

labour. The only difficulty that arises is where he is required to render his own labour, - the family's labour, the labour of his oxen; then it becomes a big too much.

If that is made the contract and it is not carried out, do you think it is unreasonable for the farmer to ask that it be carried out? - If he made which contract?

That the amount of labour has to be supplied? - In all the cases where there are Native complaints, I find that, according to law, for the right to stay on a farm he has got to act as the farmer's servant for a period of three months; but the law does not say he must ~~xxx~~^{work} for nothing, but still he does. And then, later on, the three months extends to six months, and subsequently these six months are so spread over the year that he cannot possibly find one month which he can call his own.

Why do you think he agrees to these conditions? - If he agrees for three months, he thinks he is going to work through the ploughing or reaping season, but he finds he has to render not only his services, but the services of his family right through the year.

Does he not complain about that? - Oh, yes, very often; that is why they clear away from the farms.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: If we in the Transvaal were to make a Native work for four months and you engaged him for three, he would leave your farm tomorrow; you would not have a single Native? - Right up there you are near the spelonken.

But the economic pressure there makes a farmer conform to his contract; otherwise the Native leaves him. Is there such a surplus of Natives here on the farms? - A surplus of Natives who are looking for places on which to live and graze their cattle; we have got that and they

have been compelled, through lack of accommodation on the farms, to sell their stock and come into town. A whole lot of them who had no intention of coming, found it was absolutely unbearable; they found they were losing, not only what they were earning, but what they had before and so they sold their stock and came back to town.

CHAIRMAN: You say there is too much labour here?— Here we know there are some White farmers who are so lenient with their Natives that they will actually give them seed to sow and so on, but there are other farmers who make the Native use his own oxen and gear. The Native can plough for himself on Friday and Saturday, provided he ploughs for the master from Monday to Thursday. If there is a breakage, he must make up the breakage. If his ploughshare is broken, he has to ride into town to replace it and has to work on Friday, and on Friday his cattle are not fit to work.

What you are stating here about the farmers, is that true of all farmers?— Well, I have said already ----

You have some kindhearted exceptions; but I am just leading up to the next question. Is it true of the majority of farmers?— What, sir?

The statements that you have made here?— To a certain extent it would be true of the majority.

But when you say "to a certain extent", we must be very much more definite than you are?— It is very difficult to describe in definite terms things that vary at every step.

Now, for example, farmers who do not allow the Natives to remain on the farm unless all the labour that he has contracted for is there; do the majority of farmers send off the Native if he cannot ---?— No, not the majority.

There are cases?— Yes, there are cases. I have in mind now a farmer who is across the river, where people have been living for generations. A man came from the Free State and bought the farm out; he called each Native and wanted to know where his children were; when the man said he had so many children, the owner said "You stay on the farm here and work and I will take your children and go and work on the farm in the Free State". The Native said, "No, I cannot part with my children". So the whole lot of them cleared out from the Christians district and came over to Griqualand West.

How many instances do you know of in your own experience of families, who have been put off farms because the labour of the family has not been available?— Well, I came across instances like this too, in the Kroonstad district, — I mean of people I have actually met, apart from those I hear about who lodge complaints. And then I came across instances like this in the Boshof district.

How many?— One family in the Boshof district.

Those are cases which have come within your own immediate experience?— Yes.

Any others?— Except those I have told you about; someone complains about his relative.

But those four cases are within your own experience?— Yes, sir.

Can you tell us how many cases like that have been reported to you by other Natives?— Of course, my experience is spread over a number of years, but during the year before last, I can remember seven instances. If I had time, I would probably remember more.

And last year?— No; last year I happened to be engaged in a different kind of work and I did not come into

touch with it.

So your point is not that it is the universal practise, but that there are cases of hardship brought about by that ?- Yes, exactly. Other hardships will come in a different form, such as a man ploughs and then, when his crops are very beautiful, suddenly he is told he has done something and must clear away from the farm.

Yes, that is the next point. I have marked on your statement. I take it, the Natives generally know they have the right to these crops ?- Yes.

Why do they not exercise those rights ?- The Native has the very greatest difficulty in exercising his rights.

Why does he not go to the Native Commissioner ?- To go to the Native Commissioner is not the easiest thing in the world. In town here it is very easy for a man to go to a policeman or the magistrate, but out on the farms it is very difficult, because it is not only his existence on the farm that is at stake, but he has a whole lot of friends and he is afraid he is going to create a heap of trouble for these people.

But his existence on the farm is not at stake, because he has already been put off ?- But, in order to stay, he will sometimes overlook those things, and when he is put off, the difficulties are so great that he does not wish to create troubles for others. Some have gone to lawyers and recovered something; others have recovered nothing, and have been finally landed in expense.

Some of them are afraid they would land their friends in difficulties ?- Yes.

How can I land anybody else in difficulty if I plead my own case; is it a real or imaginary fear ?- No,

it is not an imaginary fear. Supposing there are several families living on a farm and my sister is living there, the boss kicks up a row and tells me to clear off; if I am going to create trouble, I might make things difficult for my sister, too. She has still got a place where she can live, so let me rather go out and roam about and let her exercise the privilege she has still got on the farm there.

So the farmers must be a really unreasonable crowd?—
On the whole, they are.

