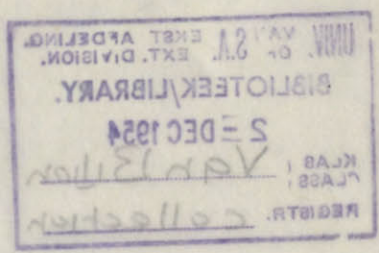


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NATIVE ECONOMIC COMMISSION

KOKSTAD 5th NOVEMBER 1930 9.35 a.m.

FORTYSECOND PUBLIC SITTING

PRESENT:

Dr. J. E. Holloway, Chairman  
Major W.R. Anderson, Mr. A.M. Mostert  
Dr. H.C.M. Fourie, Dr. A.W. Roberts  
Mr. F.A.W. Lucas, K.C. Senator P.W. leRoux van Niekerk.  
Mr. C. Faye, Secretary.

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Mr. Frank H. BROWNLEE: examination continued:-

CHAIRMAN: Yesterday, in speaking about advances you made comparisons with certain other countries - India and Australia. Is the position not rather different in this way, that here you have to encourage the Native to go out to work, whereas there he goes out because he wants the work? - He wants to live.

He has to live? - Here he has to work too.

There is more work than the people coming out? - Put it this way, the advance is an inducement for him to come out, but he will come out without that advance?\*

Some of them would not go out without that advance? - The Native does not go out because he wants to, but because he has to.

In other words, advances are used as a means of inducing them? - Yes. The temptation of a little cash is the extra inducement for him to come out, but I do not think, if advances were abolished, it would make any appreciable difference on the labour supply. I will tell you this. Originally, as I think I said yesterday, advances were unlimited then they were reduced gradually until they came down to £5, then it was proposed to reduce them from £5 to £2. Certain gentlemen who were interested in Native recruiting objected very strongly to this. They said it would ruin the labour



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supply. I happened to meet those gentlemen; we had a very hot wordy warfare on the point. I said the system was wrong and that the Natives would come forward without advances, or that the reduction to £2 would not make any difference at all. That is correct. They said, "if you reduce the advances to £2, you will kill the labour supply".

MR. MOSTERT: Is that not obvious, because the advance is advanced by the trader; the trader is the recruiter right through the territories? - It is becoming less and less; the recruiting is being done less and less by the trader now: it is being done more and more by representatives of the labour organizations.

Recruiters or runners? - Recruiters - labour agents.

The source is the Native runner? - Yes.

Who tells the boys anything? - Yes; that evil is becoming less and less; a runner who is found to be dishonest is immediately fired and the principals of the labour agents are all out for a square deal. Anything improper on the part of their representatives - the labour agents or the runners - is very severely dealt with nowadays. It was not so in former years.

Before Natives leave your area they are medically examined, are they not? - The Natives going to the mines are; I am not so sure of the Natives going to the sugar estates and employment of that kind.

Now tell us, are these boys properly examined by the doctor? - It depends a great deal on the doctor. I am inclined to think that in some instances the examination is very perfunctory.

Is not the examination generally very bad; the Natives are practically not examined at all? - So far as I know, there is no thorough overhaul.



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Now, you admit that is wrong?- I think a Native should be thoroughly examined, partly for the benefit of the employer and also <sup>for</sup> the Benefit of the Native himself. But you can imagine this, at a big Native recruiting centre, if a doctor had to examine thoroughly each batch of labourers, he would be doing nothing else; it would take him a long time to make a thorough examination of each of those labourers. I think, in many cases, the examination by the doctor is sufficient.

But we get boys returned to us?- Yes.

Boys who are hopelessly unfit?- If that is so, it shews the examination is imperfect.

Why we sometimes get boys from here with no hand; the old way was just to strip the boy?- That is not sufficient. The proof of the examination, it seems to me, is in the hands of the employer. If a man turns up at a labour centre medically unfit, that is proof that he has not been properly examined. The employers of labour are in a better position to know that than the magistrate or the labour agent, I should think.

MR. LUCAS: Do you think that recruiting increases the total supply of Natives; I do not mean the supply for a particular individual as against another individual, but the total number that would go out to work, does recruiting increase that?- I think so.

Materially?- I think so.

You think there are boys who come forward for the recruiting who otherwise would not?- I think so. I will give you the reason for that. The recruiters - in other words the labour agents - are of a very much higher standard than they were in former years. Anyone was a labour agent, as Mr. Mostert probably knows. Nowadays, labour agents are properly selected. The Native gets used to being recruited



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by a particular labour agent; he knows he is safeguarded - his money is safe, and that he is perfectly safe in going to that agent. If he did not trust him, he probably would not go at all. H

How would he live otherwise?- By sponging on his neighbours, probably.

Is that done to any considerable extent nowadays?- Yes, it is.

DR. ROBERTS: Do not Mr. Taberer and Mr. ~~GxExMill~~ Gemmill come down?- Mr. Taberer comes quite frequently, and Mr. Gemmill occasionally. They were here a few weeks ago.

MR. LUCAS: If there were a bureau established by the Council, do you think the same number of Natives would come forward?- I do not think so, they tried Government labour agents, as you know - do you know that?

No?- They had Government labour agents, and it was abolished after a very short time.

MAJOR ANDERSON: When was that tried?- I should say about 1912 or thereabouts.

MR. MOSTERT: It was after that?- I think it was before that.

The Government has labour agents now?- I am speaking of this country; they were tried here and done away with.

MR. LUCAS: Was it given a sufficiently long trial?- I am not in a position to say whether it was or was not, but the trial it was given was not a success.

MAJOR ANDERSON: There has been quite a strong movement amongst employers at the coast. They have had such an unsatisfactory experience with private recruiters that they wanted the Government to take it on, but nothing has been done yet, but you do not think it would be feasible?- There is one thing a Native objects to in a Native recruiter - the Government, he thinks, finds out too much about the Native



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- how much he is earning, and so on; that is the Native point of view; he says, "This Government man knows exactly what I am earning for taxes and so on." If he goes to a man who is not a Government man, he says "This man is not going to take all my money".

Now, the question is, looking at it from an Union point of view, not the point of view of a particular employer, mines, sugar planter, or any other particular class of employer - looking at it from the union point of view, is the increased number which is obtained by using recruiters an adequate return for the waste involved in recruiting expenses? - I think it is. I think the average Native requires to pass through some agency to put him on the way to labour; somebody on the spot near home, to whom he can go to put him through.

Is not that a more economical basis than the present one? - That is so. You might reduce labour agents' salaries.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: What is the recruiting fee now - is it not 12/6d? - I do not know. You see, many of the labour agents are on a salary basis, not a capitation basis.

MR. LUCAS: Some get £2.5.0 for every Native who goes to a sugar plantation? - I must say, in that case, most of the labour agents for the sugar plantations are on the capitation basis.

The mines used to reckon £3 a head? - I say that, under existing conditions, and for the time being, the labour agent is necessary - the recruiter is necessary for the time being, I think, and for some time to come.

MR. MOSTERT: Put it like this: if you were to take away your recruiting organization, what percentage of boys are you going to get going voluntarily to the mines? -



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There will be a hiatus; there will be a period when the labour supply will diminish.

MR. LUCAS: By how much - ten percent? - More than that; I should say by twentyfive percent, and that is purely a guess.

MR. MOSTERT: Would it not be more like 50%? - I put down 25%; it would not be less than that, I am sure; that would be for the time being. You say, the voluntary system is growing, Natives are going on their own more and more to the mines.

MR. LUCAS: They are compelled to go from this district in very large numbers now, on account of economic pressure? - That is so.

CHAIRMAN: In view of what you said in reply to a question of mine about advances, why do you think now that a large proportion would not go? - Because the agency they have been used to dealing with is removed. They are conservative; they will not do something new or fall into a new arrangement readily. The large proportion is used to going forward to labour through a labour agent; when that agency is removed, the man more or less has to look round and think about things before he goes to labour.

If it is economic pressure that sends him, he does not seem to have much option? - That question has been answered in another way in respect to another question. It is economic pressure that makes him go, but it is the advance that acts, in many cases, as the final stimulus for his going to the mines.

