

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Paris, to CONTROLLER OF SHIPPING, London.

DEAR SIR JOSEPH,—

Hotel Majestic, Paris, 5th March, 1919.

I have once again to draw the attention of the Ministry of Shipping to the unsatisfactory provision of insulated shipping which has been allocated to New Zealand under existing arrangements. I have received an important and urgent telegram to-day from the Acting Prime Minister at Wellington, pointing out that the lack of insulated tonnage has very seriously affected the meat-freezing and kindred interests. A number of freezing-works in the Dominion are already full and must close down, whilst there is a large quantity of stock available which must suffer deterioration and cause heavy loss unless treated promptly:

The New Zealand Government point out that there are only five insulated steamers available late in March and early in April loading—viz., "Port Melbourne," "Hororata," "Arawa," "Athenic," and "Rimutaka"—and the only further vessels advised as being allocated to the Dominion, but whose loading dates are at present unknown, are "Corinthic," "Armagh," "Raranga," "Kaikoura," "Ionic," and "Tainui." It is estimated that the majority of these vessels will not be available for Homeward loading from the Dominion before the end of April or during May.

To illustrate the acute congestion of meat and dairy-produce awaiting shipment from the Dominion, I may say that the quantities in store at present are: Frozen meat, 4,917,508 60 lb. freight carcasses; butter, 230,073 boxes; cheese, 478,620 crates.

I should also like to draw attention to the fact that on the 1st January the respective quantities of the refrigerated cargo awaiting shipment in Australia and New Zealand were—Australia, 50,000 tons; New Zealand, 148,000 tons.

The foregoing figures speak eloquently as to the urgent necessity for increasing the Dominion's tonnage allocation at the earliest possible moment, and so enable a very serious situation to be met. May I suggest that it might be possible to transfer tonnage from Australia for this purpose.

You will, I know, recognize how seriously New Zealand's shipping was diverted last year on account of urgent war requirements, and that the Dominion is deserving of, at any rate, reasonable consideration in the matter of its very urgent requirements.

Believe me, &c.,

W. F. MASSEY.

The Right Hon. Sir Joseph Maclay, Controller of Shipping, Ministry of Shipping,
St. James's Park, London S.W.

From CONTROLLER OF SHIPPING, London, to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Paris.

Ministry of Shipping, St. James's Park, London, S.W. 1, 20th March, 1919.

DEAR MR. MASSEY,—

With regard to your letter of the 5th March, on the subject of tonnage for New Zealand, you will appreciate that the situation as regards shipping changes with great rapidity. At the beginning of this year a programme was worked out making what was in our opinion a perfectly fair allocation as between Australia and New Zealand, taking the sailings for Egypt into account as well as those to the United Kingdom. From time to time that programme has been modified in favour of the Dominion, and we have recently been forced to review the whole position in view of the trouble caused by strikes, influenza, and troop arrangements. The net result is that we have allocated three additional steamers to New Zealand for April sailing, and this at the very moment when an urgent appeal has come from Australia for more tonnage.

We are at present working on a programme for May and June. I should add that in making these new arrangements we have been influenced by the great need in this country for meat and dairy produce from New Zealand.

Yours sincerely,

J. P. MACLAY.

The Right Hon. W. F. Massey, Hotel Majestic, Paris.

From the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Paris, to CONTROLLER OF SHIPPING, London.

[TELEGRAM.]

New Zealand correspondent of *Times* in telegram in yesterday's issue says Australia is alleged to be getting more tonnage than New Zealand in proportion to produce available. I have had cables to same effect. Can you kindly give me answer to above, also any further encouragement with regard to ships, as matter appears to be increasingly serious.—MASSEY.

From CONTROLLER OF SHIPPING, London, to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Paris, 27th March, 1919.

[TELEGRAM.]

Your telegram dated 25th instant, which crossed my letter of same date, received. Relative volume produce available impossible as basis of allocation. I once again repeat that everything possible has been and is being done to help New Zealand. You are fully apprised of the situation, and in particular as to future augmentation of tonnage. You are therefore in a position to send such advice to your Acting Prime Minister as should enable him to explain conclusively to producers through Press or otherwise that their difficulties are fully appreciated on this side, and that they are getting all the relief which circumstances permit.—MACLAY.