



# 1975 Annual Report The American Committee on Africa



**T**he coup in Portugal set in motion events that shaped ACOA activity in 1975.

Mozambique became independent on June 25th; Cape Verde on July 5th; Sao Tome and Principe on July 13th. Dominating the year, however, were events in Angola, formally independent on November 11th but unable to begin the task of national reconstruction because of internal conflicts enormously inflamed by foreign intervention.

### Angola

Efforts to avoid violence in Angola were made throughout the year. In January, a transitional government with representation by the Portuguese and each of the three political movements was established, and an integrated army called for. By June, it was clear that this effort was not succeeding; incidents of violence were increasing. President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya brought the leaders together in June to try once again to work out an acceptable program. However, fullscale fighting broke out shortly after the agreement was signed. By August, the transitional government had broken up. The United States and the Soviet Union backed different sides. The conflict in Angola had the potential for an international conflict of major significance.

ACOA took the position that the U.S. should not intervene in Angola. Although ACOA preferred a policy of non-intervention by all outside powers, we saw our primary task as influencing U.S. government policy. ACOA criticized the analysis of the Administration which saw the struggle in Angola entirely in terms of the cold war; we viewed the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) as an independent force which would not be dominated by any outside power, including the Soviet Union.

The Angola experience showed that the Administration was willing to align itself with South Africa despite the very serious implications of such a policy for the U.S. in the rest of Africa. Two sources of this policy were growing U.S. investments in South Africa and the cold war framework of American diplomacy.

By the end of the year, ACOA had taken a leadership role in organizing a coalition of groups to oppose U.S. intervention in Angola. An important article on "Communism and the War in Angola," by George Houser, appeared on the editorial page of the *New York Times* in December, and an advertisement was sponsored by ACOA and signed by numerous prominent organizations and individuals pointing to the danger of an African "Vietnam," and urging Congressional action to oppose U.S. covert actions in Angola. ACOA worked with the Washington Office on Africa on the legislation to stop intervention and co-sponsored a congressional briefing and a rally on the Capitol steps January 19th.

ACOA Executive Director George Houser delivered testimony on the need for an Africa-centered policy on Angola before the Senate Subcommittee on Africa in early 1976, and prepared an editorial comment for *The Christian Century* magazine on the same topic. His article was syndicated in numerous newspapers.

### Former Portuguese Colonies

In addition to Angola, ACOA gave special attention to significant developments with the other former Portuguese colonies:

- George Houser and Ray Gould spent much of February and March visiting Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. George Houser went on to Angola for two weeks to meet with leaders of the transitional government.
- Paul Irish represented ACOA at the independence ceremonies for Mozambique in June. ACOA was one of the few American organizations to be invited to Mozambique. Paul was able to discuss a number of projects which The Africa Fund aids.
- In October, George Houser visited Mozambique at the invitation of the new government. He was able to visit agricultural, medical and educational projects in different areas. For many years, both ACOA and The Africa Fund have provided assistance to such projects.
- In New York, ACOA sponsored a reception in honor of the Mozambique delegation to the United Nations,

as well as a meeting in celebration of Mozambique independence.

- ACOA also arranged a meeting of an MPLA delegation with Congressional leaders, and set up public meetings in New York.

### **Corporate Involvement in South Africa**

In the past decade, American corporate investment in South Africa has increased to over \$1,500,000,000. Such investment does not lead to change but supports the apartheid government. We believe corporate investment results in pressure upon the State Department to ally the U.S. with racist South Africa in its efforts to maintain white supremacy against the African people.

As part of the ACOA effort to secure corporate disengagement, ACOA President William Booth testified at hearings of the Washington, D.C. Council of Churches initiated to investigate the role in South Africa of four companies: IBM, Control Data, ITT and Motorola.

Following their study, the churches initiated a boycott of the products of these corporations and called on the D.C. City Council to take similar action. Judge Booth and Research Director Jennifer Davis both testified at a second set of Washington hearings organized by the City Council.

Ms. Davis also testified before City Council hearings in Gary, Indiana involving the same four corporations. The Council, over a veto from Mayor Richard Hatcher, adopted a similar boycott policy for city purchases. ACOA research helped target the companies and established the case against them, showing how their provision of capital and technology played a vital role in areas such as population surveillance, weapons development and nuclear capability.

In May, Judge Booth challenged ITT's South Africa operations at the annual stockholders meeting in Durham, N.C. A joint letter from Judge Booth and the Rev. Sterling Cary (past president of the National Council of Churches) secured the support of prominent black Americans for a church shareholder initiative in opposition to IBM's South African contracts.

ACOA gave wide circulation to background materials on IBM's involvement in South Africa and the continuing contract of The Southern Company to import coal from South Africa. Executive Associate Paul Irish attended a meeting of over 200 activists in Atlanta to form a Southwide Coalition to Stop South African Coal. He also participated, both from the floor of the annual shareholder's meeting, and at a meeting with top management organized by Timothy Smith, director of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility and ACOA Board Member, in protest of Union Carbide's continuing importation of Rhodesian chrome. ACOA assisted groups at East Coast ports mobilizing longshoremen to refuse to offload Rhodesian goods.

