

No alcohol found in pilots of Machel aircraft (ME/8471/ii - Excerpt) Johannesburg, 20th January: The pilot and co-pilot of the presidential plane transporting President Samora Machel and Frelimo officials to Mozambique showed no sign of alcohol or any other untoward substance in their blood, Mr Renier van Zyl, Director of Aviation Safety for the Department of Transport in South Africa, told the Machel board of inquiry today. This was the post-mortem finding of the medico-legal examination on the bodies of four flight crew members and on three passengers conducted by a South African state pathologist. The navigator and radio operator showed signs of alcohol in their blood specimens. The navigator's blood alcohol content was 0.01 g per 100 ml and the radio operator's blood alcohol was 0.02 g per 100 ml. The medical expert said, however, the alcohol concentration may have been the result of indigenous ethanol formation due to decomposition changes. They said that all the flight-crew members were in a good state of health and according to their physical conditions were able to cope with normal functional duties during the particular flight. . . (SAPA in English 1141 gmt 20 Jan 87)