

Mr. Malcolm

should be made.

Do you think you could find areas where there would be a demand for these things for cash ?- Yes, I think in at least twelve areas in Natal you could do that.

Where the Natives would have houses built rather than huts ?- Yes.

How do you propose to inaugurate it ?- Well, first of all, by putting these men into training for a year at one of our industrial schools.

I am thinking of the provision of capital to start with ?- That would have to be a matter of money, of course, - say a grant from the Education Department, say the money required for the paying of the wages. I think, in the first year or two, we would have to pay their wages. I do not think they would cover the costs of the thing in the first year or two, until the people got used to the idea of bringing things to them, rather than going to the towns, and I am sure that, in say five years' time, such a shop would be a self-supporting undertaking and could be handed over to the men to work as such.

It is rather a far call from education as hitherto visualised by the Education Department ?- I do not know. We have been looking for avenues of that sort all the time here in Natal, and all our schools have what I might call a bias in the direction of manual occupations.

Your proposal is really one of subsidizing certain national industries for the sake of the educational benefit of the people in that area. That is where you get the word education in ?- Yes, that is so.

I do not know whether your hardhearted treasurer would listen to that ?- I have had great experience of that.

Mr. Malcolm

With regard to the admission of Natives into the group of artisans, are you visualising that they should be artisans among the European community ?- I think that would be inevitable and, unless that is so, the avenue of employment would be very strictly limited for some years to come.

I take it that you are aware of the difficulty that exists of a large number of Europeans finding employment in such occupations ?- Yes, I am.

Are we not then creating an even more difficult problem than the one we have already ?- Would it not be that the very raising of these people would provide a market for their labour. I feel that the general level of their living would rise and that they would, in a very large measure, supply their own market for their labour.

In other words, if I may draw a parallel, if you paid me a bigger salary, it would mean that I would spend more money and ultimately that money would come back to the Government --- surely there is a flaw in that somewhere? To me it sounds like Douglas economics ?- Yes, it does.

MR. LUCAS Do the Natives have to pay school fees in Natal ?- Yes.

Do they have to pay at all schools ?- Yes.

And White education, is that free ?- It is free in the primary stages.

And what is the position in regard to Indian education ?- They pay.

Do they pay the same rate as the Natives do ?- I could not tell you that, I only deal with Natives.

In any case definitely all Native schoolchildren have to pay fees ?- Yes.

Is there an uniform rate ?- No, in Government schools there is an uniform rate, of course, but in the mission schools

Mr. Malcolm

they have various ways of assessing the rates. Sometimes it is assessed on the families, sometimes on the population.

What is the Government rate ?- 3d per month per child in the sub-standards, 6d per child per month in standards up to IV, and 1/- per child per month in standards V and VI. And then, in the institutions, they pay higher again.

And what is the position about schoolbooks and writing materials ?- They provide those themselves, they have to find that.

And what could we reckon, say for the sub-standards, is the cost per child likely to be ?- About 3/9d per year, I think.

And in the standards up to IV ?- Probably about 10/- would cover that for a year.

Now, you recommended compulsory education for urban children ?- Yes.

But not for rural children - why do you differentiate ?- Well, the reason why I do not recommend it for rural areas is that it would be impossible to carry it out.

Yes, I can see quite a lot of reasons. The question I want to ask your opinion about is what effect that might have on attracting rural Natives into the towns ?- It might attract them.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Would it not be rather a serious problem? You know the desire of Natives to get education - would not that bring large numbers into the towns ?- I doubt whether it would be more than at present. As a matter of fact, a large number are coming to the schools today, but you must not forget that there are schools in almost every area.

But if it were made compulsory, would you still charge fees ?- No, I am afraid that, if it were made compulsory, we could not.

Mr. Malcolm

It would mean making education free throughout the country ?- Yes.

MAJOR ANDERSON: You could not make it free in the towns and make them pay in the country ?- No, I do not think you could, it would not be fair. It would be quite unjustifiable.

MR. LUCAS: Now, what form of support would you propose giving to the Pathfinder and Wayfarer movement ?- I think there might be support in providing money for training courses for Pathfinder masters. That is the first need at various centres. And then I think there should be a secretary or an organiser. One man should be appointed.

Would you, in return~~x~~ for that assistance, require any power to control the movement? - No, I think that that movement can control itself. It is well controlled. It is under the Scout Movement. I am now referring to the Pathfinders, and I think it should be left to control itself.

You think that that movement and the Wayfarers movement are movements which deserve encouragement ?- Yes, I think so.

Have you had much experience of these movements in Natal ?- We are trying to get it going, but our difficulty is the training of men and the time to organise. We have noone specially to do it. I have to do what I can, but I have not got the time to do it properly. It should be in the hands of someone who could devote all his time to it.

It comes back to the poverty of the Natives. You cannot get much more from them to support it ?- No, that is so.

