

Group Act is wholly wrong, says race institute

From Our Correspondent

Cape Town, Friday.

THE COUNCIL of the South African Institute of Race Relations has condemned the spirit, intent and application of the Group Areas Act after a four-day conference in Cape Town during which the Act was discussed.

The findings of the council express "dismay at the terms of recent group areas proclamations for such towns as Pretoria, Durban, Cape Town, Ermelo, White River and Klerksdorp."

It says: "These like earlier proclamations for other towns, impose a greatly disproportionate burden of sacrifice on the non-White communities.

"Council condemns the ultimate uprooting of settled communities whatever their race, the resultant destruction of community and commercial life and the loss of limited freehold rights previously enjoyed by Africans.

TRADERS REMOVED

"Enforced removal of traders from existing business sites to areas remote from customers hitherto served, without any right to compensation for loss of goodwill, involves gross disregard of the fundamental principles of respect for vested rights.

"Council points out that this sets a disastrous precedent for the adoption of policies of a ruthless type which will be destructive of economic security.

"This glaring departure from a basic principle, widely recognized and so strictly adhered to in previous Union legislation, is all the more serious in view of the recent admission by the chairman of the Group Areas Board that the board considers that one of its duties in the administration of the Act is to seek to curtail the number of Indian traders on the grounds that Indians have at present too large a share of trade.

"The selection of remote areas for Indians in many recent proclamations is not unconnected with this policy.

"Council views with apprehension the recent prohibitions on Africans from attending non-White cinemas in urban areas.

"Such exclusion constitutes both an infringement on personal liberty and a further barrier to African recreation and development."

Political power should not be monopoly

From Our Correspondent

CAPE TOWN, Friday.—The monopoly of political power by one race was unjust and could not be perpetuated, and the need for devising a means of peaceful change to a system of Government in which political power was shared by all races was urgent, says the findings of the institute.

"Unless this is achieved there can be no hope of a stable political order in South Africa.

"The ultimate aim must be to establish a form of society in which persons will have ceased to regard themselves primarily as members of a particular race, and will have come to think of themselves as members of a single national community.

DIFFERENT CONSTITUTION

"A system of government will be required based upon a constitution in many respects radically different from the present constitution, which was framed by members of the white race 50 years ago."