Dear Friend,

A 14-year-old boy lies sweating in the dark.

As he tosses feverishly in his sleep, he groans and mutters to himself continually in half-formed phrases in both English and Sotho:

"No...No...I don't know...please don't hurt me..."

Sipho cries out and sits up. His eyes are wide, staring. His body still shakes from his nightmares.

Sipho is one of tens of thousands of South African children -- as young as 9 years of age -- who have been arrested and tortured by security forces within the last 18 months.

In his short life, he lost both his parents. He has been a victim of state violence and witnessed death. Despite his age, he has been detained twice for lengthy periods by the South African regime, although he has never been charged with an offence.

According to the International Commission of Jurists, children like Sipho are routinely and systematically arrested and tortured in South Africa.

"There appears to be wide use of electric shock and tear gas on detainees -- both designed to leave no visible marks", reports the Commission.

Detained children have reported that police have whipped them and scalded their bodies with boiling water and burning plastic.

Medical experts fear that South Africa is creating an entire generation of brutalized young people who are smoldering with bitterness, resentment, and thirst for revenge.

Yet the injustice and repression of apartheid continues in South Africa as it has for decades before.

South African society continues to be openly racist. It is the only country in the entire world where laws discriminate on the basis of race:

-- Black people have no say in the laws of their land
-- Black people cannot choose where they live
-- Black people cannot enjoy the rights of living together as families
Today, the struggle has intensified to the point where many South Africans are in open revolt against the apartheid system. Led by the African National Congress (ANC), courageous citizens are challenging the injustice of racism despite an increasingly bloody and violent response from the Pretoria regime.

Apartheid must be ended. Will you help?

Years ago, I became a part of the international movement against apartheid.

Each year I've seen more and more support for the struggle for a non-racial, democratic government in South Africa from Americans of all walks of life and all political parties.

The inhumanity of apartheid strikes a deep chord in the hearts of the American people. Over a quarter of a century ago Dr. Martin Luther King spoke out against the evils of apartheid and called for sanctions against the South African regime. The Civil Rights movement of the 50's and 60's was an inspiration to the struggling people of South Africa.

Today, thousands of Americans have signed petitions, attended rallies, and called for sanctions in condemnation of apartheid.

During 1985 and 1986, Americans had the opportunity to see the brutal reaction of the South African regime to peaceful demonstrations by students and others. These events became a regular feature of nightly network news broadcasts.

In response, the South African government since 1987 has attempted to lull Americans into silence by censoring and restricting news coverage originating within the country.

But that strategy hasn't worked.

Americans continue to ask what more they can do to speed the national liberation struggle in South Africa.

Because of the tremendous international support for the cause of freedom in South Africa, the South Africa Freedom Fund has been established so that you can now participate directly in the struggle to end apartheid.

Your financial support is vital. The South African regime has publicly declared its intention to cut off all means of outside financial support from friends of the anti-apartheid movements within South Africa.

The Pretoria regime doesn't want your financial support -- or that of any of the millions of people around the world who condemn racism -- to speed the end of their minority rule.

There is good reason for their concern. Right under their noses, the African National Congress backs a wide variety of community self-help projects...including many right within South Africa itself.
In the face of an appalling lack of government services for the majority black population, your donation to the South Africa Freedom Fund will support:

-- women's centers
-- sanitation projects
-- family welfare programs
-- educational centers
-- children's day nurseries

In the front-line nations near South Africa, the ANC is organizing self-reliant communities that will provide the basis for future nationhood.

Already the ANC is assisting and developing schools and hospitals as well as printing and distribution facilities for information and education materials about South Africa.

All of these programs build support for the campaign that will one day defeat apartheid. But, they all have their costs. Your contribution to the South African Freedom Fund supports the humanitarian programs of the ANC at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College and Dakawa Development Center.

You can now contribute directly towards the struggle against apartheid by mailing your donation of $35, or even $100 or more, to the SOUTH AFRICA FREEDOM FUND.

The struggle against racism in South Africa has taken longer than anyone might have imagined.

Perhaps you're old enough to remember the Sharpville massacre and Mandela's trials of the 1960's? Or, perhaps your interest in South Africa grew during the demonstrations covered so intensively by the US media in 1985-1986?

In either event, you've probably seen enough to realize that the South African regime has demonstrated time and time again that it will take any steps necessary to maintain its racist policies.

That means that only the strongest and most active campaign against apartheid has any chance of success.

Apartheid won't go away simply because the world wishes it to disappear.

Until democracy triumphs, South Africans like Sipho -- whose story I shared with you -- will have to continue their fight for freedom...despite the suffering and the cost.

In South Africa, even a 14-year-old child like Sipho has taken a personal stand against apartheid. Will you too take a stand to help the struggle?

If you were to make a donation of $35 today to the SOUTH AFRICA FREEDOM FUND, you would be taking an important step towards ending apartheid.
Each and every contribution will help. However, I'd like to offer as a thank-you gift for anyone who contributes $50 or more, an information packet, "Education for Liberation", which details the extraordinary programs of the ANC's Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College.

Please take a stand today by mailing your check for $35, or even $100 if you can, to the SOUTH AFRICA FREEDOM FUND.

South Africans like Sipho have already taken their stand. Please take yours today -- apartheid shouldn't last even one day longer!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Arthur R. Ashe Jr.

P.S. -- Help end apartheid now! Your contribution of $35 will be of great assistance in the struggle. Thank you.