Friday, Oct. 3, 1975

STATUS REPORT TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING GROUP
OF THE WORKING CONFERENCE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

Things are looking pretty good on all fronts.

1. Speakers. Ambassador Salim Salim has accepted but
will not know until the last moment whether he will be
able to come. In view of the strong possibility that he might
not be able to make it, we have asked Ben Magubane, whom we also
asked to be a general resource person to the conference, to
be prepared to fill the gap in the event Ambassador Salim
can't make it.

We had a great deal of trouble finding a speaker for
the situation in the U. S. whom everyone knew and agreed on.
We ended up asking Michele Russell of Detroit to speak. She
made a deep impression on people who heard her at the Yellow
Springs Feminist/ Socialist Conference and at the Detroit
Theology in the Americas conference. She comes at things
from an anti-imperialist and socialist perspective. She
analyzes how the imperial system affects the lives of blacks
and women. She is building a community college in Detroit

Jennie Davis accepted, to begin the process, so that
her lucid and careful analysis has been ours from the start.

2. Registrations. We have registrations from 35 groups,
who have named 71 delegates and made requests for 21
additional persons over the 3-delegate limit.
SWAPO, ZAPU, ZANU, PAC and MPLA will each send an official
delegate. This means that we are pretty much at the 100
person limit we set. It means also that everyone who wants
to come can come if they were included on the form, as
deleagtes or additional delegates. We have also had a number
of requests for people to hitch on in one way or in another
to a delegation. We have discouraged this practice since it
defeats the idea of a conference of genuine group delegations.

Summary:

- 71 delegates
- 21 additional delegates
- 3 speakers
- 1 resource person (Ben Magubane)
- 5 liberation movement representatives

Total: 101
3. Funds. We are very grateful to the various churches and persons for responding so well to our requests for funds; but we are still tight. We have collected $3200, at this point to help with transportation and accommodation for guests and participants. It looks right now as if we will need about $1600 to fund our guests and that leaves us $1600 or so to deal with scholarship assistance. This is a bit tight; we would need about $200-300 more to meet all requests. So we are having to make some judgments as to priorities: i.e. we fully funded groups who were obviously struggling not to ask for much, we fully funded travel of one delegate from each requesting group, we fully funded travel for two delegates from groups who have leadership roles in the conference, where assistance was requested. Additional funds can probably be generated: if guests will put up in private homes rather than hotels. We are encouraging them to do so, but if they wish hotel accommodations, we will have to meet that request. It may be that Africa Fund can pick up Jenny Davis' travel; George Houser is looking into that. It may be that some UCC body can pick up the Tougaloo, Miss. delegation's freight.

4. Questions we answered because we had to. We have had a small number of requests from people who write or who are with the media to come to the conference: Marty Griffin from Public Radio (All Things Considered); a South African who writes freelance things, etc. Our position has been that this is a closed conference; that press may not come as such; that it is intended for work and not for publicity. The question of AFRICA NEWS arises. How do we justify their coming when others are excluded? It seems to us that it is justified on the ground that AFRICA NEWS is not a commercial venture but a movement service which happens to take the form of commercial news service in order to inform and educate. In this case, it seems to us that AFRICA NEWS should write stories about the conference but should rather participate like any other group in the work being discussed.

5. There will be a meeting of the planning group on Friday evening, at a time and place which we will inform you about early next week. In Madison.

6. We have set up the following as pairings for moderating sessions with liberation movements:

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Trust this is o. k. We welcome criticism. We think things are coming along well. THANK YOU MACSA for your work.
7. We would like to discuss with the planning group the manner in which the question of national co-ordination is handled within the agenda framework which you already have. We would like to do this on Friday night. Be thinking about these points:

How might this be handled in the introduction to the conference?
How can we best make a transition from workshop discussion to the open-agenda proposal stage on Monday morning?
Would you be open to the idea of making the report back from workshops session one and one half hours long and having 3/4 s of an hour of that time devoted to pulling out the national co-ordination recommendations from the workshops?

Ted, Chris, Ken