

Child's moment of agony



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Mrs Rhona Edelstein, widow of Soweto riot victim Dr Melville Leonard Edelstein, tells daughter Shana: "Daddy is dead."

Widow, children mourn

JOHANNESBURG. — Schoolgirl Shana Edelstein, 11, yesterday cried out in anguish as her mother told her: "Daddy's dead."

Melville Leonard Edelstein, 56, chief welfare officer for the West Rand Administration Board, died in Soweto's bloody riot.

His widow, Rhona Edelstein, said through tears: "Melville understood Africans and loved them. He said there was no such thing as an impossible case. He was an incredible man, that's how I'll remember him."

"If ever there was a man who wanted to help Africans it was Melville," she said. "They were his life."

The Edelstein's have two daughters — Shana and Janet. Dr Edelstein also has two children, Michael, 28, and Vivian, 23, by a previous marriage.

The family maid, Mrs Sina Mabiletsa, 46, screamed when told of the doctor's death.

"He helped us, he understood us, he was one of us," she sobbed, adding: "The men who killed him must die."

Mr J C de Villiers chief

director of the West Rand Administration Board (WRAB), said: "It is tragic that Dr Edelstein should lose his life in the cause for which he had given his life. As a welfare officer he was a square peg in a square hole. He had a genuine feeling for Blacks."

"It was on his advice that WRAB handed out a quarter million rand in aid each year and always he was fighting for more."

Dr Edelstein did his Masters at the University of Pretoria. His subject was "The Attitude of Urban Africans to Whites."

African leaders tell of warnings

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG — There has been swift reaction from African leaders in Soweto to yesterday's rioting there. Some of the views expressed are: Mr Leonard Mosala, a member of the Soweto Urban Bantu Council, said the authorities should announce the immediate suspension of dual-medium instruction at Soweto schools and withdraw all police from the area.

Mr Mosala, who warned in the council earlier this week that enforcing Afrikaans in schools might result in another "Sharpeville incident" if the matter was not dealt with immediately, said last night that the police should not have confronted the protesting students.

"The police should have realized that directly they moved against the students, the students would retaliate".

The police should have consulted with the parents and school officials about how best to handle the situation rather than trying to control it themselves

Mr Mosala said the dual-medium controversy had been allowed to build up over many months in spite of repeated pleas from Black teachers and politicians to the Department of Bantu Education.

The Very Rev Desmond Tutu, Dean of Johannesburg, said Black leaders had predicted that something like yesterday's Soweto riot would happen.

"We Black leaders have been warning the Government about something like this for a long time if they did not stop and listen."

He said: "I can only appeal to the people of Soweto to restrain themselves, however hollow that might sound, but they have restrained themselves for so long, trying to get someone to