

# **STRIVE FOR WORLD COMMUNIST UNITY**

*A Statement by the  
Central Committee of  
the South African  
Communist Party*

## **I. UNITY IS OUR DIRECT CONCERN**

FOR SOME TIME our Party has been gravely perturbed at the differences within the world Communist movement. The points in dispute have been multiplied and sharpened, and the methods of discussion have become intolerably acrimonious and uncomradely. In some fraternal Parties factions and breakaway groupings have resulted from differences in the world movement. Differences about Marxist theory have not been confined to the Communist Parties, but have spread into international organizations and gatherings of peace, labour, national liberation and other progressive movements embracing both Communists and non-Communists. Even State relations between socialist countries were affected, with serious effects on their economic development and endangering the solidarity of the socialist camp.

We cannot take a detached view of this problem. Our Party is taking part in a grim struggle against the fascist apartheid regime, known, hated and despised by the whole world. Our people have embarked on the path of armed resistance rather than submit to the tyranny and degradation of continued White minority domination; foremost leaders of the South African people are being arbitrarily arrested, tortured and murdered by the Verwoerd-Vorster dictatorship.

Our struggle against apartheid is not only of local, but also of crucial international importance. The fight against the special form of colonialism existing in South Africa is an integral part of the struggle for the liberation of the whole African continent from colonialism in all its forms: the continuing African Revolution for freedom, unity and rapid social progress. The fascist South African regime with its powerful military machine, built up with the aid of the imperialists, poses an urgent threat to African independence and security and to world

peace. Solidarity with the struggle against apartheid, the international isolation of the Verwoerd regime, and the severing of its links with imperialism which sustain it and enable it to continue its rule of oppression—these questions have become a focus of international attention, discussion and activity: a rallying point of the forces of peace, national liberation and socialism everywhere. Unity of the progressive forces of the world will hasten the liberation of our people. Disunity prolongs the agony of South Africa.

The heart and soul of the unity of the anti-imperialist forces, both on an international scale and within each country, is the Communist movement. Fruitless and protracted disputes among ourselves both distract us from our great common aims and retard the achievement of unity of all anti-imperialist forces. For that reason in particular we South African Communists are vitally concerned with the world unity of our movement. International Communist unity is a correct slogan, an essential for the security and progress of the socialist camp, the defence of peace and the advance of national liberation everywhere. For us South African Communists it is also an urgent practical necessity affecting our work in many different ways.

## **2. SOME OF THE PROBLEMS UNDER DISCUSSION**

In considering some of the specific problems under discussion, we are guided by our own independent judgment; by our understanding of Marxism-Leninism and our experience of forty-two years of struggle of our Party in extremely complicated and difficult conditions. Throughout the history of our Party we have been accused by the capitalists and others of being blind followers or agents of 'Moscow'. These were baseless and unworthy slanders. Communists in all countries have faced prison and death because they have the ability to think for themselves and the courage to say what they think. We supported the main lines of policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union because we considered they were correct, in the interests of the Soviet people, of the workers and oppressed people of our own country and of the whole world. We did not allow slander or persecution to deter us from expressing our views. In the same spirit we defended anti-imperialist struggles in all parts of the world, including the heroic Chinese revolution. History has vindicated the correctness of our understanding and judgment, on which we continue to rely today in considering various matters of international debate.

It is being suggested today that the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has abandoned revolutionary Marxism-Leninism in favour of revisionism, and that the policy of peaceful co-existence of states with different social systems involves capitulation

to imperialism and the abandonment of wars of national liberation. We do not believe these suggestions are in any way justified.

We considered, and still do, that the Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the Programme it adopted for the building of Communism, were outstanding contributions to the development of Marxist-Leninist theory. These conclusions are embodied in our own Programme, *The Road to South African Freedom*, which was adopted at our Fifth National Conference in 1962 after the fullest discussion among all of our members.

The policy of peaceful co-existence of states with different social systems, as the basic line of foreign policy of the socialist countries is not something new, that has been advanced in the past two or three years. It was put forward by Lenin, and it has been elaborated since the Twentieth Congress of the C.P.S.U. in present day conditions. This concept was approved in the clearest terms by the meetings of fraternal Parties in 1957 and 1960. Our own Party participated in, approved and endorsed these decisions, and carried them out in its practical work. In our view the peaceful resolution of the Cuban crisis and the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty on atomic tests are positive results of this concept and proof of its validity; they were events which lowered international tension and helped to prevent the imperialists from plunging the world into the ultimate horror and disaster of a general thermo-nuclear war.

