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Police raids, Timol's fall — 'hit SA image'

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OWN CORRESPONDENT
CAPE TOWN.—The South Africa Foundation's London manager says the country's image abroad has been badly knocked by the dawn police raids and the death fall of the Indian detainee, Mr. Ahmed Timol.

Writing in the foundation's newsletter, the manager notes that these news items, published in the British Press emphasised once again that the biggest influence on South Africa's reputation abroad are events in South Africa itself.

The dawn police raids and the detainee's death fall threw South Africa's image in Britain right back where the country's militant critics say it belongs.

The newsletter adds: "Just to cap everything the (London) Daily Mail published the photograph of a Johannesburg traffic cop with a resemblance to and an alleged admirer of Hitler.

"With all these events, the friends of Peter Hain took their opportunity and launched a defence fund for him. The Times piece about the Coloured usherette who is not allowed to look at the films in the 'White' cinema will no doubt help their cause."

OBSESSIVE

The newsletter said the Daily Telegraph "can always be relied upon to produce a sensible comment." It quotes the Daily Telegraph as saying "Two groups emerge badly from trials of this sort" (that of the Dean of Johannesburg).

"The grotesque agents provocateurs with their obsessive search for communists are giving South Africa a worse name than she deserves. The high talking and conspiratorial cliques which sit in London and pull the strings at no risk to themselves are equally abhorrent."

But in one week, the Security Police had shattered the hopeful atmosphere following Dr. Banda's visit to South Africa (reported in the Economist) with "one of their most menacing operations yet".

"And on top of this has come a judgment in the prolonged case against the dean which itself has sent the optimists crawling back into their shells."