February 6, 1968

Minutes
Southern Africa Committee
Wednesday, January 31st, 1968

But before the Minutes are duly set out, several announcements are in order:

1. The deadline now on for the "Southern Africa Summary" is the SECOND TUESDAY of every month. THUS, the deadline for the next issue is TUESDAY, Feb. 13.

2. The next meeting for the Southern Africa Committee will be Tuesday, February 20 at 8 p.m. at Union Theological Seminary.

Now to the Minutes:

It was announced that a demonstration would take place in front of the South African Embassy on Monday, Feb. 5 at 5 p.m. on behalf of the South West Africans on trial in South Africa, and related issues of prisoner treatment and illegal arrests, etc. The sponsorship included a remarkable spectrum, from black militants to old liberals.

On April 8th, the Gaye Club of the City College of New York, an Afro-American group, is planning to hold events dealing with southern Africa. This group has had a continuing interest in that area, and has been in touch with Janet MacLaughlin about possible kinds of events.

The battle to keep South Africa from participating in the Olympics was finally joined by Vorster who issued (one is tempted to use the relative pronoun "which" instead of "who") a statement saying he would not pay the price of admission to the Olympics if that price were mixed trials in order to select South African athletes. Particularly responsive to the appeal made by ACOA to American black athletes, according to Janet, were Bob Booser (basketball) and Arthur Ashe (tennis).

Mary asked that the Summary include a letter meant to weed out those people who are not interested in reading it. Hopefully that letter will result in financial savings. Our circulation is well over the 750 mark at this point, so savings are in order. Bouquets and Bravos are definitely in order for everyone who has worked on the Summary. Via the chairman, many people have communicated their appreciation for the Summary, and have been impressed by its size, content, and readability. Gestures of interest have especially come from Mrs. Margaret Rander's office at the Church Center, reports Marcia Kerr. It may be that that interest might take a financial shape as well.

Kent Mathewson reported on the possibilities of creating some sort of research institute for Africa in the style of the North American Congress on Latin America. A room has to be found as a temporary office, and then a phone installed. This room would also function as a library where periodicals and information not already readily available will be gathered. Discussion centered around the need for sponsors, and what role they might play in the concrete creation of such a research institute. Janet noted that Charles Wilhelm and Dave Wiley had already broached the idea at a meeting of the African Studies Association, and had a list of interested people. Wallerstein would be the man to pursue that course, and Dee Dee...
Mary talked. Janet: Basil Davidson, Colin Legum, Conor Cruise O'Brien (Janet had a question mark by his name), Collin Gonze, Hal Weaver, Martin Legassick, John Strong and Julian Freedman.

The committee was not in unanimous support of the research institute, it must be noted. There came the suggestion that we proceed much more informally than had been proposed to explore the possibilities for such a project, and that the SAC might not be ready to take such a bold step. It might not be in the Committee's interest to commit its time and resources to such an effort, it was pointed out.

In commenting about the Summary, Roselle said he was glad to find out about Clark Oil and Refining, glad because the name struck a familiar chord in his experience in Chicago; Clark Oil was developing a series of gas stations in Chicago. A link between its activities domestically and in Mozambique.

Mary talked with Joe Short of the African American Institute, and discovered that not one new scholarship was going to be offered to any South African for 1968-69, and that the program might not reopen after that. Mary pointed out the number of Africans who would be graduating, and unable to return to Africa because of travel documents, difficulties. This would create quite a problem for the Africans, problems which the AAU seemed indifferent to. It was noted that the Immigration Service makes specific allowances for refugees from communist countries (Hungary, Cuba), but does not make the same allowances for refugees from fascisit countries. It was also noted that the program was being terminated at the time that Afro-Americans and Africans were getting to know one another, and talking about common interests- the hidden reason beyond the termination thus having a racial and political motives.

The following American business activities in Southern Africa were mentioned: a Public Relations firm, based in Chicago, was given a Ford Foundation grant to do PR work on Africa. Janet said she would try to get more details. The Ford Motor Company's sale of trucks to South African police was curtailed, forcing Henry Ford II to go to see Vorster and lobby for the sales to be renewed. They were. The police use a truck for only 10 months, and then they are replaced.

Those present at the meeting: Janet MacLaughlin, Carolyn Wilhelm, Kent Mathewson, Roselle Nesbitt, Marcie Kerr, Mary McNally, Dee Dee Vallenga, Nancy Frees,er, Bob Maurer.

MINUTES for the January 16th meeting will be sent out as soon as our typist recovers from typing these minutes. He has very delicate fingers, unused to manual labor.