MR. LUCAS: A matter of a month or so, is not that all that is involved? - It might be more.

He has to find money for clothes and so on? - If he has not money for his clothes, he keeps on wearing



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what he has got, and if he has not money for the taxes, he keeps on owing it.

Not for long though?- Some of them do<sub>x</sub> quite well in evading the tax.

DR. ROBERTS: That they do not want any change, is not that an argument against any change? When did you make the change of doing away with the recruiting?- Well, I qualified my statement in regard to the recruiter or labour agent but saying that, for the time being and for some time to come, in my opinion, he is necessary. A gradual change might be worked up towards eliminating the labour agent.

MR. LUCAS: How would you proceed if you were trying to do that?- Supposing I now were the head of a Native recruiting corporation and saw that that was the benefit of the corporation and the Native, I think I would take a sample district; I would cease recruiting in that district, I would remove all my agents from that district and see how it works, and see whether the Natives from that district would go forward without a recruiting agency.

MR. MOSTERT: I do not want to argue this now, but is it not a matter of steady persuasion always on the Native to go forward owing to your recruiting organizations, otherwise you are not going to get them?- I go back to a previous answer that, if you do away with the recruiting agencies, for the time being - it may be 12 months or possibly more - there will be a lull in the recruiting or in the joining.

What percentage?- I go back again and say not less than 25%; but then the economic pressure will force that man out. You have at present an inducement in addition to the economic pressure. If the inducement is<sup>re</sup>moved, then there will be a reduction for the time being in the labour supply.



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MR. LUCAS: Would it be feasible to say to the Natives "~~that~~ We save a certain amount on you if you go forward voluntarily; we will pay those that come forward voluntarily 5/- a month more than the others". Would that have any effect?- Do you know that labour agents are preaching to Natives to go voluntarily?

Those are agents paid a salary and not so much per head?- Yes, I must admit that.

But then, today, so far as I am informed, no allowance/<sup>in the way of</sup> ~~anywhere~~ of extra wages is made to the voluntary boy?- No, not so far as I know.

The point I put to you was, "If you say to the Native 'if you go forward voluntarily and not through a labour agent, your pay will be increased an extra 5/- a month'" ?- I think that would be very sound.

Do you think the Native would respond to that?- He would be very suspicious of it first.

If the saving were given to the Native, or most of it were given to the Native in increased wages?- I think that would be very sound.

Do you not think that would go a considerable way to reducing your 25/-?- Yes, I do.

I thought you omitted the point I was trying to make - give the Native the benefit of what the recruiter takes out of the employer today?- Yes, I did not understand your question. If you make it worth his while, I think he would respond to that.

Would my figure of 10% be near the figure then?- I think you had better make it 20% for the time being, and eventually things would get back to normal just as was prophesied by agents of recruiting organizations that, when the advance was reduced from £5 to £2, there would be no labour. Well, there was a slight drop in the labour for the time being, but then it got back to normal again. I



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have said before, in regard to other matters, the Native is very suspicious of innovations.

Supposing that innovations were taken in hand by the Council and run by them, would that appreciably reduce the percentage that would be lost?— First of all, one has got to think out how the General Council would handle a matter of that kind. If the idea found favour with the General Council and the propaganda were done through the General Council, that would be something in the right direction, but as to whether the General Council is going to make itself responsible for labour supply, even indirectly, that is perhaps a matter which had better be discussed with the Council Officials.

MR. MOSTERT: Do you think if it were only voluntarily labour going up to the Rand and other places, the farmer will ever have a hope of getting labour at all?— Yes, he will.

I am talking about the farms in the Transvaal?— I have no knowledge of the farms there.

We have to get our labour through recruiting agents?— You said just now you were discussing the question of closed areas to recruiting. This happens to be a closed area, that is so that the farmer may have an adequate supply of labour. The policy is very sound.

How is recruiting now; it is bad, I suppose?— There is no recruiting here at all; no recruiting is permitted.

How does he go forward from here?— He may go forward voluntarily or go to another district; he may go in somebody else's name, and so forth.

How do you find that compares with what it used to be?— Find what?

Do you find 50% of them go out now - being a



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closed area - to what it used to be? - I do not know; I cannot give you any information on that.

MR. LUCAS: Is there any means of getting the figures? - If you wish to examine them, I think Mr. Beard would give them - the local representative of the Recruiting Corporation. I asked him to give evidence; he said he would rather not, but I think, with a little persuasion, he would. I can find out whether he will.

He is a N.R.C. man? - Yes. I do not think the answers to these questions would do him any harm.

As far as you are aware, has anybody of employers offered to share with voluntary Natives what they save in recruiting? - I do not know of any such cases. If I might offer a suggestion, this idea might be put to the General Council and discussed with the General Council, and you probably will get some very wise suggestions from the Council as to the feasibility of this scheme and how far it is likely to act and react upon the Native labour supply; you will get a very sound consensus of opinion from a body of Natives.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: What is your opinion about deferred pay? - I am a great believer in it, and it is made use of to a considerable extent. Many Natives, when they are recruited, sign the contract, "I will draw 10/- only", or "I will draw £1 only a month". The balance is kept for him or sent to him when he gets home or perhaps handed to him at the labour centre even.

MR. MOSTERT: Is not that only for small boys? The bigger boys do not go in much for deferred pay? - Quite a number do; you can get full details of that from the mines.

Have you any evidence of hoarding gold in the territory? - Only from hearsay. When I was in Butterworth there were two cases of men who were said to be very well off;



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it was also said these men were hoarding money - in one case £200 and in the other £400. In each case this money had been buried secretly. In both cases the misers died. In neither case was the money ever found, so far as I know. One trader interested himself in the matter and tried to do a little Sherlock Holmes-ing about it, but he never found the money. One of the advantages of this co-operative system is to bring into circulation money which is hoarded; it is having that effect.

DR. ROBERTS: At one time there was a disparity between the gold that was in circulation and the amount of gold that ought to be in circulation, and at that time it was said it was being hoarded; you remember that? - Yes.

You do not think that is so? - There is still hoarding; there is no question about that.

MR. MOSTERT: Of gold or notes? - Gold or silver. In the case I speak of it was said to have been gold and silver.

Gold or notes? - I do not think they would take the risk of hoarding notes. When notes first came into circulation here the Natives were upset about it on account of rats, fire and so forth.

CHAIRMAN: On the question of survey, have you any experience of survey in this district? - Yes, but not very wide though.

MR. LUCAS: Will you explain what is covered by the words "surveyed district"? - That is where the arable allotments are surveyed.

Does it mean the whole district is surveyed? - Yes, and a proportion of the building sites and the building areas are surveyed.

And the grazing is communal? - Yes, it is.

CHAIRMAN: The arable land is given out then in definitely surveyed portions to various people; but what



sort of title is given them?- How do you mean, what sort of title?

Freehold title?- You could get a copy of the title at Umtata; I am not exactly sure what the conditions are; they pay a communal quitrent. I cannot give you the details of the conditions of title.

MR. MOSTERT: You do not know the quitrent?- It varies; you can call it a couple of pounds; but all that you can get definitely in Umtata.

MR. LUCAS: You said yesterday one of the reasons why the Natives went out to or preferred the towns to the farms - I have forgotten what your answer was about additional foodstuffs?- The Native taste in food has changed. If you go to an average Native hut nowadays, you can always get a cup of tea, as I very often have done, with sugar. He requires a china cup. He gets used to that. His tastes, as I say, in food are changing; his tastes are becoming more extravagant, and his natural foods are being replaced, to a certain extent, by European foods.

Is that change still going on?- Yes.

Has it been more rapid in the last few years, or has it been steady?- I think it has been steady.

And you think that is what of the reasons why he has to go out?- It is one of the minor inducements for his going to town, I think.

Now, you heard yesterday what the rations were to farm Natives; do you think that that has any effect in connection with making Natives prefer towns to farms?- I think it might. In the town, as a rule, - where he is employed in town - he gets a more varied ration, a more attractive ration.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: And if the farmer had to pay him more than the townsman and did not give him tea?-



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I think he would go to the place where there is more money, and sacrifice his craving for tea. I used "tea" simply as an illustration.

