

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

Steering Committee

December 20, 1961

MINUTES

Present: Donald Harrington, Chairman; Nelson Bengston; Frank Montero. Staff: George Houser, Hazel Gray, James Robsinson, Debby Kallen.

1. Education program and membership drive:

(a) The title of this item was changed from Speakers in the South to read Speakers in General and in the South. Hazel Gray passed around a memorandum regarding a National Lecture Tour, detailing the expenses of such an undertaking, and a list of potential speakers. A brief summary of the two memos was presented, including further information given by George Houser about potential speakers. It was felt that these speakers fell into two general categories: those who would be suitable for a national lecture tour, including Basil Davidson (while in London George Houser would discuss the possibility of Davidson's making such a tour); Jomo Kenyatta, if a definite commitment could be secured from him; and either Leopold Takawira or Kogsana. Eduardo Mondlane would be suitable for a national tour if he were available, or for single lectures in specific areas of the country. It should be kept in mind that we could probably undertake only two national tours between now and the beginning of summer.

An attractive folder listing speakers whom we could make available should be developed, but more thought must be given to the exact makeup of such a folder which could be mailed out around the country.

Items (b) Negro leadership conference, and (c) Regional conferences, were postponed for the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

(d) Chapters: It was felt that local chapters would involve financial and legal commitments that we do not want to undertake, but that if such chapters were loosely affiliated with our Committee, this might be valuable. It was agreed that James Robinson should draw up a memorandum exploring the difficulties and advantages of local chapters, and along what lines such chapters might be affiliated with our Committee, and that this memorandum should be presented to the Steering Committee and then the Executive Board.

2. Preparation for Houser trip and effect on January Board meeting: George Houser reported that he would be leaving New York about December 28 and that John Marcum would probably accompany him. The Norman Fund was donating \$3,500 toward the trip. He would try to visit Dar es Salaam and Nairobi on his way back from the Congo. Because there was no chance that he would be back for the January Board meeting, it was decided to reschedule this meeting for Tuesday, February 6, if the Tuesday date was not inconvenient for a majority of Board members.

Peter Weiss had requested that the following items be added to the agenda:

3. Conor Cruise O'Brien: An attempt should be made to get Mr. O'Brien to write an article on the Congo situation for us. It was agreed that this should be done and a letter will go to him.

In addition, it was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Secretary of State congratulating him on the United States position in regard to Katanga. A duplicate of this letter should be sent to the New York Times signed by Donald Harrington and A. Philip Randolph.

4. Southern Rhodesia: From recent reports in the newspapers, it appears that Nkomo's party has been banned, but there has been very little information other than this. We will try to obtain more details.

5. Andrade: The Angolan situation, particularly relationships existing between different factions, is very confused and we should try to get as much information as possible.

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