

Victoria climbie inquiry report



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April 2001 The “ Victoria Climbie” inquiry began; the inquiry reviewed what went wrong and why systems failed to prevent the death of this innocent young girl. On February 25 2000 Victoria Climbie was declared dead after months of abuse and neglect, the torture of which she was subjected to was what many described as “ the worst abuse of a child they had ever seen. ” The torture included starvation, cigarette burns, repeated beatings with a bike chain and hammer blows to her toes.

When Victoria was declared dead London doctors believed that the little African girl they had declared was actually named Anna. Victoria was born November 2 1991 in the small African village of “ Abobo” located in the Ivory Coast. Victoria’s parents Francis Climbie and Berthe Amoissi wanted the very best for their daughter but their country was being torn apart by civil war and poverty. So when, just before Victoria’s seventh birthday, her then 42 year old great aunt Marie-Therese offered to take her back to France with her, it seemed like the opportunity of a lifetime for Victoria.

Unknown to Victoria’s parents, Marie-Therese only wanted Victoria to help her access and claim better state benefits. Before Victoria even arrived in France Marie-Therese had already prepared a false passport in the name of her “ daughter” Anna. However the family of her intended target “ Anna” would not let her go, so it was easier for Marie-Therese to recruit another child of a different name than change the passport. This is the reason Victoria became “ Anna. It takes Marie-Therese and her boyfriend only 18 months to kill “ Anna. ” Marie-Therese first takes Victoria to Paris, where she used Victoria to access child benefits. Here Marie-Therese is required to send her “ daughter” to school, however Victoria only attends school half the time.

By now Marie-Therese has started to abuse Victoria. The authorities in Paris threaten to take action because of Victoria's non-attendance at school, so after 5 months Marie flees with Victoria. It is April 1991 when they arrive in West London.

It is believed there were twelve instances where intervention could have prevented Victoria's death. There more than 230 witnesses involved in the inquiry many of which could have in some way acted and prevented Victoria's death. It was Lord Laming who lead the inquiry into Victoria's death, he identified social services departments at four London boroughs, two police forces, two hospitals and a specialist children's unit who all failed to act when they presented with the obvious evidence of abuse. He believed such failings were "disgrace".

Lord Lamings inquiry concluded that a radical reform of child protection services was needed and that especially there should be a children's commissioner to head a nation agency. Lord laming concluded that it was not a lack of law but a lack of its implementation that allowed for such a tragedy to occur. One point of view on the Victoria Climbie case and the issues that were raised from it came from the government. Following the inquiry the government wrote report "Keeping children safe" in 2003.

This report stated that "The Victoria Climbie inquiry report showed that they system failed comprehensively, because of the ill-trained and overworked staff, who were unsupported by their management in their organisations and because of senior staff failing to take responsibility for the quality of children's services within the organisation." The government backed Lord

Laming and helped him to reform the child protection services and systems put in place following the inquiry into the Victoria Climbié case.