

THE VIEWS OF THE  
JOHANNESBURG JOINT COUNCIL OF  
EUROPEANS AND NATIVES ON "FORCED  
LABOUR."

To the Editor, *The South African Outlook*.

Sir,—The article "Forced Labour in Africa," which appeared in the April number of the *Outlook*, was of great interest to the Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives, especially as the Council itself has been engaged in a study of the Report of the International Labour Conference on Forced Labour, and the application to conditions in South Africa of the principles enunciated in that Report. The very able survey of this subject embodied in the article referred to is highly appreciated, and the conclusions reached are very similar to those arrived at by this Council.

The trend of legislation in the Union renders the whole question of Forced Labour a matter of the greatest importance. This is especially true of *indirect* compulsion. In view of the principles laid down in the Report of the International Labour Conference for 1929 the Joint Council desires to call attention to the following additional points.

A. *Direct Compulsion*.

The practical effects of the South West Africa Vagrancy Proclamation of 1920 should be examined in view of its distinct likeness to early 19th century Cape enactments.

In this regard the Report states (p. 65) that there is no system of forced labour for public works, portorage, emergencies or compulsory cultivation ; but

"Proclamation 25 of 1920 provides, in Section 14, that upon a first conviction of *vagrancy* or of *being an idle or disorderly person*, the court shall sentence the prisoner to a term of service on the public works of the territory or to employment under a municipality or a private person, and shall fix a reasonable wage therefor. If no such service or