

REPORT FROM THE AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA
TO
THE CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE AND AID FUND

April 25~~27~~, 1969

As has been reported to past conferences, Defense and Aid is only one aspect of the work of the American Committee on Africa. In a very broad sense, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the International Defence and Aid Fund ("Keep the conscience of the world alive to the issues at stake") would cover most of the work of A.C.O.A. Thus our work in 1968 included sending replies and information to more than 3,000 letters for information about Africa. 50,000 copies of a position paper entitled "The United States and Southern Africa" were distributed in connection with our political campaign. Fact and information sheets were prepared on such items as South Africa and the Olympics, the food emergency in Nigeria-Biafra, material on the Sharpeville massacre, South West Africa terrorism trial appeal case, a distribution of the Courtroom statement made by Toivo ja Toivo, an information sheet on Portuguese Africa and a memo on U.S. military bases in Portugal, and other items.

We sponsored a public meeting on March 21st. We did a great deal of work in connection with the possible participation of South Africa in the Olympic Games and were instrumental in getting more than 60 American sports figures to sign a public statement saying they would support the boycott against the Olympics if South Africa was permitted to participate. We sent two persons to Mexico City to work with SANROC at the time of the Olympic Games to urge the suspension of South Africa from membership in international sports federations. Our representatives appeared at a good many stock holders meetings of American companies investing in South Africa.

We opened up a Washington office on a full time basis which laid the foundations for more effective work on government policies. We took on special field work personnel primarily to work in the black community leading towards greater black participation in programs on Africa.

Something of the scope of the work of A.C.O.A. may be seen in our projected program and budget for 1969 which will be circulated as an addendum to this brief report.

During the early months of 1969, A.C.O.A. has put a great deal of time and effort into a campaign protesting the granting of an air carrier permit to South African Airways to fly into Kennedy International Airport. Many demonstrations have been held both at Kennedy Airport and at the offices of South African Airways and B.O.A.C., the latter company providing facilities for S.A.A. Possible legal action against

against South African Airways is being explored. Hearings have been held, largely as a result of our urging, by the Subcommittee on Africa of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee.

It should be mentioned in this report that a relatively new fund called The Africa Fund (whose name was changed last year from the African Aid and Legal Defense Fund to avoid confusion with the Defense and Aid Fund of A.C.O.A.) carried on an active program in 1968. This Fund is an independent agency whose activities and grants were limited to those which made possible tax benefits for donors. It has its own Board of Trustees and is organizationally and financially separate from A.C.O.A. although there is some shared staff.

During the past year, under Clause 1 of the International Defence and Aid Constitution, we have expended approximately \$16,981.04. This has included expenditures to aid refugees in Africa, assistance to students in the United States, some assistance to political prisoners, and a small amount for legal aid.

Under Clause 2 of the Constitution, we have extended approximately \$42,837.30. A great portion of this has been directed to Mozambique.

There are some expenditures which do not fit directly under the terms of reference of the International Defence and Aid Fund, such as \$5,581.78 which was contributed for famine relief in Nigeria-Biafra.

George M. Houser