

ture of "Communism" customarily presented by Liberal spokesmen. Our criticism was directed not at liberalism as such but at the illiberal and obsessive anti-Communism of that Party, which vitiates it as an effective force against Nationalist tyranny. We did not suggest that the Liberal Party should undertake acts of violence, but asked that it should at least have the decency to refrain from criticising and sniping at those brave spirits who are hitting back against the ceaseless and ever-growing Government violence against the African and other oppressed people.

The burning issue in South Africa is not Communism but the rampant Nazi tyranny of Verwoerd and Vorster, which if allowed to develop unchecked will submerge the Liberal Party just as it has already outlawed the Communist Party, the African National Congress, the Pan-African Congress and the Congress of Democrats. It can only be checked if all democrats, Communist and non-Communist alike, stand together to bar the road. By feeding the flames of anti-Communist hysteria among Whites, the Liberal Party is, objectively speaking, hastening its own destruction.

## **Hitting back**

The democratic masses of South African people are not taking the blows of the Nationalist Party ruling clique lying down. They are courageously and resourcefully hitting back, in a variety of ways. They are taking full advantage of whatever slender possibilities of legal political action still remain. The warmest tribute must be paid to the African people, at Langa and elsewhere, who hold mass meetings under the noses of the sten guns and batons of the police and pass militant resolutions demanding the release of Nelson Mandela and the leaders under house arrest, condemn the outrageous Government plan to expel all Africans from the Western Cape, and insist on the people's right to defend themselves against violence.

At the same time the underground forces of people's resistance are gaining strength and consolidating their forces. Despite the conditions of terror prevailing, both the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party have succeeded in holding national conferences—the former in Bechuanaland and the latter inside South Africa itself. The greatest spirit of confidence and militancy manifested itself at these conferences.

The S.A.C.P. conference was a historic landmark in the development of the Communist movement and the building of a

united front of national liberation for victory in the national democratic revolution against the special type of South African colonialism. The Conference considered and approved a detailed Report from the Central Committee, decided on policy and practical tasks for the period ahead, and elected a new Central Committee. It also adopted—after a thorough discussion at Conference, following months of prior discussion among members, workers and democrats throughout the country—a new Programme of the Party.

**This remarkable document—the full text of which is published in this issue of “The African Communist”—embodies forty years of the experience of the Communist movement in South Africa, enriched by the creative thought of Marxism-Leninism throughout the world, as expressed in the famous Statement of 81 Communist and Workers’ Parties of December 1960, and other historic documents. “South Africa’s Road to Freedom” is bound to have a profound and ever-growing impact on the development of political thought and movements in this country and even beyond our borders.**

Another way in which the revolutionary people of South Africa are expressing their resistance to the Verwoerd-Vorster terror is through the activities of the military-type organisation Umkonto We Sizwe. Over forty acts of sabotage have taken place on the Witwatersrand industrial complex, in the Eastern and Western Cape, and in Natal during 1962. Despite the “death-for-sabotage” law passed by the Government, intensive police counter-measures and large rewards offered to informers, the acts are steadily increasing in scale, frequency and effectiveness.

True, the significance of these daring actions, at the present time, is mainly symbolic. They inspire a mood of confidence and militancy among the people, and help to destroy the picture of impregnable strength and stability which the Government is so laboriously attempting to present at home and abroad. But no illusions should be entertained that the revolutionary overthrow of the white supremacy state can be accomplished by such actions, considered in isolation. It is unlikely that Umkonto We Sizwe itself harbours any such illusions. It has announced that it supports the broad aims of the mass liberation movement, and has been established to enable the people to meet colonialist violence with an armed force of their own. If its present operations form part of a process of training and preparation for the building of a formidable military force, they take on an entirely new significance, whose importance should by no means be underestimated.