### **South Africa Advertisements in the New York Times**

The case against the *New York Times* for carrying job advertisements from South Africa which discriminate against black Americans entered a new round in 1975. The state's highest court will now consider an appeal by ACOA and the City Human Rights Commission. Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark has joined the

lawyers working on the case, including ACOA board members Peter Weiss and Michael Davis, and Douglas Wachholz of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

### **Namibian Seal Skins**

ACOA is suing the federal government for allowing the importation from Namibia of seal skins used to make luxury furs. Leonard Meeker of the Center for Law and Social Policy is seeking a permanent injunction against the trade, while ACOA board member Goler Butcher and Michael Peay of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights are contesting an application by the importer before the Commerce Department. They won a victory temporarily halting the trade in February 1976 when the State Department upheld our contention that the furs should not be imported due to South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia.

### **South African Airways**

In 1975, ACOA went back into federal court to stop South African Airways flights in the U.S., charging that the Civil Aeronautics Board had not considered the evidence of racial discrimination in the airline's operations. This case is being handled by Roderic Boggs of the Washington chapter of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

### **Cultural Protest**

ACOA's Ray Gould mobilized many important Americans (including: Marcia Ann Gillespie, editor of *Essence* magazine; Joan Sandler, director of the Black Theater Alliance; Ann Early, director of Writers in Residence; Robert Browne, director of the Black Economic Research Center; Congressman Charles Diggs, former chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa; and Frederick O'Neal, president of Actors Equity) to protest a visit by The Supremes singing group to South Africa in the fall. A cover story, editorial and cartoon appeared in the *Amsterdam News*, the nation's largest black weekly newspaper, based upon an ACOA news release. Perhaps in response to this pressure, the Supremes condemned conditions of Africans, their own status as "honorary whites," and the segregated audiences and were expelled by the white authorities. No doubt their experience will give others pause.

A number of entertainers joined ACOA's "We Say No To Apartheid" pledge not to go to South Africa until all the people can enjoy the cultural advantages of that country. These included Sammy Davis, Jr.; Richard Roundtree; Victor Borge; and Diahann Carol.

### **Africa Defense and Aid Fund**

ACOA provided modest, yet often critical, emergency assistance to political refugees in grave need in Africa. One example was emergency humanitarian assistance to 50 Namibians stranded in Botswana. We also provided help with the expenses of African liberation movement representatives in the U.S.

The Defense and Aid Fund also provided legal assistance to two Zimbabweans arrested in Delaware in June. The two were arrested and manhandled by police, apparently for entering a "white" restaurant. One, Synos Mangazva, a Ph.D. candidate, was hurled through a plate

glass door after asking why he and Tapson Mawere, a Zimbabwe liberation movement representative, were refused service. Both were charged with a number of offenses.

ACOA arranged for lawyers and issued news releases and bulletins to concerned individuals. ACOA President, Judge William Booth, and Board Member William Johnston testified as character witnesses. Mr. Mawere was acquitted. Although Mr. Mangazva was acquitted of the charge of public intoxication, he was convicted of resisting arrest, offensive touching, and disorderly conduct, but ACOA's assistance helped prevent a jail term for these exiles from Rhodesian racism. ACOA covered the fine involved.

## Washington Activities

ACOA and the boards of six Protestant churches jointly sponsor the Washington Office on Africa, which represents our aims to the Congress and in other ways in Washington. The Washington Office issues periodic bulletins on legislation and quarterly background notes on Africa and the Washington scene.

Early in 1975, the White House announced the nomination of Nathaniel Davis, former Ambassador to Guatemala, and then to Chile (during the period of the coup of Allende), to head the Africa Bureau of the State Department. William Bowdler, Davis' successor in Guatemala, was appointed Ambassador to South Africa. The Washington Office and ACOA worked to oppose the confirmation of this "coup team." Through press releases and bulletins, ACOA took the initiative in a campaign against confirmation. This position was adopted by the Organization of African Unity, the Congressional Black Caucus and key newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. Peter Weiss, testifying for ACOA, asked the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to reject the appointments. What was considered by some to be a routine personnel shift became the focus of a significant debate over the Ford Administration policy toward Africa. Davis' appointment was confirmed but he resigned in August over differences with Kissinger on Angola.

The Washington Office continued the effort in the Congress to restore U.S. compliance with the U.N.-voted sanctions against Rhodesia by stopping the importation of chrome. The effort achieved great support but was not finally successful.

Both Jennifer Davis and George Houser provided testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings. Mr. Houser provided the Committee with an historical overview and analysis of events in southern Africa, while Ms. Davis provided the Committee with evidence of continued U.S. violations of its arms embargo against South Africa, documenting the dangerous flow of aircraft, nuclear and electronics technology.

## Conferences and Seminars

The change in policy in Portugal stimulated a growing number of conferences and seminars concerned with analyzing its implications. Mr. Houser participated in a Symposium on South Africa sponsored by the Johnson Foundation in Racine, Wisconsin in April. A few days later, he delivered a principal address at a conference at

Temple University on "The United States and Human Rights in Southern Africa."

