

# World Scene

STEVE BIKO, "A MISERABLE AND LONELY DEATH"

(For Classroom and Group Discussion)

The following is an interview with Jon Blair, one of the British journalists who wrote a dramatized version of the last days of Steve Biko's life while he was under trial in Pretoria, South Africa.

Steve Biko was the most prominent member of the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa. He died in police custody, and the inquest into his death lit up the whole South African system of apartheid for the world to see.

Courtesy: Unesco Features

### Part II of Four Parts

The various witnesses, police officers and doctors, who had examined Biko, either said that nothing was very seriously wrong with him or that his injuries were self-inflicted. Their evidence, as it came out in the transcript, was a terrifying indictment.

The police officers and security men responsible for Biko's safe-keeping while he was held by them from August 18 until his death on September 12, were perhaps the most predictable as witnesses, though I don't think anyone expected them to reveal quite as much of their brutality and callousness. Under pressure from counsel for the Biko family, Sidney Kentridge, they were forced into admitting rather strange things. For instance, they admitted that it was the custom to keep people naked

and manacled overnight in security police headquarters in Port Elizabeth while they were being interrogated. Indeed, the leg-irons in which Biko had been kept were produced in court. And the man who had been in charge of Biko's custody during the night, a Lieutenant Wilkin, likened the wearing of leg-irons to the wearing of sun glasses.

The second group, the doctors who had examined Biko between the morning of September 7 when he first showed rather bizarre symptoms, up to his death, were perhaps the most horrifying, because one expects a certain standard of ethical conduct from the medical profession. Called in to examine Biko, they signed medical certificates stating they could find nothing wrong with a man whom it later became known was suffering from fatal brain damage. For instance, the first doctor found nothing wrong whatsoever, although a later statement he signed said that Biko had a cut lip, swollen ankles and hands from the leg irons and handcuffs, a bruise on his chest, and so on. A second doctor, this first doctor's superior, likewise signed a certificate saying he thought Biko was shamming, although tests had shown positive signs of brain damage.

The third group were the pathologists who examined the corpse. The state pathologist, who had been the main doctor at the post-mortem,

suggested in the court-room that Biko's very extensive brain damage could perhaps have been self-inflicted. Under cross-examination, he agreed that in medical history there was no case history of a man ever having incurred his own death by self-inflicted brain injury. Yet this doctor was smug enough to suggest that there is always a first time in medical history. And when it was pointed out that it would have been well-nigh impossible, given the circumstances in which Biko was kept—chained, manacled, lying on a mat—to inflict brain injury upon himself, the man was callous enough to say: "It is not probable but it is possible, and therefore I will not put it aside as a possibility." However, the pathologists did agree that the brain damage that caused Biko's death undoubtedly took place while he was held in security police custody.

### Key Questions:

1. What are three main issues in this article?
2. What does this article suggest that you can do about our world situation today?
3. How many words did you look up in the dictionary? (If we do not use a dictionary daily, and for every word whose FULL meanings we may not know, we cannot grow individually and assure the best use of our resources for group freedom and a better America.)

## Legislative Alert!!

You may write to your Congressmen and Senators at: Congressional Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 or Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. Please congratulate them for their important work.

TO: CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS  
306 House Annex  
Washington, D.C. 20515

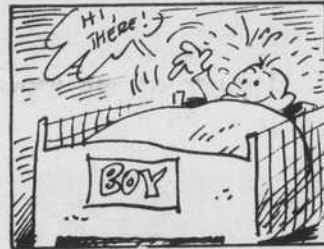
I would like to help—

- Organize a "Regional Friends of the Caucus" group
- By enclosing a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- By working with my local or nearest black congressional representative in any way that is needed
- (Please send me literature on the Caucus)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Between five and six percent more boy babies are born each year than girl babies.



### REPRESENTATIVE PARREN MITCHELL ON MINORITY BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

#### Part I of Two Parts

In two parts, Congressional Black Caucus Chairman Parren Mitchell (Democrat of Maryland) sets forth the historical rationale for support for minority business enterprises.