MR. LUCAS : Are there other foods now that are becoming required in the Native's own home - tea, coffee, bread?- I do not know that there is anything else.

Have you noticed any change in the amount of meat the Native consumes?- No, I have not noticed any change; I am not able to speak of any change.

Now, a number of Natives are breaking away from their tribes, who still do not want to go and live in towns or work on European farms. The surveyed district is one way of dealing with them; but where you do not have the surveyed district, is there any scope for these Natives in the Transkei - any opening for them?- You mean, to lead the lives of individualism?

Yes?- Yes, there is.

What scope?- A man may say, "Well, I am nominally subject to this chief and I suppose I must regard myself as subject to him", but he is able to live a life of considerable independence from the authority of the chief.

Are there any instances of his being allowed to fence off the land that he is working?- Yes.

Does the tribe interfere, or the Chief or the tribe as a whole interfere with him then; is he able to enjoy the benefits of his production?- I cannot quote any particular case, but I believe he would be allowed to fence without interference. You see, we have for some years past tried to encourage fencing; there is a fencing scheme under which blocks of land are fenced; the Council pays half and the owners pay the other half. That is becoming popular gradually.

And is that happening on tribal lands?- The



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only experience I have had of it is in surveyed districts; but it may happen elsewhere. I have seen fenced lands in a communally occupied district.

Now, if that develops considerably, is not there likely to be trouble - in the conflict between that and the tribal system? - No, I do not think so. The owners rights in the land are recognised.

How is the land allocated - I am speaking of communal land in an unsurveyed district? - In the way I described yesterday. As a rule, when a man is married he goes to his headman or chief as the case may be and says, "I am married, I want the land". The headman or chief, in due course, sends a list of men requiring lands to the Magistrate, the Magistrate also, in due course, sends out a constable to investigate each case and to allot the land or withhold it; generally it is allotted.

By the Magistrate? - By the constable who comes back and reports what he has done, and a record is kept of the lands allotted, with their approximate dimensions, so many paces by so many paces.

That implies there is land to be distributed? - New lands are being distributed.

And there is still land available for distribution in that way? - There is.

Now, when a plot is allotted like that, for how long can the allottee hold it? - For ever.

And does the right to work that particular lot remain with his family? - Yes, the custom is that the land is transferred to his heir.

DR. ROBERTS: But you have the one man one lot, because his father's lot would go to the son; so there would be two lots and perhaps three and four? - Yes; well,



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those lands are apportioned to needy people, but we still maintain in principle this, in connection with the idea of one man one lot; if a man dies, his landless son will get that land, or it may be that a son who already has land will exchange the one piece he has for his father's land.

It is one man one lot?— That principle still applies.

MR. LUCAS: Who looks after the widow and children; supposing the allottee dies and leave a widow and children, who looks after them?— So long as she remains at her husband's kraal, it is the duty of the heir, if there is one, to maintain her out of her husband's estate, if he has any.

But supposing that the son has himself, by then, got another lot?— The widow remains in occupation of the arable land.

Does the son come into the picture at all then?— No, not before she dies. If she dies, very often the land is left in charge of the son, who cultivates it for the benefit of the children, if there are any. It varies according to the circumstances of the particular family. (Q) The son does not have to carry the responsibility of the family, as well as his own family in respect of one lot of land?— Responsibility in what respect?

A man has a plot of land, his family are living with him on that. He dies. One of his sons has a plot of his own and that son, say, is the heir; when he becomes heir, through his father's death, can he retain his own lot?— He can retain his own lot.

And must he help to work the lot of his father?— Well, filial duty compels him to do so. There is no law; it is a custom. As a dutiful son he will see that his mother is properly looked after.



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When the mother dies and the rest of the children have gone off, what happens to the lands?- As a rule, supposing the heir has brothers - married brothers - the land will be allotted to them.

Supposing he has land already?- It will be allotted to somebody outside the family; but there is a very strong tendency to keep the land in the family.

CHAIRMAN: Is it not the case that, at the last Bunga, a motion was carried to the effect that where there are minor children of the deceased man, and in the same location there are landless Natives, the land should go away from that family to the landless Natives?- I do not know; I am not associated with the Council; I do not know anything about that debate.

MR. LUCAS: Now, a question was put to you yesterday to the effect that, if the Natives improved their agriculture, there would be adequate land in the Transkei for the present population. I would like to follow that up to provide for the present population and any natural increase; what degree of improvement in agriculture would be necessary to make the land adequate; what amount of change is necessary to make the land adequate; is the change one which is reasonably possible in the near future to the neighbours with the capacities we know they have today?- It is possible, but it is not probable. It is possible for the Native so to improve his land that the country will hold a greater population than it does, but the improvement in agriculture is gradual. Perhaps I might put it this way, that the improvement in agriculture does not keep pace with the increase of population.

Now, is it possible with Native habits and Native character, to make the improvement fast enough to allow the land to keep pace?- I do not think so, because he



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will work it for quite a number of years; With these agricultural demonstrators and all kinds of propaganda, work has been carried on, but the progress remains slow. I think almost everything possible to speed up improvement in agricultural methods has been adopted, but it is still inadequate as a whole.

DR. ROBERTS: That does not mean it will always remain slow?— I do not see anything in particular that is going to make the improvement accelerate.

CHAIRMAN: But is not movement by itself inclined to accelerate it?— Well, I have no knowledge of dynamics.

MR. LUCAS: You were not discouraged by what has been done; in fact I take it you thought what had been done was very encouraging?— I am, but still the progress is much slower than anybody would have it — than we would have it. I say that the increase of population is more rapid, if one uses comparison, and compare them in that way, — it is more rapid than the improvement in agricultural methods. That is my opinion.

And that is taking into account that the country is supported by a very large income from outside labour, or from working outside?— Yes.

And you are assuming that will continue?— Yes, I am assuming that will continue.

So that, as far as this area is concerned, is it correct to sum up your view by saying that there is a shortage of land?— There is a shortage of land, yes. Mind you, things may seem to be inconsistent. I have said there is still arable land for allotment, and I have said that there is insufficient land; those two things may seem to be inconsistent. Things vary very much in one district from another. For instance, in Pondoland, there is a huge tract of land on which there is no cultivation whatever.



Mr. Brownlee

The coast belt running from Port St. Johns to the Natal Border, varying from six to eight miles, - it is the wild coast, as it is called, - that is the ~~xxxxxxx~~ ancient Pondoland grazing ground - there are very few huts or any cultivation in that area.

CHAIRMAN: Is it arrable?- Yes, not all of it. I do not think crops grow too well there, but still it is arrable.

MR. LUCAS: In practise, do you think it would be feasible to bring in members of any other tribe into that area?- You could do it, but you would have war. For that reason it is not feasible, firstly, owing to tribal jealousy, and secondly, we undertook not to alienate any portion of Pondoland without the consent of the people.

So that you cannot average up the area of one tribe with the area of another?- No, it would be a very, very dangerous thing to introduce aliens into a territory occupied by a particular tribe.

DR. ROBERTS: And if they were prepared to accept the suzerainty of the tribe and so on?- No tribe would agree to accept other people, they would not do it willingly.

MR. LUCAS: They would accept applications from individuals?- Yes, and by a recognised process they would become recognised as part of the tribe.

But any outside interference would be resented strongly?- Yes, especially if it were attempted to introduce people in large numbers.

In the working of their lands, do the Natives cooperative in the use of cattle - the use of oxen?- Yes.

Is that common?- Yes.

Is there any recognised way in which they co-operative; one man have the oxen, another the plough, and so on?- The most usual way is this: one man has four



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and another has four oxen, they make it into one span. Another man has six, or eight oxen as the case may be; this is combining the oxen to make a plough span. One man may loan another man a whole span.

Do they do that voluntarily, or is there any money return~~ing~~ attached to it?— I have never heard of any compensation being claimed on the part of a man who loans another cattle.

It is usually voluntary?— Yes. I can tell you there is cooperation, but what the basis of the cooperation is I do not know.

It is not finally worked out in commercial quantities?— No, it may be purely friendly, neighbourly cooperation, I think it generally is so.

MR. LUCAS: Now, coming to the question of cattle, In looking through the figures of the number of cattle for this district, and taking the population of 1921, without assuming any increase at all, the number of cattle appears to represent roughly one and a half per head of the population?— Yes.