Now, as far as recreation facilities in Natal are concerned, are they adequate in connection with the Native schools ?- Yes, I think so.

Can you express any opinion as to the provision of recreation for the children when they leave school, as to the

Mr. Malcolm

adequacy or otherwise of that provision ?- That, I think, would be one good reason for supporting the Pathfinder and the Wayfarer movements. It is because of the inadequacy of that that I feel something should be done.

These two movements are considerably more than just recreation ?- Yes, but they do embrace that. They take that in. I think that the recreation, if I might put it this way, is inadequate for young children at the schools and beyond the schools.

And is there anything in which your department can assist in that matter beyond the school age ?- We have no means of doing so at present. I do not know whether we could do anything by employing people to take it up.

Have you yourself any experience of the rise or the growth of the Amalaitsa movement, or of any similar movement ?- No, I cannot say that I have. I only come in contact with it casually, but it is a growing movement. It is a movement which has its inception in the lack of some means of giving vent to animal spirits, very largely.

Is the scale of pay for Native teachers in Natal the same as it is in the other Provinces ?- Yes.

It is uniform now ?- Yes.

Does that scale represent any change in the existing rates in Natal ?- Yes, there was a slight increase.

And the increments provided for in the scale, are they being paid ?- They are not being paid in full. They are paid one increment for every five years service.

That is considerably short of full ?- Yes.

Does that mean that no increments are paid yet, but it is hoped to do so in five years ?- No; they are paid now with retrospective effects after five years' service.

Mr. Malcolm

Is there any pension fund for teachers ?- In Government schools, yes.

There is a fund there ?- There is also, in addition to that, a provident fund for Native teachers in Government schools.

Is the pension fund calculated on the same basis as it is for European teachers ?- Only a few teachers come under that. Only after a certain salary can they participate in the provident fund.

What is the limit ?- Anything under £80 does not come in.

Have you any Native inspectors ?- Yes, we have five.

And is that number likely to be increased ?- Yes.

The policy is to use Natives as far as that is possible ?- Yes, we use Natives in our high schools and in our training colleges, too.

And is it the policy to encourage, as far as possible, the employment of Natives in connection with Native schools ?- Yes.

We had complaints made to us by a Native organization in Durban that, in a number of schools and institutions, there were practically no Native teachers ---- they referred to Native colleges. One instance which they gave was a particular Roman Catholic Mission Institution ?- Yes. The Roman Catholics do employ a fair number, perhaps 70 or 80 Sisters who are employed in the Native schools.

Do they get a grant for these Sisters ?- Yes.

Is that on the same rate of pay as would be given to Native teachers ?- Yes.

So that for a White teacher employed in Native schools, the rate of pay is the same as for Native teachers ?- Yes.

Is that the same as the high schools ?- No; there is a different rate for Native teachers and for European

Mr. Malcolm

teachers.

How do they compare ?- A Native teacher with a degree begins at £175 per year, and an European teacher with a degree starts at £350.

That is double ?- Yes.

Is that a teacher with a teacher's training ?- Yes, with a teacher's training and a degree.

CHAIRMAN: Is it the same teacher's training for both -- is it the same certificate for both ?- No, it is not exactly the same certificate, but the training is equivalent.

MR. LUCA:S Would you say that the standard was the same ?- Yes.

Now, a complaint made in this connection was that the funds available for Native education were burdened by these higher salaries for Europeans and that certain institutions got the advantage of that and that Native education was consequently restricted. Can you express any opinion on that ?- Well, I do think that there is some truth in that. You see, our institutions are under denominational control, and it is difficult for us, short of withdrawing grants, to impose our will on them entirely, but our policy is to put Native teachers in wherever possible. Short of taking drastic action, we cannot do that. Our idea is to have a half and half staff, and we do have that in some of our institutions, but we have not got it in all.

Is it necessary to restrict the Natives in those institutions to half ?- Well, we feel that it will be wise at present.

It is just a temporary position ?- I think that, eventually, the White principal might work with a staff which may be entirely Native.

Mr. Malcolm

CHAIRMAN: Why do you think it is wise ?- Well, for one thing, we have not got the teachers.

Yes, Mr. Malcolm, that is not wisdom, that is necessity up to the
? - That is so. Probably, because at present our experience has been that European teachers are better than Native teachers of the same quality.

MR. LUCAS: Better just for results, or for the system as a whole ?- Better for results.

Is there not another factor ?- Yes, I should be glad to see all Native teachers employed and should be glad to see that come about.

CHAIRMAN: It is a scheme which has to grow up ?- Yes.

MR. LUCAS: In those institutions where the 50/50 basis is not adopted, would it be advisable for you to say that, where the Europeans are in excess of the Native teachers, as far as the excess is concerned at anyrate, the allowances for salaries would be on the same basis as for Natives ?- Well, we do that now. Any replacement must be by Natives.

