

1903.
NEW ZEALAND.

PACIFIC CABLE.

(CORRESPONDENCE SUPPLEMENTARY TO F-8b.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

(Telegram.)

London, 14th September, 1903.

COMMONWEALTH Government, referring to suggestion that they should maintain their terminal rate of fivepence but make allowance on account considerable gain net rate will become threepence and three-halfpence Government messages, ask whether they should satisfy without Conference. I am of opinion that suggestion not an unfair one. At the same time, am anxious for principle of holding Conference for purpose of settling points in dispute should be agreed to at any rate for the future. Reply by telegram as soon as possible, stating views of the New Zealand Government. Some settlement of the question absolutely necessary without loss of time.

No. 2.

COPY of Cable from PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND to AGENT-GENERAL, 25th September, 1903.

I UNDERSTAND that majority members Federal Senate prepared to hold over ratification of agreement until Conference held provided Pacific Cable Board of the opinion Conference essential. It was expected there was to be a meeting of the Board on Tuesday last and that a reply would have been received ere this as to the Board's wishes. Strongly of opinion that Conference would do good, lay down leading principles, and prevent complications in future, and result also in preventing ratification of Eastern Extension agreement. Matter important. Kindly use best endeavours to further holding Conference.

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER, New Zealand, 25th September, 1903.

RECEIVED your telegram. At meeting of Board 22nd September Barton's offer to reduce terminal charges, providing that Board waived Conference, taken into consideration. There were present Chairman, Jersey, Lang, and myself, all of whom in favour of Conference. Chairman and myself were willing to accept Barton's offer to waive Conference, but not without Canada. Demanded unconditional Conference. It was agreed Chairman inform Colonial Office of these views. They have acted accordingly. I will urge Colonial Office to lose no time in informing Australian Governments.

No. 4.

Telegram from PRIME MINISTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH to the PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND, dated the 2nd October, 1903.

DISPOSED to agree to request for Pacific Cable Conference on matters set out by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, but suggest that if we are to meet our partners in friendly discussion it would remove possible misapprehension and some soreness if you could see some way to first withdraw imputation on the Commonwealth contained in 8th and 9th paragraphs of your despatch of 11th May.