



The Days of Police Raids are Back Again, But

# CRIME MARCHES ON IN ALEXANDRA

From Tennyson Makiwane

**SOMETHING** has hit Alexandra Township, like the "Asiatic flu," and disturbed the lives of many residents. Some call it the "perubin" or the "lubin" and these have become new household words.

It is enough to shout out "there it goes" and a big commotion starts. Some young men jump over fences and take shelter in the back yards whilst the women who brew beer hastily shove their tins into hiding places.

The days of the vicious "pick-up van" raids are back again. The new authority of the township, the Peri-urban Areas Health Board, has turned on the heat. A police van and the Health Board's newly recruited police force conduct relentless raids for passes, permits and beer. Many scores of people are arrested each day.

"We are determined to clean up the township," says the Health Board. It claims that the raids are aimed at eliminating vagrancy and lawlessness.

## KEEN STARTERS

The new police squad in khaki trousers, khaki shirts and black ties is fresh and enthusiastic. I saw them in action the other day. The van came down the street at full speed and jerked to a sudden stop outside a yard. Out dashed the police recruits and one of them in his haste tripped and landed on his face. This brought applause from the on-lookers and the police under the lash of the tongue of a young woman standing by.

"What are you all up to, you fellows—kissing the ground so early in the morning?"

Meanwhile the youths they were chasing had disappeared into the neighbouring yards.

I also saw something which made the claims of the Health Board look absurd. Hardly five minutes after the pick-up van had gone by some youths came out of their hiding places and continued with their game of dice.

Crime in the township marches on. Things will go from bad to worse if the Health Board continues with this type of "cleaning-up."

## NEW RUBBISH TINS

True, the introduction of the new Health Board which replaced the former Alexandra Health Committee was heralded by such good actions as the dishing out of new, shiny rubbish bins for the old ones. Some potholes in the dusty roads have been filled in.

On the other hand the new authority has conducted itself in a manner that has roused the worst fears of the residents. People are afraid that Alexandra Township might share the fate of Sophiatown and be removed.

The right to build new houses has been seriously curbed. Originally permitted a building space of 33½% on their plots, the landowners are now restricted to 30% and next year this is to be reduced to 28%. In practice this means that landlords who were able to erect dwelling houses for their own use as well as rooms for tenants on the same plot, will now be permitted to build their dwelling houses only.

With big bonds to pay off, the landlords are only kept going on

the rent paid by their tenants. No new business licences are being issued by the Health Board.

## NO REPRESENTATION

Perhaps the greatest blow to the residents is the fact that under the new authorities they have no representation whatsoever, as they had on the old Health Committee. Coupled with this is the ban of meetings of more than ten Africans in Alexandra Township. The people are voiceless.

It appears that the scheme of the Health Board is to grant permits only to a limited number of residents and then squeeze out the rest by intensified raids for permits and arrests.

When the permits were first issued by the new authority, only those who had resided in the township before 1951 and had rent receipts to prove it, were eligible. The indignation of the people, however, was aroused to such an extent that the authorities retracted this requirement and more people were

issued with permits.

Even before the issuing of permits was completed, however, a new police force was in the making. And every morning they drilled on an open square opposite the offices of the Health Board, giving an ominous pointer to the shape of things to come.

## HIDE AND SEEK

It is clear that the Health Board will fail to get the co-operation of the people as long as it plays a game of hide and seek with pass defaulters.

Raids and arrests will never stop vagrancy. Only jobs will and Alexandra job-seekers are still debarred from finding work in Johannesburg.

But if the Board were to settle down to the urgent job of uprooting crime and bringing in desperately needed social services like street lighting, the people would cooperate. The "peri-urban" would then be regarded with respect and not like a monster as is the case at the moment.

# KWELA KING CONQUERS CAPE TOWN

**SPOKES** Mashiyane has been and gone. In his short week-end visit, he took Cape Town by storm, and his two concerts for the Treason Trial Defence Fund were a rousing success, both socially and financially.

Spokes arrived in Cape Town on the same day that the Administrator of the Cape, Dr. Otto du Plessis, was putting up "Europeans Only" notices at the new Queen's Park swimming bath, and officials were chasing Non-European children out of the park where they had been playing quite happily with White children.

The Nationalists say Black and White must not enjoy themselves together because it leads to friction and the undermining of White civilisation. Both players and audience at Spokes' two concerts proved that the contrary was true.

