

FIRE SALVAGE & INSURANCE CLAIMS
 FURNITURE & CLOTHING
 CARPETS and many more
 at prices you'll have to see to believe!

BARNETT GENERAL SALVAGE
 159 ELOFF ST EXT 438-5787
 174 FOX ST EXT TROYE 21-6990

CRASH - FLASH

RAND
Daily Mail



JOHANNESBURG, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1977.

Price 12c

No sign of hunger strike — Biko doctors

By HELEN ZILLE
AN EXTENSIVE investigation by the Rand Daily Mail — which included interviews with doctors who examined Mr Steve Biko in detention — has revealed that the black consciousness leader showed no signs of a hunger strike or dehydration.

In fact, Mr Biko was overweight when he died in detention on September 12, and on delivery for burial his well-built body weighed between 85 and 90 kg. Sources close to Mr Biko during the last days of his life also revealed that he drank water during a medical examination on September 8 — three days after, according to the Minister of Justice, Mr Jimmy Kruger, "he began to refuse meals and water after threatening a hunger strike".

The "Mail" investigation — in Pretoria, East London, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town — also supported earlier reports that Mr Biko was found to have extensive brain damage and severe bruising.

The doctors who examined Mr Biko in Port Elizabeth are:
 ● Dr Ivor Lang, the district surgeon.
 ● Dr Benjamin Tucker, the Chief District Surgeon.
 ● Dr Colin Hersch, a specialist physician.
 Mr Biko's condition was discussed with a neurosurgeon, Dr R J Keeley.

The facts that emerged from interviews with these doctors and others who had contact with Mr Biko during the last week of his life contradict points made by Mr Kruger in the statement that followed the worldwide outcry over Mr Biko's death.

Mr Kruger said Mr Biko died in detention on September 12 after beginning a hunger strike on September 5. Several doctors who examined him could find "no physical problem," according to Mr Kruger.

The "Mail" investigation revealed that:



DR TUCKER
 ... chief district surgeon

A 'Mail' special investigation

The doctors who saw Biko in detention — full report in tomorrow's Inside Mail.



DR LANG
 ... district surgeon

- The Security Police and doctors were "deeply concerned and worried about his deteriorating condition".
- A lumbar puncture test — done to detect possible brain damage — was ordered by a specialist physician, Dr Colin Hersch.
- The fluid drawn from the spine during the lumbar puncture revealed many red cells, which medical sources said yesterday was an indication of possible brain damage.
- The results of the lumbar puncture, as well as the other symptoms, were discussed with a Port Elizabeth neurosurgeon, Dr R J Keeley, who said there was nothing to worry about. This week Dr Keeley again insisted that he would be "most surprised if Mr Biko had brain damage". Dr Keeley did not examine Mr Biko.
- Mr Biko showed "several other worrying symptoms that seemed to indicate brain damage" and his condition deteriorated steadily while in detention.
- An X-ray of the skull was recommended but not

- carried out.
- None of the doctors had "any idea" that Mr Biko was close to death.
- During initial examinations by the district surgeon, Dr Ivor Lang, and the Chief District Surgeon, Dr Benjamin Tucker, Mr Biko was conscious and was closely questioned about his symptoms and personal history.
- Mr Biko's transfer to Pretoria was arranged and discussed by the Security Police, the Chief District Surgeon and the district surgeon, without consulting the specialist or the neurosurgeon.
- Neither Dr Tucker, Dr Lang nor the Security Police would say how Mr Biko was transported to Pretoria — by plane, ambulance or police van. It is known that Mr Biko was moved from Port Elizabeth on September 11 and taken to Pretoria "the same night". In the afternoon of September 12, he was examined by the district surgeon in Pretoria.
- Dr Tucker and Dr Lang refused to give reasons for

Mr Biko's transfer to Pretoria. They also refused to say whether the district surgeon in Pretoria, Dr A van Zyl, had been briefed on Mr Biko's condition.

● Dr Tucker and Dr Lang refused to comment on the possibility of an assault in prison, but Dr Hersch said: "I cannot tell you anything about whether he was manhandled or not. What I would like most of all is to find out the truth of this matter ... what happened and why he died. If there were any problems over here, I would like to know he received the best attention."

Questioned further, Dr Hersch said: "If there wasn't a judicial inquiry or an inquest, there would be every reason to say everything, because the public must know. But because an inquest is coming up, I see no point in giving details before."

In another development yesterday the Department of Information stressed that an inquest, and not a judicial inquiry, had been ordered into the death of Mr Biko.

The department issued a statement to Sapa following a protest by the Director of Information at the South African Embassy in London, Mr Chris van Der Walt, about a British television film on Mr Biko.

In a letter to Mr Brian Lapping, producer of the film, Mr Van der Walt accused Mr Lapping of failing to make it clear the Prime Minister, Mr Vorster, had ordered a judicial inquiry into the detention and death of Mr Biko.

Mr Van der Walt had used the term "judicial inquiry" in a non-technical sense, while he had an "inquest" in mind in a technical sense, the department said yesterday.

There appeared to be confusion in various quarters over the two terms, it said.

"The term 'judicial inquiry' is unfortunately used loosely in a non-technical sense. There can be various forms of judicial inquiry, of which an 'inquest' is one," the statement said.

However the Attorney-General of the Transvaal, Mr J E Nothling, said yesterday that it was possible the inquest might not take place at all, writes a "Mail" correspondent.

Mr Nothling said he had not yet seen any documents relating to the case, but pointed out that if the investigations currently under way led to a criminal prosecution then an inquest would not automatically be held, as was normally the case in instances of unnatural death.

Quick Mail
 Phone the 'Mail' 28-1560,
 171 Main Street, Johannesburg, Box 1128. Telex 87044.

Snakes alive...
 IN one day, two large snakes measuring more than a metre were found in different built-up areas of Johannesburg.

Speed kid Ernst

We can't go alone, Mudge tells

