

DAILY STAR 24.2.93  
& OTHER PAPERS

terrified as crime-spree menac

# Neighbours

# THE

# 4 brats flee kids' home to cause havoc



BEECHWOOD: Escaping kids laugh at the law

FRANK CURRAN

FEED-UP cops last night named Britain's worst children's home — where teeny tearaways laugh at the law and terrorise local residents.

A staggering 54 problem brats from Beechwood in Nottingham have been arrested this year after scraping and going on the rampage.

And police at tonight by the "mini-epidemic" — blame them for a FORTY PER CENT spike in car crime.

"These juveniles are wreaking havoc," fumed Insp Kevin Aldred. "They get a buzz from breaking cars and being chased by the police."

"Arrests won't frighten them and courts ban them back to the home because of limited powers."

Yesterday as cops revealed there had been 55 cases of children absconding in the last seven weeks, social services chief ordered an urgent inquiry.

Insp Aldred added: "Even when we return them to the home, they just walk out the back door and get back into trouble."

### Thrills

"Children as young as 12 are just laughing at the law — and there is not much we can do about it."

But feed-up staff at Beechwood say they're powerless to hold the otol and menaces.

The home caters for 17 tearaways aged between 12 and 17, but they can be moved on within two weeks and replaced with others.

Neighbours say they are often too frightened to report the little thugs after their houses are broken into and cars stolen.

Michael Scott, landlord of the nearby Duke of Cambridge pub, said: "I've put up barbed wire to protect us from the home — but it makes no difference."

"Glue-sticking containers are dumped in my garden and I've had the house broken into. You'd need to turn that place into a fortress to keep the kids in at night."

Residents' chairman

CLAMPDOWN Major It's time to cage the kids

PREMIER John Major targeted trouble-makers by pledging a new crackdown on today's crime.

But he made it clear that the Church and parents must share the blame.

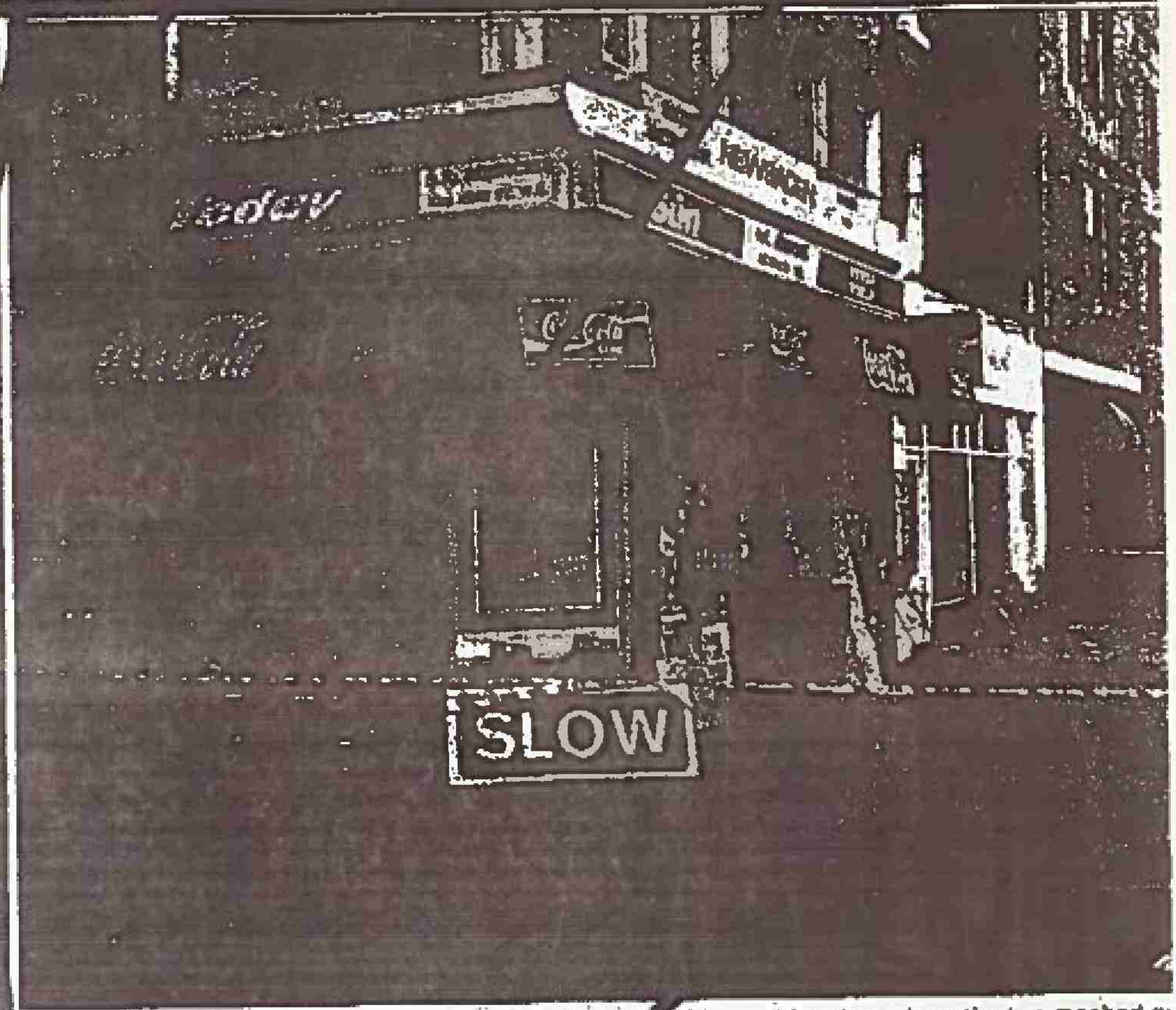
Education Secretary John Giddens and Home Secretary Kenneth Clarke are to tackle the problem.

