

desirable to use British tonnage for this purpose in view of the facts that meat is urgently required here, storage-room in the United States is limited, and the risk involved in conveying meat over-land, while there are no neutral refrigerated ships available.—LONG.

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND. 10th October, 1917.

“Waitemata”: With reference to Colonial Office telegram of 24th September and your telegram 1st October, Governor-General conveyed views of Ministers to Colonial Office by telegraph on 30th September. Suggest you request perusal.

From SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF NEW ZEALAND. Dated 13th October, received 15th October, 1917.

With regard to my telegram of to-day's date: The Shipping Controller informs me that there is every probability of necessity arising for further withdrawals of tonnage in the near future from the Australasian trade. If the “Waitemata” and “Aparima” are retained increased withdrawal of regular liner tonnage *pro tanto* would be necessary, and Shipping Controller points out that the resulting decrease in refrigerated tonnage available would be on balance more prejudicial to the interests of New Zealand than the release of the two vessels referred to above.—LONG.

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 22nd October, 1917.

With reference to my telegram 16th October: “Waitemata” arriving 21st October. Arrangement for marine and war risks required by your telegram 12th September cannot be made until your decision as to retention of this vessel is known. Very important receive immediately your instructions, as Admiralty states existing war risks will expire on discharge inward cargo, whilst other arrangements remaining in abeyance pending your decision.—MACKENZIE.

From SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF NEW ZEALAND. Dated 6th November, received 7th November, 1917.

With reference to Your Excellency's telegram of 26th October regarding the diversion of insulated tonnage: I desire to inform you that the necessity for alteration of the programme arose partly from a decision that a large number of horses for Mesopotamia must be conveyed from Australia to India by the end of March, 1918, and partly from the fact that since the use of the Mediterranean for these ships has had to be relinquished the troops in Egypt and the eastern Mediterranean who formerly received the bulk of their meat-supplies from the Argentine now have to receive them from Australasia, with the exception of a small quantity which comes from Durban. To meet these two urgent and essential requirements with the greatest economy of tonnage it was necessary to use vessels whose meat- and horse-carrying capacity combined would give the maximum result to load them in Australia with meat and horses, despatch them to India to unload horses, then send them to Egypt with meat and other foodstuffs, and let them return to Australia in ballast.

At the time when this problem presented itself to the Shipping Controller three insulated steamers mentioned in your telegram were in or due to arrive in Australia, and the Shipping Controller had no alternative but to direct that they should be taken up forthwith for the essential purposes named. Deviation which would have been solely loading meat in New Zealand and returning to Australia for horses, which would have meant covering an additional distance of roughly 2,500 miles ocean steaming without any allowance for coastal steaming and delays involved in getting horses to India, rendered such a course most undesirable. It was fully realized that this alteration of programme would mean a considerable disturbance to New Zealand arrangements, and therefore the Australian Committee were asked to afford relief to New Zealand. So far no reply has been received.

The Committee were also asked to suggest vessel to fill in December blank in Board of Trade Egyptian meat programme, and they have put forward the “Rimutaka,” now in New Zealand, which will therefore load New Zealand meat. Subject to the paramount necessity that all tonnage should be used in the best possible manner in the national interests, the Shipping Controller will do his best for appropriate compensation in tonnage to be allocated either immediately or in the future. Information as to the sailing of British ships appointed for New Zealand will be communicated to Your Excellency monthly, and I hope that this regular information, together with the representation of the Government of New Zealand on Wellington Committee, will meet your Ministers' desires as to alteration in tonnage programme.

The Shipping Controller will endeavour as far as possible to meet the needs of New Zealand by a fair allocation of available vessels between New Zealand and Australia.—LONG.

Copy of Memorandum for HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL from Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 25th October, 1917.

The Prime Minister presents his compliments and begs respectfully to inform His Excellency that Ministers have learnt with great apprehension through the Tonnage Committee at Wellington that it is contemplated to deflect to Australia three insulated steamers—namely, the “Mahana,” “Pakelia,” and “Mahia”—all of which had been allocated to New Zealand for loading in November frozen meat and general cargo. The fact that these vessels had been allocated to New Zealand had been officially intimated and made public, and commitments regarding space have already been entered into.