

suggestions that had so far been received from the Platte-land and that any further suggestions that were put forward would receive the same sympathetic attention if they appeared to be of real practical help for the solution of the Native labour question."

IS THE PROPOSED LABOUR TAX A BREACH OF THE SLAVERY CONVENTION ?

Article 5 of the *Slavery Convention* is the one dealing with compulsory labour. It reads as follows :

" *The High Contracting Parties* recognize that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that :

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned."

The Article is somewhat vaguely expressed but two points are clear, first that where compulsory labour for private profit already exists it must be put an end to, and, second, that where it does not exist it must not be begun. Is the Minister of Justice forgetting that South Africa has ratified the Slavery Convention ?