Would it not be possible to say that, after a certain date, the allowance will be cut down ?- Yes, it might be a good thing, but then the onus would be thrown on us to supply the teachers of the quality that is required.

Is the supply of suitable teachers likely to equal the demand before long ?- Before long perhaps, but it does not at present. We take all that Fort Hare which is our training ground can give us and we do not get enough at present.

But is Fort Hare the only training ground for that class of teachers ?- Yes.

That is for high school teachers ?- Yes.

And what are the minimum requirements of a Native teacher in a primary school to entitle him to claim a salary from the

Mr. Malcolm

Government ?- In primary schools we employ all grades, and we even employ untrained teachers.

And do they get a grant ?- Yes, they get a grant and they appear in the salary scale, too.

Is that so? I thought that the grant was only for qualified teachers ?- No, we have a large number of unqualified teachers and I may say that our supply of teachers is not enough to meet the demand.

Does the Natal Provincial Education Department make provision for the training of teachers ?- Yes.

Will you tell us what provision is made ?- We have five training colleges at present.

Those five training colleges, are they run by the Province ?- No, not by the Province; they are all denominational.

And the grants are made to these institutions ?- Yes, they are made on the basis of the teachers' salaries required.

And are they turning out enough teachers for your primary schools ?- No, that is the point; they are not.

They are not yet turning out enough ?- No, not yet.

And do you think that they are likely to do so within reasonable time ?- Well, I do not know. Our new schools open as fast as we can get the teachers for them, but it looks to me as if it will be some years before the demand will be met and before the supply is likely to reach the saturation point.

So that it really comes to this, that there is a large opening for educated Natives ?- That is so.

What are the minimum qualifications for a qualified Native teacher in a primary school ?- Three years training.

Three years training after what ?- Three years training after Standard VI.

Can you tell us what are the corresponding qualifications

Mr. Malcolm

for an European teacher in an European school ?- An European teacher in an European school has to have his matriculation and two years training, which is four years after St.VI, and two years training.

What provision do you make for industrial training for Natives ?- We have industrial schools for Natives and we have some schools which are training schools with industrial departments attached. We have two boys schools and four girls schools - industrial schools.

Are those Government schools ?- No, they are not.

But they are all subsidized by the Government ?- Yes.

Is nursing included in the training opportunities at those institutions ?- No.

That does not come in at all -- that does not fall under you, does it ?- No.

CHAIRMAN: What is the medium of instruction in your Native schools ?- It is Zulu up to Standard VI, and then English comes in with a modified amount of Zulu.

But up to Standard IV it is generally Zulu ?- Yes, that is so.

Do you know what attitude the Natives take up in this Province on the question of Zulu medium as against English medium ?- Well, the Zulus generally, if it were put to them, would vote for the English medium.

On what grounds does the Department carry on the Zulu medium ?- Because it is more efficient and much more progress is made by beginning with the medium of the people, than by starting with English as the medium straight away. In the beginning, especially, it is much better to have the medium in their own language.

After Standard IV, roughly, what proportion would be English medium and what proportion would be Zulu medium ?-

Mr. Malcolm

I should say 75% would be English.

Is that in Standard V ?- Yes.

And what would be the position in Standard VI ?- In Standard VI it would be about the same.

And what is the position in the training institutions ?- There it is practically all English.

MR. LUCAS: Is the fact that Zulu is the medium one of the reasons why you are still short of teachers ?- No, that is not the reason.

Your Zulus have reached the stage that they can teach in their own language ?- Yes, and in English too. They can teach in both languages.

CHAIRMAN: Is it possible for your records to shew for a period of, say, five years back, how many new teachers you have taken on every year ?- New teachers entirely?

I do not mean transfers, but I mean how many new Natives have joined the staff of your schools, say, over a period of the last five years. Would you be able to get that from your records ?- No, we have not got a return shewing that, and any figures which I might give you on that would have to be more or less approximate.

Now, it is a fact, of course, is it not, that there are some trained teachers out of employment at present ?- Yes. That is due to the fact that we have a method of ~~giving~~ allocating certain grades of teachers to certain schools and we have had to make some reductions in the grading of our schools. We have had to reduce the grades of some of our schools, and that has had the effect of throwing some of these people out of employment. That is the reason for that.

But surely there is no objection to a trained teacher

Mr. Malcolm

of a higher grade taking a position in a school of a lower grade rather than an untrained teacher ?- Well, the position is that some of them prefer to be unemployed, rather than go into a lower grade school.

But what do they do then ?- They have to find some other employment.

MR. LUCAS: Is the number of unemployed teachers substantial, do you think ?- No, I do not think it is very large.

Do your records shew the average cost per pupil ?- Yes, our records shew that.

And do your records make any comparison with the cost per pupil of the other race ?- No, they do not shew that.

But could you get us that comparison ?- Yes, it might be possible to get you that from some other source.