ACOA played an active role in organizing a conference of more than 30 groups working on southern African issues at Madison, Wisconsin in the fall. Ms. Davis delivered a keynote address. Every section of the country was represented at the three-day conference to develop better working linkages. ACOA serves on the newly formed steering committee of the Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa, to coordinate information, campaigns and strategy.

ACOA staff and board members spoke before numerous rallies, churches, university and community forums on Angola, and gave many radio and newspaper interviews.

## The Africa Fund

The Africa Fund is an independent, tax-exempt associate of ACOA which supports schools, hospitals, medical and social services in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde Islands. Africa Fund also aids those from South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) who have been the victims of political persecution through education and family assistance, legal defense and refugee aid. It provides research and literature on economic, social and political developments in southern Africa.

## Publications

In 1975, ACOA distributed pamphlets and materials prepared by its associate, The Africa Fund, as well as by many other groups.

A major publication during the year was "*Mozambique: Dream the Size of Freedom*," by George Houser and Herb Shore. The 68-page illustrated booklet documents the history of Portuguese colonialism and Frelimo's long struggle.

Jennifer Davis edited a study of Japan's economic links with South Africa, "*From Tokyo to Johannesburg*," by Yoko Kitazawa. This 48-page document was published by the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility.

Other publications include:

"*National Security Study Memorandum #39 and the Future of United States Policy Toward Southern Africa*" by Edgar Lockwood, Director of the Washington Office on Africa. This article, critically evaluating the Nixon Administration's secret policy study that guides U.S. Africa policy, was printed in *Issue* magazine.

"*Southern Africa: Detente or Prologue to Struggle?*" by George Houser appeared in *Christianity and Crisis*. It is a 9-page evaluation of rapid changes in southern Africa generated by the coup in Portugal, the transition to independence of the former territories and the prospects for developments in Rhodesia, Namibia, and South Africa.

"*Prospects for Change: Apartheid and the African Worker*" published by the U.N. and written by Dr. Susan G. Rogers, Africa Fund research associate, is a 6-page study of current conditions for Africans.

"*Migrant Labor*" by Sheena Duncan of the Black Sash is a concise 2-page look at the mechanics of South Africa's labor system from the inside.

"*Message to the Nation*," Mozambique President Samora Machel's inaugural address. It is the first in a planned series of "Voices of African Liberation."

"A Report on Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde and Angola" by George Houser, carried in *Christianity and Crisis*, is a 38-page report based on observation of a month-long visit to these three countries.

"Angola in Perspective" by George Houser is a 6-page background for understanding the current situation in that country.

"Continuing Escalation in the Angola Crisis" by Prof. Sean Gervasi is a 6-page report on the South African invasion of Angola and U.S. cooperation based upon U.S. Defense Department sources. ACOA publically released this information at a press conference in December.

"Angola Chronology" is 6 pages of critical background facts.

The Fund has continued to update and expand the number of publications circulated and distributed, producing two new issues of the "Southern Africa Literature List 1975." The Fund also regularly mails United Nations publications on southern Africa to hundreds of contacts.

### Board Additions

Nine new members were elected to the Executive Board of ACOA this year, and should add to its effectiveness and strength:

1. Elombe Brath is a producer of WABC-TV's black public affairs program, "Like It Is."
2. Goler Teal Butcher is a partner in the law firm of White, Fine and Verville, and former chief counsel to the House Subcommittee on Africa.
3. Michael Davis is an attorney with Rogers, Hoge & Hill, and the Center for Constitutional Rights.
4. Moe Foner is executive secretary of District 1199, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees.
5. Collin Gonze is assistant director, Department of International Affairs of the United Auto Workers.
6. David Lampel is director of the news department at radio station WLIB in New York.
7. Oseye Mchawi is an organizer of the Committee to Aid African Independence.
8. Herbert Shore is consultant to the U.S. Commission for UNESCO, and author of a biography of Eduardo Mondlane, the first president of Frelimo.
9. Robert Van Lierop is currently producing a film on Mozambique and is formerly director of the Africa Information Service.

During the year, Frederick A.O. Schwarz, Jr. took a temporary leave from the board to become chief counsel to the select committee of the U.S. Senate investigating the intelligence agencies.

### Financial Results

AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA		
	INCOME	EXPENSES
Program Projects	\$ 85,318	\$73,179
*Research, Education and Literature	456	697
Administration (Salaries, rent, utilities)	16,917	21,362
Security deposits and advance payments	—	6,791
	<u>\$102,691</u>	<u>\$102,029</u>

In addition, the Africa Defense and Aid Fund of the ACOA raised and spent more than \$11,000 for emergency assistance to liberation movements and their representatives.

ACOA carries a deficit from the previous year of \$16,041.

\*The major portion of research and literature distribution is now provided by The Africa Fund.

THE AFRICA FUND	INCOME	EXPENSES
Program Projects	\$ 62,968	\$ 62,112
Research, Education and Literature	22,881	41,921
Membership and Special Contributions	54,527	19,178
Administration	1,482	7,876
	<u>\$141,858</u>	<u>\$131,077</u>

### The American Committee on Africa

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