Do you consider that one and a half cattle a head of the population is more than the population needs for ~~xxx~~ ploughing and for milk; I am not dealing with the question of overstocking now, or the availability of land?— I accept those figures, but I do not know that I have any opinion on that.

DR. ROBERTS: It is only one per head in the Transkei?— You say a million cattle for a million people, in effect?— X

Yes?— Well, I am not in a position to say really; I should say it is too many.

One per head?— Yes.

CHAIRMAN: The question assumes they must remain pastoralists?— Yes.



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Clearly the evidence is overwhelming, the land is overstocked?- Yes.

But there is the other aspect; have the people on that land got enough cattle for their needs; have the people in the country enough cattle for their needs?- Yes.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Have they too many?- There are too many for their needs.

MR. LUCAS: Some individuals have a lot too many; there is no question about it?- Yes.

But is there any appreciable number that has not got enough for its needs for ploughing and for milk?- Well, the milk supply is very poor. It all comes back to the question of overstocking. There is not enough grass to feed the cow to produce sufficient milk. The average family is generally short of milk because, first of all, the cattle are scrub cattle, and secondly they do not get enough to eat; but the question as to whether a million cattle is too many or too few for a million people, is rather a different one. There are many aspects from which the thing might be regarded.

If you tell us the different aspects as they occur to you, it may help us?- You have a system among them all - what you call "Ngoma", of which you may have heard, by which one man lends another cattle; for instance, I lend you ten head of cattle and I can call upon you for the return of those cattle at any time I think fit, and I reward you for the care of those cattle by giving you some of the progeny. That is a system that is universal throughout this country. So that a man who has a large number of cattle dots these about among his friends and relatives under that system, so that, although a man may own a very large number of cattle, those cattle are widely distributed.

Have you any instance here of Natives doing that on European land?- Yes; I cannot give you chapter and verse,



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but we know it is done.

To any substantial extent?- I have got only hearsay evidence on the point, but I believe it is done to a considerable extent. You may perhaps find more definite information on the point elsewhere; but I have reason to believe that, in Pondoland, certain traders do it to a considerable extent.

Now, Dr. Henderson worked up a statement for Victoria East shewing that, in 50 years, that district will become economically much worse off?- Yes; I have seen those figures.

Have you ever made, or do you know of any comparison made of any other district on similar lines?- No, I know of no comparison such as Dr. Henderson brought up.

Is it possible to make it for any other district; are the figures available?- You would have to have figures of the number of stock over a period, would you not?

Well, that was one of the things he did?- And the amount of grain produced; the figures might be obtained, but I think it would be rather difficult to get them. He had statistics, but I doubt whether any statistics can be obtained here. He worked back on those statistics contained in a number of old blue books. I do not know that there is any set of figures upon which one might work in this part of the country.

Have you yourself made any investigation, or have you any facts on which you can say whether the economic condition of the Natives is better or worse than it was 20 or 30 years ago in any district?- I have no figures, but my impression is that the economic condition of the Native today is better than it was 20 years ago.

In what respect?- You see, individual cases differ a very great deal. We have the fact that his methods



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of agriculture of improving in one case very much more than in another.

We have got to take it generally? - Yes, generally. You have improvement in agricultural conditions generally, and improvement gradually in stock.

There has been an improvement in stock in the Transkei, has there? - Oh, yes. That is the work of the agricultural schools. They are distributing stud rams, bulls and so on; keeping thoroughbred horses and so on and thoroughbred fowls. That is quite an important factor of agricultural development; one might call it poultry keeping.

Do they sell eggs? - Yes, the Butterworth market is kept alive by Natives' vegetables and eggs. It is very much more marked in the Butterworth district than elsewhere.

Take the district of Mount Ayliff? - Well, that might not apply there. The history of the people there is different from the history of the people on the Transkei proper. The history of the Fingoes has left a particular impression. The history of the people here has left a different impression.

Well, now, take Mount Ayliff - if you will answer my question as applied to that; there are in that district of Mount Ayliff - are the Natives today economically better or worse off than, say, 20 or 30 years ago? - I should think slightly better.

In what way? - Well, the stock has increased for one thing; there is an improvement in roads. There, again, there is improvement in agricultural methods in a number of cases.

MAJOR ANDERSON: The level of wages is higher too, is it not, for one thing? - There is more money earned. I suppose there is a rise in wages.



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DR. ROBERTS: More schools?- Yes, and more education, which means that their earning capacity is increased. There are more wagons owned, more ploughs, more agricultural implements, so I think I am justified in saying that the economic position is better than it was 20 years ago.

CHAIRMAN: On the other hand, have their needs increased in the last 20 years?- Yes.

Which has increase faster, their material yield or their needs?- I think they have just about kept pace with each other.

They are living on a higher level?- Yes.

And, as far as their ability to get the means is concerned, that is about the same?- Yes. As a feature, you have this introduction of the co-operative system that makes for economic stability, that is growing. It is a factor.

MR. LUCAS: For what purposes is that being used, - the co-operative system?- The purchase of fertilizers is one which is included in agricultural co-operation. Then there are some of these co-operative societies which are purely banking.

For making advances or loans?- Advances for productive purposes; but then you have your agricultural co-operation pure and simple.

Are there a number of Native farmers' associations?- Yes, there are.

Do they hold shows?- Oh, yes.

Do they run these shows entirely by themselves, or are they assisted by Europeans?- Well, I will give you a case in point. I was stationed at Butterworth before I came here - I will bring a case nearer home; I was asked to open a show at Mount Frere last year, and a feature of that show was that there had been no European assistance,



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that the money was the Natives own money, and that the show was run by Natives for Natives.

Would you describe it as a successful show?-

A wonderful show; a very successful show.

In the organization and in the quality of the goods shown? - The organization was good and the quality of the exhibits was excellent.

And the business management of it? - The business management was alright, but slow - I am speaking generally now; the business management of these shows is entirely in the hands of Natives; they have a treasurer or joint-treasurer or secretary, who has, in due course, to render accounts to the General Council. I know that the personal responsibility in the General Council is to keep hitting them up to render their accounts.

But eventually it is fixed up; it is only a bit slow? - Yes.

Who are the judges, Natives or Europeans? -

They are Europeans.

MR. LUCAS: What would be the reason for having European judges? - I am not able to state definitely, but one reason would be that the Native would be likely to be prejudiced in favour of or against an exhibitor. I think they have greater confidence in European judging. Besides, the European is the better judge; he has the more expert knowledge. The Natives acknowledge that the skilled European has a greater knowledge of agricultural matters than has any Native.

Are there Native storekeepers in the Transkei? -

I believe there are; I cannot tell you of any particular case where there is.

Are there any in this district? - No.

Itake it you do not know much in detail about that? - No.



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Have you had experience of adjoining districts to this; have you been in what is called the Siskei and had experience there?— I had experience there many years ago; I was stationed for a while at Keiskamahoe, and King Williams Town.

What are the relations between whites and blacks in this district - in the Transkei as a whole?— I should say the relations are excellent.

Would you say that of the Siskei?— No.

How would you account for the difference?— Well, if I answer that fully I will probably be taking considerable risk. Well, I will illustrate it by an experience I had myself. I was walking a good many years ago outside King Williams Town. I met an old woman carrying a bundle. She put it down and said "Kindly give me a tickey". I gave her a tickey and then began the conversation. She waved her hand over the town and said "There are no longer any white chiefs there". Now, that remark was most illuminating to me. If my interpretation of it was correct, there was no white man there to whom the Native had ready access. That was my interpretation of her remark. I think there has not been that relation between the European officials and the Natives which there has been here; there has not been the close association down there and the sympathy down there that there has been here. I am speaking purely now of officials and not of the general European public.

