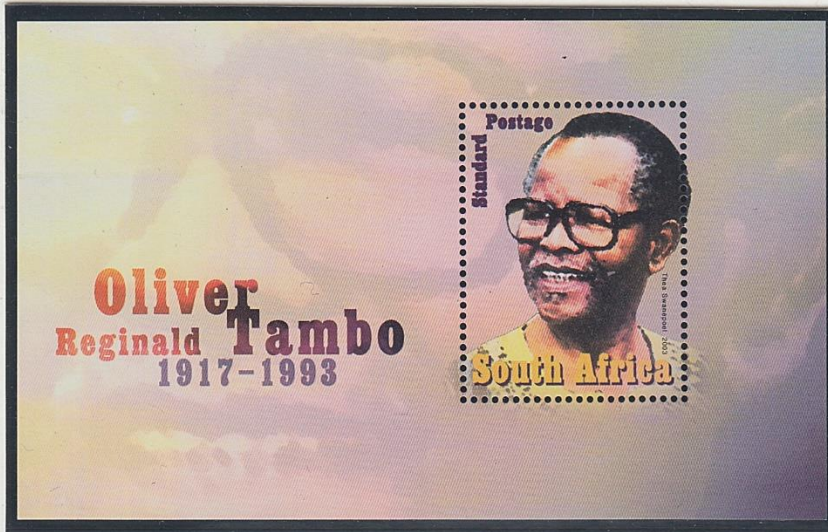


On 5 December 1956 the Security Branch arrested 140 people on the charge of treason. 105 Africans including Nelson Mandela, 21 Indians, 23 whites and 7 coloured leaders were arrested. 156 defendants were charged with high treason, later reduced to 92. In November 1957, the prosecution reworded the indictment and proceeded a separate trial against 30 accused.

Amongst the defendants were: Chief Albert Luthuli

President of the ANC at the time, later released for lack of evidence.



Oliver Tambo

Released for lack of evidence, then went into exile to co-ordinate the ANC from abroad.



Walter Sisulu

One of the final 30 defendants.

Freedom Charter
"The People Shall Govern ..."

The accused faced charges claiming that they had participated in the campaign to draw up the Freedom Charter. Combined with the slogan 'Freedom in Our Lifetime', the Charter was considered revolutionary, as it would involve the overthrow and destruction of the existing state. All the judges agreed that the state had failed to prove the ANC or the Freedom Charter as communist and the remaining accused were all acquitted of treason.