And the family is afraid the farmer will go and visit what the Native has done on somebody else?— I do not see why it should be, because, if he wants to treat a Native well the law is against him. Take, for instance, formerly when he allowed these Natives to live on the farm and encouraged them and gave them opportunities for encouraging stock, the law comes along and says, "You are not going to let these Natives plough there, under a penalty of £100".

Plough on shares?— Yes. He stays in town; he does not do his own ploughing; he must let the Natives do it. But what the law allows him to do, is to go and call another man who is White and put him there as overseer. The more they plant and reap, the more they gain, and then they go and get a White man who has no capital and he profits by the landowner and the labour of the Native, without having contributed anything whatsoever towards the development of that farm.

Perhaps he does not. But let us get back to the question that I asked you, — the Native is afraid of claiming his just rights because it might prejudice somebody else on the farm?— Yes.

Now, the law makes provision for giving him his

just rights if he brings along a charge ?- Yes, the law makes provision. Some have actually recovered.

He is afraid of using the law ?- Sometimes.

Very well; if the law is not a sufficiently strong means of giving him his rights, what do you suggest ?- Well, one remedy is, if these people had some place to go to, if they had a reservation of their own where they could go out and work. Senator van Niekerk has told us about the better conditions in the Transvaal. Well, there they have some reserves and some farms and if a man is dissatisfied he has somewhere to go; but the people in this neighbourhood, right away from Bloemhof here to Komatipoort, have not anywhere to go except these farms. If he gets very bad terms here, his only alternative is to go and work on someone else's bad terms. He has no place to which he can retire and say, "I am going to rest and put my family here".

You are suffering from the fact that you have too many Natives here ?- Yes, they have nowhere else to go,

Now, with regard to these cases of Natives who have been evicted, will you give me individual instances that have come to your notice ?- That would be going very far, because, as far as I am concerned, I take a deep interest in these things - not because I want to, but because, when that law came into force, the trouble was so serious in the surrounding districts, that people living about there left the farms because the law changed their status at once.

DR. ROBERTS: You are talking of the 1913 Act ?- Yes, I am talking about that time.

CHAIRMAN: Do you mean this statement to refer to evictions after the 1913 Act ?- Yes, right up till now.

Well, at the present date, a farmer may not allow

a Native to plough on shares; the Native knows that ?- Yes.

Now, are there cases where the farmer allows the Native to plough on shares and then turns him out ?- No; what happens is this, that he gives him land to plough which the law allows.

As a rival tenant ?- Yes, and while the crops are still standing, he turns him out.

Do you know instances in your own experience of this sort of thing happening now ?- Yes, in the Klerksdorp and Vredefort districts.

How many instances ?- In the Klerksdorp district there were four just within the last two years, and I personally met with three more in the Vredefort district and two at Bothaville.

Those are the ones that have come under your personal observation ?- Yes.

You must have heard of some others that you could not investigate yourself ?- I have heard of so many, but I am telling you of those I have personal knowledge of.

How many can you remember that people have come and told you about ?- It is very difficult to say.

You would not care to be definite about that ?- You must allow for the fact that, when you hear of a complaint about people you have not seen, it is likely you may hear about the same case again.

Now, you say, when there are jobs to dispense, no one will think of employing a Native while anybody else is available, is that really your opinion. Nobody ~~will~~ will employ a Native when somebody else is available ?- But, sir, it is not an opinion, it is a fact.

DR. ROBERTS: Can you indicate exactly what you mean - I have underlined this too ?- Well, in the towns

when there is work to dispense - such as in the town here - the best work will naturally go to the Europeans, and if there is any other work, you will rather give it to a Coloured man or somebody else instead of giving it to a Native, - unless it is very menial work that a Coloured man will not do.

Your point is not when there are jobs to dispense, but good jobs to dispense ?- Exactly.

The way you put it is that, even for the same work at the same pay in Kimberley, they will employ an European rather than a Native ?- Oh, yes, that is so undoubtedly. And then they will employ an European or a Coloured man before they will employ a Native.

MR. LUCAS: Did you see a reference in yesterday's paper to Lichtenburg, where the diggers are now employing White people at Native wages ?- That is not an ordinary thing. I was not referring to the effects of depression; for instance, to abnormal conditions.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: You are referring to Kimberley more than anywhere else ?- To everywhere.

And the Transvaal, too ?- Yes.

But you know very little about it ?- I am surprised that the members of the Commission are not aware that there are a whole lot of Coloured men who pose as White men, not because they like to be White, but simply because, as a White man, they will get £1 a day for a job that they would otherwise get 5/- a day for. Similarly with a Native; if they think he is a Coloured fellow, they will pay him 5/- or 6/- a day. That is our experience and not our opinion.

What we are driving at is this, if I require a man, say, as a motor driver and pay £3.10.-, and a Coloured man comes along and offers his services, would you say, according

to your statement I would prefer a Coloured man instead of a Native ?- Yes.

Does that apply to the whole of the Union ?- Yes.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: IF you go to Cape Town and many other places, you will find a Native cook in the heart of Cape Town and, if you ask his employer, "Why do you employ a Native?" he will say, "I do not want a Coloured man; I want a Native". ?- That is an exception. Unless a Native can do the work in a way that anyone else can do it, he has no chance.

Do you think the mines would prefer a Coloured man to do the same work if he could do it as well as a Native ?- Certainly.

