

From the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Wellington, to the HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND, London, dated 2nd June, 1920.

Meetings of dairy producers being held in different parts of the Dominion have officially communicated to me that they consider action of Food Ministry in placing restrictions on the free importations of butter and cheese in Great Britain is unfair and inequitable, and they consider also that as citizens of the Empire they should be allowed a free market for their produce, or that the Food Ministry should take over butter and cheese, especially the former, and place it on the market, returning to the New Zealand producers the price received therefor, less charges for storage, freight, distribution, &c. Please take steps to convey these representations to Food Ministry and telegraph reply.

From the HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND, London, to the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Wellington, dated 25th June, 1920.

Australian butter has been sold to Ministry of Food on following terms: £12 per hundredweight f.o.b. for butter grading 90 points, with 1s. per hundredweight extra for each point from 91 to 95 inclusive, and 1s. less for each point under 90. Extra 3s. for unsalted, which must not exceed 25 per cent. of the whole. Imperial Government pay storage after average of six weeks. Australian Committee to have right to supply up to 50 tons per month to South Africa. Contract to run from 1st September to 31st March, 1921, and to include butter delivered in store Australia till last-mentioned month. Other conditions same as existing contract.

From the HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND, London, to the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Wellington, dated London, 29th June, 1920.

Butter: Letter received from Ministry of Food to the effect that they are now in a position to open negotiations for the purchase of next season's New Zealand butter.

From the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Wellington, to the HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND, London, dated 9th July, 1920.

Your cable of 29th ultimo regarding butter: Intimation from Ministry of Food that now in position open negotiations purchase next season's butter has been conveyed to dairying interests.

From the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to the HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND, London, dated 16th July, 1920.

I have been asked to transmit the following resolution passed at the annual meeting of the National Dairy Association of New Zealand, which kindly place before Imperial authorities: "That this meeting of the whole of the dairy producers of New Zealand object to the attitude taken up by the British Ministry of Food in placing restrictions on the importation and sale of New Zealand dairy-produce whilst British and Irish producers are enjoying a free market, and as British citizens and producers we consider we are entitled to equal treatment with British producers located in any other part of the Empire." Kindly place resolution before Imperial authorities, and telegraph reply with least possible delay in order that Imperial Government's policy in this matter may be made clear to New Zealand producers, in order that they may be in a position to decide with regard to Imperial Government's offer to negotiate for purchase of next season's butter-output.

From the SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to His Excellency the ADMINISTRATOR OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND, dated 22nd July, 1920.

With reference to my telegram of 19th June: Understood that negotiations have not yet resulted in agreement as to disposal next season's butter-output New Zealand, and that Food Controller anxious arrange if possible to purchase exportable surplus on terms similar to those now agreed to in case of Australia, 1st August, 1920, to 31st March, 1921—namely, 240s. per hundredweight free on board for butter graded 90 points, with 1s. per hundredweight additional for each point up to 95 inclusive, and 1s. per hundredweight less for each point under 90.

From the HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND, London, to the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Wellington, dated 22nd July, 1920.

Butter: With reference to your telegram of the 16th July, I have had long personal conversation with the Food Controller, who states that control over butter is inevitable, as otherwise sparse supplies would be entirely purchased by wealthier classes, and that Government could not ensure equitable distribution except as sole purchasers of supplies. I raised point of the Imperial Government controlling British and Irish output in the same manner as is proposed in case of New Zealand and Australia. Food Controller replied that British supplies for the winter months are practically negligible, and any attempt to collect British supplies in 1918 resulted in less than 100 tons at wholly disproportionate expense. Regarding Ireland, Food Controller stated that he had taken matter up with the Irish Department of Agriculture, and as a result Irish butter from November to April will be restricted to Irish market, and retail price will be controlled. Food Controller is most anxious to meet wishes of New Zealand producers in every way possible, but maintenance of control for this winter cannot be avoided. Food Controller will give New Zealand free market at earliest possible date.

From the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Wellington, to the HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND, London, dated Wellington, 29th July, 1920.

Butter: Your cablegram of 22nd received and communicated to dairy companies. I have consulted dairy producers' representatives as to whether they are now willing to negotiate with Imperial authorities for sale of exportable surplus to 31st March next. They inform me that they reiterate their request for a free and uncontrolled market, to which they consider they are entitled in common with Home producers. They are unanimous in this opinion, and, having regard to all the circumstances, I strongly support their request, and will be glad if you will again take the matter up with the Food Controller and strongly urge reconsideration of his previous decision. Early reply very desirable.