.

D. The Committee prepared, and had widely distributed among the delegations at the United Nations, material on two issues that received thorough debate. A study was prepared for the Committee by Dr. Bruce B. Birkenhead of the Department of Economics at Brooklyn College, on sanctions against South Africa. Richard Kasdan, an attorney who is a member of the UN Committee of the ACOA, prepared a study of the reforms which the Portuguese announced for Angola. This material was sent to virtually all of the UN delegations at the time of the debate on the Angolan item on the agenda of the General Assembly. This and other material that the Committee issued in pamphlet or article form, was quoted widely at the United Nations during its recent session.

E. The Committee sent a letter to the Chairman of the Board of the First National City Bank protesting against the loan of \$5,000,000 to the South African Industrial Development Corporation, pointing out the real financial risk involved, and underlining the moral reasons for withholding of capital from South Africa: "Why should a regime be bolstered up that alone of all the governments of the world is pursuing a policy based upon the false doctrine of racial supremacy?"

F. The Committee arranged for the representative of the Algerian Provisional Government, Mr. A.K. Chanderli, to go to Washington and meet with three Senators who had made a rather expensive trip to Africa--Sens. Church, Morse and McGee. This was the first time that there had been any contact in recent years between the Algerian F.L.N. and representatives of the United States Government.

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G. The Committee made the initial arrangements for Robert Young and Charles Dorkins of N.B.C. to go into the rebel-held territory of northern Angola to make the film which subsequently appeared in the WHITE PAPER series on September 19, 1961.

H. Because of the many activities of the ACOA in criticizing Portuguese rule in Angola, the public relations firm of Selvage and Lee, working under a contract to Portuguese companies, began a public attack upon the Committee. A subsidiary of Selvage and Lee, called the Portuguese-American Committee on Foreign Affairs with headquarters in Boston, held a press conference, calling for a Congressional investigation of the Committee for its alleged support of "communist goals in Africa." Subsequently, a pamphlet entitled "Communists and Angola" was issued by this Portuguese-American Committee, attacking the Committee for its work in backing the Angolan nationalists. Copies of this material had been sent by the Portuguese-American Committee to virtually all the members of our National Committee. Apparently no members of our National Committee resigned on the basis of these communications.

### III. PROGRAM

#### A. Literature

The circulation of AFRICA TODAY has increased about 20% in the last year, being now over 4,200. Three mimeographed pieces with information are sent to teachers, librarians and children who make inquiries--several a day during the school year. We have sold over one hundred Africa Packets in the last year.

The demand for material, especially on Portuguese Africa, maintains itself. Five thousand reprints of Malcolm McVeigh's articles on Angola which originally appeared in AFRICA TODAY were in such demand that they passed out of print in a month.

Statement on the Congo: 14,000 copies were mailed to persons on all ACOA mailing lists. Over 60,000 more were used with an appeal letter signed by Eleanor Roosevelt. Almost 2,000 copies were sent out in response to individual requests.

New Basic Brochure: In contrast to the preceding basic brochure of which 10,000 copies were printed, we printed 100,000 copies of the new brochure (cost-wise, we spent just slightly more than twice as much for the 100,000 as we had for the earlier 10,000). The brochure went to all lists of the Committee and 60,000 more went to other lists with the Eleanor Roosevelt appeal letter. The brochure is a basic informational piece frequently requested by members. About 15,000 copies remain in stock.

#### B. Speakers Service and Other Projects

With the establishment a few months ago of a Projects Department, directed by Mrs. Hazel Gray, several programs have been undertaken with varying degrees of success. Among these are:

Speakers Service: Numerous engagements have been filled by various speakers available. Speakers have been enlisted from among petitioners here temporarily for UN sessions. Others have been secured mainly from among African graduate students. Also, where possible, engagements have been arranged on short notice for outstanding African visitors. In this connection, several radio engagements were arranged last month for Joshua Nkomo, President of the Zimbabwe Party of Southern Rhodesia on stations WWRL, WLIR and WBAI. Also, interviews which the Executive Director taped on his last trip to Africa with Jomo Kenyatta and Julius Nyerere were used by radio stations.

