

1929.

NEW ZEALAND.

SALARIES AND WAGES OF EMPLOYEES IN
PUBLIC SERVICE

(STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER REGARDING).

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

VERY careful consideration has been given to the representations recently made by representatives of the three parties of the House in connection with matters affecting Government employees, with particular reference to employees in the Post and Telegraph Department.

The principal matter referred to is what is known as the restoration of the salary "cuts." In this regard, representations were made to me early in the year by deputations representing not only the Post and Telegraph Association, but also the Public Service Association, and the various Railway organizations. I intimated then that I proposed to consider carefully the position, and, pending receipt of representations from all of the organizations concerned, would make no promise or statement. I further intimated that I proposed to refer the matter to a Committee for the purpose of advising me in regard to the merits of the representations made, so that I might be in a position, after reviewing the whole of the facts, to make a decision in respect thereto.

At the outset I think it should be made plain that the representations really affect three distinct issues, namely:—

- (1) The restoration of what is known as the salary cuts;
- (2) The regrading or reclassifying of salaries of officers of the various services;
- (3) The increasing of salary scales generally, without reference to salary cuts or regradings.

Dealing firstly with the restoration of the salary cuts, I am advised that there remains only a small proportion of employees in the various services who have not had some adjustment made in their rates of pay or conditions of work since the Public Expenditure Adjustment Act of 1921–22, and that the restoration of the salary cuts to these employees—and these employees only—is not sought for by the various Service organizations. It is recognized by them generally that to restore the salaries to these employees, and these only, would create an anomaly in the various services, in that differing salary rates would be paid to employees for the same class of duty.

(2) In regard to the regrading or reclassifying of the services, I have intimated to the Departments concerned that Government does not propose to take any action to hold over the regrading of the services as at present required by law.

(3) What the Post and Telegraph Officers' Association really have represented to Government is *not* that the salary cuts be restored, and *not* that the Service