

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
March 11, 1977

TO ORGANIZERS AND ANTIRACIST WORK DIRECTORS

Dear Comrades,

Attached is a copy of an "open letter for a united campaign against U.S. support to the white minority regimes in southern Africa." This open letter for unity is being circulated by the National Student Coalition Against Racism (NSCAR) to all supporters of the Black majorities in southern Africa as well as to the public at large.

Since my February 18 report to the Political Committee, there has been an escalation of political attacks and slanders against the Soweto student leaders and on NSCAR. In response to these attacks, NSCAR is encouraging people and organizations active in the southern African solidarity movement to read, discuss, and sign the open letter. Branches, along with YSA chapters, should help circulate this letter among people supporting or building the Mashinini and Seatlholo speaking tours and the March 25-26 protests. (The March 25 issue of the Militant will reprint the open letter.)

Circulating this letter will be an important part of the counter-political campaign in defense of NSCAR and the Soweto student leaders. Combined with the successful meetings that Mashinini and Seatlholo have already had across the country, a discussion of the points raised in the open letter will help politically arm supporters of NSCAR and lay the basis for future successful campaigns concerning southern Africa.

Copies of statements in support of the open letter should be sent to the NSCAR office as well as to the SWP national office. Any material reporting the attacks on the Soweto student leaders or NSCAR should also be sent in.

It is also important that articles on local actions and speaking engagements of Mashinini and Seatlholo be sent to the Militant. These articles should include information on any red-baiting attacks on NSCAR or the Soweto leaders.

Comradely,

Malik Miah
Malik Miah
National Office

THE NATIONAL STUDENT COALITION AGAINST RACISM

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AN APPEAL TO BUILD A UNITED MOVEMENT AGAINST U.S. SUPPORT TO THE RACIST REGIMES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On the weekend of November 19-21, 1976, the National Student Coalition Against Racism (NSCAR) held its Third National Student Conference Against Racism in Boston. This conference against racism "from Boston to southern Africa" was attended by 1,100 people with representatives from more than 120 schools, including 40 high schools, and more than 130 organizations. The conference participants issued a call for nationally-coordinated actions March 25-26, in cities across the country against U.S. complicity with the racist regimes in Southern Africa. Tsietsi Mashinini, a central leader and founder of the Soweto Student Representative Council, which led the Soweto rebellions in June, addressed the conference and was one of the first endorsers of the March 25-26 action proposal.

At this conference, Mashinini appealed to the American people to help get the U.S. out of South Africa. To aid this objective, Tsietsi Mashinini agreed to tour the U.S. to explain the situation in South Africa and the role played by the U.S. in sustaining the racist apartheid regime. Mashinini also agreed to arrange for Khotso Seatlholo, who succeeded Mashinini as President of the Soweto Student Representative Council, to join the tour.

These tours, which began February 23, are organized by NSCAR, and co-sponsored by the International Defense and Aid Fund, to aid the entire movement against apartheid. The tours are a major educational effort on the part of the two Soweto student leaders to alert the American people to the important role they can play in the South African freedom struggle.

The South African government is very much aware of the breadth of support these two student leaders can win for the growing struggle of the Black majority for freedom, and in organizing the American people into a campaign against the U.S. involvement in southern Africa. Both the tours and the March 25-26 actions have received very broad endorsement (attached is a partial list of endorsers).

The majority of people in this country oppose apartheid, and this sentiment is the basis for building a powerful mass movement in opposition to the U.S. support to the racist regimes in southern Africa. The South African government knows that this sentiment, if translated into an organized, united movement, has the potential power to stay the hand of the American government. The success of the anti-Vietnam war movement proved that massive struggles of the American people can help force the U.S. government to change its policies.

This presents a major threat to the South African government and the illegal racist regime in Zimbabwe. The withdrawal of all U.S. aid to the racist regimes of southern Africa would place a question mark over the ability of these regimes to survive.