Among the more important engagements filled during the past few months are: Columbia University Citizenship Council--"Politics of the Emerging African Nations"; New Rochelle College student seminar on African Student Leadership; Rutgers University trade union seminar; United Christian Missionary Society seminar on more effective UN aid to African independence. Of special importance was a two-day lecture series for senior students at Baldwin-Wallace College, Berea, Ohio.

A policy has been established of securing fees which compare favorably with those charged by well-established lecture bureaus. Audiences have ranged from 75 to 700.

Another aspect of work in this area is the need to extend ACOA influence into the South. In this connection, correspondence with various southern colleges has resulted in a number of possibilities for scheduling lectures during 1963.

That the ACOA is providing an increasingly effective service is attested to by letters of appreciation, such as one from the United Christian Disciples which states in part, "...it was an outstanding experience and our group profited greatly....", or another from Baldwin-Wallace College, stating the speaker "was very outstanding and indeed represented your Committee and his people very well.... We also had the largest single attendance at any of the programs we have had during the past four years...."

The Executive Director filled an average of two speaking engagements a week during the past year in such far-flung places as California (spending one week on the West Coast) and Vermont, Baltimore, Boston and Philadelphia. He participated in the Unesco Conference in Boston in October, and addressed numerous conferences on Africa on university campuses along the eastern seaboard. He also addressed church groups and community organizations and appeared on television and radio programs. Because he is in such demand as an expert on Africa it is impossible to fill all the engagements he is invited to undertake.

The President of the Committee appeared on the television program "Open Mind" discussing the issues involved in the Congo crisis, and debated the same issue before a chapter of the ADA with a representative of the American Committee for Aid to Katanga Freedom Fighters. He filled a number of other speaking engagements in his capacity as President of the ACOA.

Film on Angola: This year the Committee purchased a copy of the N.B.C. documentary film "Angola: Journey to a War" for rental circulation to aid in

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raising funds for ACOA's Angola medical relief project. The film has been shown at the University of California, Princeton University, New Paltz State University College, St. James Presbyterian Church (N.Y.C.). It is presently being circulated on United States National Students Association member campuses with 15 showings already completed. The film was also seen by District 65 of the RWDSU, the AFL-CIO Steward Council, and the American Friends Service Committee conference on Africa held in New York City.

C. Africa Defense and Aid Fund  
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Through the Africa Defense and Aid Fund we gave assistance in the following ways during 1961: (Totals are given in round figures)

South Africa: \$2,342.00 \$1,000 was sent to the Teason Trials Defense Fund this year, and another \$200 to the South Africa Defence and Aid Fund. Petitioners who came in increasing numbers to appear at the United Nations were aided as well as were South African students.

South West Africa: \$875.00. The very important debates at the United Nations on this item drew many petitioners to New York, and much of the money spent for South West Africa went to aid these petitioners.

Basutoland: \$400.

East Africa: \$1,650.00. The greatest part of this sum went to Kenya, including a substantial portion to Kenyan students. Money was also sent to aid refugees in Dar-es-Salaam.

Central Africa: \$1,000. The deteriorating situation in the Rhodesias and the arrrst of thousands of nationalists created a great need for funds for families of detainees and for preparation of their defense. \$700 in all was sent to Northern Rhodesia.

Angola: \$350. After the outbreak of the rebellion in Angola on March 15, many native Angolans were forced to flee into the Congo, and this sum was sent to aid the refugees.

Algeria: \$235. Money was raised on the West Coast for Algerian refugees in Tunis and sent to the Algerian Red Crescent Society.

Ruanda Urundi: The Fourth Committee of the United Nations once again heard petitioners from Ruanda Urundi, and the Defense and Aid Fund was able to help them with their expenses in this small way.

Miscellaneous: \$49.00. This amount included telephone calls and cables sent by petitioners which were paid for by the Defense and Aid Fund.

A total of \$7,000 was disbursed by the Fund during 1961. 

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Medical Mission to Angola--a Pilot Project: This Medical Mission was handled through the American Committee on Africa account rather than the Africa Defense and Aid Fund because it involved staff travel for the purpose of investigating a new program emphasis. However, it resulted in the distribution of \$4,000 worth of medicines inside Angola and the formation of ERA (EMERGENCY RELIEF TO ANGOLA) as a major project emphasis for the ACOA.