Our interest should be communicated to Representative Parren Mitchell for his vigilance in this crucial field.

In the 1950's, the Congress passed the Small Business Act. Its purpose and intent were clear, i.e., the survival and growth of the Nation's free enterprise system was predicated upon widespread ownership and control of business and industry and avoidance of too much economic concentration by the Government towards the mammoth and ever-burgeoning business and industrial entities that had had their inception in the 1890's and early 1900's. Greater competition for Government, commercial and consumer markets would ultimately insure a continuation of better products and services and a healthier dissemination of the Nation's wealth.

The Small Business Act and the subsequent establishment of the Small Business Administration insures the growth of small business throughout America; and, further insures that a fair proportion of Government procurement and contracting opportunities are afforded to it. It is certainly no accident that more than 8 million small businesses exist today;

but, it is rather, by design and Federal Government commitment to an economic philosophy of free enterprise that small businesses are flourishing and will continue to flourish.

Minority participation within the American economic system has been one primarily of consumerism. With the exceptions of land and housing—and that to minimal degrees—minority ownership has been restricted to consumer products; and, even more so, minorities have been faced with non-ownership, materialized in an overall "rent as you live" philosophy.

The concept of ownership has always been a motivating factor behind the American ethos of "rugged individualism" and "self-determination." Capitalism has thrived as a system because profit is a means by which one can measure effort. Business and industrial development have placed the means of production and distribution into the hands of the people. The competitive spirit by which we live has been responsible for America's evolution as the greatest industrial society on earth and one that has afforded its people the highest standards of living.

Consequently, the worker who sincerely believes that his employer enhances those precepts and ideals which have made the Nation great, translates that sincerity into conscientious effort and achievement, while generating a competitive spirit among his peers

### BUSINESS IN THE BLACK

# PAUL ROBESON'S ANSWER

by Charles E. Belle

"The sun shines bright on my old Kentucky home" are words to a song sung by Paul Robeson which has special meaning to Black Americans. It now has significance for everyone looking up for help from the oil companies these energy short days.

Paul produced pride and power in the words he sang to the sun in the morning and the moon at night. Solar energy is a renewable source of power, and appealing alternative in times of depleted standard energy sources.

Furthermore, it is equally distributed and accessible. An excellent way to cut fuel and electricity cost as well as aid the environment. Poor communities are likely to bear a disproportionate burden of rising fuel cost and fuel shortages. Solar energy is one system for cash relief

for all home owners.

A tax credit is available to those people who wish to install solar equipment. Congress has provided tax incentives to encourage energy conservation and the development of alternate energy sources.

The amount of credit is computed on Form 5695, Energy Credits, which you attach to your income tax return and may be as high as \$1,800. Both owners and renters of dwellings are eligible for the credit, provided they actually pay for the qualifying items used on their principal residence.

The renewable energy source property, to qualify, must be new, must be expected to last at least five years and must meet certain performance and quality standards to be specified by

the Secretary of the Treasury. However, the property does not need to meet the standards if it is purchased before the standards are published.

The cost of renewable energy source equipment included labor cost properly allocable to the on-site preparation, assembly or installation of the equipment. Renewable energy source property included solar energy equipment for heating or cooling a dwelling or for providing hot water for use within the dwelling.


Doing environmentally sound planning is not new. The early Greeks understood the principle of natural solar heating and cooling. In the fifth century B.C., entire cities were designed on an east-west axis so that one long side of each building

faced south.


About 1200 A.D., the Indians of Mesa Verde, Colo. built their "solar homes" among the cliffs of the mesa to take advantage of the sun. Today nearly 800 years later, their natural heating and cooling system is still working.

Solar water heating systems were introduced in the state of California in 1891. The first commercial solar water heaters began appearing in the rose bowl home of Pasadena in 1895. In 1920, hundreds of Los Angeles and Pasadena roof tops were adorned with the solar collectors.


The boom lasted until the discovery of gas and oil fields in the Los Angeles Basin during the 1930s. Paul Robeson's sun has been shining bright all the time.



KATHY GAY




BOBBY JOHNSON




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