We regard the Moscow Treaty as a positive achievement of the progressive forces all over the world, including South Africa, which have long been campaigning for the ending of nuclear tests. The treaty puts a stop to the dangerous contamination of the air and the oceans. It helps, and is a step forward in, our continuing struggle for the abandonment and destruction of all nuclear weapons, and for eventual general, complete and controlled disarmament. We vigorously condemn the French government which intends to go on with nuclear tests on the soil of our continent and elsewhere, poisoning the air we breathe. And we regret very much that the Chinese comrades, by belittling and attacking the Moscow Treaty, weaken the international exposure and isolation of French imperialism on this matter.

We South Africans, like all fighters for African freedom, are keenly conscious of the solidarity, the support both moral and practical, rendered to our struggle by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. We remember Suez; we remember Algeria; we remember the innumerable occasions when our cause has been championed by the socialist countries; we know of their unqualified backing for African freedom today. No sincere African patriot will ever forget these things. The plain facts of present-day history disprove any suggestion that the

Soviet Union, or the policy of peaceful co-existence, or the demand for disarmament hamper or retard the national liberation of colonial or formerly colonial peoples.

As stated in our Programme, universal disarmament would not only free our generation from the nightmare of a catastrophic nuclear war; it would also 'greatly assist the cause of national liberation by striking the arms from the hands of the imperialists'. It is not the African patriots, fighting an armed struggle with inferior weapons, who are adversely affected by our campaign for disarmament; it is the powerfully-armed enemies against whom they fight. It is the imperialists and the armament-manufacturers, in particular it is the Verwoerds, the Salazars, the Chiang Kai-Sheks and their like, who profit from international tension and the cold war. International tension and the cold war facilitate the continuing support of these condemned regimes by imperialism, on the grounds that they are 'bastions of the West, of anti-Communism'. Already a certain lessening of tension has brought about a situation where an international arms embargo on South Africa could be passed by the United Nations, and a further relaxation of cold war pressures could enable this embargo to be enforced. Ending the cold war would help towards the liquidation of the remaining islands of colonialism and fascism both through mass political struggle and armed revolution.

The national liberation movements of countries which are fighting colonialism and neo-colonialism and the heritage of colonialism in Africa, Asia and Latin America are not alone in their struggles. They share common aims and aspirations with the working people of the socialist countries and the developed capitalist countries. They have a common enemy: international imperialism. There is a profoundly necessary and healthy trend for all the progressive movements of all countries to merge in a mighty stream for peace and the liberation of all mankind. Our Party is vigorously opposed to any tendency to isolate our national liberation movements from their allies and brothers in the socialist countries, and from the militant labour and progressive anti-imperialist movements in the capitalist countries. Such tendencies are fraught with the gravest dangers.

We in South Africa have striven ceaselessly to preserve and uphold the character of our people's struggle for freedom as a united movement both of the oppressed non-whites and the progressive whites. It is not the Communists, not the national liberation leaders, but Verwoerd and his kind, enemies of mankind, who try to divide people on lines of 'colour'. They try to present a picture of an inevitable conflict, in South Africa and all over the world: not a conflict between workers and capitalists, between oppressor and oppressed, but solely

one between the so-called 'white' and 'non-white' races. It is the duty of all Communists and other anti-fascists, everywhere, to fight uncompromisingly against any such utterly false, dangerous and anti-human ideas.

### **3. DIVISIONS CAN AND MUST BE HEALED**

We believe strongly that the principles and interests which the world Communist movement and the socialist countries have in common are far more fundamental, permanent and binding than any temporary differences on day-to-day policy which have arisen or may again arise. We are sure that time will prove this view to be correct, and that these long term and fundamental factors will reassert themselves. We are vigorously opposed to any 'theory' that a split, an organizational cleavage in our movement is inevitable, necessary or 'healthy'. The only ones who would welcome such a theory are the imperialists, and those confused elements, unprincipled careerists and adventurers, Trotskyists and others who are always ready to profit by differences between serious revolutionaries in order to establish a platform for themselves.

Honest anti-imperialist fighters outside the ranks of the Communist movement, trade unionists, peace workers and others are dismayed by the sharp differences that have arisen in our movement and by the unseemly methods used to express them. They do not wish to be drawn into our dispute, and they demand urgently that we settle our problems among ourselves and get on with the innumerable practical tasks they and we have in common.