DR. ROBERTS: Why take the officials?— Because, after all, the change in the feeling at King Williams Town - changing I agree at the time - is due to the change in the character of the people who govern them - the local government; that is my opinion?— Well, not necessarily King Williams Town particularly, but the people who govern that area of the Siskei, the personnel or the character of the



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the administrators has changed. Now, for many years there was an office - a special Native magistrate at King Williams Town; he was independent entirely as a magistrate; he was called a special magistrate and was Native commissioner; his work was to keep in touch with Natives and deal with Natives and nothing else. As far as I understand it now, the office is under the Magistrate of King Williams Town's direct control - in fact, the change came about while I occupied the position of acting special magistrate. The Chief Magistrate at King Williams Town insisted on this office being subordinate to him. Well, that makes a difference in a way, but the main thing is the difference in the character of the officials.

MR. LUCAS: You have dealt with the officials. Now take the ordinary public; is the relationship in the Siskei between the employers and the Native employees satisfactory? - I think it is. I think the relations of all storeboys, garden boys and people like that employed in the area, and farm boys, are satisfactory on the whole, but I think there is a feeling of antipathy - an estrangement between the Natives as a whole and the Europeans as a whole. I do not want to be mistaken in regard to my statement with reference to the character of officials. The official nowadays is burdened with an enormous volume of work: writing up this, keeping records of that, taking census and so forth. He has not time to be in close touch with the Native that he had before. I am not speaking personally at all. If I did, one could say a great deal of good about certain of the Native officials who are now Native commissioners. There is rather a swing back, and the appointment of magistrates as Native commissioners is going to have a very good effect; it is going to make the official realise that he has a



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responsibility in regard to Native administration, whereas I think that his responsibility in that respect has rather been lost sight of.

MR. LUCAS: What would you say was the attitude of the Native to the missionaries today?- There again, a most distressing situation has cropped up. The statement is being made that the missionaries are not taking us along fast enough.

CHAIRMAN:

Is this the complaint of the Natives?- Yes.

What does he mean by "not fast enough"?- The development is not fast enough - improvement, general progress.

Can one take that seriously?- I am saying the Native says so.

Yes; but can one take the Native seriously when he says that? Is he not expecting the missionary to wave a wizard's wand over him?- Yes, undoubtedly. I will give you a case in point. This is what brought the thing very definitely to my knowledge. Some time ago I sat on a Select Committee of the General Council to discuss the question of establishing an industrial school for girls. A certain offer had been made by a missionary to undertake the whole scheme. The Natives were absolutely and totally opposed to this institution being under any missionary control; they would not have it under missionary control, it must be under the control of the Council.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Was that a special denomination?- It was; it was Wesleyan. By the way, it was not an objection to the particular denomination, because a number of the Natives who sat on that Committee were Wesleyans. Their answer to me was "The missionaries are not taking us along fast enough". They said "Look at our Council institutions, our agricultural farms; look at the they are bringing about. There is no such progress being



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brought about by missionary effort. The results of the efforts of our own organization are much more rapid than they are by missionary enterprise".

MR. LUCAS: Is that correct in fact?- I do not know that it is; I do not say that it is.

CHAIRMAN: Take the Bunga farm or school at Tsolo; no doubt it may be there, But do they realise what they get from the missionary they get for nothing, whereas the other they have to pay for?- I do not think they have regarded it from that point of view.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: They did not compare the two?- No, they did not distinguish between the two.

MR. LUCAS: Does the fact of the missions being denominational enter into the question?- It did not enter into that question.

No, but generally, on their attitude towards the missionary?- No.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Do they recognise the generosity of the missionaries?- Yes, they are very appreciative. They say "the time of the missionary has passed"; "we want institutions we can ourselves control in the way that we control the agricultural school".

DR. ROBERTS: Do you not think there is a great deal to be said for that?- Yes, there is a good deal to be said for it.

CHAIRMAN: It is like a motorcar that has not sufficient power left?- That is what they say. They say "We appreciate very much what the missionary has done for us; we will thank them very much, and now we will look after our own affairs".

DR. ROBERTS: We might expect that period of improvement to arrive?- Yes; I think it is quite a normal development.

MR. LUCAS: I understand education is free in the schools in the Transkei?- Yes.



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That is different from the other provinces we have been to. All the Natives there have to pay fees. I understand that there, one of the reasons why they object to mission schools is that the mission schools cannot go ahead fast enough, because they have to raise money by fees, and the Natives reckoned they would be better off under their own schools, because then they would have them free; that factor does not enter into the Transkei, does it?— No.

Well, now, do you find much trouble from denominational competition in the Transkei?— Oh, it raises very difficult situations sometimes.

And do the Natives as a whole resent that?— You mean the denominational competition?

Yes, and the want of cooperation?— No; it is rather a curious position. We will say, for the sake of argument, there is a Presbyterian church there and a member of that church, for certain very good reasons, is put under discipline and is expelled from that church — it is a fact that this does happen; that man goes up and sets about raising opposition to the church from which he has been expelled, and eventually he gets the people to ask for a church of another denomination. Whereas he was an ardent Presbyterian, he now becomes, we will say, an ardent Baptist, and he does his utmost to induce his friends and neighbours to become Baptists. And the next thing is to induce the Baptist missionary to establish a church there. That arises out of the action of the Natives in many cases.

I take it, from what you have said about the General Council Meeting, that that was not a factor that entered into their argument?— No, it was not a question of the denomination; that did not come into it at all.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: If the missionary had not control, the result would be chaotic?— Yes, they must



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be under European control for quite a number of years to come. I have no objection to the establishment of an industrial school under the council, but this particular missionary stated that he had been given a promise that the industrial school would be established at his mission. Rather a delicate and difficult position arose. However, the Natives were insistent that they wanted the institution to be under the Council control for the reasons they gave, namely, that progress would be more speedy and the arrangement more satisfactory.

MR. LUCAS : Did the Natives complain about the difficulty of getting education for children - workers on farms?- I have not heard any complaint like that.

Now, what is the Native opinion, so far as you know it, of recent Native legislation?- First of all, he is very suspicious. I can only refer you to Solomon Plaatje's book. He has material in that book which is beyond argument. Then you have Professor Jabavu's warning in his book, and in particular you have the report of the Select Committee which sat upon the Prime Minister's Native Bills in the General Council. That report created a certain amount of interest. As a result of that report being placed before the General Council, three Natives were sent down to give evidence before the Select Committee. That gives you an indication of what is in the mind of every intelligent Native, because it seems to me there was a certain amount of earnestness in that report, a very definite expression of opposition to these bills in the character in which they were then presented; but at the same time there was a reserve in the mode of expressing themselves, which, to my mind conveyed an impression of very great depth of feeling.

DR. ROBERTS: You are talking of the three delegates now?- I am talking of the report of the Select



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Committee; The report presented by the Delegates. I wrote for a copy of the report, but I have not got it. But I must say this that, personally, - I am saying something perhaps that I should not say -, I have always had the belief that General Hertzog is out, and very courageously out, to do something towards solving the Native problem; but I agree with the Natives in saying that that effort was in some respects unsuitable.

MR. LUCAS: We had a Native recently who said to us a thing which should be overlooked in an European is considered a crime in a Native. Is that a common outlook among the Natives?- Not in this country, I do not think. One often hears it said "There is one law for the white man and another for the Native".

It was in the Transkei we got that?- I think that is rather exceptional than universal.

Does the Pass Law cause any difficulty in the Transkei? You have only a stock pass, I think?- We have travelling passes.

In the Transkei itself?- Yes.

Or for leaving the Province?- If a man wants to go from here to there (indicating), he carries a pass.

Who issues that?- It is usually issued by the police officers.

CHAIRMAN: You say "From here to there". What do you mean by that?- Say to a neighbouring district.

He may move about in his own district as he likes?- He may move about freely there, yes.

They know definitely what the district boundaries are?- Yes.

Do you find that is necessary?- I do not think it is very necessary. You use the term "Very necessary"; I do not think it is. It keeps a check on the movements, I believe, to a certain extent. At the same time it assists the Native. His pass is his voucher. He has a paper from



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the magistrate of his home district as a guarantee of his bona fides. I think that is a feature that the Native is sometimes inclined to overlook.

SENATOR VAN NIEKER: The fact that you have the same class of administrator in the Transkei for a considerable time - say for the last 50 years or so - has not that blunted your efforts at uplifting the Native? - In other words, you mean familiarity is liable to breed contempt; you mean that in effect?