CHAIRMAN: It would be interesting to have that, if you would look that up for us and send us the details, when you can ?- Yes, I shall look that up for you.

THE COMMISSION ADJOURNED FOR LUNCHEN UNTIL 2.30 P.M.

Mr. Holden (Chamber of Industries)

On resuming at 2.30 p.m.

MR. EDWARD HOLDEN (Speaking on behalf of the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Industries,
called and examined:

CHAIRMAN: Have you copies of your statement? - I have only rough notes; I can hand you in a rough copy, but I wanted to elaborate it a bit.

Will you proceed please? - Well, gentlemen, I am here to give evidence, from the point of view of the Chamber of Industries and large employers of labour, on the Native as his labour is applied to industry and his efficiency and shortcomings and the effect on industry of increased wages for the Native. In the first place, we admit the economic fact that increased wages naturally mean increased spending power; but we wish to point out that today, when we have increased competition from Japan, Russia, Czechoslovakia, where wages levels for civilized White workers in some cases are as low as, and in some instances even lower than that of our wages, whilst the labour in those countries is of a purely White and efficient character; and whilst the public will continue to purchase in the cheapest markets, irrespective of the country of origin of the goods or of the standards of living and wages in those countries, we fail to see how industry here, whilst having to meet this competition from the countries aforementioned, can afford any highly increased rates of pay.

I do not think I need weary you with figures in regard to production in Japan, for instance, but I would just like to mention that, in regard to rubber shoes at present being imported into this country, and also cotton goods, whereas in Lancashire ^{each} operative operates four

Mr. Holden (Chamber of Industries)

looms and works eight hours a day for an average wage of £2.15.- a week, in Japan each operative operates 12 looms - which is equivalent to 300% more than in Britain, - works 12 hours_x a day, - another 50%; making 450% in all. In addition, the average rate of pay is reputed to be 10d a day, or oneeighth of that paid in Lancashire. This makes an increased labour cost per article of approximately 3,600%, or, otherwise, where it costs a penny for labour in Japan for an article produced, it costs about 36d in Lancashire. Our point is this; if we are to support increased conditions and increased wages for Natives, which we will admit will increase spending power, it must be fully understood that industry in this country will be totally unable to compete with such countries as Japan, Russia, & Czechoslovakia and will eventually be faced with obliteration.

Another point which we wish to bring forward - I expect this Commission has had ample evidence brought before it on the necessity and the advisability of giving increased wages and increased facilities to Natives throughout the country. We, however, have failed to find any evidence which points to the fact that Natives respond to increased wages by increased production or increased outputs or increased efficiency; and unless Natives respond to increased wages by increased outputs, naturally the cost of the articles produced must increase. Our point of view is Natives do not respond to increased wages by increased outputs, although they have a very large reserve of energy which would enable them to do so. Speaking now, personally, I would like to give the experience of my own firm, when the wages determination, which put up the wages of Natives practically 50%, came

Chamber of Industries

into force. We have a certain key operation in our factory on which Natives have been employed for some three years and who, for over three years, have demonstrated their inability to do more than 30 hides per day. When their wages were increased 50% by the wages determination, they did not do one extra hide per day. We knew perfectly well that their reserve of energy was such that they could quite easily have done so, so eventually we took the risk of bad work and we put them on piece work.

The first day we had them on piece work, one man did 70 hides by 3 o'clock and went home, - which proved to us that his reserve of energy was over 100%. As a matter of fact, the whole of the boys on this work now are on piece work and they all do their 70% to 80% more per day and usually leave off between 2 and 3 o'clock each day.

MR. LUCAS: What do they get/according to the piece work basis, they get 25% for the daily rate.

That is for 70 hides ?- No; the agreement says this, that where a man is employed on piece work, the rates shall be so adjusted that he can earn 25% above what he would have earned had he been on day work.

When you started, you were working on a basis of 30 ?- Yes.

What did you reckon they should do to get that 25% above day rates when you first fixed your piecework rates ?- Well, the point is this, they are earning far above 25%.

I would like my question answered; you had to pay them 22/- a week ?- 25/-.

Yes, 25/-, and you were getting 30 hides ?- Previously we were paying them about 18/-.

You had to fix a rate before you put them on piece work? - Yes.

Chamber of Industries

Doing 70 they must be earning between £2 and £3 a week? - Yes, in that vicinity. This proves to us that the Native has as such a vast reserve of energy. To make my point clearer, I would point out that if farm wages, for instance, are put up to the extent that it would entail 6d extra per bag on mealies, South Africa would be in a very deplorable condition, because, with the present state of the mealie market, it could not afford any increased cost per bag. But our argument is this, that the Native has sufficient reserve of energy or working power to justify an increased wage, but at the same time not to cause any increased price per bag of mealies, provided that he exerted the reserve energy which we are sure he has.