Special contributions exceeding \$6,400 were solicited to make the Angolan mission possible. Expenditures ran just below \$5,000. In March of 1962, \$1,500 was transferred to the ADAF account and earmarked for ERA--this represents the excess raised over the expenses on the Houser-Marcum trip.

#### D. The Angolan Trip and Emergency Relief to Angola

Late in 1961 and in early 1962, the Executive Director took a trip into the revolt area of northern Angola. The purpose of the trip was to find out what was happening in Angola at the present time. He found that, contrary to statements made by Portuguese officials which were widely reported in the press, the revolt was not ended, and that the nationalists controlled large sections of northern Angola. A second purpose of the trip and the resulting project is described above.

#### E. Press Conferences

The Committee held a number of press conferences during the course of the year, including two for Holden Roberto, President of the Union of the Populations of Angola, one built around petitioners to the United Nations from South and South West Africa, one for a delegation from the Kenya Africa Democratic Union, one for Joshua Nkomo, President of the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union, and one for George Houser and John Marcum upon their return from Angola.

#### F. Work with Petitioners

The Committee continued to spend a great deal of time working with petitioners from various parts of Africa. During the Sixteenth Session of the General Assembly an especially large amount of time was given to work with representatives from South Africa, South West Africa and Angola. Contacts were made for them at the United Nations and with U.S. officials, press conferences were held, material was mimeographed, and some financial assistance was given. This continues to be a very important aspect of the work of the Committee.

#### G. Special Events

Among special events which the Committee sponsored this year were a reception in honor of the Honorable Angie Brooks, the Assistant Secretary of State of Liberia and the Chairman of the Fourth Committee at the United Nations. This was held at the home of Mrs. Zelma Brandt. A gathering was held at the home of Mrs. Sophia Yarnall Jacobs on the evening that the Young-Dorkins film on Angola was shown over N.B.C. A public meeting was sponsored on Angola at which Holden Roberto and Malcolm McVeigh were the speakers.

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## IV. ORGANIZATION MATTERS

A. Staff Changes

Because there had been a great deal of staff turnover for the Committee over the last year or so, a staff re-organization has taken place. A system of departments has been established. James Robinson joined the staff in October as Assistant Executive Director of Finance. He and Emma Thomas and Ethel Mingo are responsible for everything relating to finances, the mailing list, receipting, etc. Collin Gonze was taken on the staff last August as Director of Publications and Editor of AFRICA TODAY. He and Catharine Raymond are responsible for everything in the publications department. Mrs. Hazel Gray was taken on last September as Projects Director. She and Mary Robinson are responsible for that department. The Executive Director has increased administrative responsibilities in this kind of a setup. Miss Deborah Kallen came on as his secretary in September.

B. Mailing List

The ACOA mailing list currently is about 13,000. This does not include any new names for 1962 as they have not yet been added to our address plates at the mailing house. Large mailings for Africa Defense and Aid and for the Committee itself should increase the list considerably during 1962. But, at the same time, we can count on dropping at least 2,000 names for no sign of interest in two years, for moving without leaving a change of address, death, resignation, etc.

Beginning with 1962, the list will be broken down differently: ACOA members and contributors will be maintained on one list at the mailing house; ADAF contributors will be on a separate list. This should enable us to solicit the ACOA list for ADAF and the ADAF list for the Committee.

C. Finances

As was clear in the financial reports for last year, the American Committee on Africa suffered a decline in 1961. For ACOA itself however, in spite of the non-repetition or reduction of large contributions from several sources, the decline was a very small one. That we did as well as we did is traceable to extremely successful mailings early in the year and to the signal success both of the Lutuli letter in December and the special fund-raising done at the same time for the pilot medical mission to Angola. This project was handled exclusively through the ACOA account, but the excess money, about \$1,500 has now been transferred to the Africa Defense and Aid account, earmarked for the use of ERA--EMERGENCY RELIEF TO ANGOLA.

Africa Defense and Aid Fund: This fund suffered a precipitous decline from the previous year. The decline is traceable to (1) lack of easily publicized African causes for which money can be raised satisfactorily; (2) the split between ACOA and ADAF funds, which makes it difficult to spend money for ADAF unless ACOA itself has enough cash to be able to cover overhead; and (3) most importantly, lack of any staff person primarily responsible for raising funds for ADAF.