DR. ROBERTS: And the Boeks ?- Yes, they will, if he will go and do it.

Have you ever heard of Coloured men protesting that Natives were taking the work out of their hands ?- Yes. Simply because he was made to do more without protest and then, later, accept less wages than a Coloured man.

CHAIRMAN: How do you account for the fact that, up to the present depression, there have always been certain industries that could never get enough Native labour?- Industries like what, for instance?

Like mining and agriculture ?- Mining and agriculture Well, it is very difficult to make out those things.

Gold and coal mining particularly ?- It is very difficult to make out those things, because, even at the present time they say they cannot get enough labourers, but they will not have the Natives.

Who ?- In Johannesburg.

Oh, no. At present they have enough labour and they do take the Natives. I admit that they do not take a Native down into the mines who is not physically fit; that is in

the Natives interest that it should be so, but the Rand Mines have always wanted more labour than they can get. If you do not know that, I can tell you that? - At the present time, we learn that if they could get many more Natives, they would be able to employ a few more Whites: I think that is the contention at the present time. Natives are offering at the mines at the present time but are not accepted.

The mines have enough labour now. It is only during the last four months - it is not the first time in history, but the first time during the last six years. As a rule, there is always room for physically fit Natives on the mines. For agriculture there is always a shortage and for the White men, relief works have to be started because there is not enough work to absorb them all. That does not seem altogether to agree with your opinions? - There are two reasons I can give for that. In the first place, it is not every Native who is competent to go and drill rock; not every Native can do it. So that a Native may be looking for work but unable to go and drill rock. The same thing with the farms: a Native may be looking for a job and, when he gets there finds he can only be paid in kind with the right to live on the farm. He would rather go and take casual jobs at a shilling here and a shilling there.

I think it is a fine quality of your people that they will support their friends? - They do, when the country is allright; but it is not so today. Even with the best intentions you cannot support a friend today.

MR. LUCAS: You see that actually heppening now? - What?

That they are reaching a state where they cannot

support their friends ?- Yes, certainly.

We were told in one place that people hid what they had because there was not enough to share. Do you know of any instances like that ?- No; but things are very hard at the present time.

You make the statement that the shops keep two sets of prices - one for the Native and one for the European ?- Yes, some shops do.

Why is that; why^{do}/they charge two prices; can you account for their being so cussed ?- You might as well ask me why does the Government make me pay more than my White neighbours for my right to live in this town.

DR. ROBERTS: You would not be prepared to give this reason, that the Native usually beats a storekeeper down; therefore, he has a bigger price to start with. If I go in and buy a pair of trousers, the man says, "25/-", and I put down the 25/-; but if you go in, he says to you "30/-" because he knows that you will pull him down to £1.?- I do not suppose that will explain why^{when}/a Native wants to buy, say, Natal cigars or cheroots, he should be asked to pay a shilling and when a Whiteman comes along, the Whiteman is told it is sevenpence.

CHAIRMAN: But do you agree with the point that Dr. Roberts has made, that the Native does try to beat the storekeeper down ?- That is one angle of it. Another angle may be this, that the Native gets it in the neck every time because, where another man will come and buy by the pound, the Native will come and buy a ticky's worth; he is charged so much more for taking a fraction of a pound.

MR. LUCAS: The same applies to poor Whites, too?- So that, in the end, he has only got sevenpence or eightpence

worth for the shilling. There may be a piece of cloth, a blanket or something; it is 14/- to the European and about 18/- to the Native.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: But in most up-to-date shops, you have the stuff marked in plain figures nowadays? - Yes, but not in the shops that cater for the Natives.

Do they not have Native assistants mostly? - No; you have them in some towns, but not everywhere; sometimes they do have Native assistants serving behind the counter.

Where they have Native assistants, they would not apply that principle? - Well, you knew that when a man is working for a boss, he has to carry out his instructions if he wants to keep his job.

But is not the competition so keen that the European has to ask the lowest price possible to sell his stuff nowadays? - Well, that question can better be answered by the storekeeper himself. You see, I have no experience as a seller; my experience is only as a purchaser.

CHAIRMAN: Do you not think it is a reasonable thing to charge relatively more for goods bought in small quantities? - I was not expressing the right or wrong of the thing at the present time. As a matter of fact, I go further and say that some shops, even where he buys things in bulk - or a thing like blankets and shawls - he is always charged from 20% to 30% more than an European.

Is that when he pays in cash? - Yes.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Do you put that down as a general principle? - In some of these shops that cater for Natives, yes.

Does he pay it? - Well, what does he know? He is told that is the price of the article, and if he wants it he pays that price.

CHAIRMAN: He does not go round and enquire about prices ?- In some cases he does. Well, he has bought it already; he can only say, "Next time I will go to the other shop".

Would you apply the same principle to the Coloured ?-
Not to the Coloured.

Has not the Native found it out by now ?- Some of us have found it out. There are some shops, for instance, where I walk in and ask for an article and get it; but there are some shops where I will only go in if the price is plainly marked on the article.

DR. ROBERTS: May I go to the next point. You make a statement here that the salaries of teachers have been reduced since the inauguration of the Development Fund; is that the case ?- Here?

Yes ?- Well, before the Development Fund, I was secretary of the School Committee here and used to employ my teachers at £100 a year. Now they do not get more than £60 a year.

CHAIRMAN: Did all the teachers in that school get £100 a year ?- At anyrate, those employed by me did during the time I was there.

MR. LUCAS: Why were the salaries reduced ?- Well, I went abroad and when I came back I found they were paying them £5 a month.

DR. ROBERTS: Now, is it not the case that the new scale of salaries for teachers is considerably higher than the old scale ?- Who can get £10 a month now?

CHAIRMAN: Answer the question now please; do not try and avoid it.

DR. ROBERTS: Do you mean the new scale is not higher than the old ?- For instance, there was no limit; the old

one had no limit. A meritorious teacher always had a recommendation from the inspector and got his rise. There were teachers working for me when I was secretary, at £108.

Just compare the scale, please ?- The scale is limited.

Does not the scale give a higher salary to the ordinary teacher ?- No. It has given a higher salary to the better type of teacher that you may turn out, who has passed the J.C., for instance, and the Primary Higher, but the T.3 class teacher of the old days, his wage has been cut down.

So that most of the teachers accept the scale as being certainly an advance upon the old scale. Then, where do you think the bulk of the money has gone? About £150,000 in the last five years has been paid over and above what used to be paid ?- Where is that from?

Out of the education sum. I need not give you the figures. You know them quite well ?- Well, that is not a question which I can answer. That is a question which the Native is asking ; he is asking what happens to his £8,000 and why he cannot get the facilities, because he was infinitely better off in the school before he paid the £8,000.

Well, of course, it is one statement against another? - What we are meaning, is the poll tax. When you ask about it, you get some figures from the Government which account for 4/- in every £ that the Native pays, but says nothing about the other 16/-. Whereas the Native says what I am getting now is ~~gxixix~~ less than what I got at the time when I did not have to pay the £8,000; now that I have to pay the £8,000, why do I not get any improvement?

You say nothing then is paid for education at all ?- What we used to get before has actually been reduced.

MR. LUCAS: Is that £8,000 the increase in the

tax in your district ?- Well, in this district you know, we have no Native reserve and in the Cape Colony you only pay the hut tax in the Native reserve.

There is no direct tax ?- No.

And then the pound tax was introduced ?- Yes; and it was said that was going to be one method of improving the schools, but it has done them no good.

DR. ROBERTS: You know that, in the Cape alone, about £150,000 is paid more now on Native education than before the Development Fund ?- The answer of the Natives to that is that in Kimberley alone you are taking £8,000. Now, you have not added anything to what you used to spend in Kimberley before.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: We have had the same complaints in a place like Taungs, we will say, where you have a Native reserve. We are paying much more into the Native Development fund and we are getting less. That is the fault of the Education Department. They may spend it somewhere else. The Development Fund gives the money - the £150,000 extra - to the Education Department, and they can spend it where they like. If they do not think Kimberley needs more money, they will spend it in Barkly West, Uitenhage, or where they like ?- But the point is this, if the Native pays £8,000 to the Government and the Government gives it someone else to spend where it likes -----

If we were to follow your principle, we would have to say that all the taxes that come from Johannesburg from the mines, must come back to Johannesburg and that all the money we get from Kimberley, from the diamond mines, must be spent on Kimberley. But we do not do that. There are places where education is much more required and backward

than Kimberley. I agree we take the money from people in Kimberley and spend it elsewhere ?- But according to your own figures, you do not.

Yes, we spend £150,000 more than we used to ?- I mean, according to your own figures, where you give us, for instance, an account of how you spend the Development Fund, the amount is only a fraction of your poll tax.

That is a different thing, you see ?- It is only a fraction. The trouble of the Native is this. Supposing there are two widows, one a Hottentot and the other a Native, and these two widows send their children to the schools, the relatives of the Native pay the poll tax, whereas the relatives of the Hottentot pay nothing.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: That is a different question. What I am driving at is this, it is rather unreasonable for the Natives of Kimberley to say because they pay £8,000 in poll tax they want to have all that £8,000 back to be spent here ?- No, they never said that, because, if for instance you are spending 4/- in the £, that might be a portion of it - or if you are spending one third, but you do not.

DR. ROBERTS: Well, may I point this out. The sum ~~saxx~~ that was paid to the Cape for education before, or at the time of the Development Fund, is still paid to the same fund out of the general funds of the country. Perhaps you know that ?- Yes.

Whatever was paid at the time the Development Tax was instituted is now paid out of the general coffers and over and above that is a portion of the 4/- in the £. So that, you see, you are getting more in the Cape; you are getting what you actually spend on education before the Development Fund was instituted, plus a portion of the 4/- ?-

No, sir. What I mean is here we do not get a penny more than we got before we paid into the Development Fund.

The Government cannot take a microscope and look at Kimberley as if it were a child of the Gods. What I want you to see is that not only is the same money paid for education when the Development Fund was instituted, but this 4/- in the £ is paid over and above? - It is not paid to us. ^Q/They must have forgotten? - They have been a long time forgetting Kimberley. They do not listen. The greatest thing about them is what the Americans call "passing the buck". If you go to them, they will refer you to the Education Department and then to the Native Affairs Commission. It goes on like that right up to Pretoria. On this very question, the Chairman of a Government Conference said, "Tell it to the Economic Commission".

CHAIRMAN: Now, coming back to the question of shops. Have you noticed any change in the articles that the Natives buy in the shops - say in the last fifteen years? - There have been changes everywhere.

Of what nature? - Well, as far as this district is concerned, they are just changing with the times - clothes.

We have plenty of general statements in your paper, but I want to be definite. Take clothes; what changes have come about in regard to clothes, do they still wear the blanket? - Those who come from outside still wear the blanket, but in this district you never have the blanket Native round about.

Compared to 15 years ago, do they wear more or better European clothes? - 15 years ago they could afford to buy more clothes, but not now.

Do they wear worse clothes now? - Some people wear better clothes, those who can still earn enough money;

but the bulk of them do not spend. I mean, taking the masses as a whole, they have not the money to spend on clothes that they used to have 15 years ago.

Do you think they do not wear as good clothes now as then? Are you speaking now of Kimberley and Barkly West area, or other parts of the country, too? - I should say other parts of the country, too, but mainly about this district.~~2x~~

What other parts of the country? - Well, my experience is mainly in the Cape, Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

But the Cape is a fairly big area? - And right down to the Eastern Province.

You think the Natives spend less on their clothes now than then? - They have not got the money to spend on their clothes that they had 15 years ago.

They are actually wearing poorer clothing now than they did 15 years ago? - Yes, you will find certain individuals wear better clothes, but so far as the masses are concerned, they do not buy such good clothes now.

Have the Natives been affected in any way by European ideas of having certain fashions in clothes? - Well, they have no other ideas here; you see, they are only swayed by European ideas.

They follow fashion, too? - Yes, especially the womenfolk.

Not the men? - Some of the young fellows do. At one time they wore very short jackets and what they called "Oxford bags", but I see they have stopped wearing them now.

It is no longer the fashion. Now, on the next page there is one statement, "Native contribution to the public good was not limited to the cheap labour of his hands,

50
Mr. Plaastje

for,, in addition, he was paying heavy taxes for the maintenance of White civilisation and the high cost of European government and the welfare of the families of poor Whites." Have you worked out how much the Native pays in tax? - It is very difficult to work it out.

You have not worked it out? - They are so inextricably mixed up that even the officials themselves cannot tell you; but, as I say there, it is much easier in the Transkei if the Commission could get hold of the figures there.

Yes, you have stated that. I think we would make better progress if you just answered the questions. You have not worked out what the Native has contributed in taxes? - No.

Incidentally, I take it you have not worked out how much is spent from public revenue on the Native? - Well, we get statements from time to time.

You have not worked it out? - Not I, personally.

Have you any statements which you regard as sufficiently accurate and on which you can base an opinion? - On what, for instance?

On how much the Government spends on the Natives? - The only full statements that you get, for instance, are those of the Education Department.

Yes, but that is only a part of what is spent. Have you ever seen any figures which shew the full amount that the Government spends on Natives - State services for Natives; have you ever seen a statement shewing that? - Yes, at the Government Conference, some years ago.

By whom was it prepared? - By Dr. Loren. The Post Office was mentioned as one, and then I enquired whether a Native could get anything from the Post Office for nothing. So that we were told that money was being spend on the Natives

but you do not find anything there that has been spent on him that is not given to an European, for instance.

I do not criticise the statement. I just wanted to know about the statement. What is the total amount? - It is very difficult to say now.

You did not have that statement before you when you prepared this statement? - That was about five years ago.

But when you prepared this statement, did you have it before you? - No.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Did it shew a balance against or in favour of the Native; can you remember that? - I cannot remember that.

CHAIRMAN: On what grounds do you maintain that the Native is paying heavy taxes "for the maintenance of White civilisation, and the high cost of European government and the welfare of the families of poor Whites" - or is it your opinion? - No, sir, it is not an opinion, it is a fact; it is what I see.

But you admit you have not worked out the facts? - You want me to work out the facts from the Union point of view, but I come face to face with the facts in my travels, and when I meet certain individuals and find out exactly what they pay and try and find out what benefit they get or their relatives get, I find that the benefits they get are nothing to be compared with the amount of money they pay; I mean in individual cases. So that, if it were possible for a Commission like this to get hold of figures, where you get Natives in areas like the Transkei, then there might be a possibility of supplying an estimate.

I am just trying to find out whether you have any ground, except opinion, for making a statement like this. I think you have already explained you come into

Mr. Plaatsje

contact with Natives and your impression is they get nothing back for the money they spend; that is your opinion ?- Yes.

DR. ROBERTS: You mention here rightly and very wisely, the Transkei. Now, that would give you a very simple means of arriving at what you would consider the just dues or charges against the Native. How much do you think is the general cost of keeping up the Transkei - of police, judges, - the whole service ?- Well, that is a very difficult thing for me to say.

No, it is very easy. I mean the expense of keeping it up ?- That would be very difficult for me to say,

Well, probably it would. It comes to nearly half a million, nearly £500,000; would it be a fair estimate then, to say that, since the Transkei is one fifth of the whole Native population, the charge against the Natives would be five or six times that ?- Yes.

If the whole of South Africa would be a Transkei ?- Yes, more or less.

Well, that would give you £3,000,000 as a charge against the Natives ?- Yes.

So that you would have to meet that in taxation of some kind or another, you see ?- (No answer):

CHAIRMAN: You maintain here that the liquor trade has got a strangle hold on the scant income of the Natives. Does that mean that the Natives prefer buying liquor to food? It is unreasonable, mind you ?- Well, it is very difficult to tell what a man prefers who is under the force of liquor. You see, when he gets his money he does not know what he prefers -----

But are the Natives, generally speaking, very much under the influence of the desire for liquor, that that has given the liquor trade a strangle-hold, - is it less, say,

53 Mr. Plaetje

now than it was before ?- Well, they used ^{not} to drink as much as they do at the present time.

It is more so now ?- There is more drunkenness than ever before.

Is that because they have learned to like European liquor ?- Well, they used to drink European liquor when I was a child, but they did not get so drunk as they do now.

They drink more of the "hotter" stuff ?- I could not say.

But you think there is more drunkenness now than ever before ?- Yes.

DR. ROBERTS: You are quite sure of that ?- Oh, yes. When I was a child, a drunken man used to be so rare that he got ashamed and tried to get out of the way when he saw people, but nowadays it is the fashion.

I come very often to Kimberley and have never seen a drunken man all the time I have been here ?- (No answer):

CHAIRMAN: Now, the Native, therefore, either must spend more on liquor or must get more of it for nothing. I take it there is not much hope of his getting it for nothing, so he must spend it on that ?- Yes.

And he is spending more on fashions ?- Yes, he does spend more on fashions now.

But he is worse off; he gets less money ?- Yes.

You mention here that an estimate was made at Lichtenburg that there were no fewer than 176,000 Natives on the diggings ?- Yes.

Can you give me a reference to that; when was that made and where ?- When I was there and made an official of the Native Affairs Department.

The Native Affairs Department said 176,000 ?- Yes, at Lichtenburg in 1927.

Working Natives ?- Yes, on the diggings.

Do you know how many Natives are working on the gold mines ?- About 200,000.

There would be almost as many on the Lichtenburg diggings, then ?- Well, at that time I have never seen such a mass of humanity as I saw then. That is the reason why I went and asked.

Have you any idea how much room a hundred thousand people would require to stand elbow-to-elbow ?- Well, you have those people in Cape Town.

How many ?- Over 100,000.

People altogether ?- Yes.

Not Natives ?- No, people altogether.

MR. LUCAS: You do not mean everywhere; all in one place ?- I mean at the Lichtenburg diggings.

CHAIRMAN: You include Ventersdorp ?- No.

You definitely confine it to Lichtenburg ?- Well, I was working that out and I was referring to the Lichtenburg district. I went there two years later and where I ~~isnt~~ met seventy motorcars, two years later I met twelve.

You mention an amount spent on stamps in the Wesselton Compound. I am not sure that you mention that purely as an interesting fact, or do you want to draw any conclusion there which you have not drawn ?- I forget the exact number of Natives they have in the compound.

Something between a thousand and eleven hundred ?- Perhaps you are referring to the three Wesselton compounds; I am referring only to one.

No, only one ?- There they spend £1,000 on stamps annually, and the fact is not appreciated that Natives support the Post Office to that extent.

Do you think that also supports the Post Office ?-Stamps ?

Yes ?- What else is it?

Do you think the stamps are used for postal purposes ?- I did not know that the Native wanted stamps for anything else.

Well, they do ?- It comes back again, but what Dr. Roberts was asking me was how and where these people support. If I could show you the amount of money that some of my friends spend on stamps, you would be surprised.

Do you look upon that as taxation ?- No, I mean they are supporting the administration of the country - the civilisation of the country. I do not call it taxation.

Incidentally, the civilisation of the country is enabling them to keep in touch with their friends?- Decidedly.

So they seem to me to be getting some sort of quid pro quo ?- Just the same as I say, with reference to the hospital tax; people in other centres do not pay the hospital tax. We do not complain, because we get something for it. It is not like the pound that you pay and get nothing in return.

Now, this hospital tax; to whom is it paid ?- To the hospital.

To the Hospital Board ?- Yes.

But how is it paid ?- It is paid by cheque - by the Native Affairs Department.

How is it collected ?- From servants; contract services; the registration of contracts.

The money that comes from service contracts goes to the hospital ?- Yes.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Who pays the shilling?- The Native
Are you sure ?- Yes.

I have never had a Native who paid it ?- Well, in the Transvaal, the law says the Whiteman must pay it. The Native here gets arrested and the law says the Native must pay it.

But, if you engage a Native at £1 a month, do you subtract a shilling when he gets his pay at the end of the month?-

Mr. Plaatje

I daresay one employer will make a present of the shilling to the Native, but in the majority of instances they subtract it, because the law says they must. In most cases, they do not bother about it. A Native himself is afraid of being run in, so he goes and pays it.

CHAIRMAN: Who collects the pass fees and the poll tax ?- The Native Affairs Department.

The additional Native Commissioner ?- The protector of Natives.

And the Government arms him with a bayonet ?- Yes; oh, yes.

How many bayonets has he got, to extract the fees from Kimberley ?- Well, he has got the Police Force and the Gaol.

But how many bayonets; I want to know about the bayonets ?- Those are bayonets, of course.

You do not mean literally at the point of the bayonet, but figuratively at the point of the bayonet ?- Yes.

Another example of where a little more accuracy might be useful ?- (No answer):

SENATOR VAN NIKKERK: You have a fairly good knowledge of the conditions of Natives on the farms in the three Provinces - the Cape, Transvaal and the Free State ?- Yes.

