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When the Suppression of Communism Bill was issued, the S.A.I.R.B. expressed its "full accord with the Government's decision to ^{take} ~~use~~ powers against communist organizations which are dictated to in their policy and tactics by a foreign Government," and agreed that "the Government must have the power to protect our society against threats to its safety".

But it considered that the provisions of the Bill whereby it was proposed to carry out these objectives might endanger perfectly law-abiding citizens and destroy some of the fundamental principles upon which the whole structure of our Western civilization rests.

The Suppression of Communism Amendment Bill is an even more far-reaching violation of these principles. It makes the application of the law retrospective and establishes the extremely dangerous precedent than an individual can be penalized for an act that was lawful at the time it was carried out.

A. The Institute has operated in the spirit of Western democracy.

For this reason the Institute has been in the past and is today resolutely opposed to communism. It considers that in all the areas controlled by the Russian Communists the individual is subservient to the State in all phases of his life and through this rigid control, denied that free development of his inborn capacities which it is the aim of ^{liberal Democracy} ~~liberalism~~ to promote.

But it must be borne in mind that communism has claimed for itself the defence of certain of the fundamental principles of Western democracy. To promote the liberties of all groups within a society is the professed aim of Communists. It is likewise the aim of many other groups ~~bitterly opposed to communism.~~ Hence to widen the definition of "Communist" as the Suppression of Communism Amendment Bill does, to include any person who, at any time has "encouraged the achievement of any of the objects of communism" gives the government the unfettered power to prevent activities upon which the progress of the Western democracies has been based.

On the conviction that this Bill destroys the very basis on which the established rights of the individual rest, the Institute ^{urgently requests} ~~calls on~~ the Government to withdraw the Suppression of Communism Amendment Bill.

See text for where
to insert

"The South African Institute of Race Relations is in full accord with the Government's decision to take powers against communist organizations which are dictated to in their policy and tactics by a foreign Government, and agrees that the Government must have the power to protect our society against threats to its safety.

"But the Institute considers that in making provision to enable the Minister to do these things the Government has, in the Suppression of Communism Bill, given to individuals powers which may endanger perfectly law-abiding citizens and destroy some of the fundamental principles upon which the whole structure of our Western civilization rests.

"In seeking to side-step the ordinary judicial processes of our civilization the Government is weakening one of the bulwarks of our system. In giving extremely wide powers to administrative officers to proceed against so-called "active supporters" for whom no clear description is provided, and in permitting such officers without warrant, without official witnesses, without publicity, and without the clear intervention of the Courts, to intrude on the privacy of the home (which in our system has always been sacred) the Institute considers that the Government is asking citizens to sacrifice values which should at all costs be preserved."

Noted

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