

arrive at a settlement, each of them is to forward a separate statement to the District Engineer. If the Engineer is unable to effect a settlement, the dispute is to be referred to the head offices of the Public Works Department and of the New Zealand Workers' Union. Men are not to stop work while a dispute is under consideration either locally, or by the head offices of the Department and the union, or by the Minister of Public Works. This will explain my stipulation that all workmen on construction works must belong to this one union.

APPLICATION OF AGREEMENT.

The agreement applies to workmen on construction works, but does not apply to those regularly employed on maintenance of existing works or services, such as surfacemen on roads or highways, workmen engaged in operation or maintenance of hydro-electric or irrigation schemes, tradesmen or others employed on maintenance, &c., of buildings. Neither does it apply to workmen directly under the control of the Public Service Commissioner.

TERM OF AGREEMENT.

The agreement will operate as from the 1st June, 1936, and will remain in force for three years. The Minister, however, is entitled to alter the rates of pay at any time if the Government should find it necessary.

Further, the Minister has the right, in the event of any of its terms being violated, to cancel a part or the whole of the agreement, either in respect of a particular locality or of the whole of the Dominion.

I have entered into this agreement on the understanding that the union will serve a dual purpose: It will be helpful to the workmen and to the Department, and the union officials will co-operate with myself and the Department to the fullest possible extent. I am satisfied that the executive of the union will act accordingly, and now that workmen will have a decent wage and good working-conditions I am confident that the Public Works Department will again become the competent and efficient constructional organization it was before practically all of its undertakings were converted into relief of unemployment works with small rates of pay and other unsatisfactory conditions.

As I have stated on previous occasions, in future there will be no room for the slacker or unsatisfactory workman on public works. Workmen should be able to earn a decent wage and will have good conditions and will be expected to give of their best, the object being to have a well-trained and efficient body of men who will be a credit to themselves and to the State.

In conclusion, I admit that the proposals outlined are comprehensive, but our task and our effort are to build New Zealand. Finance will be available for the creation of these assets. We have the men, we have the engineering and administrative ability available, and with courage to go ahead I am convinced that, by means of this development, New Zealand will advance.

I ask for leave, Mr. Speaker, to table this report and a copy of the agreement.