CHAIRMAN: How would it increase the price of mealies? I did not follow that? - We would point out that if you were to put up the rates of wages on farms today to such an extent that it would put up the price of mealies 6d per bag, South African farmers would be practically bankrupt; but we consider that the Native has sufficient reserve of energy whereby it would not entail, if he exerted himself, any increased cost per bag of mealies.

What I mean is, a Native hoes four rows; if a Native today hoes, say, four rows of mealies, our experience has taught us that he has sufficient reserve of energy to probably do twelve - which would allow him to have increased wages without increased cost to the producer; but the whole point of this argument is, the Native is not responding to increased wages by increased outputs voluntarily.

Our next point is this, that if the economic circumstances are pressing as hardly on the Native as the evidence before this

Chamber of Industries

Commission would lead one to believe, then with regard to a very large proportion of the Native population, the remedy is in their own hands, because they can work for a longer period per year. I, personally, /- and I doubt whether any member of the Commission can afford to have four to six months' holiday per year, which is the usual thing with the majority of rural Natives. Therefore, we say, if economic circumstances press heavily on the Native as reputed, he can alter things himself by working for a longer period per year.

Another point is that the policy which has already caused Native wages in industry to be advanced in many cases at least 50%, under wage determinations, while Railways, Government Departments, Provincial Councils and City Councils still retain the old rates unaltered, -- this policy is unsound and uneconomic and is leading to a good deal of misconception and unrest.

We believe that Government restriction of Native credit is necessary. I think the figures brought before you by the Native Welfare Society will definitely prove this. Our experience is that rural and tribal Natives - and in saying this I speak on behalf of the Chambers, which employs very large numbers of Natives - are contented and can actually save money on their present pay. We ourselves save money on behalf of boys at times, and it is surprising the amount of money they can accumulate in a few months; whereas, the detribalized Native who is sping the European standard is usually found to be seething with discontent and to be in debt.

Another point which we wish to bring forward is a great deal of the discontent would be averted if there were

Chamber of Industries

a thorough overhaul of all the petty laws applying to Natives. Many are petty and vexatious. We suggest that the whole Code for Natives should be overhauled and that a synopsis of these laws in simple language should be available at all police posts and should be circulated to chiefs and that the police, as far as possible, allocated to Native areas, should only be those who have a knowledge of Native languages.

Our biggest difficulty today - and my factory is in a rural area - is the fact that the police, or the majority of them, are totally unable to understand the Native and in a great many cases, our own interpreter has to interpret for the police. This is a very vital factor in Native discontent.

Another thing which is leading to a good deal of discontent and a great deal of loss of time so far as both employer and Native is concerned, is the method of collecting Native taxes. It is no unusual thing for Natives to go to Maritzburg two, three and four times to pay a £1 poll tax. It is a thing which could no doubt be simplified by a simple means of paying the tax to the employer or to the local authority, instead of boys having to travel the whole way to Maritzburg.

The next point we wish to bring to your notice is the conflict between wage determinations, the Industrial Conciliation Act, Act 27 of 1913; Act 27 of 1913 calls for boys to return to farms for 90 per year. I have here a letter which I only received yesterday, which says, "In terms of your agreement, you are hereby notified that you are required by me, on April 1st 1931, to return and work out rent due for the year ending 1931". This arrived at

Chamber of Industries

the office yesterday and the boy was supposed to be back at his occupation on the 1st April. Our Industrial Council Agreement and wage determinations call for a week's notice and we have had instances where boys have actually been arrested for not returning to the farms, in which case they have not given us the legal week's notice according to law.

We do not wish to press the point, but we think that some simpler means of co-operation between Act 27 of 1913 and the Wage and Industrial Agreements, would avoid quite a lot of friction of this description. I do not think, as a Chamber, we have anything further to suggest, but we hope what we have suggested will prove helpful and enable the Commission to reach some definite and some totally agreeable finding in this matter.

MR. LUCAS: I would be glad if you would send us in the piece-work rates that you are applying to Natives; and we can take it from what you said, that the ordinary production is now not less than 70 ?- Well, it depends on the boys. When we get a new boy he does not do that. My point is this; the boys who were originally on the work, always contended that it was impossible to do more than thirty per day. They received an increased wage of a fraction over 50%; we paid that wage but did not get any increased output whatsoever. We put them on piece work and immediately the output of the boys who had previously been doing thirty jumped up to seventy and over.

Do they keep that up ?- Yes, when there is the work for them to do. At times we have not sufficient.

Would they be able to keep that up for months without any effect on their health ?- Yes. Previously they used

Chamber of Industries

to work from half past seven till five; but they leave off earlier now.

Have you changed the piece work rates since you started? No, we have not.

You are paying the piece work rates which you calculated originally ?- Yes.

Has this increase in their earnings led to their staying shorter periods with you ?- Excuse me, Mr. Chairman; that is one point I missed in my statement on behalf of the Chamber of Industries. We have an item here; I overlooked it; in speaking from the notes I missed it. We say here we should like you to consider whether increased pay caused the Native to stay longer on the job, or whether the amount of money he is earning caused him to save more and to forsake it sooner.

