

1903.
NEW ZEALAND.

PACIFIC CABLE.

(CORRESPONDENCE SUPPLEMENTARY TO F-8b.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

(Telegram.)

London, 14th September, 1903.

COMMONWEALTH Government, referring to suggestion that they should maintain their terminal rate of fivepence but make allowance on account considerable gain net rate will become threepence and three-halfpence Government messages, ask whether they should satisfy without Conference. I am of opinion that suggestion not an unfair one. At the same time, am anxious for principle of holding Conference for purpose of settling points in dispute should be agreed to at any rate for the future. Reply by telegram as soon as possible, stating views of the New Zealand Government. Some settlement of the question absolutely necessary without loss of time.

No. 2.

COPY of Cable from PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND to AGENT-GENERAL, 25th September, 1903.

I UNDERSTAND that majority members Federal Senate prepared to hold over ratification of agreement until Conference held provided Pacific Cable Board of the opinion Conference essential. It was expected there was to be a meeting of the Board on Tuesday last and that a reply would have been received ere this as to the Board's wishes. Strongly of opinion that Conference would do good, lay down leading principles, and prevent complications in future, and result also in preventing ratification of Eastern Extension agreement. Matter important. Kindly use best endeavours to further holding Conference.

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER, New Zealand, 25th September, 1903.

RECEIVED your telegram. At meeting of Board 22nd September Barton's offer to reduce terminal charges, providing that Board waived Conference, taken into consideration. There were present Chairman, Jersey, Lang, and myself, all of whom in favour of Conference. Chairman and myself were willing to accept Barton's offer to waive Conference, but not without Canada. Demanded unconditional Conference. It was agreed Chairman inform Colonial Office of these views. They have acted accordingly. I will urge Colonial Office to lose no time in informing Australian Governments.

No. 4.

Telegram from PRIME MINISTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH to the PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND, dated the 2nd October, 1903.

DISPOSED to agree to request for Pacific Cable Conference on matters set out by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, but suggest that if we are to meet our partners in friendly discussion it would remove possible misapprehension and some soreness if you could see some way to first withdraw imputation on the Commonwealth contained in 8th and 9th paragraphs of your despatch of 11th May.

No. 5.

Telegram from the PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND to the PRIME MINISTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH, dated the 4th October, 1903.

VERY pleased to hear you are disposed to accede to request to hold Pacific Cable Conference. With you I earnestly desire that the partners should meet and in friendly spirit discuss matters. When writing despatch of 11th May I felt very keenly interest other partners would be prejudiced by contemplated action of Commonwealth. From the reply of your predecessor I was not aware any soreness created by paragraphs 8 and 9 my letter 11th May, and regret any misapprehension possible, and, whilst at present adhering to the opinion expressed that result of proposed agreement entered into would be as stated, I, to facilitate partners meeting in friendly spirit, and accepting your overtures in spirit intended, frankly state no wrongful imputation on Commonwealth was intended, and desire paragraphs to which exception has been taken may be so construed.

No. 6.

Cable from Sir WILFRED LAURIER, Ottawa, to PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND, dated 3rd October, 1903.

CANADIAN Government will join proposed Conference prevent ratification agreement with Eastern Telegraph Company.

No. 7.

Cable received by the PREMIER, New Zealand, from the PREMIER OF THE COMMONWEALTH, dated Melbourne, 5th October, 1903.

THANKS for your prompt and considerate reply. Where and when do you consider Conference should meet?

DEAKIN.

No. 8.

Cable received by the PREMIER, New Zealand, from the AGENT-GENERAL, dated London, 8th October, 1903.

AUSTRALIAN Government agree as to Conference for the discussion of the following matters in dispute: (1.) Agreement between Australia and Eastern Extension Company. (2.) Terminal rates. (3.) Customs duties charged on cable material. Expect that Colonial Office will take initiative as regards convening Conference and fixing time meeting, place, and *personnel*. I anticipate the Conference will be held in London, and that each partner will be represented by one delegate, not necessarily members of the Cable Board.

No. 9.

The PREMIER, New Zealand, to the AGENT-GENERAL, London, 13th October, 1903.

IN reply to your telegram of the 12th October, 1903, my cable a clerical error. Exceedingly pleased to hear Conference agreed to. Trust result will be that the new agreement with the Eastern Extension Company will not be ratified.

No. 10.

Cable sent to the Hon. Mr. DEAKIN on the 13th October, 1903, by the PREMIER, New Zealand.

I ANTICIPATE Colonial Office would wish Conference held in London, but if not in London it is only natural to suggest New Zealand.

No. 11.

RESOLUTION of the Fifth Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire respecting a CONTINUOUS STATE-OWNED TELEGRAPH GIRDLING THE EMPIRE, passed at the Montreal Session, 21st August, 1903.

THAT, in the opinion of this Congress, all the self-governing British communities around the globe should be united by a continuous chain of State-owned telegraphs. That such an inter-Imperial line of communication would, under Government control, put an end to the difficulty which has been caused in Australia by the allied cable companies, and remove all friction which has arisen between the partners in the Pacific cable; that it would lower charges to a minimum on over-sea messages passing between New Zealand, Australia, India, South Africa, the West Indies, Newfoundland, Canada, and the Mother-country; that it would provide a double means of communication at low uniform rates between the Mother-country or any one British State and all self-governing British States; that it would constitute the most effective means by which the several governmental units of the Empire may hold communion with each other whenever they desire; and that, while it would be of the highest importance to the commercial and social interests of the British people around the world, it would, by the subtle force of electricity, at once promote the consolidation of the Empire, and prove an indispensable factor in Imperial unity.