## Police Escort

A posse of about 20 uniformed and Special Branch members of the police force were at the aerodrome when Spokes arrived, almost as if it were Lenin himself who had come to start the revolution. Did the police expect a riot? The moment Spokes came off the plane, two uniformed policemen walked across the tarmac and guided him to the exit for Non-Europeans only, just in case this great artist might take it into his head to walk through the wrong door.

How the edifice of White civilisation would have been shattered if he had!

At his concerts, there was no need for police. In Athlone in the afternoon, and in the Weizmann Hall in the evening, Black and White rolled up in their hundreds to hear him. They sat together in the auditorium, the Black men from Langa and the Black Sash women from Kenilworth, hecats

and squares, young men and women in jeans and fur-lined jackets, older types who had never been to a jazz concert before, wealthy businessmen and, perhaps, their employees—all paying tribute to musical artistry which has shown itself stronger than the colour bar.

## No Ban in Cape Town

They banned Spokes from playing at the Zoo Lake in Johannesburg on Sunday afternoons, because Black and White danced together to his music. Yes, he and his accompanist Jerry Mahlangu were threatened by the Special Branch that they would be arrested if they ever did it again—as if it were a crime to give



Spokes Mashiyane.

people pleasure just because your skin is black.

Spokes, if his gentle nature could harbour any feelings of revenge, got his own back in Cape Town, where he not only had Black and White in his audience, but Black and White played together on the platform. At the

## NEW BAAS

Le roi cest mort! The king of apartheid is dead, and it looks as if the country will be saddled with the high-priest himself. I never had any bets on who was going to take over, but if Herr Doktor Verwoerd gets the driver's seat a lot of people are expecting fireworks. Others don't give a darn who's boss.

An old Indian merchant told me: "I've been in South Africa since 1916 and four Prime Ministers have died since then. None of them did any good."

An African in the street, when he heard of Strijdom's death, said to me: "Swart or Verwoerd or Donges, how can we have a preference for any of them?"

Six of one and half-a-dozen of the other.

Anyway, with Verwoerd as Prime Minister the African women will have the right man to march on the next time they decide to advance on the Union Buildings.

But I guess Herr Doktor won't be around either when they get there.

## LET'S ALL SEE IT

I didn't get a chance to visit the

# UP MY ALLEY

Spring Festival, but I saw the Family of Man Exhibition in book form. Apart from the beautiful photography, it is something everybody should get a chance to see. And that goes double for the followers of apartheid. 280 photographers from 68 countries contributed their works and man, it's an eye-opener. The life of man, irrespective of his colour, whether he lives in Moscow or the deep South of the U.S.A., a village in India or an igloo in the Arctic, it's the



By ALEX  
LA GUMA



same all over. Love, hate, labour, pleasure, sickness, birth and death, the whole exhibition is a testament to the brotherhood of man.

It is something to touch the conscience of anybody. But then again, some people in this country just haven't got any conscience.

## YANKEE DOLLAR

It looks as if the Yanks are going to move in on us, if I read the papers correctly. Some investment outfit has arranged for millions of those pictures of George Washington—dollars to you—to be invested here sometime soon. Well, I guess it's part of the American plan for Africa. They've had their eyes on this continent for years now, especially since their markets in the East went phut.

I wonder what Die Volk is going to say once they see their sons abandoning the old corduroys and veidskoens for zoot suits. After all the republic is supposed to be one of the ware Afrikaner type.

Well, if Die Volk start objecting to the pickings going to the U.S.A., the Yanks can always send in the marines.

## Job Reservation in Steel Industry

JOHANNESBURG.

The announcement by the Minister of Labour that job Reservation will be extended to the iron and steel industry follows upon the abortive attempt last year to earmark certain jobs in the clothing industry for Whites only.

The sections of this industry which have been picked by the Minister include the making of jambs for doors and windows. This is a small section of the industry and the number of Africans engaged in semi-skilled and skilled jobs is insignificant.

According to Mr. G. Hlalukwana, Secretary of the Non-European Iron and Steel Workers' Union: "The employees who will be affected by this reservation of jobs will be hard hit. There is no point in hounding out these few skilled African workers. They should be recognised as skilled workers and paid a skilled wage."

"My Union is preparing a reply to the Minister protesting against this further inroad into the rights of the African workers."

So there were no incidents, a good time was had by all, and several hundred pounds were raised for the defence fund. Thank you Spokes. And come again.  
B.P.B.

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