

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

Ministry of Shipping, St. James's Park, London S.W. 1,

DEAR MR. MASSEY,—

19th May, 1919.

In reply to your letter of the 14th instant, on the subject of New Zealand needs in the matter of refrigerator tonnage, I may say that in conjunction with the Board of Trade we have had under consideration the position as it appears to exist in New Zealand.

As you know, arrangements have already been made to restore to the Australasian trade all the refrigerator tonnage which had been withdrawn for service in the shorter trades during the period of hostilities. In view of the efforts which have already been made to meet the demands for refrigerator tonnage in the Australasian trade, I regret we cannot possibly do more than has already been done for the months of May and June, particulars regarding which have already been furnished to you.

As regards July, a provisional estimate has been made of the tonnage which may be allocated for loading in New Zealand, amounting to approximately 2,570,000 cub. ft. The delays which are at present being experienced, however, in connection with the fitting and repairing of ships, &c., render it very difficult to furnish a reliable estimate for any considerable period in advance.

Believe me, &c.,

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

J. P. MACLAY.

From the FOOD CONTROLLER, London, to the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, London.

DEAR MR. MASSEY,—

Board of Trade, Whitehall Gardens, S.W. 1, 19th May, 1919.

With reference to your letter to me of the 14th May, enclosing copy of a letter which you have addressed to Sir Joseph Maclay on the subject of tonnage for New Zealand, I am well aware of the difficult situation in New Zealand resulting from the diversion of steamers last year to bring troops from America, and the Board of Trade in conjunction with the Shipping Controller have been continuously engaged in trying to ameliorate the situation. The diverted ships have now been practically all released to their proper trade, and I find that in the first six months of this year steamers with 13,534,000 cub. ft. insulated capacity, or over 64 per cent. of the insulated capacity of the available insulated Australasian steamers, have been allotted to New Zealand, while for the months of May and June the proportion is 67 per cent. A provisional estimate of the tonnage available in July indicates that approximately 2,570,000 cub. ft., or 64 per cent., may be allocated to New Zealand, but this may be altered, and it is not possible at present to make a forecast for any later period.

Everything practicable is being done to meet the requirements of New Zealand, and from time to time arrangements made have been altered in favour of the Dominion, but delays connected with the fitting out and repairing ships, with strikes, and with quarantine regulations have prevented us from moving so much produce as we had expected. If, consistently with our other obligations, any opportunity presents itself of doing something more for New Zealand we shall not be slow to take advantage of it.

Yours sincerely,

The Right Hon. W. F. Massey, M.P., London.

AUCKLAND GEDDES.