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Telephone No. 836/0789

THE BLACK SASH

CIRCULAR NO. 11/1977.

503 Lestar House,
58 Marshall Street,
Johannesburg.
15th September, 1977.

This will probably turn out to be one of the most important and tragic weeks in our country's history. This is written in haste to tell you all what we are doing.

1. Joyce, Gita and myself have asked for an interview with Kruger. We are waiting to hear whether we will be granted an **appointment**. We are not going to ask for anything but want an opportunity to express to him face to face our feelings and opinions. The statement we want to make will be released to the press whether or not he agrees to meet us.
2. The three of us stood to-day, one at a time with a Sash and a poster. There must not be more than one person and if other people want to do it at the same time they must not be within sight of each other nor must there be any organised stand (e.g., along a traffic route) because there must be no common purpose.
3. Shirley Moulder has two suggestions :
 - (a) that in penitence we fast, taking nothing but liquids, for eight days from Sunday 17th September to 24th September. I shall be doing this with her but it is an individual thing and I can only hope that some people will do the same. Eight days is the time span in which Kruger says that Steve Biko starved himself to death.
 - (b) That every day we phone the Security Police, Commissioner or Commanding Officer in our area to inquire about local detainees by name. We intend to do this here.
4. We have inserted a number of death and "in memoriam" notices in the evening paper for Steve Biko.
5. We have sent a letter and cheque to a newspaper asking that the money be sent to Steve Biko's project in the Eastern Cape so that his work may continue.
6. Esther and Jill delivered a wreath with a black sash to the Prime Minister at the Transvaal congress of the National Party in Pretoria to-day. They marched straight up the aisle and laid it on the stand with the microphone below the top table before anyone reacted, after which they were hustled out with cries of 'Vuilgoed'.
7. We are making hundreds of wreaths to be laid all over town on Friday - the only words being "Steve Biko".
8. Grahamstown had a walkabout yesterday and distributed 2000 pamphlets by 6 p.m
9. The P.F.P is calling a protest meeting in Johannesburg City Hall on Monday in the lunch hour. I have been asked to sit on the platform together with leaders of other organisations.

You will all have noted Kruger's statement that there is no point in a judicial inquiry into deaths in detention because each death is judicially investigated at an inquest. One of our most helpful advisers here has pointed out that the call is not for an inquiry into the incidental deaths but into the conditions in which people are detained and the methods of interrogation used by the Security Police, and the circumstances surrounding their deaths.

If any of you have ideas and are carrying out projects which are not mentioned here, please circulate them to all Regions and to Headquarters.

I know we all feel discouraged and sorrowful and we do not bluff ourselves that anything we can do can influence people whose behaviour is reported in the Star tonight as follows :

"Mr. Kruger said his/---

"Mr. Kruger said his reaction to Mr. Biko's death was :

'I am not pleased nor am I sorry. Biko's death leaves me cold!'

Mr. Kruger commented after a delegate, Mr. Chris Venter of Springs, had congratulated him on being 'so democratic that those who want to starve themselves to death are allowed by him to do so as their democratic right'. Ripples of laughter went through the congress as Mr. Kruger explained the steps taken between Mr. Biko's falling ill and his death....."

But the most important thing we can do is to remember that Steve Biko was a man of peace and we can only be defeated if we allow ourselves to be afraid.

Love to you all, Shalom,

SHEENA

P.S. Kruger has refused to meet us. Press statement attached. Please send it to your newspapers.

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You will all have noted Kruger's statement that there is no point in a judicial inquiry into the deaths in detention because each death is individually investigated as an isolated case. One of our most respected lawyers has pointed out that the call is not for an inquiry into the individual deaths but into the conditions in which people are detained and the methods of interrogation used by the Security Police, and the circumstances surrounding their deaths.

If any of you have ideas and are willing to put them into effect, please write to me, please telephone me to all questions and in Johannesburg. I know we all feel the same and are anxious to see the situation reported in the press as follows: