Dear Friend:

You may have heard of the five Africans from South Africa, former members of the cast of the Broadway musical "Sponono," who are seeking political asylum in the United States.

The principle of granting asylum by the US has already been well established for refugees from Communist countries. No such precedent, however, has been set for South Africans who are totally opposed to, have suffered under, and do not wish to return to the tyranny of apartheid in South Africa. We of the American Committee on Africa, in cooperation with the Workers Defense League, are seeking to establish such a precedent in the Sponono Case. Details of this case are set forth in the enclosed Fact Sheet.

The Workers Defense League has been handling the legal side of this case. At the most recent Immigration hearing on April 26 and 27, the trial attorney for the Government Immigration service requested postponement of a decision until he receives recommendations and advice on the case from the State Department in Washington.

We feel that you, as organizations and individuals, will be interested in establishing the right of political asylum for all who flee tyranny, and will want to let the State Department know your views at this crucial juncture when they are considering their response.

We therefore urge you to immediately write or telegraph the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, Department of State, Washington, DC, sending a copy of your letter or telegram to the Attorney General, Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

We would also appreciate copies of your letter and of any replies that you may receive.

Sincerely yours,

George M. Houser
American Committee on Africa

Norman Thomas
Workers Defense League