In response to this potential threat, the South African government has gone on a campaign, in its press, to try to discredit Tsietsi Mashinini internationally. Through this campaign, the South African government hopes to divide the growing American movement in opposition to the U.S. role in southern Africa. Attached you will find a copy of an article which appeared in the January 30, 1977, issue of the **Johannesburg Sunday Times**. It levels severe slanders against Mashinini and the National Student Coalition Against Racism. It attempts to portray Mashinini and NSCAR as part of an "international communist conspiracy". This campaign to red-bait NSCAR and Mashinini is a concerted effort on the part of the South African government to whip up a hysteria of accusations in the growing movement in opposition to the racist regimes of southern Africa and the U.S. support to these regimes. Red-baiting is a tactic which has been used in many social movements, and in some cases have been successful, causing entire movements to be destroyed. Recent FBI revelations show how this type of FBI and CIA Counter-Intelligence Programs (COINTELPRO) operation was used to destroy and to disorient the Black movement in the U.S. "Communist conspiracy" is the excuse given by the South African government for murdering hundreds of Blacks this summer, when masses of Blacks took to the streets to demand their basic human rights.

As well, the article seeks to divide the liberation forces in South Africa, by distorting Mashinini's political differences with the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC). This vile slander campaign is picked up in another article, also attached, which appeared in the January 25, 1977 issue of the **Christian Science Monitor**. Mashinini has denied ever giving such an interview, and not one sentence in the article is a direct quote from him. Both Mashinini and Khotso have expressed an urgent need for all liberation organizations to work together to fight against the common enemy in South Africa.

The viciousness of this campaign is a small example of how far the racist South African regime will go to destroy anyone or anything which threatens its racist stronghold. This is why we find it necessary to clearly expose the real aims of this slanderous propaganda campaign against NSCAR and Tsietsi Mashinini.

Unfortunately, some organizations and individuals in the U.S., who have either been supporters of NSCAR or of the African liberation struggles, have already begun to be confused by this campaign of the South African government. In several coalition meetings in different cities, supporters of the southern African struggle have raised questions concerning the political authority of Mashinini based upon the slanderous article which appeared in the **Christian Science Monitor**.

At a February 28 meeting held at Howard University one of the meeting participants raised doubts about Mashinini's authority, the purpose of his tour in the United States, and NSCAR's reasons for organizing the tour. This question came after a representative of the ANC who was also speaking on the panel referred to Mashinini as the 'unquestionable central leader of June 16'.

Some forces have taken the distortion of the political differences between Mashinini, the ANC and PAC to mean that perhaps Mashinini has links with the South African secret police. Such accusations are dangerous inside the movement and serve only to call into question the legitimacy of Mashinini and the entire struggle he represents. We must not allow the movement to fall prey to this campaign by the South African government, because it can only work in the interests of those who wish to destroy the movement.

NSCAR takes no position on any of the liberation organizations in South Africa. In the opinion of NSCAR, the best way to build a united movement is to involve everyone regardless of which group they support.

NSCAR has always had a policy of non-exclusion, and welcomes everyone who is against racism and willing to carry out the campaigns of NSCAR. This has proved to be the best and most effective way to build a campaign against racism. NSCAR has always defended the rights of everyone, regardless of political affiliation, to be members of the organization as long as they agree on the above two things.

We appeal to all supporters of the southern Africa freedom struggle to join with us in the campaign to build the actions of March 25-26, and to make the tours of the two Soweto student leaders successful.

All supporters are urged to denounce the campaign of the South African government and join us in this appeal for unity.

Letters and telegrams of support should be sent to the National Student Coalition Against Racism, with copies to the International Defense and Aid Fund.

SIGNERS:

Kenneth N. Carstens, Exec. Dir. International Defense & Aid Fund for Southern Africa, North American Committee
Koko Farrow, Commission on Racial Justice
Professor Dennis Brutus, Pres. South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee
Tsietsi Mashinini, First President and founder of the Soweto Student Representative Council
Tony Austin, National Coordinator, NSCAR
Khotso Seatlholo, Former President, Soweto Student Representative Council
August Nimitz, Instructor of African Studies, University of Minnesota
Robert Allen, Former Editor of The Black Scholar magazine
Rev. Bernard Lee, Executive Vice President, SCLC

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The following statement was released February 24, 1977
by Tsietsi Mashinini and Khotso Seatlholo at a N.Y.
Press Conference:

The United States is playing an important role in the support of the racist regime that oppresses, suppresses, kills, massacres, maimes, tortures and systematically destroys the Blacks in South Africa. The various forms of oppressing the Black masses for the sake of "preventing the spread of communism," gives us reason to believe that the American community is ill informed about the South African situation. We therefore embark on an educational tour to bring to the notice of the American community the inhuman brutalities that the Black South African masses are subjected to. Inclusive in the educational program will be building support for the National Student Coalition Against Racism's proposed March 25-26 national actions against South Africa.