Yes? - I do not think so. There is always new blood coming in. In fact, a good many years ago Mr. Merriman introduced a number of young officials into the Transkeian territories as new blood. I think he had a similar view to that of Senator Van Niekerk. At anyrate he introduced this new blood with very satisfactory results. Those men all did excellently well.

MR. LUCAS: Have you noticed any change in the last quarter of a century in the position of Native women? - Yes, I think their status now is very much better than it was 25 years ago.

In what respects does that shew itself? - She holds a higher position in the household than she did before. She is more considered in the household economics.

In what say? - I think she is treated with greater respect.

Does she have more say in the management? - Yes, of household affairs.

Does she do less of the hard manual work? - She does less of the hard work in the fields - that is the civilised or semi-civilised woman.

Is there any sign of their claiming a share in political affairs? - The women?

Yes? - No; I have not seen any sign of that. You have occasionally an exceptional woman arising and



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and taking an exceptional part, like a chieftainess, shewing exceptional ability.

DR. ROBERTS: You have not found that they have more educated women that we turn out of the high schools and so on, and training schools, taking an interest in politics?-- No.

MR. LUCAS: Have you noticed any changes in regard to marriage? Is the marriage system of the Natives tending to break down? I do not mean the use of lobolo, but are they tending to get away from marriage and go in more for just living together without any ceremony?-- No.

In some districts we have been told that that is quite serious now?-- No, I have not seen that; but in many districts the marriage tie is a very slender one in the earlier stages of the marriage. I have always been an advocate of having marriages registered.

What do you call the earlier stages; before any children are born?-- Put it this way; the parents decide that a marriage shall take place; the man pay a few head of cattle as dowry; the father says "You must go away and earn more money to pay the balance of the dowry, or more dowry", the man comes back from the mines, and the father of the girl repudiates him. He says "These cattle are for seducing my daughter; it is not dowry at all." Meantime, the father has married the girl to some wealthy suitor. Those cases are not infrequent, so I say marriages should be protected by registration.

Is that abused; has it become a sort of trade by the father?-- That is exactly what it is. He sticks to the five cattle and he gets more cattle, say from a more wealthy or another suitor.

DR. ROBERTS: But that surely must be less common as people rise?-- Yes, it will be. I would like to quote something in connection with a question asked by



Senator Van Niekerk yesterday - that is in regard to the officials of the Transkeian Territories and their position, status and quality. This is from the Native Affairs Commission of 1883, page 53 - or the general recommendations and remarks. I do not know that it is necessary to quote in detail, but this Commission recommended officials of the Transkeian Territory, and I think this applies to Native Affairs Officials everywhere, now in the outside districts: they should have special consideration because of the lives they were compelled to lead; and the whole of the administration of these territories is based on the recommendation of this Commission: judicial system, land tenure, inheritance, and even the council system is the outcome of this Commission's report. So I say the whole system of our administration is based, to a great extent, upon this Commission's report. This point has been overlooked all along.

DR. ROBERTS: And the best exposition of lobolo is given in there? - Yes; it is on a page or two before that; page 29.

MR. LUCAS: May I put one question I have forgotten: is there any competition in this district between the Natives and the Griquas? - I have not heard of any.

Do they follow different occupations? - To a great extent.

What is the main occupation of the Griquas? - Some of them are painters, carpenters, handymen, assistants - store assistants perhaps -, waiters.

Any farm labourers? - I agree with Mr. Scott in saying that there are, here and there, but you will get better information from other witnesses.

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Mr. Young, Jnr.  
Mr. Gilson

Mr. GEORGE WILLIAM YOUNG, JNR.

Mr. LOUIS DESORMEAUX GILSON, M.P.

called and examined:

CHAIRMAN: Are you a farmer, Mr. Young?- Yes.

Have you prepared any statement, or do you wish to make any statement with regard to any of the points contained in the list of subjects?-(Mr. Young) /Not particularly. Mr. Brownlee asked me to come along here. I thought I might perhaps <sup>W</sup> answer leading questions.

The farm labourers here are generally Natives?- Yes

Can you give us any idea of the conditions as regards remuneration?- Yes, the remuneration of the boys today is anything from £1 to 35/-, depending on the length of time a boy has been in the farmer's service. Do you wish me to deal entirely with Natives and not with Griquas at all?

Well, except in so far as you have Griqua farm servants, the comparison may be interesting?- I have one or two Griqua farm servants.

Do they receive more than the Natives?- Yes, the highest native wage I am paying just now is 35/- and the highest to a Griqua type of boy - he is really a Baralong, I think, - he gets 50/- a month.

Why does the Griqua Baralong get more?- This particular boy is far more intelligent than any Native I have or ever have had.

Do Griquas, generally speaking, get more on farms as labourers?- I think probably they do. I have only the one family myself and they have always received more from me than the Natives, for this reason particularly, because they seem to stay longer and are more reliable for that reason.

(At this stage Mr. Young introduced Mr. L. D. Gilson, M.P.)

CHAIRMAN: (To Mr. Young) Have you any idea what the general range of wages for Griqua farm servants is?- No,



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I cannot say generally. I can only speak in regard to the few I have on my own farm, but I think generally they are more intelligent, and for that reason they probably get a little more money than the Native.

Mr. Gilson, have you any information on the subject?- (Mr. Gilson) You mean, monthly wages?

Yes?- I would say there are very very few working by the month. Their inclination lies towards building and fencing and that sort of contract job. So you get comparatively very few working on monthly wages as the Native works. I would agree with Mr. Young where there are stableboys, Griquas have the reputation of being fond of horses and that sort of thing and they would get a little more than the Natives. So far as the farms are concerned, I would repeat there are comparatively few working on the farms.

MR. LUCAS: Are there many Natives doing what you call contract work in this district?- Would you include shearing as contract work.

You mentioned building, fencing and so on?- Yes, there are quite a number of boys doing it - principally building.

Do you know whether they make a good living out of it?- You see, one has to approach the term "good living" from a Native point of view. Probably the wages a Native earns would not be considered as affording a good living from an European point of view, but from their own point of view I would say yes.

Have you any idea what they can earn for themselves a month net, say?- That is very hard to say because the amount that they work for varies so much.

We met one in Mount Fletcher - a tinsmith - who claimed he made from £6 to £7 a month?- I am thinking more



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of the itinerant contract builder; he would probably do that.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Shearing; that is by contract too, is it not?- Yes.

What sort of rates do they get; do they vary?- You can take the standard rate for the last few years as being 15/- 100. There is a tendency now to reduce that rate.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: What does he earn at that rate?- It depends. I have had shearers who can do ten, fifteen, and have had some who do 100.

What is the average?- On the ordinary farmers flock, about 30 to 40.

MAJOR ANDERSON: What do these Natives do out of the shearing season; do they do ordinary farm work?- As a rule the bulk of these Natives are not local Natives; they come in from the Hlubis in the Matatiele district. When the shearing season is over they go back to the location; but I would say that, on the whole, these boys do not do ordinary farm work.

MR. MOSTERT: They get 5/- or 6/- a day on shearing?- Yes. You have the weather to contend with. They maybe laid off for a day or two in wet weather and earning nothing.

Then they get their food?- Yes, they get a little extra beef to the ordinary ration which the Native gets during shearing time.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: What is the ordinary ration for a farm hand?- Well, unlimited meal, salt, milk, and a good many farmers are now giving a small meat ration as well - not a regular ration. Sheep are getting low in value now and the boys get a sheep.

MR. LUCAS: Is that an innovation?- Meat?

Yes?- It is rather; it is only just coming in now; it is an innovation. As Mr. Young corrects me, plus a certain amount of sugar.



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SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Is that a ration for a boy who works himself, or does it include his family?— Well, you have different systems. Certain farmers ration the whole family. Certain farmers do not give any land whatever to plough. They may give a little piece for green mealies. They feed the man, his wife and family, and they expect them all to work as far as they possible can. Others again, work more on the labour tenant system, where they give a certain acreage to plough — it may be two, three, four or five acres, and the Native is rationed himself, but he has to provide for his family. (Mr. Young): In regard to rations; I would like to mention it is not a practise actually to ration a Native. If he can sit down and eat a bucketful of meal, he can get it, but it is not customary to dish out a certain number of pounds of meal to each Native. He has an unlimited amount of meal — as much as he can eat — so long as he does not waste it.

