

MINUTES

Summary Minutes: Archives Libraries Committee Business Meeting, April 4, 1986, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.

(Complete minutes will appear in *Africana Libraries Newsletter*.)

There were twenty eight people present; Doris M. Hull, Chair, presided.

Reports were presented by the Conover/Porter Sub-Committee, the editor of the *Africana Libraries Newsletter*, the coordinator of the Small Countries Project and the Nominating Committee, the chair of the Bibliography Sub-Committee and the chair of the Cataloging Sub-Committee. Trip and institutional reports were also given. The topics of liaison with museums and opportunities to ship books to Africa were discussed.

The 1987 Spring Meeting will be hosted by the University of California at Berkeley on April 2-4, 1987.

(Submitted by Victoria K. Evalds, Secretary, ALC/ASA.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

REFUGEES IN AFRICA

Recently the editors received several letters concerning the plight of refugees in Africa. These letters are brought to the attention of the Membership because they address an appeal on behalf African scholars that their American colleagues be made aware of the ongoing plight of African scholars who, in the face of political or other types of repression, have sought refuge in Africa and/or abroad.

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to you and your association on behalf of Prof. Mambo-Mbili Ntamunozwa who used to teach at the University of Lubumbashi in Zaire but who was obliged to flee his country and who lives now with his wife and three small daughters in a refugee camp run by the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees in Lusaka, Zambia.

As a member of Amnesty International's Urgent Action network I write monthly letters on behalf of prisoners of conscience, and last year I wrote to the government of Zaire which had imprisoned Prof. Ntamunozwa for allegedly advocating a strike at his university for better working conditions. Strikes in Zaire are legal; however, he and others who advocated peacefully a strike were sentenced to serve long prison terms. After an international outcry, he was released but barred from the University of Lubumbashi, he and his family were placed under surveillance, and he was denied a passport. Thereupon he fled to nearby Zambia.

He turned to me as one of the writers on his behalf and asked for help. Amnesty International members usually do not get involved in aiding people who were released, and this is the first time in many years that I received such an appeal. However, now I feel obliged to do what I can for this man and his family.

His situation is desperate; he needs financial aid, and above all, he needs to leave Zambia and find work. In other words, he needs a kind of help which an individual person cannot provide. Would it be possible for your organization to do something for him? If there is, in any meaningful sense of the word, such a thing as an "international community of scholars" we should not let this man and his family languish as a displaced person without a future in a refugee camp. He has not committed any crime beyond the peaceful expression of his views which should be a universal human right.

I am aware, of course, of the academic market being depressed and of the language difficulty since French is the language of Zaire. However, similar obstacles were overcome with ingenuity and good will in the 1930s when this country's universities took in scholars fleeing from Hitler and Fascism. Then, it took for each family an individual act of Congress under an individual Congressional sponsor to enter our country.

I also wrote to the Linguistic Society of America and to the MLA, but anything you and your colleagues could do would be wonderful! Prof. Ntamunozza's address is: Prof. Mambo-Mbili Ntamunozza, c/o UNHCR, Great North Rd., P.O. Box 32542, Lusaka, Zambia, Africa.

Sincerely,
Sabine D. Jordan, Ph.D.

(Ms. Jordan's original letter was addressed to Prof. Kenneth Harrow of the African Literature Association. A copy of Mr. Ntamunozza's c.v. and of the original Amnesty International appeal is on file at the ASA headquarters.)

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for your letter of 27 March regarding our request that an advertisement be placed in the ASA Newsletter concerning Dr. (Mbagus V.) Murinda's need for employment in Africa in his field. However, it might be that the ASA Newsletter could consider the idea of a special arrangement for such cases as he represents.

There are a large number of refugee scientists whom I know of who are unemployed, living on social security in Europe or wielding their hoes in camps in Africa. When one considers what this means in terms of waste of the investment in education for Africa, one is moved to ask why the situation has gone unnoticed for so long. The IDRC did fund a project which attempted to document the numbers, but it was not sufficiently global to raise attention and as far as I know was never published. One such person, Elias Habte-Selassie, is an agriculturalist, a lawyer, and recently completed an M.A. in Development Studies, The Hague. He has been some eleven years living on social security in Holland. We were able--with some help from MP's--to get him to Oxford for a month as a visiting Fellow. He has made a collection of refusals to job applications from voluntary agencies. His own situation has improved in that finally he has received citizenship in Holland and is presently a visiting professor at Berkeley for this semester. I could go on with case after case.

Although not all refugees are African, more than half of them are. If members of the ASA were alerted to their plight it might be that not only voluntary agencies but UN organizations could be persuaded by individual and collective pressure to