No. 12.

The Hon. Mr. DEAKIN to the Right Hon. the PREMIER.

Commonwealth of Australia, Department of External Affairs,
Melbourne, 14th October, 1903.

SIR,—

I have the honour to forward herewith copies of telegrams which have recently passed between us on the subject of the proposed Conference respecting the Pacific cable, to confirm those which I have sent, and to acknowledge the receipt of your replies.

When the matter comes to be considered by the Conference, I have no doubt all the recent correspondence which has passed between us, as between all the partners in the enterprise, will be submitted and made public.

Details require to be settled as to the time, place, and character of representation at the Conference. In my opinion it should be held as soon as possible, and this Government will do all in its power to facilitate an early meeting.

On the 2nd instant I communicated with England for the purpose of ascertaining the views of the Colonial Office on the points I have mentioned, but am so far without any definite reply.

Although as a place of meeting Australia would be most convenient for us, I do not consider that point as of very great importance, but think it should be settled in the first instance, as it is obvious that upon the decision arrived at will depend, to some extent, at any rate, the character of the representative whom we shall select.

I shall be glad to learn whether you consider that the Conference should be composed of Ministers or officials, or, if it is to be held in London, of the usual representatives of the partners there resident. If the latter course is decided upon the Conference will practically amount to a mere meeting of the members of the Pacific Cable Board.

Further, I think that the subjects on which the representatives are to confer should be definitely stated beforehand, and that the delegates should not be authorised to introduce fresh matters. I should be pleased to have your views as to what these subjects should be.

It is, of course, understood that the Conference is to be merely consultative, without any authority to bind any of the Governments concerned.

I shall be glad to have your co-operation in arriving at an early decision on the matters referred to in this letter, as I have no doubt our partners in the enterprise will readily agree to any proposal which we may jointly make.

I have, &c.,

ALFRED DEAKIN.

The Right Hon. the Premier of New Zealand, Wellington.

Enclosures.

Telegram from PRIME MINISTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH to the PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND, dated the 2nd October, 1903.

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Telegram from the PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND to the PRIME MINISTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH, dated the 4th October, 1903.

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Telegram from the PRIME MINISTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH to PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND, dated the 5th October, 1903.

THANKS for your prompt and considerate reply. Where and when do you consider Conference should meet?

Telegram from the PREMIER OF NEW ZEALAND to the PRIME MINISTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH, dated the 13th October, 1903.

ANTICIPATE Colonial Office would wish Conference held London, but if not London it is only natural to suggest New Zealand.

No. 13.

Cable received by PREMIER, New Zealand, from the AGENT-GENERAL, dated London, 15th October, 1903.

SEND Home as soon as possible the names and addresses of the London firms reported to have ordered their telegraphic correspondence with local branches *via* the Eastern Extension Company.

No. 14.

The Right Hon. the PREMIER to the Hon. Mr. DEAKIN.

SIR,— Prime Minister's Office, Wellington, 23rd October, 1903.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant relative to the Pacific Cable Conference, and forwarding copies of telegrams which have passed between us on the subject of such Conference.

Doubtless the recent correspondence which has passed between us, as between all the partners in the enterprise, will be submitted and made public.

I quite concur with you that the Conference should be held as soon as possible. I was under the impression that all the Australian Governments had agreed that the following are to be the matters discussed: (1.) Agreement between Australia and Eastern Extension Company. (2.) Terminal rates. (3.) Customs duties charged on cable material.

I anticipate that the place of meeting will be London; failing that, it is only natural, as stated to you in my cable of the 13th, to suggest New Zealand. If it is decided to hold it in London, I would suggest that the representatives of the various Governments on the Pacific Cable Board should be appointed to represent the partners, as they are thoroughly conversant with the whole matter in dispute, and are on the spot. It would not be convenient to appoint a Minister as representative, for, in the first place, one could not be spared, and, if he could, it would mean further delay, and in these matters time is the essence of the contract.

I am of the opinion that the Conference should be consultative, without any authority to bind any of the Governments concerned.

I have, &c.,

R. J. SEDDON.

The Hon. A. Deakin, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, Melbourne.

No. 15.

The Right Hon. the PREMIER to the Hon. Mr. DEAKIN.

(Telegram.)

28th October, 1903.

Re your letter 14th October. Concur Conference should be held soon as possible. Understand Australian Governments have agreed that following are to be matters for discussion: (1) Agreement between Australia and Eastern Extension Co.; (2) terminal rates; (3) Customs rates charged on cable material. If Conference held in London would suggest that representatives various Governments on Pacific Cable Board be appointed represent partners as thoroughly conversant whole matter in dispute, and are on the spot. Would not be convenient appoint Minister, for, in first place, one could not be spared, and, in second, it would mean further delay. Concur with you that Conference should be consultative, without any authority to bind any of Governments concerned. Letter posted.

SEDDON.

Deakin, Melbourne.

No. 16.

COPY of Cable from Sir SANDFORD FLEMING, dated 2nd November, 1903.

ANNIVERSARY completion Pacific cable. No Press messages yet transmitted. Would you favour immediate limited news service between New Zealand and Canada?

Ottawa, Ontario.

SANDFORD FLEMING.

No. 17.

The Right Hon. the PREMIER to Sir SANDFORD FLEMING.

(Telegram.)

2nd November, 1903.

HEARTY congratulations anniversary Pacific cable. The shortening of time in transmission and reduction in rates has proved great boon. An immediate limited news service between New Zealand and Canada would bring the Dominion and our colony, which have so much in common, closer together, to the advantage of both.

Sir Sandford Fleming, Ottawa, Canada.

SEDDON.

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