In the past, our great Communist movement has known many attempts to split it and to divert it from the path of Marxism-Leninism. Such attempts, for example, were made by elements like the anarchists and the Trotskyites. For some time they gained a certain amount of support among sections of the 'ultra-Left' middle-class intellectuals who always attach themselves to the revolutionary movement, and whose character was so brilliantly analysed by Lenin in his masterly essay: '*Left-Wing' Communism: An Infantile Disorder*'. Again, on many occasions, opportunist, Right-wing tendencies developed in the working class movement, especially in the imperialist countries, based on the sharing of a portion of the imperialists' super-profits with the 'aristocracy of labour' as the price for their support. But all these erroneous concepts and theories have been tested and proved false by the unfolding of history, they have been rejected by the revolutionary working class and the anti-imperialist masses. Marxism-Leninism has been proved by history to be the only correct revolutionary theory, and Communism

the only alternative to capitalism with its poverty, exploitation and oppression; its crises, chaos and wars.

Moreover, we Communists, coming from all over the world, and with widely differing conditions of life and work, have reached, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, an extraordinary degree of unanimity. We have agreed on the new problems with which life has faced us, on the characterization of our new epoch and on the most pressing and urgent problems of the world we live in today. The only differences which remain among us are those relating to the detailed interpretation of agreements we have already reached.

There is thus no basis, in theory or in fact, in differences of class or national interest or outlook, for any split within our ranks. It would be idle to pretend that serious divergencies have not already taken place, and serious damage caused, by disagreements among us Communists, and by uncomradely methods of debate. But the damage is not irreparable. Our pressing need for unity must override all our differences. The immediate problem is: what is the way out of this situation? How can we Communists heal the breaches and restore unity, comradeship and confidence among all of us?

We think the first step is to bring to an end the unseemly type of unrestrained 'all-in' controversy we have been witnessing, regarding any methods as permissible for 'victory'. In reality there can be no 'victory'; all the Communists must be the losers. There can be no possibility of calm and rational debate. Issues are multiplied out of reason; the air is filled with recriminations and angry insults; state relations between socialist countries deteriorate to the point where economic development and even security are adversely affected; our friends are repelled; destructive factional struggles spread inside every Party; only the enemy rejoices.

We do not think any useful purpose will be served by discussing who was to blame for this deplorable state of affairs, or who started it. What is important is to make a new start, a new drive for unity. And we are sure that the first essential step is to bring to an immediate end the period of debate of our differences outside the ranks of the Communist movement itself.

By this we do not mean, of course, that we should not discuss our differences; without discussion and interchange of views there can be no agreement. But we do mean that the discussion should be brought under control; that before further discussions we should have agreement on exactly what subjects are to be discussed, and by whom, and in what manner.

We are of the opinion, in general, that detailed discussions should be limited to those directly concerned. In particular we think that the

detailed interpretation of questions of Marxist-Leninist theory should never be submitted for debate or arbitration to non-Communists.

We think that all of us should scrupulously observe certain rules of comradely discussion. It is impermissible to ascribe views to others which they have not expressed, or which are derived by inferences and out-of-context quotations. Nor is it permissible to ascribe improper and un-Communist motives to comrades with whom one disagrees.

We think that questions regarding the internal policy of any Party should not as a rule be generally debated by fraternal Parties. If one Party has criticism to make of the internal policy of another it should be made in a private and comradely manner.

We would urge, with all due modesty, that on the basis of some such preliminary understanding, and on the basis of ending the public controversy, discussions should be held between the leaderships of the socialist countries as a means of preparing the way for a general discussion by the whole Communist movement. Without an understanding and discussions of this kind we do not think any useful purpose would be served by a big meeting of all the Parties at the present time.

For our part, we shall do all we can to strive for unity in the world Communist movement. We shall discuss every issue on its merits, regardless of who puts forward any viewpoint. And we shall contest vigorously any viewpoint which disunites, diverts or confuses the Communist and working class movement, the anti-colonialist African Revolution and the great struggle for South African freedom.

We call upon all South African Communists to defend the unity of our Party, based on our Marxist-Leninist Programme, and to fight ruthlessly against any sort of factionalism, which in present day conditions of illegality and repression endanger the very existence of our Party and the lives of all our members.

**In the name of our great world movement, as well as of our noble fight for South African freedom, the cause of all progressive humanity, we appeal to all the leaders and members of our fraternal Parties to strive for a new beginning, an overwhelming campaign for unity.**

**Long live Communism! Long live the unity of the world Communist movement!**