

military putsches in a number of African and Asian newly-independent countries. They seek to wipe out the gains of the Asian and African revolutions, to incite waves of anti-communist hysteria, and to re-establish in new forms colonial domination over the peoples who have won their independence. They threaten the world with the horrors of nuclear, gas and germ warfare.

The peoples are not submitting to these terroristic actions and threats. The heroic Vietnamese resistance is an inspiration to all freedom-loving people. In Angola, Mozambique and other countries, resolute patriots are carrying on an armed struggle for their national freedom. In all five continents fresh forces among the people are arising to struggle against imperialism and reaction, for peace, democracy, national independence and socialism.

In the process of this vital struggle which is determining the course of history, the anti-imperialist forces have a fundamental identity of interests and purposes; it is vital that they should combine their resources and evolve common strategies and initiatives. Our Party has consistently upheld the cause of the unity of all progressive anti-imperialist forces, and in the first instance of their revolutionary vanguard, the Communists. Only the imperialist enemies benefit from division in our ranks; the first to suffer are peoples such as ours, the victims of colonialist and fascist aggression and oppression. Hence, in the opinion of the South African Communist Party, the time is long overdue for the convocation of a meeting of all Communist and working class Parties with a view to further consolidating the anti-imperialist forces for meeting the new offensives launched by the imperialists.

The South African people are engaged in a life and death struggle against a most vicious form of racist colonialism which is resorting to terrorist, fascist methods against the democratic liberation movement. In cities and towns, raids by armed battalions of the police on African locations—the ghettos in which Africans are forced to live by the white man's laws—have become an almost daily occurrence. In these massive, military-type operations, hundreds of working people are arrested and flung into prisons, and the population subjected to indescribable brutalities.

Many opponents of apartheid from all racial groups, including progressive whites, are held in detention without trial in solitary confinement and subjected to barbarous forms of torture in attempts to force them to inform on their colleagues and comrades-in-arms. At this moment over 8,000 political prisoners are languishing behind prison bars serving sentences varying from three years to life imprisonment under the most savage conditions. At this very hour, one of the foremost leaders of the South African people and an eminent advocate,

Abram Fischer, is on trial on fifteen counts, including membership of the banned South African Communist Party and conspiracy to commit sabotage, which carries a possible death penalty. Judgement will be given on May 4th. From the dock Comrade Fischer gave a searing indictment of apartheid in South Africa and declared: 'My conscience does not permit me to obey laws which are wholly unrepresentative of three-quarters of the population.'

We consider it to be the duty of every progressive throughout the world to save this determined revolutionary who has devoted his whole life and energy to the cause of the liberation of South Africa from the hands of the fascist South African rulers. We therefore make an earnest appeal from the rostrum of this great Congress to all the progressive and democratic movements of the world to express their solidarity with Abram Fischer and the noble cause he stands for, and to demand his immediate release.

The South African fascist regime is a focus and stronghold of fascism and reaction in our continent and the world. It has illegally seized the mandated territory of South-West Africa; it is supporting the illegal Smith gang in Zimbabwe; it is a threat to the peace of Africa and the world. For these reasons it has rightly been made the object of international action designed to isolate it and to cut its lifelines with the imperialist countries which sustain it.

Our people deeply appreciate the consistent support of your Party for our struggle. Not only has the Soviet Union backed international action against apartheid; it has given valuable practical assistance to the fighting movement for national liberation. We know from our own experience that the C.P.S.U. is a sincere and reliable friend of the revolutionary movement against imperialism and colonialism.

We are confident that the delegates to your Congress will measure up to the great responsibility resting on them on this historic occasion. We are sure that, guided by the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism, your Congress will hammer out correct policies to meet the great problems of our times; that it will inspire the Soviet people to fresh advances in advancing the socialist economy; in strengthening Soviet democracy; in advancing towards Communism.

**Long live the Communist Party of the Soviet Union!
Long live Communism!**

With brotherly Communist greetings,

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY