

RE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN A.N.C. LEGAL GROUP.

1. The visit of comrades Ted Pakane and Sibongile Mula to Maputo has given us a chance to make concrete preliminary plans for the establishment of an A.N.C. Legal Group (the name at this stage to be left open) based in Lusaka.
2. The comrades arrived at a time when I was extremely busy with University work, but we tried to organise ourselves as professionally as possible, arranged a number of formal working sessions, and kept minutes of our discussions.
3. These minutes should already be in the possession of the S.G., and the purpose of this memorandum is to give an overview of the discussions and make a few observations of my own about the kind of work I feel the two comrades concerned should do.
4. The basic objective was to create a small ANC Legal Centre under HQ control, to serve as a base for A.N.C. legal work, including the creation of a wide ranging A.N.C. Lawyers Section involving A.N.C. legal workers in various parts of the world. Our concept was to have a proper equipped library of legal documents and a small staff of full-time workers who would:
  - a) Collect the texts which the leadership could consult when planning visits to the O.A.U., UNO, ILO etc; or when dealing with Bantustans, Sactions etc
  - b) Collaborate directly with the International Dept. in the preparation of papers for International meetings;
  - c) Attend such meetings in a support role, and represent the ANC at international lawyers conference;
  - d) Help prepare ANC internal statutes when required;
  - e) Be responsible for the organisation of the broad ANC professional body, which would keep all ANC legal workers wherever they might be directly in touch with the organisation and the struggle.
  - f) Publish an ANC Legal Bulletin to carry information and perspectives useful to the struggle.
  - g) Maintain contact with professional lawyers who can handle concrete problems (contracts, little deeds etc.) when necessary.
5. The comrades were at first uncertain about their capacity to fulfill these objectives without first receiving further training in Maputo, but finally we were all agreed that they should start working as soon as possible under the control of the S.G.'s office, advancing step by step, and periodic meetings in Maputo to review the situation, the progress and the problems.
6. A major project we had in mind was the holding of a workshop (or Seminar) for about 10 days in the period July - August 1982 in collaboration with the International Department.

If the idea is approved, planning would have to begin immediately.

7. The two comrades concerned have a good political legal background for the required work; they appeared to have good moral values and the general intellectual capacity that will be necessary. What they lack is experience in this kind of work, and the professionalism that is essential to good legal work. Under appropriate guidance, they should be able to acquire both. It will be especially important for them to immerse themselves in South African (especially ANC) legal materials, and to become familiar with the legal systems of Zambia and other ex-British colonies in which the impact of British-type legal thinking is still strong. Especially, they will have to work at their legal vocabulary in the English language - this is not just a question of words, but of concepts. Comrade Sibongile in particular will have to read and write as much as possible so as to give her documents the precision and accuracy required. We did not discuss this at the time, but possibly she should be considered for a special one - year course in an English language University.

Secondly, the comrades will need an appropriate venue for work which cannot always be done in the hurly burly of a general office.

Thirdly, they will need appropriate attire - I would suggest safari suits for comrade Ted, plus ordinary suit for special occasions; and appropriate dress for comrade Sibongile.

Fourthly, comrade Sibongile struck me as a serious person with a major contribution to make, but lacking in the composure necessary for this type of work.

Thus on one occasion she rather rudely said she was not going to attend a meeting because she was too upset about her missing suitcase. Later, when she left my flat to find other accommodation - a group of university people from Salisbury had arrived to stay in my place - she left no address, made not attempt to contact me or to get the papers needed in Lusaka. When we met at a December 16 meeting, she told me, again in an aggressive way, that I

.....3/

I could have found out where she was staying, that she had no transport etc. etc. I mention this in some detail not simply because I found this inconsistent with the behaviour of a comrade, a colleague and a house-guest, but because it would be a grave defeat in anyone doing ANC legal work to speak and behave like this, Lawyers are entrusted and negotiators, and this type of subjective and emotional behaviour is totally inappropriate.

8. Finally, we agreed on a number of concrete training ideas: a course in typing (absolutely essential), a course in the French language; attending a Seminar in Salisbury in February (see documents enclosed) etc.

Yours in the struggle,  
Albie Sacks.