MR. MOSTERT: You are not called upon in the ordinary way to feed the family unless they work?— Well, if the family is actually living on your farm and the boy has no land, then you do feed the family. To illustrate it: the other day a Native, who has been in my employ for some time, — to shew you how they can live on your farm and save money as farm labourers — this particular boy and his wife had not drawn £1.8.6 from me actually in ten months. They went home for their holiday and drew £16 or £17 from me, and away they went. So the farm labourer in this country can actually save a lot of money, nowadays, on his wages if he is careful.

Do you think the farm labourer is better off than the man who goes to the town?— Yes.

CHAIRMAN: What is your view, Mr. Gilson?—

(Mr. Gilson): You mean between the town labourer and the farm labourer?



Yes?- If the farm labourer is working under good conditions, I would say he is considerably better off than the town labourer - normal average conditions. Some of course are better than others. May I give my own position as an illustration. I farm fairly extensively; I keep a farm of 1900 acres, of which the Natives have the sole use, practically; to all intents and purposes I do not use that land; it lies in what we would call the thorn country, broadly speaking. Those Natives pay me nothing in the way of rent. There are perhaps 30 huts on that farm. They have unlimited grazing for their cattle. They plough as much land as they want for the use of their families and themselves. I keep a dipping tank on that farm, which I keep filled with dip according to the veterinary regulations, and I charge them nothing for dipping; but every Native there is bound to work for me, and for me only, at 15/- a month, up to £1 in a few cases, and they are not allowed to work elsewhere without my consent. A few years back, these Natives had practically nothing; they were wiped out with East Coast fever, before that with rinderpest; and today there are 347 head of Native cattle on that farm, besides horse and goats which have been accumulated in my service.

MR. MOSTERT: What is the value of the farm per acre?- Two or three years back £3 an acre, but today about 25/- an acre.

MR. LUCAS: But those are exceptionally advantageous terms to Natives?- They probably are, but most farmers allow Natives to graze a certain amount of stock. The earnings of a farm boy go very largely into cattle; they are his savings bank.

Take the conditions that are not fairly good. It seems to me from your answer there must be a substantial



number in this district. So I take it they are not so well off as a Native who goes to the towns?— You have, in my opinion, a number of Natives in the town who are comparatively well off; Natives who have acquired a certain amount of skill in some trade, and who have a permanent job; but you have a large floating population in the town. I am talking about Kokstad. My remarks would apply with even greater force to the bigger towns; you have a large floating population of Natives who have very little means of subsistence at all.

MR. MOSTERT: Does that farm of yours improve by having those Natives on it?— No, I should say it is deteriorating.

How many Natives have you there?— I have got about thirty families.

So if you take a very low interest, it would cost you about £100 a year?— Yes.

You realise that?— Yes; what applies to me applies to a great many other farmers throughout the Union. The point I want to make is, what is often stigmatised as a low wage in cash is really a very high wage when you come to the indirect benefits which the Natives and their families are getting.

MAJOR ANDERSON: You have 30 kraals on that farm; how many Natives have you got there?— I should think I have got about 30 to 40; they do not work all the year round; I have them a holiday always.

MR. LUCAS: Do those that come to work for you at any time bring their wives to work?— No, never.

So they are separated from their families, like the Natives who go to town?— They get a weekend off; it is only about 25 miles away in this particular case. They have all got horses; a Native thinks nothing of jumping on his horse and going home.



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SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: You said that the Native man and woman earned £1.2.6 a month?— (Mr. Young): No, they were actually earning more, but in ten months they had saved £17.

But what was their monthly wage?— The boy was getting about 30/- and the woman about 18/-.

Were they permanently employed?— Yes; they have only gone home now on holiday, actually.

Do you feed them?— Yes, they are fed on the farm.

MR. LUCAS: So they, between them, are getting £2.8.0 a month?— Yes.

When all the members of the family have to work, do the children get paid too?— Oh, yes, decidedly.

What sort of pay do you give the younger members of the family?— It depends very much on the size of the youngster. You cannot get many on farms today under about 10/- a month. Even so, they soon reckon they are big enough to earn a bit more; they run up to perhaps 10/6 or 13/-.

Do you find many of the children attracted away from your farm?— Well, there seems to be a tendency among the Natives today to send their children to be educated.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Is there a tendency for the Natives to leave the farms, or is the tendency the other way round; have you more applications than you can put up with?— In my particular case?

Well, in general?— Well, I have far more applications than I can put up with.

Is that so, Mr. Gilson?— (Mr. Gilson): At present, yes; it is very marked this year; but generally speaking, I would say there are very few farms which do not get more or less their full complement of labour.

DR. FOURIE: Have you written contracts with the Natives?— No, it is just a general agreement; there is no



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specific contract as a rule.

Why is that?- I do not think it is necessary; it is not found to be necessary.

The Natives do not ask for it?- No, never.

(Mr. Young) I do not think the Native likes to be bound over; he prefers to be a freelance. So far as the farmer is concerned, the Native can leave more or less when he wants to, on a month's notice in most cases.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Are the rations the farmers give their Natives sufficient to give them stamina to keep them going?- Oh, yes. (Mr. Gilson): I would say there is no deterioration in the physique of the Natives. (Mr. Young) In fact they are very much better off than they are at home.

Take European rations - sugar, tea, vegetables and so on; most farmers say they only give them meal, mealie porridge and sugar or milk; is that sufficient for a Native to do hard work on?- I do not think a Native works very hard on a farm, does he?

MR. LUCAS: Is not that a point that has to be considered, where there is a complaint that there is, in many districts, a shortage of Native labour?- Yes.

Can more be got out of the Native if he has more of a ration than mainly mealie meal?- I do not think so; I think the food he gets today on the farms is plenty for his requirements.

At the rate he works now?- Even if there is heavy work to do, he can carry on all day.

For long?- As long as you want him to carry on that particular work.

Would not a better diet for the Natives on the farms make for better work on the farms?- A Native on a farm gets a good deal of milk.



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In some districts, not all; in your district he practically does; it is a dairy district?— In our district he does. For instance, there is no cheese made on Sunday and he gets the whole of the milk; it may be 150 or 200 gallons of milk; he would get a sugar ration, and, as you know, if a cow or sheep dies — as they are always dying on a farm — that meat is used by the Natives, so he does get almost a regular meat ration.

Do you think that milk addition to his diet helps to keep up his stamina while at work?— Well, as long as I have been associated with the Native I have never seen cases where one would reckon that a boy was getting insufficient nourishment, anyhow for the work he has got to do.

Are you getting the work out of these people that you would get if they were fed on a hardworking diet?— Yes, I decidedly think I am.

MR. MOSTERT: Do you consider farm work hard work for Natives?— (Mr. Gilson): No.

Do you think the same, Mr. Young?— (Mr. Young) No, it is not; decidedly not.

It is a soft job?— Yes; he inspan an ox, the ox pulls the plough, and he walks alongside.

And on his ration he can very well do the job that is required of him?— Yes, and have lots to spare.

Do you agree with that Mr. Gilson?— (Mr. Gilson) Yes; not only that, but you will find this; not only when nightfall comes are they comparatively fresh, but they are fresh enough to chase round after the girls and to come fresh again to work in the morning. If they were starved they could not do that.

Have you known a Native, after his day's work, take a 20 mile walk and come back the next morning?— (Mr. Young): I have known them do ten. (Mr. Gilson) I would not



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say twenty, but it is very common for them to go to a kraal miles away to see their girls and come back in the morning.

(Mr. Young): There is just one other thing that should not be lost sight of. There is no doubt that, in this country, anyhow, round about our part, the Native, apart from his ration, makes that mahou drink. You can do what you like but you cannot stop it. They call it mahou, but sometimes it is real beer; but that also is a very sustaining food, I think.

MR. MOSTERT: It is done all over the country ?- Yes, it is.

