

Another cover-up?

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Suspicion is a terrible thing. And now we are faced with renewed suspicion that the plane crash which killed President Samora Machel may have been more than just an awful accident.

TRC investigators have revealed that South African police who first looked into the crash 12 years ago gave away part of the wreckage. Was this just an act of insensitivity or does it hide something more sinister?

The plane was flying Machel from Lusaka to Maputo and virtually from day one (it crashed on our side of the border with Mozambique on October 19 1986) there has been suspicion that SA was somehow involved. Speculation included a possible direct attack on the aircraft and that a false beacon was used to lure it off course.

The official board of inquiry, chaired by Judge Cecil Margo, found that blame for the crash rested with its Russian crew. But this finding was rejected by both Mozambique and the Soviet Union.

We would like to believe that South Africa had no complicity in the death of Machel. But given the recent revelations about death and mayhem before the TRC, there must be concern that once again an official inquiry was lied to, that the truth has yet to be uncovered.