

information respecting approximate quantity of meat which will be at store at freezing-works on 31st March and 30th April, and have pointed out that considerable additional tonnage is urgently necessary for these months. London Tonnage Committee replied on 8th February that possibility of supplying requisite tonnage is remote. Quite recently it has been ascertained that meat in store at end of March and of April would be respectively approximately 2,900,000 and 3,500,000 60 lb. carcasses, greatly exceeding figures as supplied by New Zealand Overseas Shipowners' Committee, which were 2,300,000 and 2,700,000 60 lb. carcasses respectively. I should be glad if you would confer with Board of Trade with a view to ascertaining whether something further cannot be done to relieve congestion which will take place in freezing-stores, and which will seriously affect farming interests and labour conditions throughout Dominion. It has been suggested by London Tonnage Committee that position might be relieved by first clearing droughty districts, but this is impossible. Also, in addition, I should be glad if you could represent to Board of Trade that, whereas forty-two steamers were despatched from New Zealand during period November to April last year, those supplied and in sight for same period this year are eleven less.

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND. 19th February, 1916.

Anxious for reply to my telegram of 15th February providing additional refrigerated steamers.

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 19th February, 1916.

In reply to your telegram 19th February on subject of refrigerated tonnage: Using every endeavour, and hope to reply early next week.

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 21st February, 1916.

In reply to your telegram of 15th February on subject of refrigerated tonnage: Matter had already been in hand and receiving every consideration prior to receipt of your telegram, but I again made representations to Board of Trade, who reply to the effect that in their own interests as well as those of New Zealand they were doing all possible to assist New Zealand. Three additional steamers—"Dorset," "Makarini," "Carpentaria"—have been allotted to New Zealand, and Board of Trade promise that more will be allotted when they can be spared. Can you put me in a position to explain why steamers, notably "Kaikoura," "Karamea," "Orari," were allowed to leave with insulated space not fully used for frozen cargo, although there was considerable quantity in store?

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND. 25th February, 1916.

With reference to my telegram of 15th February on subject of refrigerated tonnage, and your telegram of 21st February asking for explanation with regard to "Karamea," "Kaikoura," and "Orari" using insulated space for general cargo: The Overseas Shipowners' Committee advise that there was every indication that there was not meat enough to fill all the insulated space in the "Kaikoura" and "Karamea," and the London Tonnage Committee were informed of this by cable on 11th October, and at the same time advised that general cargo would be available instead. Further indications pointed to the insufficiency of meat for the "Orari," and the owners of the steamers mentioned were asked by the New Zealand Committee to find general cargo to fill the insulated lower hold in each of the steamers. Later there was an unexpected rush of meat at a North Island works, but the arrangements made with regard to taking general cargo could not be cancelled. I desire that you will emphasize to Board of Trade that if steamers are not made available for relieving congestion in freezing-works storage charges will greatly exceed those of last year, adding greatly to the cost of the meat.

From HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER. 24th February, 1916.

With reference to my telegram of 21st February on subject of insulated tonnage: Informed by Board of Trade that "Makarini" may not be available for New Zealand meat on account of being required for conveying troops to Egypt from Commonwealth of Australia, and even if available there would be unavoidable delay through necessity for returning to Australia after loading New Zealand meat. I am urging Board of Trade to use every endeavour to arrange for substitute.

From Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND. 26th February, 1916.

With reference to your telegram 24th February, in which you advise that the "Makarini" may not be available for New Zealand meat on account of being required for conveying troops to Egypt from the Commonwealth of Australia: I desire to point out the seriousness of this, and to protest most strongly against the using of insulated ships such as the "Makarini" for the conveyance of troops, especially when there are numbers of uninsulated vessels available. That this is so is borne out by the large number of insulated ships engaged by the Government of the