Where do you think a Native is better off - in the Cape ?- Well, in the Cape he gets better facilities; in the Transvaal he gets better pay, as a shepherd, for instance.

What better facilities does he get in the Cape ?- Here, for instance, he has better school facilities.

I am talking about better economic facilities ?- He certainly gets better pay in the Transvaal. That is a point I believe I brought up in your presence, that it is a wrong principle to go and make the same poll tax all over, for a Native in the Cape, who gets 15/- a month, and the Native

Mr. Plaatje

in the Transvaal who gets £2 a month.

Well, the law of 1913 is not applying to the Cape and you people are all complaining so very much of the hardships of that law. In the Cape it does not apply ?- Speaking about this district, for instance, we are largely influenced by what happens outside. A whole lot of the town population here are Natives from the Free State and Transvaal, so that when we get an influx of Natives here, they do not only come from the Cape districts, but from Bechuanaland and the Orange Free State.

Now you state somewhere here that kaffer truck seems to be specially selected for high taxation. With the exception of blankets - I can see the point there that taxation was raised on account of encouraging local manufacture, - and sheeting; but for the rest, can you give the Commission a specific instance ?- I mention the instance of cloth, there; that is not a blanket. There have been a whole lot of changes since the last time I dealt with the figures, but what I remembered was the case of these blankets and also the cloth.

You refer chiefly to those_x two ?- Yes, there are other things, too, but I would not care to mention them now because I do not know how they stand.

You speak about Japanese print; when was the import duty on that raised ?- During the last three or four years, I think.

We were in the Transkei four months ago and were shewn there Japanese print sold at sevenpence ?- Well, I do not know if there has been any alteration.

We went into a Native shop there and asked the man what are the Natives buying; he said formerly they bought German and American print, but that is being discarded in favour of Japanese print. "Look at this excellent piece,

which is being sold at sevenpence a yard". I do not know where you get this 2/9d from?— That was from a buyer who was down at Cape Town buying for some Transkeian firms and it was in the wholesale store where we were discussing the matter. He said this Japanese cloth the Natives got for ninepence before but that, since last year, it had jumped up to 2/9d because they clapped the tax on.

MR. LUCAS: You, in reply to a question of the Chairman, said that there were variations in the terms of farm contracts. Could you tell us those variations generally. I do not want minor details of differences, but general variations of types of contract?— Well, some farmers will take on a Native on condition that he is going to render service for a certain period of the year with his family; and other farmers again will pay 5/- or 10/- a month to the wife, who does work at the house, with the help of the daughters and so on, but the chief grievance is with reference to ploughing lands; some farmers are more considerate. They allow a Native to plough, say, three days in the week for themselves.

Do they all get land to plough?— That is the sort of question I want answered; is it universal?— Of course, there are individual farmers who do not want to go in for that sort of thing. They just hire their servants and pay them 2/- a day the same as in town. I do not know whether it is spreading among the farmers, but there are some farmers like that in the Free State.

Do the Natives get anything in addition to the 2/- a day?— No.

Do they provide their own food?— Yes; and they must not keep any stock.

They are not given any land to plough?— No.

You say you do not know whether there are many cases of that sort ?- There are some.

Are the farmers who are doing that able to get all the workers they want ?- I do not know; I have seen the Natives there and was told these are the terms under which they worked.

Are there some farmers who work entirely with labourers of that sort ?- Some farmers, yes.

They have no other labourers ?- No, and they are given no rights to ploughing or grazing.

I know; but are there some farmers who have just that kind of labourer on their own farms, to do all the work, and no other labourer ?- Yes, there are some.

Could you find out easily from those farmers whether they have any difficulty in getting labourers - not just at once, but you could let us know afterwards ?- Well, it is very difficult to tell, because, when you ask a farmer if he has got all the labour he wants, he wants to know what business you have to ask.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Would you say they like that system or that they would like to see it extended ?- No, I would not say the Natives like it. Some like a certain number of oxen, milch cows and so on. Some farmers are considerate; they give him certain hours in which he can use his oxen during the four days, but others want him to start at daylight and plough right through till sunset. The result is, on Friday morning, the fellow is so sorry for his animals that he does not work them; he gives them a rest. He works for, perhaps, half a day on Saturday. Those are some of the terms. Then again, there are terms where they are supposed to give manual labour. They come out for, say, three or four months, but then the three or four

months is spread out between ploughing time, weeding time, reaping time and shearing time; so that they find it very difficult to get away and earn something for themselves.

CHAIRMAN: Is that common in these parts - to spread it out over the whole year? - Well, with the Kimberley district does not do that.

Boshof, for example? - Yes, some do it there.

Is it common practise; is it more common practise to spread, say, three months over the whole year? - You get all these conditions so that it is very difficult to tell which is the majority or which is the minority.

MR. LUCAS: Is there not one which is in the minority? - No; sometimes you find the two systems on the same farm.

Now, taking the Native you have been in contact with, - the type we are told who is moving off the farms because he cannot exist on the conditions that he gets; would that class of Native be prepared to stay on the farms at 2/- a day without any other privileges, if the farmers tried to introduce that system? - You know, there are some people, sir, who can only live on a cash income, but again there are others who do not care to stay in the country unless they can plough or do anything like that.

Or keep cattle? - Yes.

