

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 12th February, 1915.

In reply to your telegram dated 11th February: My telegram of the 2nd was intended as an intimation that the "Opawa" was not then available. Circumstances having altered, "Opawa" can be obtained now at "Limerick" charter basis. Do not recommend, as saving only about three weeks. Understand shippers for New Zealand have been promised and are relying upon this vessel.

TELEGRAM REFERRED TO IN PRECEDING MESSAGE.

In reply to your telegrams of 1st and 2nd February: Very full inquiries have been made from all shipowners, and cannot succeed securing further tonnage owing to commitments here for outward freightage and increased freightage from Australia and Argentine. . . .

S.S. "ZEALANDIC."

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 2nd February, 1915.

Can secure "Zealandic" sailing this week for ten thousand. Open until 4th February. Unless I hear to contrary from you will accept offer, as opportunity should not be lost.

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND. 3rd February, 1915.

It is understood that "Zealandic" is advised to sail for New Zealand from London on 10th February, and consequently any acceleration seems to possess doubtful advantage. Advise further.

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 3rd February, 1915.

In reply to your telegram of 3rd February: Now find "Zealandic" cannot leave before 10th February, but if leaving then estimate gain about three to four weeks. If fully loading here will not leave 18th February, and further time will be lost discharging cargo in New Zealand. Reply promptly.

NOTE.—"Zealandic": The owners asked £10,000 to expedite the departure of the steamer from London by at least three weeks for New Zealand loading. The Government offered to pay half cost, and asked the meat companies concerned to provide the balance. A majority of the companies would not agree to make any payment, and the negotiations were not continued.

S.S. "WAIWERA," "KARAMEA," "ARAWA," "KUMARA," "PAKEHA," AND "RANGATIRA."

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND. 9th February, 1915.

It has been reported that Admiralty intend commandeering the following steamers *en route* to Australia—viz., "Karamea," "Arawa," "Kumara," "Pakeha," and "Rangatira." These are being depended upon to load frozen meat for the United Kingdom during March and April, and if withdrawn it will render position here practically hopeless. Please take all necessary steps with Admiralty to prevent these steamers being withdrawn from New Zealand trade at such an inopportune time.

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 12th February, 1915.

Referring to your telegram of 9th February: I advised Shaw-Savill and Company from information received that vessels you referred to besides "Waiwera" may be taken over by Commonwealth of Australia—not Admiralty—under former's powers to commandeer all vessels coming within their territory. Admiralty has been requested to use their influence with Commonwealth in order that Commonwealth will not prevent these vessels proceeding to New Zealand. Admiralty strongly advise you also represent the position to Commonwealth. If unsuccessful telegraph me, when I will again make representations to the Imperial Government of the seriousness of the position both as to shipping our meat and also troops being provided for. I am proposing to the Commonwealth that our transports "Verdala" and "Knight Garter," which are fitted for troops, and due here shortly, should be exchanged for two of your refrigerated transport steamers which are under orders to return to Australia from here. Please also take up Commonwealth this proposal. Understand five new insulated steamers controlled by Federal Line nearing completion, but delayed on account of men being required by Admiralty. Am approaching latter to see if possible for sufficient men to be released to complete one vessel in about six weeks, two about eight weeks, and two about fourteen weeks, as two of these are for New Zealand trade. Will reply your telegram 9th February respecting refrigerated steamers of all companies to-morrow.