It is a splendid food?- Yes, it is. (Mr. Gilson): In connection with farm labour, may I say this, that there is no doubt a tendency to build up gradually what I would call a peasant population of agricultural farm labourers throughout the country. At one time - I think Mr. Young will bear me out - speaking of a few years back, we used to get boys, perhaps for six months; they would then be mine boys, the next six months they were pulling a ricksha, the next six months they would be kitchen boys, and they would come and work on a farm for six months. Well, that wandering type, so far as the farmers are concerned, is dying out and you are gradually getting a fixed population who are living entirely on European farms and not in Native locations at all, and their children are growing up almost as farm labourers. That is more valuable labour than that I have described; and there is a tendency there to pay higher wages.

Does the quality of the work improve?- Yes.

MR. LUCAS: Is anything done to accelerate the rate at which he would get that skill, by training him?- No; that is a point I would make to this Commission: if



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any general scheme to improve the economic condition of the Natives is inaugurated, the most valuable factor would be some possible means whereby a Native could acquire more skill in whatever calling it is.

Has not the custom been just to take on a Native and let him pick up the work?- Yes, that has been so. I think it is very largely owing to the overcrowding of the Native reserves that these Natives are living almost entirely on the farms and are acquiring that skill and becoming more valuable labour.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Do you contemplate some training institution for farm labourers?- Now, you are asking me a very difficult question, because you are dealing with such enormous numbers that I would say it would be a drop in the bucket. I tell you what I would suggest - perhaps it is outside your province to consider it - but I would think it might be possible, in the case of farm Natives who are in the perpetual employ of farmers, to exempt them from the poll tax. I will tell you frankly that you are losing a very large amount of your taxation. It is not often paid by the farm Natives in any case; there is absolutely no record of them; they move about from farm to farm and their record is lost. I think it would be an inducement for Natives to reside permanently on the farms and acquire more skill in their calling, if that particular tax were dropped.

MR. LUCAS: Could farmers do more by explaining the reason why things should be done and how they should be done - to train their Natives and to make them skilled more rapidly than they are now?- No, unless the farmer is to be like a schoolmaster. Where there is work to be done by Natives, he does his best to make the Native familiar with that work.



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Do many of them explain why? It seems to me that is one of the things that is lacking, this making the Native understand why a thing should be done and not so much how it should be done; do you not think that would be an advantage?- (Mr. Young) The Native is instinctively a farmer and he sees the work that is done on the farms - and that he works on. There is no doubt about it that, in many cases, they are copying this work in the locations. For instance, today if you go to the locations - the one I am associated with - Makubas, in the district - you will see their grazing lands fenced off; you will see, instead of growing only mealies as they used to, they will grow teff, oats, wheat or anything of that description, and it is cut and stacked carefully, and instead of the old system of stacking and just/letting everything have it, or eat it, as they used to, the food is preserved and it is dished out to the stock as the winter comes on, but it only applies where the lands are fenced and the stuff is carted to the Native's particular hut and dished out from there.

Have you had any knowledge of any other part of South Africa?- No.

You Mr. Gilson?- (Mr. Gilson): Natal and the Natal territories I know very well; I see a good deal of the Native districts right down Umtata way.

Could you make any comparison as to the efficiency of the reserve Natives here in connection with farming, and the reserve Natives in any other part of the country. I am taking it from the farmer's point of view; I am taking Crown lands?- I think the average Native in East Griqualand is probably as skilled, if I may put it so, in his occupation, as any Native in any part of the Union. I am rather impressed with the Free State Natives, from



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what I have seen of them. You see, we are farming on a very big and varied scale here. There are all sorts of farming operations going on in East Griqualand; we are general farmers, and I think the Natives here have acquired a greater skill than Natives in any other part of the Union that I know of.

Which part of the Free State have you in mind?— Bethlehem and so on. But even here there is more mixed farming than there is in that portion of the Free State.

CHAIRMAN: Is there any tendency on the part of the farmers to tide their Natives over periods of difficulty?— Absolutely; you mean starvation trouble and so on?

When they have had bad crops or anything of that kind, or illness?— I would say absolutely. I cannot recall a single case where I have known a farmer deliberately turn a family adrift to avoid having to supply them with grain during an ensuing period of scarcity; I have never known that.

MR. LUCAS: Do you know of any who have taken advantage of that to charge excessive prices or demand undue service in return?— I would say that tendency is not general.

But there are cases, I take it?— I expect you would find cases. You will find cases of extortion, if you like to call it so, in any walk of life; but I would say it is not general.

No; but we know it occurs in some parts?— I would like Mr. Young to answer that question; but I would say, from my point of view, it is not anything like a practice. (Mr. Young): I can say I know of no case where such a thing has happened. I agree with Mr. Gilson.

CHAIRMAN: When one considers the wages that are paid, one cannot assume that it is on the same basis as a wage paid to a journeyman; he gets so much money and then



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it is no concern of the employer what happens to him?— No; I think the Native here is very well looked after. You like a Native to work for you and you like him to stick to you as far as possible, because it is only natural, if you are getting new boys every day of your life, you have to be training new boys every day; whereas, if a new boy stops with you for a long time you look after him better for that reason, so the farmer encourages him to stay.

MR. LUCAS: Have you had any cases of farmers being boycotted in this district?— I have heard of them in a roundabout way, but it is certainly very exceptional.

(Mr. Gilson): May I amplify that remark of Mr. Young's. There is no doubt,—certainly in a lesser degree than obtained in former days —, a certain essence of the feudal system among the Natives on the farms; they have a certain claim on their employers there is no doubt; but in the case of sickness of a woman, they will never go to a doctor, they will always come first to the farmer. There is no doubt a very much closer cooperation between the farm Native and his employer than there is between the town Native and his employer.

MR. MOSTERT: The women as well as the children ?— Yes, most decidedly.

MR. LUCAS: Do you notice any signs in this district breaking down?— I would say it is increasing.

CHAIRMAN: On account of the greater certainty of having your labour force?— Yes; and on account, as I said before, of the rather more settled population among the Natives, that is gradually coming about.

Instead of a Native pastoral class, which is still very general, you are gradually getting the emergence of the Native peasant class?— I think I would agree with that. (Mr. Young) I expect you have had evidence on



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Native housing; Native housing in this country is generally good.

MR. LUCAS: Is there plenty of housing material, such as thatch, timber and so on? - Yes, it is either a w sod hut or stone hut, as regards the building. As a rule the living huts up here are very comfortable.

Is the type of housing improving that the Natives themselves build? - I think they are the same old hut.

Are they introducing windows? - Not very much. Ventilation is generally bad, as a whole, as far as I can see.

And chimneys? - No; they seem to like the smoke. There has not been much change in the Native hut. They are still wanting in ventilation, and very badly. But, on the whole, so far as farmhouses are concerned, they are comfortable houses. In these particular houses there are windows - not that they are used; they are very often stuffed up. (Mr. Gilson) If you put up a very good building with every convenience, you will find a Native will go to his own hut; he prefers it. There are very few barracks on farms here; each little family lives by itself in most cases. (Mr. Young): With regard to the type of stock; to me, one would have to be very careful about changing the type of stock the Native has. He has the Native stock, which is a hardy stock. It is adapted to and can stand hard conditions. In most cases where these reserves are, there is very little control over the feeding. The beast has to come over and get fat quickly and then live on nothing. To change the type of stock, I think, would be very dangerous. There is another thing that has occurred to me in connection with the locations, and that is, I notice certain individuals in a location seem to accumulate a tremendous lot of stock. After all, they pay the same poll tax and that sort of thing



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and it does not seem to me quite a fair thing to the other Natives on the location, because one boy may have two or three head. and plough a fair amount, whereas the Native with a big lot of stock gets the same privileges over his land as the man with less stock.

You reckon he should be taxed over and above a certain number?- Yes, say limited; I think he should be limited to a certain number. Certainly he should have to pay for the privilege he gets for carrying that very much bigger number of stock.

CHAIRMAN: Is that common, that they hold a large number of stock?- Some Natives own a lot of stock, yes.

Do you find some in every location?- You find odd ones in every location, yes. The labour conditions are very good just now, which is exceptional; they are better than they have ever been. It is on account of the shortage of food probably.

MR. LUCAS: You mean, the supply is better?- Yes.

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The Commission adjourned at 12.25 p.m. to hear evidence at Flagstaff on the 6th November.

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