Yes; now what is your experience ?- It is that, with the Native who comes in from the country to work, it certainly makes him forsake his job sooner.

Have you actual experience of that ?- Yes.

Since this increase was granted ?- Yes.

How many cases have you ?- I could not say; boys are changing so often.

Would it be half a dozen in the period ?- More, I should say.

What proportion have you of Natives who do not have to go back to the land, on this job ?- That I could not say.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Does that have an effect on the town Native ?- On the detribalised Native it does not have any effect. We have about 120 employees; quite a number of them have been with us for as long as three and four years; those are mostly detribalised Natives; but the ordinary Native, or one who resides on farms, increased pay enables him to save

Chamber of Industries

more and to take a longer holiday a year.

It enables him to, but does he do it ?- Yes.

When did the determination come into operation ?- In 1927 I think.

Could you go back six years and take a particular occupation like this one that we have been dealing with and tell us how many Natives you had each time and how long those from the country have stayed - and do the same for each since ?- It would be a big job.

Yes, I know; but you want us to express an opinion. If you can suggest any other way of giving us figures that would be worth looking at up, that we can form an opinion on, we would be glad ?- Yes, I will do my best.

As far as that is concerned, the break that happens, may that reduce the efficiency of the Native ?- Exactly. Our point is this. The particular boy mentioned in this document (indicating) for instance, may just have begun to get useful to us -- you will quite appreciate whatever job he is on he is not efficient in until he has worked at it a few months and possibly just begining to get useful to us and begins to earn his money and a letter such as this comes along and off he goes and, by the time he gets back again, he has probably forgotten all that has been taught to him.

Do they go as far back as that, as to forget all they have learned ?- Yes, - perhaps not. But you cannot put him back on the same job.

It has a detrimental effect on the efficiency of the Native ?- Yes.

That is your point ?- Yes.

We would be very glad of any concrete evidence we

Chamber of Industries

could get on the efficacy -- on the length of time that a boy stays with you, as affected by any change in his wages; you can send it to us in Pretoria ?- Yes.

CHAIRMAN: When did you introduce the piece work ?- We had an Industrial Council Meeting in September 1928, and they increased the pay by 3/- a week, and that is when I made the decision and went back and introduced the piece work, - I think it is December 1928, but I would not be sure. Our agreement is optional as regards piece work; the only stipulation is that a man must be able to earn 25% above. Since wages have been more stable, the town Native has tended to stay longer and not rush about the country seeking for work.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Would it be correct to assume that under the piece-rate scale, you are getting satisfactory results ?- It means more supervision; they are likely to skimp the work.

It means a much better output ?- We get our work done more expeditiously, get it finished and are able to go on with the next day's work.

How does that compare with the old scale of wages; what is the nett result now as compared with the old scale of wages ?- So far as we are concerned, the cost of the article is about the same . Where we gain is that the work goes on much more expeditiously. We used to have to work overtime to get the work there, but now, by 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon, the all these fellows have gone and we can get on with the next day's work.

MR. LUCAS: How many are employed on this work ?- About six or eight .

MAJOR ANDERSON: Could you get similar particulars from

Chamber of Industries

any other employer ?- I do not know. I only know one other firm in our industry that does piece work; that is Messop of Cape Town.

MR. LUCAS: We referred to piece work because it has meant a big increase; but a further point is the effect ~~which-~~^{of} any increase which has happened in any way ?- I hope you understand me, that I brought this piece work in to - I brought in a personal point to illustrate the Chamber's point that the Native does not respond to increased wages by increased output, which means increased cost of goods.

CHAIRMAN: I do not know whether your Chamber wishes to express any opinion about the desirability of extending the laws relating to wages determination to unskilled Natives ?- We do not approve of it.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Do you know the results in Bloemfontein ?- No.

MR. LUCAS: Why do you not approve of it ?- Because the thing is likely more from a political aspect. There are so many trades and industries involved that we consider they should be allowed to have their own organisation and fix their own wages, similar to the way ours is worked.

The wages of Natives in your industry had to be regulated under the Wage Act ?- We appreciate that. It is quite competent for the Wage Board to regulate the wages of Natives in other industries or for Government Departments. I know it is not the law at present, but we fail to see why the Provincial Council and other Government Departments should be exempt. Our point of view is that these industries, or the people concerned should be consulted and should apply their own rates. We do not believe that the Government

Chamber of Industries

should go and legislate or put in wages for farmers, for instance; we consider the farmers should be consulted and do as we in the industry have done, - either have an Industrial Council or Conference and fix their own wages.

What chance is there in Natal, in any reasonable time, for Natives to be able to organize and look after the interests of their members, as members of an organization ?- We do not think it is necessary for the Natives to organize, so far as that is concerned.