- 1) END U.S. COMPLICITY WITH SOUTH AFRICA!
- 2) MAJORITY RULE NOW IN SOUTH AFRICA!
- 3) ARMS EMBARGO ON SOUTH AFRICA
- 4) ECONOMIC SANCTION ON SOUTH AFRICA!
- 5) RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!

From the Johannesburg Sunday Times, January 30, 1977

AT VANESSA'S RED SCHOOL

Tsietsi Mashinini, the schoolboy who led the Soweto riots, has been on an intensive training course at the "Red House"--- the "school for revolutionaries" set up by British actress Vanessa Redgrave.

The "school" is a mansion in Derbyshire belonging to the Workers' Revolutionary Party (WRP), a fanatical Trotskyist Marxist group including Vanessa Redgrave and her brother, Corin.

The "Red House" has repeatedly run into public controversy, once for holding revolutionary courses for school children. It has also been raided by the police.

When Mashinini fled to Britain last September, the African National Congress organised a Home Office permit for him to study there and supplied him with winter clothes. But he quickly broke with them to undergo an intensive course on Marxist revolutionary theory at the "Red House."

Mashinini, now in Botswana, is working in association with an American organisation with Trotskyist links, the National Student Coalition Against Racism (NSCAR) and has started a campaign to discredit the ANC, accusing its leaders of corruption.

This has created a crisis in the ANC similar to that which recently nearly smashed Swapo [sic].

Similar allegations of corruption to those of Mashinini have been levelled against the organisation by a splinter group which is to make a bid this year to take over the ANC.

Old established anti-apartheid organisations overseas are infuriated by the Mashinini campaign.

In October Mashinini gave a lengthy interview to the "Red Weekly"---official journal of another Trotskyist organisation, the International Marxist Group---in which he claimed the ANC was "extinct" in South Africa.

He was later flown to the US by NSCAR and continued to attack the ANC there.

In Botswana, Mashinini is claiming he is engaged in "programmes to help fugitive students to further their studies abroad.

The nature of the "programmes" is a mystery.

In an interview from New York this week the American Committee on Africa's executive director, Mr. George Houser, denounced Mashinini for his attacks on the ANC and told me the student had

Johannesburg Times/2

no organisation behind him which could offer educational programmes.

His own organisation, which worked with the ANC and the UN Committee on Apartheid had dissociated itself from Mashinini.

By David Beresford: London

South African liberation movement hit

Student leader urges: shun agitators, get education

By June Goodwin

Staff correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Johannesburg

South Africa's most prominent black student leader, Tsietso Mashinini, has advised students who leave the country not to join either of the two South African liberation movements, the African National Congress (ANC) or the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).

Mr. Mashinini, whose photograph has been splashed on Page 1 of the black newspaper, the World, for three consecutive days, is in neighboring Botswana. It is estimated that more than 1,000 South African students have fled to Botswana in the last year.

The student leader told the World that in his travels to Europe and the United States he had found that the ANC, which has operated from exile for 16 years, was corrupt. He said ANC agents in Botswana were recruiting 13-year-old boys. He added that PAC, which had only one man in New York, also was ineffective.

Black salute photo

Mr. Mashinini was photographed giving the black power salute with the student who replaced him as president of the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC), Khotso Seatlholo. Mr. Seatlholo recently fled Johannesburg's black township of Soweto to escape possible detention.

In his interview with the World Mr. Mashinini said he now was involved in trying to help newly exiled students further their education. He said two U.S.-based organizations, the National Student Coalition against Racism and Apartheid and the American Committee on Africa, were helping in this regard.

The Sunday World said that 200 scholarships had been provided for the exiles, through the International University Exchange Fund in Geneva, for schooling in Britain and African countries, mainly Nigeria.

Mr. Mashinini said that by the end of February the majority of students should have found places. He said 500 students, more than most observers had thought, had gone to Tanzania for training by the ANC.

A natural leader

Spearheading the political protest that has transformed black thinking, Mr. Mashinini has proved a "natural" leader, according to the adults who have worked closely with him.

Stories abound of his intuitive ability to get the backing of the people. When taxi drivers were reluctant to support a stu-



UPI photo

Mashinini: spokesman for a new generation

dent called strike last year, Mr. Mashinini called off the strike. Then in a fast visit to a central taxi stand he talked to the drivers, explained to them the reasons for the strike, and about 10 minutes later disappeared before police arrived on the scene. When the strike was resumed, the taxi drivers observed it.

