One year ago today, on September 12, 1977, Stephen Biko joined "the long list of those who have died for a just cause in South Africa". Stephen Biko was probably the most influential young black leader in South Africa, and he died in the hands of the police.

Biko's death forced a response from the government because November 30 was election day in South Africa. The government's original statement claimed that Biko had died from an eight day hunger strike, and that no attempt had been made to force feed him. Later it was revealed that Biko had been fed intravenously and that when he died he was in fact above his normal weight.

Throughout most of his imprisonment Biko was receiving no special medical attention and it was not until just before his death that he was transported to a hospital, because the police felt that he was a security risk. The security forces claimed that he was faking brain damage despite a doctor's report to the contrary and a four square inch bruise on his left forehead. They finally moved him when he lay unconscious on the floor of his cell, foaming at the mouth.

The government's stalling tactics became clear when it took over four weeks to produce an autopsy report. This report acknowledged that five separate parts of Biko's brain had suffered damage and that there was evidence of minor burns, bruises and abrasions on twenty-five other parts of his body.

After a stall of another two weeks an inquest was started. During this inquest many policemen contradicted each other, retracted some of their statements and frequently claimed poor memory. Finally, on December 3 (just after the elections), the inquest came out with its findings. The police were exonerated. The reason established for Biko's death was an accidental banging of his head against a wall, yet a confidential memo from the police to their superiors clearly states that Biko's injuries had been "inflicted".

Biko, who had been arrested twice before that same year, is only one of twenty-three black prisoners who have supposedly "committed suicide" in the past two years. The official explanation for these murders include "slipping in the showers", "falling down the stairs" and now banging head against a wall. But these murders did not end with Stephen Biko. For instance, Lungile Tabalanza "committed suicide" this past July. His death occurred in the same police building and at the hands of some of the same policemen involved in the death of Stephen Biko. The official explanation for Tabalanza's death was that he jumped out of a fifth floor window.

These unwarranted, supposedly "accidental" deaths -- which all observers outside of the South African government realize to be obvious, cold-blooded murders -- are only the tip of the iceberg. In 1975, the South African regime executed 68 people (almost all of whom were black) -- about half the world's executions. And South Africa has the highest proportionate prison population in the world.

**HOW CAN THE UNITED STATES, WHICH CLAIMS TO ACTIVELY SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS THE WORLD OVER, CONTINUE TO SUPPORT A REGIME WHICH ROUTINELY MURDERS ITS PEOPLE? CAN BROWN UNIVERSITY SUPPORT THIS REGIME BY INVESTING ITS MONEY THERE?**

Vincent "Buddy" Cianci, Mayor of Providence, has agreed to lower flags on Tuesday to commemorate the life, and remember the senseless death, of Stephen Biko. Unfortunately, Brown's President Howard Swearer does not consider Biko's memorial as important. If the university's flag is at half-mast, it is most likely only because the Mayor's decision supercedes Swearer's refusal.

For further information, contact Eric Finke at 351-4502 or Bob Accola at 863-4491.

**BIKO MEMORIAL SERVICE: 8:50 P.M. ON THE COLLEGE GREEN, MOVIE: 9:00 P.M. WILSON 102 TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 12**