

PANAMA CANAL ROUTE.

No. 145.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Washington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 18th June, 1913.

I have the honour to request to be apprised with as little delay as you may find necessary of the intentions of your Administration with regard to the continuance of the mail-service between the United States and New Zealand, now that the Panama Canal may be counted on as a transit route at an early date.

If it appears advisable to you to continue the present direct trans-Pacific service I am not at present informed of any difficulty which should be allowed to interrupt that service.

But it may be that your Department contemplates the institution of a contract service to these shores, and I seek enlightenment in view of the fact that the contract for the Wellington—San Francisco service expires in a few months. It therefore is a matter for immediate consideration whether the service should be renewed or should be extended only temporarily in view of contingencies naturally to arise on the opening of the canal.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Washington, D.C.

W. R. MORRIS, Secretary.

[P. & T. 36/6.]

No. 146.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 18th June, 1913.

I have the honour to advert to the approaching opening of the Panama Canal for the purposes of international traffic, and to inquire whether it is the intention of your Department to use the canal for the purposes of mail transit, and, if so, to what extent.

The contract of this Department with the Union Steam Ship Company for the carriage of mails to and from San Francisco will terminate a few months hence, and the question of renewal or extension must therefore receive early consideration. It will be of material assistance to hear of the intentions of your Administration with regard to the United Kingdom—New Zealand mail transport. If it is the intention to use the canal regularly or under contract for the mail traffic this Department would naturally make a temporary arrangement for the continuation of the present service on the Pacific. If, on the other hand, you are of opinion that the present Atlantic, American continental, and Pacific transport is the more expeditious, this Department would prefer to act in concert with yours in prescribing the route of the mails.

I shall be obliged to you for an expression of your views at an early date.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

W. R. MORRIS,

For the Postmaster-General.

No. 147.

The SECOND ASSISTANT POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Washington, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,—

Post Office Department, Second Assistant Postmaster-General,
Washington, 30th July, 1913.

Referring to your letter of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour, by direction of the Postmaster-General, to inform you that at present this Administration is not contemplating any changes in the near future in connection with the mail-routes from this country to New Zealand and Australia.

I have, &c.,

JOSEPH STEWART,

Second Assistant Postmaster-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 148.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 19th September, 1913.

With reference to your letter of the 18th June last, inquiring whether this office intends to use the Panama Canal for the transmission of mails for New Zealand, I am directed to inform you that this Department has no contract with any shipping company for the conveyance of letter mails to the Dominion, and it is not proposed at present to vary the arrangement by which this office pays at Postal Union rates to your Administration for the use of the service from San Francisco and to Canada for the service from Vancouver.

The Postmaster-General is not aware of what conditions in the future may render a modification of the present practice desirable, but should it appear that the institution of any fast communication between this country and New Zealand by way of the Panama Canal would materially accelerate the mails he will not fail to consult you on the question of its adoption.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

E. W. FARNALL.