

It's high time that these people used their influence to tell the Prime Minister that they are disappointed at his failure to follow through on the Carlton Conference.

Marshalling free enterprise to solve problems means more than providing housing and services for urban Blacks on the shoulders of businessmen who have already paid heavy taxes precisely to provide for these. It also means releasing business from all the restrictions on the hiring of labour, such as the Planning Act, and from the operation of laws that prevent the vertical and horizontal mobility of labour.

**Janet:** What do you think of the granting of independence to the Ciskei?

**Helen:** A disaster — unmitigated, I mean — this independence is phony. Two-thirds of the people live outside of the Ciskei. Over 75 percent of the Ciskei's income comes from the earnings of migrants in the RSA and from grants from the central government in the RSA.

It means in effect that 2,1 million people will be deprived of their South African citizenship on December 4th. That means that all hope of participation in the political processes of the country in which they earn their living — ie the RSA — will disappear forthwith.

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## GROUP AREAS

KATHI JORDI AND ELEANOR ANDERSON

**I**T IS WELL that the Voortrekkers were a sturdy lot, for the roads named after them are usually long and need a good bit of trekking on before you get to where you want to be. Such at all events is Voortrekker Road in Vereeniging (meaning union, society, association, combination) which led us two Black Sash women to the south edge of the town where the Indians are being moved to a new, and nearby shopping area, comprising about fifty shops in a not especially impressive complex. Some South Africans reach for the tooth and the nail when change is mentioned, but the Indians are a sturdy lot too and have accepted the move with resignation, some indeed, the owners of very old shops, with satisfaction. The whole city block is to be demolished and the new development is to take in the adjoining park which borders Railway Street. White people are to be dislodged, too, the shopkeeper we are talking to informs us, and we look at each other carefully and nobody says 'Hah!'

It has been known for years that this was to become a 'White' area, though nobody could make plans because the new complex is just being completed. If our Government has a fault it is this apparent unwillingness to tell people likely to be affected just how they are to be affected. So often questions over the siting of a highway, the spending of money on a clinic, further investment in a business are met with the official response, 'We haven't decided yet' and this can be inconvenient and expensive.

The Indians seem to feel this too. They speak with courtesy to the sombre-faced officials who come in their GG cars to tell everybody what to do, but it is exasperating to have been promised a large shop and given a small one, or vice versa, or to be allotted a very obscure site when the one you had before was on a corner.

One trader is lucky to be moving from one big shop to another and is pleased that the African bus rank is to be moved near him, as most of his customers are Africans. But he shares the general

apprehension about rents. These are to start quite low but will soon be doubled and may escalate so rapidly that only heaven will know the price. Subletting is not allowed, nor does there appear to be space for expansion.

'Will the new complex accommodate everyone who has to move?'

'We really can't say', comes the official reply.

'IS everyone to be moved?'

'We haven't decided yet'.

With these uncertainties in mind, and also cheered by recentish talk of reform in the land, one well-to-do trader has made enquiries of estate agents with properties to let in 'White' areas. They said they'd let him know if anything turned up. These things take time — a long, long time. Another shop owner is distressed because he'll have to move twice, once almost immediately, and a second time when permanent accommodation is available for him.

'Please may I not stay put a little longer and then have just one move?' 'No'.

'But why?' 'The answer is no'.

'You realise I shall have to pay about R3 000 for carpeting in the temporary place?' 'So?' replies officialdom.

We buy a coke and two bananas each for lunch and ask the cafe owner how's business in the new place. Surprised at our interest he says things are not too bad, after all people do need to eat and drink. We tell him we came along from Johannesburg to wish him well. His surprise becomes astonishment.

'You did? Well . . . er . . . thank you'. He stares at us again. 'Well, I never!' He calls to someone at the back and his wife joins us. 'These two ladies have come to wish us good luck', he tells her.

'Some of the people just moved have had a terrible time', she tells us, gesturing at a little jeweller's shop across the street. 'Bue we hope things will improve. Allah has always watched over us and now we shall need his protection more than ever'.