Do you think the wages paid to Natives generally are satisfactory ?- Are you referring to industry or generally?

Leave out domestic service; I am talking about the towns at the moment ?- So far as industry and commerce are concerned, I think they are quite satisfactory; but you must understand industry today is paying 50% more than the Government, practically speaking.

Your particular industry; but that happens to be regulated. I do not know what industries you have here at the moment ?- There are the big wattle industries.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Do you think they are satisfactory as regards the cost of living for a Native; have you gone into that question at all - in the town I am talking about ?- In so far as the Native who is prepared to live on a Native's standard is concerned, they are quite adequate. So far as the Native who is trying to ape the European standard is concerned, they are not. In cases like the wattle industry, who feed their own boys and who give regular Native rations, which is quite consistent with life, a Native, on his wages, can live up to that standard, but when he tries to live up to a European's standard, he has not got sufficient. I

Chamber of Industries

remember I assisted the Native Welfare Society in their budgets and we found one man who was earning £6.10.- a week who had been living for about five years on a £15 a month standard. I think I would like to be able to do that myself. You are dealing with two classes of Natives - one prepared to live on a Native's standard, and another on an European's standard.

CHAIRMAN: And you think the wage is not adequate to live on that standard ?- No. The wages paid generally will support a Native standard, but they will not support anything more. Our contention is this; we have to compete with countries which are paying their White workers wages equivalent to those of our Natives here, and we find it impossible in this country to do it.

MAJOR WILLIAM CONRIE)
MR. ALFRED FAUCUS)
MR. ARCHIBALD HUGH COCKBURN) called and examined:
MR. WALTER EDWARD ANTLE)
MR. THOMAS HACKLIND)

CHAIRMAN: We have statements from three of your gentlemen; are the others coming in support ?- (Mr. Fawcus): In support. Unfortunately, the notice of the meeting was not given in time to allow them to prepare a statement.

Now, with regard to your statement Col. Fawcus, I see you express the fear that the Natives could withdraw themselves from industry for a period of six months without feeling the effect of it. Do you really consider that is possible ?- I consider it is quite possible. They do so now.

Now, first of all, let us look at the Natives; what

Major Comrie and others

are they going to do in those six months ?- They are going to attend to their own work on the farms; their ploughing, working their oxen; they attend to their customs of marriage and customs of various sorts.

They withdraw themselves from the towns, in other words ?- Yes.

So your agricultural industry will not come to a standstill ?- Under what conditions?

If they withdraw themselves from the towns for six months, your agricultural industry will come to a standstill? net Yes, if they go on strike, decidedly; because they would not work.

If they go on strike from the towns ?- Yes.

You mean, if they go on strike on the farms, too ?- Yes.

Where are they going ?- To live at their homes.

On the farms ?- Yes.

Surely it is quite easy to deal with people under those circumstances ?- We do not want to deal with them.

You are convinced it can happen ?- It could happen.

Now, in the case of the farms; you as a farmer are not going to allow Natives to stay on your farm indefinitely who go on strike ?- Why not? I would not be unfair to them. We are not used to dealing with them on strict lines of that sort. We put up with a great many things from the Native that they are perhaps not legally entitled to.

You, as farmers, would put up with ⁸ six months' Native strike without taking any action to safeguard your interests ?- The only thing is, we could send them off the farms, if that would be possible.

But you said you would not do that ?- Personally, I do not think I could.

Major Comrie and others

Let us suppose you would not do that. Now, you have a large number of Natives in towns who have no farms and reserves to go back to; where are they going ?- Unfortunately, that is the case. You are speaking in the case of a general strike?

Yes ?- Well, in that case they would be inconvenienced to the extent that they would have no farm to go to. I am speaking largely about Natal because I know more about it than other parts. Most of the Natives in Natal have farm homes. There are some who have gone away and who live on the outskirts of the towns - more's the pity - but, speaking generally, the Natives have home connections that they can go to.

And you regard the Native population as having a sufficient reserve of food to carry them through a six months' strike ?- Oh, yes; they grow their food. The man who is working in the town for wages and spending his wages as they come in and not putting anything on one side for a rainy day, of course, would be injured by the idea of a strike.

It seems to me they must be a great deal better off than most artisans in European countries ?- So they are; considerably better off; I think they are much better off. They are certainly much better off than the inhabitants of European countries that I am aware of.

I would like you to support that statement with any facts that you can ?- I have not got the facts at hand; I have no doubt they could be found.

But, after all, you surely do not express an opinion like the man who said he had not read the books of a man, but he thought the books were immoral; you do not express an opinion like that; you express an opinion on knowledge, surely ?- In my opinion, a lot of the Natives in this country do not

Major Comrie and others

do any work at all for farmers or anybody else. How do they make a living? I do not know. They perhaps do not make a very good living, but they manage to exist.