In the late fall, after James R. Robinson had joined the staff for direct-mail, while some time was spent in planning for later ADAF fund-raising, the financial picture was dark enough so that all mailings had to be for ACOA.

Work and planning done then is resulting in March-April mailings for African political refugees. And the Angolan medical project will move toward the mailings stage this spring.

The danger to both of these special projects is the fact that ACOA finances, while showing some improvement, are still not strong enough. In other words, ADAF fund-raising is basically dependent upon the financial health of ACOA since it is the Committee itself which pays basic costs such as rent and salaries.

Outlook for the Future: ERA(EMERGENCY RELIEF TO ANGOLA) is potentially a very major project of a long-term nature. It aims not only to raise money and send medicines and medical personnel from the American Committee on Africa, but also to stimulate similar aid from other groups, including especially some of the large religious relief agencies.

#### D. The Board

The most significant changes made as far as the organization of the Executive Board is concerned is that A. Philip Randolph was elected as the Co-Chairman of the American Committee on Africa and a new office of President of the Committee was created, which Peter Weiss was elected to fill.

#### E. Sub-Committees

The active sub-committees of the organization have included: Steering Committee, Editorial Board, UN Committee, Finance Committee, Personnel Committee and Organization Committee. The Steering Committee, under the chairmanship of Peter Weiss, has had meetings fairly regularly, and for a good part of the year met practically every two weeks. The UN Committee, under the chairmanship of Betsy Landis until she moved to Paris, and more recently, Mrs. Winifred Courtney, has met regularly, especially while sessions were on at the United Nations. The volunteer assistance of non-Board Members such as Richard Kasdan, Mrs. Anne-Marie Stokes and Mrs. Zelma Brandt has been especially helpful. The Finance Committee, under the chairmanship of Nelson Bengston has met as need demanded it, and has acted as trustee for the Africa Defense and Aid Fund, in addition to regular committee responsibilities. The Editorial Board, under the chairmanship of Joseph Jablow, has met approximately once a month. The Personnel Committee, under the chairmanship of Stanley Levison was very active at the time we were looking for new staff personnel during the summer and early fall of 1961. The Organization Committee, under the chairmanship of Frank Montero has met as the situation demanded it.

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F. Local Organization

Following up decisions made by the Board, two local groups have been established that are affiliated with the American Committee on Africa. The first is the Northern California Committee on Africa which Mary-Louise Hooper has organized, and has a Board of Directors and officers as well as membership in the northern California area. The second is the Washington Committee on Africa. Lewis Carliner of the United Auto Workers has been instrumental in getting this group organized. Both of these groups are affiliated loosely with the American Committee on Africa, but will cooperate with us on virtually all the work which we carry on.

G. Tax-Exemption

This last year, following William B. Landis' departure for Paris, a new tax lawyer began to work on our case. The new lawyer is a recognized authority in the field, Adrian DeWind. We still do not have the status of an organization to which the contributions are tax-deductible. The latest communication we have from the Bureau of Internal Revenue indicates that we are defined as an "action" organization. Mr. DeWind has outlined some steps which he proposes we take and which he hopes will lead to a reversal of the position taken by the Bureau.

V. THE LOOK AHEAD

The American Committee on Africa should have a good year. Within the limits of our traditional role of giving major attention to those areas of Africa not yet independent and also to various aspects of U.S. policy towards Africa, there is a challenging task confronting us. The question of Portuguese territories, of South and South West Africa and of Northern and Southern Rhodesia will continue to be burning issues during the next period of time. No other organization is doing our kind of job in relation to these issues. The Committee is increasingly looked on as an organization doing an effective job in meeting these issues. Program-wise, we will carry out our emphasis in dealing with these problems through our Africa Defense and Aid Fund, through speakers we bring to the United States, through keeping in touch with various aspects of the work at the United Nations, and through constant contacts with the U.S. Mission to the UN, the State Department and some Congressional leaders.

The system of organization now being followed in the office should lead to increased efficiency and an increased amount of work being done, especially as the newer staff members become better acquainted with the tasks.

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