But if they are being driven off the farms because of cattle and they take their cattle and move into the towns, would they, instead of coming into the town, have a further choice of 2/- a day, say, on the farms and nothing else? - Well, if he can get 2/- a day in the town, I do not think he would go and earn it out in the country.

CHAIRMAN: He prefers 2/- in the town rather than in the country? - Yes, unless you give him the right to

graze cattle.

Surely he must realise he is very much worse off if he gets 2/- in the town ?- He is worse off if he gets 2/- in the town, providing you give him grazing rights in the country.

If he is going to get 2/- in the town or 2/- in the country and has to make a choice between those two, which of the two would he prefer ?- If he cannot keep cattle over there (indicating), he would soon come here (indicating). For one thing, he will not have to send his children very far to school, if he is in the town.

Are there any districts that you have referred to in which any appreciable number of people have no wage at all but who are just given these privileges ?- Yes, there are a good number who pay no wages at all.

Is there much in these areas of payment in kind - a beast, so many months; a calf for so many months, or so many head of sheep ?- I have often heard Natives complain that the White people refuse to pay them in sheep now.

Natives like that ?- Yes; I would not say they all like it; some would prefer cash, others prefer stock and cannot get it.

Now, a number of Natives have told us that the 1913 Act produces certain results. How does the Act passed in 1913 lead today to the driving of Natives into the towns ?- Well, the conditions are getting harder and harder.

How is that due to the Act of 1913 ?- If the Act were not there, those men could get away and make better terms with the farmer next door.

You mean he would have better opportunities of improving his position ?- Yes, exactly.

The actual driving off the farm which took place

wholesale is definite ?- It is not definite; it turned country dwellers into town dwellers; it turned others from intelligent farmers into labour tenants, and the conditions are getting harder and harder. For instance, this matter of ploughing for three and four days in the week is a new affair. You did not have those things before. Those are the sort of little things that have come in since the 1913 Act was passed; the Native is hard up for land, he will do almost anything for a little land on which to graze cattle and do a little ploughing.

You heard Mr. Kuhn giving his evidence, did you not ?- Partly; I had to go away.

One of the points he made was that Natives were not trained on the farms to do their work efficiently. Have you any comment to make on that statement ?- Well, you know, sir, I think it would be a very useful thing, because farm life is the Native's natural environment and perhaps if we had a Native who was scientifically instructed to use the soil, or scientifically instructed to look after cattle the farmer would recognise his value and pay him a little more. The Native will benefit and the farmer will benefit because the stock would be better cared for. The same thing applies to other things. When I was a child, you know, we used to have old women helping as midwives without any training, and they managed to get on very well. At the present time we have trained nurses and qualified midwives and even the old women admit things are very much better and confinement very much easier for the women. My father was a cattle farmer; he thought he knew a lot. There are some young fellows who go from Bechuanaland to Tsomo and they tell the old people things that they knew

nothing about. Now, the White people have agricultural schools and they are instructing the farmers in the science of agriculture. Those farmers are helpful to the Native because, perhaps, they are teaching their servants to do their farming. They are farming in a progressive way; but there is the unfortunate fellow who has his own farm. He has to be taught to use his farm for he cannot go and learn from qualified White farmers.

MAJOR ANDERSON: They have demonstrators now? - Yes.

DR. ROBERTS: You are not going to train farmers in the ordinary public school? - No, sir; in the agricultural school.

The point the first witness stressed was that they should be trained in the public schools - in the ordinary schools? - Perhaps he meant the farm schools.

No, he did not? - (No answer)

MR. LUCAS: You have told us of a number of cases of influx of Natives into the towns; one of the points we have to make recommendations about is how to prevent that influx; have you any suggestions to make? - My only suggestion is that last point I handed in this morning, that there ought to be some reserve where these people can go to.

Can you see any other solution? - I do not see any other.

That means providing further land for the Natives? - Yes, that is all.

I take it that a number of things that are involved in the existing law must be taken as settled as a matter of policy, like the farming on shares. If it were possible to reopen that, would that go some way to easing the difficulty? - Well, the Native contention is and always has been that he never had it so hard to exist while he was permitted to

do some farming on shares, because he had no other land except the White mans and, when he had that permission, he did a good deal better. That was always the contention. I do not know whether that could be remedied straight away. People have practically got used to it; it has practically placed the Native in the hands of the Whites. He can dictate his own terms now; he is not going to lose his liberty and give the Native a chance to dictate terms, too.

Supposing it were possible, do you think that would ease the position as far as this influx of the Natives to the towns is concerned; would it tend to draw them back to the farms? - Yes.

In substantial numbers? - Yes.

You make the point that one of the things that drives the Natives into the towns is the absence of school facilities on the farms and the existence of such facilities in the towns? - Yes.

Supposing that an active policy were adopted of setting up school facilities in the country, would that have much effect in preventing the influx? - I would not say that that would affect the influx, without the provision of land. There would have to be provision of land before it could be effective; but where there is a permanent arrangement whereby the Native would be more sure of his tenure on the farm - there are some farms where they do open schools, but the population must be more stable.

Then, another point we have to deal with is the question of the application of the different industrial acts, such as the Industrial Conciliation Act and the Wage Act, to Natives - or if they should not be applied, what other form of such legislation should be available for Natives; have you anything to say about that? - Well, I