

INTERNATIONAL

Despite jail threats

Socialist Challenge
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Spirit of Black

Consciousness

LIVES ON X:PC

ELEVEN members of the Soweto Student Representative Council (SSRC), aged between 18 and 23, are coming up for trial on 18 September in South Africa. They each face possible death sentences or life imprisonment.

Exiled SSRC member Majakathata Mokoena talks to a 'Socialist Challenge' correspondent about the latest wave of repression in South Africa.

'They have been accused of so-called crimes such as distributing "petrol bombs", "forcing" workers to stay away from work, and demonstrating for the release of prisoners, but these are just excuses by the regime to try to crush the students and to demoralise those who are still outside the jails.'

BANNING

These moves follow the banning of the SSRC, South African Student Movement and South African Student Organisation, Black Peoples Convention and other organisations of the black consciousness movement.

Others named in the trial as 'co-conspirators' include exiles such as: Tiseti Mashini, Drake Koka (founder member of the BPC), Khoiso Seatho, Trofomo Sono (last chairperson of the SSRC before it was banned), and the current

'By bringing these militants to trial the regime thinks it can crush the movement. Certainly it could demoralise it — but the only way to prevent that is for an international campaign to release these and other political prisoners.'

'These people have been charged only for fighting for their rights. All we demanded was justice.'

'If they can find these people guilty, then they can lock up every black person in South Africa because our demands are the same as those of the people; we as the SSRC simply articulated these grievances of the people.'

'But we took action instead of just talking. In any case, we took up non-violent action which was met with the violence of the trigger happy police.'

BLOODSHED

'We asked our parents to stay away from work in order to avoid bloodshed, with the people milling around in the streets — making themselves easy targets for the bastards, we asked them to stay indoors, but the police even went into the houses to shoot people down.'

'If the regime tries these people for their non-violent actions and the "legal" actions, then they are no

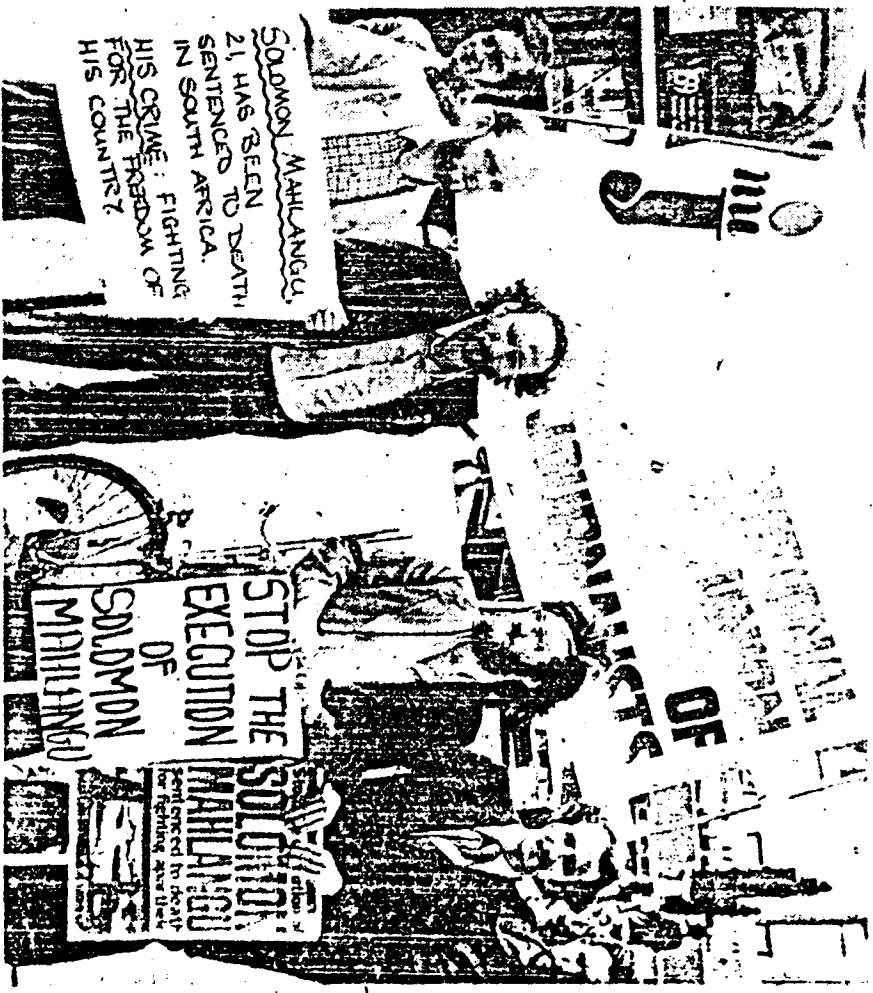


Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

A RECENT picket of South Africa House against the planned execution of 21-year old Solomon Mahlangu. Mahlangu was a school student in 1976 who joined the African National Congress in response to state repression. He was arrested in June 1977 after a gun battle with police. On 2 March this year he was sentenced to death for murder. Yet his only crime is to have fought against the apartheid system. On 25 August there will be a Poster Parade in London to protest against the sentence. Assemble 5.45pm at Horse Guards Avenue and march to South Africa House and Downing Street.

different to the Nazi regimes and other oppressive regimes. 'But what is needed now urgently is a mass campaign in Britain and internationally to force the Vorster regime to release these prisoners.'

'We appeal to all people internationally to come out on 18 September to show their solidarity and prevent the child slaughter which is being carried out by the South African repressive system. 'We need demonstrations and rallies leading up to that

day involving as many people as we can. But we need help in organising the campaign — because in this country we do not have the resources and organisational facilities to mount such a campaign on our home. We appeal for solidarity and for help in mounting this campaign.'

- Resolutions of solidarity from trade unions, student unions etc should be sent to Majakathata c/o 1, Cambridge Terrace, London N1.
- Those accused in the trial are: Sechaba D. Monistisi, (chairperson SSRC), age 22.
- Sandile Seth Mazubuko (founder member of SSRC), 19
- Welle C. Twala, 18
- Khoiso J. Lengane, 21
- Sibongile S. Mkhembu (founder member SSRC), 22
- Mafison Morobe (Vice Chairperson), 21
- Thabo Ntabeni, 21
- Kennedy Mogami, 19
- Teboho Mngomezulu, 21
- Michael Khiba, 20
- George Twala, 23.