Mr. Mashinini's successor Khotso Seatlholo, did not have the same flair. Now that he too has fled Soweto to avoid detention, the SSRC plans to continue its activities under a third president, Daniel Motsisi, who was elected in mid-January.

Membership claims

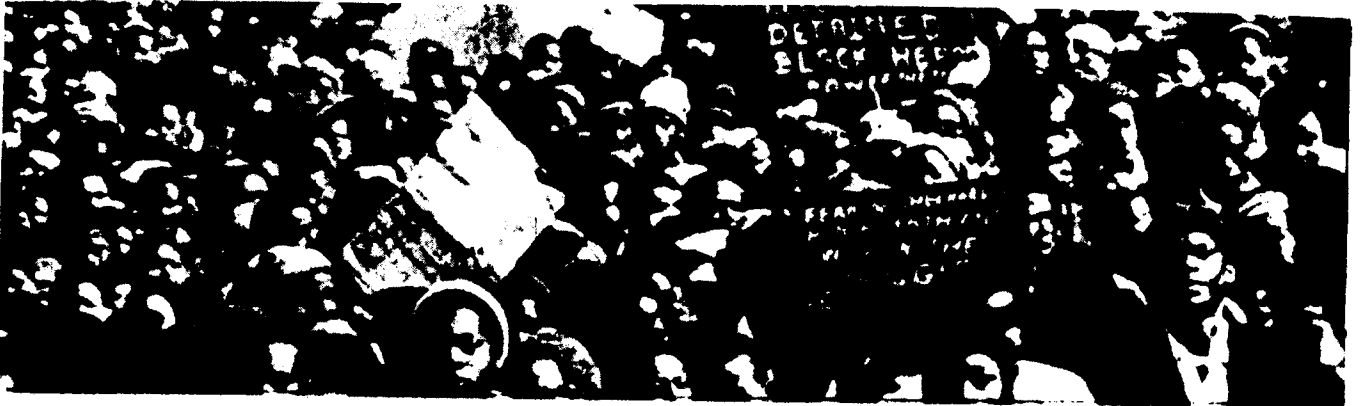
The SSRC, which was established after the disturbances began last June, claims a following of thousands of students in Soweto. It is headed by a committee of more than 45 students chosen by their secondary and high school contemporaries.

Guided by politically experienced adults, the SSRC has almost eclipsed the last generation of ANC and PAC activists. But what the new South African exiles will do is unknown.

A black source in close touch with the students says that Mr. Mashinini's political activities (and presumably those of his friends) will "go on to another level."

At least the students are developing a broadened political pragmatism. According to the World, "They expected fame and glamour in exile. All most have acquired is sorrow."

HELP EXILES IN BOTSWANA



Black student activists in the struggle against the brutal system of apartheid in South Africa face daily and severe harassment from the South African government and police. Hundreds of them have been forced into exile by the South African police. Many of these exiles now reside in Botswana, which is north of South Africa. Despite their official exile status, these fighters for Black majority rule continue to face harassment from South Africa, even in Botswana. BOSS, South Africa's secret police, steal over the border at night into Botswana and attempt to kidnap Black exiles and take them back into South Africa to face torture or death.

To aid in bringing this and the U.S. role in perpetrating apartheid to the attention of the American people, the National Student Coalition Against Racism and the International Defense and Aid Fund are touring two central leaders of the Student Representative Council (SRC) who are among the leaders of the massive student demonstrations against apartheid in Soweto, the Black township outside of Johannesburg, that began on June 16. Tsietsi Mashinini and Khotso Seatlholo, the founder and the second president of the SRC, respectively, themselves best impart the conditions of Black exiles in Botswana. Mashinini explains, "They live in five houses which have got five rooms; each room 7 by 8. They share clothes. They share blankets. They share food. They get 20 rands (which is about \$23) per person a month, which they are supposed to make last over 31 days . . . They need clothes, . . . food, . . . accommodations."

NSCAR and the International Defense and Aid Fund urge you to contribute as generously as you can to better the living conditions of these young exiles.

For more information call: (617) 288-6200 (NSCAR)
(617) 495-4940 (International Defense and Aid Fund)

Write your check today to:

International Defense and Aid Special Projects

Mail your check to:

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