

Chicago Committee to Defend the Bill of Rights  
189 W. Madison St., Room 811 - DE 2-7142

Oct. 3, 1961

MEMORANDUM: To Members of the National Committee to Abolish the Un-American Activities Committee and local Council leaders

In view of the serious leadership problems created by Frank Wilkinson's imprisonment and Aubrey Williams' illness, there is grave danger that the work of the National Committee will lose its momentum and sense of planning unless immediate steps are taken to strengthen its coordination and collective work.

I am therefore taking the liberty of proposing a number of concrete organizational steps and some immediate work projects which must receive consideration before further time is lost. These proposals are the product of exchanges of views and discussions with leaders of the Abolition movement from coast to coast. The suggestion that I undertake the responsibility of initially projecting these questions in the role of a coordinator came from the initiative of the Citizens Committee to Preserve American Freedoms in Los Angeles and is made with the agreement of the two functioning National Officers, Robert Kenny, Treasurer and Dorothy Marshall, Secretary.

The special need for defining organizational and policy-making procedure and responsibility arises in part from the past informal structure of the NCAUAC, which depended to such a large extent upon the personal leadership of Frank Wilkinson and Aubrey Williams.

I. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:

1. The officers and members of the National Committee are as follows (National Committee memorandum dated August 15, 1960) :

Chairman: Aubrey Williams (inactive because of illness); Field Representative: Frank Wilkinson (leave of absence because of prison sentence); Secretary: Dorothy Marshall; Treasurer: Robert Kenny.

Members of the National Committee: James Imbrie (New Jersey); Harvey O'Connor (Rhode Island); Florence Luscomb (Mass.); Otto Nathan (New York); William T. Baird (Illinois); Bernard Weller (New York); William H. Melish (New York); Russ Nixon (Washington, D.C.).

2. The following persons shall receive all communications of the National Committee, shall be invited to meetings of the National Committee and shall be consulted for advisory opinions: Sandra Rosenblum, New York Youth Council); Lee Ball (NY Council and MFSA); Alexander Meiklejohn (Berkeley, Calif); Bert Edises (Bay Area Committee, Oakland, Calif.) ; Sarah Crome (Bay Area Committee, San Francisco); Jean Wilkinson (Los Angeles); Anne Braden (SCEF, Louisville, Ky.); John A. Bjorklund (Wisconsin Committee, Milwaukee, Wisc.); Burton White and Irving Hall (Bay Area Student Com-  
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mittee, Berkeley, Calif); Selma Rein (Washington Committee, Washington, D.C.); Ron Dorfman (Midwest Student Civil Liberties Coordinating Committee, Chicago); Sylvia Crane (New York); Sam Kenin, (Philadelphia); Willard Uphaus (Mass.); Richard Criley (Chicago Com. to Defend the Bill of Rights, Chicago).

(Additions to this advisory list will be welcomed)

3. A coordinating committee pro tem shall be established in Chicago, consisting of William T. Baird, Richard Criley and a third member to be designated by the Chicago Committee DBR. This coordinating committee shall be responsible for the coordination of work projects, the organization of exchange of opinion, and the polling of the opinions of National Committee members. It will work under the direction of the functioning national officers.

## II. IMMEDIATE NATIONAL PROJECTS:

A. National Speaking Tour. It is proposed that Burton White, past chairman of the Bay Area Student Committee to Abolish HUAC, undertake a national speaking tour of about two months duration. He was one of the leaders and initiators of the anti-HUAC movement in the Bay Area and played a part in the San Francisco demonstrations; he has appeared on radio and television and in many meetings and debates on the West Coast. While it is suggested that he be free to speak under the auspices of numerous organizations, both student and non-student, it is proposed that the National Committee undertake to coordinate the tour and provide financial assistance.

1. Finances: Funds (designated by the donor for such purposes) are available to the NC to pay Burton White a salary of \$250.00 per month while he is on tour, and to advance initial funds for air fare. It is proposed that travel costs be assessed proportionately to the areas visited, money being raised at local meetings for this purpose; surplus funds from meetings to be kept by local groups.

### 2. Objectives:

- a. To stimulate student efforts for abolition of the HUAC and to encourage the organization of student civil liberties groups.
- b. To help launch a national campaign directed to Congress for the achievement of a maximum vote against HUAC appropriations in January 1962.
- c. To further the collection of signatures and other support for executive clemency for Carl Braden and Frank Wilkinson.
- d. To stimulate the "abolition" efforts of non-student civil liberties groups.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COORDINATION OF TOUR:

Midwest - Chicago Committee to DBR and Midwest Student Coordinating Committee  
New York City - New York Council to Abolish HUAC and N.Y. Youth Council

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East Coast (exclusive of NY City) - Sylvia Crane

South - Anne Braden ; West Coast - Los Angeles & Bay Area Committees

4. Time Schedule: Speaking dates from second week of October to mid-December. Midwest dates set for November 6 - 17.

B. LITERATURE: (Many of these proposals are tentative and subject to change and further suggestion. Where responsibility for preparation of literature is not indicated, the assignments are to be worked out from Chicago.)

1. Collections of Resolutions and Editorials. To be revised and brought up to date by the Los Angeles Committee; to be used for presentation to Congress as was done in 1961 and for other general uses.

2. Irving Hall Article on the Meisenbach Case reprinted from The Californian. 15,000 copies of these are reported to be available from the Southern Farmer Press at \$5.00 per M. Should we consider printing additional copies?

3. "Behind the Bars for the First Amendment" (revised and brought up to date). Bill Price and Harvey O'Connor have agreed to make necessary revisions.

4. "My Beliefs and My Associations, etc." (on Braden case) is available from the Southern Conference Educational Fund, 822 Perdido Street, New Orleans 12, La.

5. Full Text of Braden and Wilkinson Dissents in pamphlet form.

Question: Should the majority opinion also be included in an alternate edition?

6. Text of the Ad-Hoc Clemency Petition for Carl Braden and Frank Wilkinson with partial list of signers (perhaps in similar form to reprinting of New York Post Abolition ad,) Note: The total listing of over 2,500 is too numerous to reprint.

7. Brochure on National Student Congress based upon text of civil liberties resolutions and Capital Times news stories.

8. A Basic low cost piece for quantity distribution on subject of 1962 HUAC appropriations. The Nation Magazine has granted permission for reprint of an article which may form part of such a piece.

C. Preparations for second session of 87th Congress in January 1962.

1. Memorandum to be prepared with factual information to serve as guide for selection of concentration districts and a nationally coordinated plan of work.

III. NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING.

It is proposed that the meeting of the National Committee be held on Saturday, November 18th, in New York City.

A. Attendance - It is suggested that in addition to the National Committee members and the supplemental list contained in this memo, that additional  
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individuals be invited as was done in the two previous meetings of the National Committee. Such people will come primarily from New York and vicinity. Suggestions of persons to be invited would be welcome.

B. Proposals for Agenda.

1. Report of progress of national tour: Burton White.
2. Report on proposals for congressional campaign: Russ. Nixon.
3. Information report on executive clemency petitions sponsored by Ad-Hoc Committee: Clarence Pickett (if he can attend) and Sylvia Crane.
4. Literature, publicity, and related questions.
5. Organizational problems and new additions to the National Committee.

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As these problems, while discussed in a number of areas, are unofficial at this time, it is particularly important that you indicate your general approval or disapproval and submit your suggestions and comments. For National Committee members your cooperation in this respect is particularly urgent. Also please indicate, if possible, whether you might attend the proposed meeting of the National Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard L. Criley, Secretary  
Chicago Committee to Defend the Bill of Rights.