

# The Star

## Trafficking in hysteria <sup>17/11</sup>

ONCE AGAIN Government-controlled newspapers are making shrill, emotive noises of alarm about an international communist "master plan" to seize control of South Africa. Mr Ahmed Timol, we are now told, was the key South African link in this blueprint for bloodbath.

Under scary headlines, and without regard for ethical considerations, the information (which is said to come in each case from unnamed sources in London) reads vaguely in the extreme.

There is no doubt a danger that some people may actually be taking such stuff seriously, without any supporting proof, since they want to believe it. Several points, therefore, need to be made at once.

First: it is all too easy to make serious accusations against the dead. Mr Timol, whether "guilty" or not, is in no position to defend himself or to sue for defamation.

Second: even if there is or were a plot it should not be beyond the wit and the considerable powers of the Security Police to show us some concrete evidence of it. It is high time they did.

And thirdly—what purpose is being served meanwhile by this loose and irresponsible hysteria-mongering?

In fact it is serving a most dangerous purpose.

This kind of "red plot" hysteria is distracting attention from the real nature of the communist threat and from the need to resist it in the only effective way.

And that way is to demonstrate, through policy and practice here, that the majority of South Africans would have nothing whatever to gain from communism.