Mr Clarke is changing current legislation which makes it hard for courts to lock up persistent offenders under 15.

He'll reveal plans soon for new secure units — run by private firms.

Contentious young offenders must be reviewed at least four times before appearing in court. Even then they are too often let off without stiff penalties.

# UNTOUCHABLE



SCENE OF THE SHOOTING: The corner shop in Hammersmith, west London, where the two masked g



NATH Innocent victim

# RAIDERS MURDER MAN

From Page One

more, the other gunman — believed to be aged about 18 — screamed at him: "You're a liar!"

Seconds later, Nath fell dead with a gunshot wound near his heart.

Cyril Fernando, owner of the newsagents in Hammersmith, west London, said last night: "They showed no mercy — they were maniacs, total maniacs."

Nath and Cyril were devout churchgoers. They became friends after meeting at twice-weekly Bible classes.

### Escape

Cyril, 42, said: "I was in the shop with Nath and four members of my family."

"These two young men came in with their faces covered. At first I thought it was a joke."

"Then they produced a gun and started using foul, filthy language." Sri Lankan born Cyril spoke to his family and Nath in Sinhalese, telling them to stay calm but try to edge their way out.

In the confusion which followed, four people managed to slip through a side door.

Cyril added: "I gave the robbers everything they asked for. They could

have taken the stock for all I care they were crooks and one shouters going to kill some

### Shout

"Nath had a chattering away didn't want to be alone with them, such a good friend."

"I saw my chattering out as I men scrambled

# RUNAWAY IN HOLIDAY

A BOY accused of setting fire to a woman in the street has been sent to an ADVENTURE camp because he is nowhere else to keep him.

The 13-year-old is said to be having the "time of his life" staying in a holiday camp at a countryside conference centre.

He was sent there by social workers after he absconded from a residential home THREE times in five weeks.

There is no report of which he can be kept for a

STAR REPORTER

camp housing Otterburn Hall stands in 100 picturesque acres of Northumberland National Park.

It is used by organisations such as the Midland Bank, British Gas and the Police Office for management training and family adventures weekends.

There are on-site squash and tennis courts and a croquet lawn. Camp organiser Chris Jones, who is also a magistrate, said the teenager was living in a £120-a-

week Scandinavian style but let get deep in woodland, C said. The centre is many miles from anywhere. This lad is a

### Charges

"He has been there for 11 weeks and there has not been a problem with him."

"In fact he is having the time of his life."

The boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, is expected to appear before magistrates at 5