There are lots of Europeans who do not do any work at all; but you are speaking of the Natives now? - I am speaking more particularly of Natal Natives. I should like to confine myself to them.

I am still looking for any facts supporting the view that the Natal Natives as a whole are better off than unskilled labour in Europe? - I will not say they are better off. You cannot say a thing is finished until it is completed. What is going to be the end, for instance, of labour in England under the very improved conditions, some I think consider they are working under now; ^{they} what/will they end up in are two very different things. It may end up in shortness of food.

Generally, a strike in England cannot economically be maintained in England for six months; they have not got the means; you know that yourself? - No.

Well, if you do not know it, perhaps we had better leave the subject; but I think it is very relative to the question of the position of the South African Natives which you introduced? - I just inadvertently made the remark while we were talking, but it is not in the statement I put forward.

Well, if you do not stand by it, I will not press you on it? - But I do stand by it. I consider they are quite as well off as many European labourers are.

The statement was that they were well enough off to be able to stand a six months' general strike? - A lot of them are, in my opinion.

Major Comrie and others

You qualify it now by saying a lot of them, not all of them ?- I think the majority of them are.

One hundred thousand, perhaps ?- I think the majority of them are; the vast majority would be able to.

You express the view that the less interference we have with the laws affecting the Natives, the safer and sounder the country will be ?- Yes.

Must I conclude from that you think the laws affecting Natives are all very good and very sound ?- No, sir. There has been for years now a lot of legislation produced that has - I will not say stirred up discontent amongst the Natives, although the term might almost be used, - but I will say that it has tended to unsettle them and make them suspicious and wonder what the Government of the country is going to do next.

Therefore, you think that the laws, imperfect as they may be, are better than trying to change them ?- The very laws I am speaking of are laws that I would rather not see on the Statute Book.

They are there now, and now you prefer to leave them alone ?- I should like to see the 1913 Land Act off the Statute Book. If you meant legislation to annul ~~xx~~ legislation that already exists, I would say yes.

When annulling, you generally have to substitute something ?- I do not know.

Would you be in favour of scrapping the Native Land Act ?- It has done far more harm than good.

I will put my question again; would you be in favour of scrapping it without substituting anything else ?- Yes.

Take the Native Labourers' Act; you would be in favour of scrapping that ?- I am not a ~~foreign~~ lawyer.

Major Comrie and others

Take the Native Urban Areas Act; would you be in favour of that ?- The one as I say is bad; I think it has done more harm than good, and that we should interfere as little as possible, by new legislation, with the Natives; it is best to leave them alone as far as possible.

So you do not want no interference; you want to diminish the interference ?- Yes; I mean we must have some laws, of course.

Let us assume that we withdraw the Native Lands Act and leave the rest of the legislation as it is at the present day, and pass nothing or next to nothing; do you think that we shall have a condition of satisfaction among the Natives ?- I think, if the Native Lands Act could be withdrawn - you are assuming that it can - it would satisfy the Natives of Natal to see the last of it; I do not think they are at all enamoured of it and they do not consider the Native Land Act is put there in their interests and they do not think we are working in their interests when we pass such legislation as that.

That is as far as the Natives Land Act is concerned. What about the other laws? - I would rather leave them to lawyers. As I say, I am not a lawyer, but a farmer.

May I draw your attention to the fact that you started out with an opinion on this subject; otherwise I would have left you alone. I must find out whether that opinion can hold water. So I would rather not express an opinion on the laws otherwise? - I do not mind passing an opinion on laws at all, but you asked me to instance one, and I gave the instance of the Natal Natives Land Act of 1913, which I do not think was passed in the interests of the Natives of Natal,

Major Comrie and others

and the Natives of Natal are suspicious of it.

You think this sentence of yours about annulling all the laws could not be applied ?- We could not annul all the laws.

We have arrived at a stage, therefore, where no additional legislation is required for the Natives ?- No, I would not say that.

You say, there is no doubt that the less interference we have with laws affecting the Natives, the safer and sounder the country will be ?- That is my opinion.

I think you have contradicted it at least three times in the last five minutes ?- My own opinions are exactly as I started.

Mr. Cockburn, with regard to the first proposition that you advance here, that the Natives should be allowed to pay rent and lease land from the farmers and the Government, --- ?- (Mr. Cockburn): Yes.

Is the position in Natal at present that the farmers are prepared to lease land to the Natives ?- Yes, I think so, in certain parts of Natal,

As far as we have gone, the opinion has been expressed that the farmer can generally do a great deal better by working the land himself than he can by renting it to the Native, because the farmer can work according to up-to-date methods, and the bulk of the Natives do not know those methods as yet ?- Well, sir, I cannot agree with that. There are numbers of farmers who have large areas of land - quite large areas and not rough country, some of it - which would be quite well occupied by Natives if they could rent the land.

Do you think that rough country is likely to be rented by the Natives ?- It is, sir; it is country they will live in;