

ment, during off-seasons. Equipment has become increasingly complex in a trade in which there has been no formal training or apprenticeship, and where accident rates are high.

MDTA training programs in several States (Pennsylvania, Ohio, Idaho, Arizona, California) have demonstrated the usefulness of six-week training sessions involving large numbers of operating engineers.

Training should be supplemented by new types of adult education. Operating engineers in the United States whose education is greater have higher annual earnings at their own trade. In New Jersey, education undoubtedly helps a great many operating engineers who are young in terms of age and experience to enjoy greater hours and earning opportunities than their seniors.

The volume of construction activity in the United States has been growing, and heavy construction has been increasing at a faster pace in New Jersey than in the United States as a whole. Predictions concerning future volume and employment opportunity show a continuing increase, and vary only respecting the degree of upward climb. The national commitment to maintain an economy which grows without periodic setbacks, and the demonstration now that this is possible, should reduce the uncertainty which has dominated bargaining.

The operating engineers, who man some of the most spectacular machines of a new era, are growing in number. The parties are in a unique position to begin a long-overdue job.

An attack upon seasonality and intermittent work will require not only new attitudes but new institutional arrangements and financial investment. But it should have long-range effects which substantially diminish unit costs while providing security and year-round earnings for individuals. There is hardly a Western nation—other than the United States—which has not embarked upon a deliberate effort to reduce seasonality and the effects of intermittent work assignments.

Beyond the matters at issue in this case, it is clear that a sizable effort should be directed at the problems of seasonal unemployment in the industry as a whole.

II. CONCLUSIONS AND DETERMINATIONS

The parties to this case, by their unprecedented action in referring it for determination and disposition to offices of the State and the Federal governments, recognized the combination here of both their own and the public's interests—and also their own and the public's responsibilities. They indicated their willingness and their desire to make this a case which tests the possibility of finding a better answer, in a prosperous economy—which is properly concerned with maintaining both its growth and its stability—to the problem of seasonality and intermittent work in a key industry. They have recognized that there is both a case to be settled and an industry and an economy to be served.

These are the five steps which appear to us appropriate in response to the parties' decision to follow this course:

1. *Every effort should be made to ensure the establishment by public contracting authorities of practices and procedures in the awarding of construction contracts which will reduce seasonal unemployment to a minimum*

The offices of the undersigned are in a position to promote the establishment of such practices and procedures.

The Commissioner of Labor and Industry of the State of New Jersey undertakes, on the basis of consideration of this matter with the Governor of New Jersey:

(a) That there will be initiated promptly an independent and comprehensive administrative and technical study, under contract supervised by a key central official of the State, covering the letting and administration of contracts for public construction in the State. In view of the importance of highway construction to the total employment of operating engineers, emphasis will be placed in this study on the operations of the State Highway Department, but it will also include all construction activity financed in whole or in part or administered by the State, or by localities subject to State coordination. The study will be scheduled to yield preliminary results in time to affect operations during the winter of 1966-67.