

I am aware that my successor has made a change, and I do not criticize his action. It is always a justifiable policy for a Government to do work direct rather than by commission, even if at first no saving is made by the change. But if the newspapers are saying that the Government will make thousands out of their shipping office here then, as far as the immediate future is concerned, they are very much mistaken. In my opinion—of course, speaking as a mere outsider—my successor will have all his work cut out to make the new office pay, at any rate at first. Later on it may do better, and please understand I do not condemn the change at all. But had I carried it out I do verily believe that the newspapers which are now fulminating against young Kennaway would have attacked me bitterly for giving way to a bent for State socialism. I have always been keenly anxious to protect the taxpayers where their money has been in question. During one of your visits to London I was able to show you how, by going out of my way, I saved over £10,000 on one large contract. Where offices were useless I did not hesitate to abolish them; where terms and expenses of loans were concerned I was at endless labour to save money for the Treasury. I fought for every fraction, and I did save not thousands, but many scores of thousands of pounds.

All I have wished to do in this letter is to show that I had fair reason for letting the commission system go on during my term. I repeat that I think I had, without in the least criticizing the change which the Government has since thought it right to make, and with which as a matter of general policy I fully sympathize.

I have, &c.,  
W. P. REEVES.

The Right Hon. Sir Joseph Ward, Prime Minister, New Zealand.

HIGH COMMISSIONER to Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

Via Suez, 8/4/10.  
No. 1272.

Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London S.W.,  
7th April, 1910.

SIR,—

With reference to the attached cutting *re* Mrs. Jane Margaret Carter, I beg to inform you that there is no record of Mrs. Carter having made an unsuccessful application for reduced-rate passages for herself and child. The first record is the usual application form, which was received from her through Messrs. Thos. Cook and Son. In dealing with this, there does not appear to have been any undue delay; on the contrary, the application was dealt with in a specially expeditious manner.

It is possible that Mrs. Carter made a verbal request for reduced-rate passages, but as she was not eligible for the same they would be refused.

On the written application coming in, my predecessor apparently took into consideration the fact that Mr. Carter was in New Zealand, and that he desired his wife and child to join him. Viewing all the circumstances, he appears to have treated them as if they had been nominated, and granted reduced passages, although strictly speaking they were not entitled to this, the routine form not having been complied with by her husband in New Zealand.

Mrs. Carter appears to have received special consideration from the High Commissioner in this connection, and for which she expressed her gratitude. Extracts from her letters attached.

I have, &c.,  
WM. HALL-JONES.

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington, New Zealand.

*Cutting from the Lyttelton Times, 29th January, 1910, referred to in the High Commissioner's Letter, No. 1272, of 7th April, 1910.*

TO THE EDITOR.—

SIR,—I would like to give you my experience at 13 Victoria Street. I wished to join my husband, who had been some months in New Zealand, and to obtain assisted second-class passages for myself and my little son. I went to the New Zealand Government offices, and was received by a polite elderly gentleman. "Oh, you wish for an assisted passage. Well, come to our shipping agent, and he will fix it up for you." He led me down a passage to E. A. Smith and Son's office, where a younger gentleman was sitting, who told me that "assisted passages are very difficult to obtain just now. They are not granting them to wives, save in special cases; but I could book through them very cheaply to go by a cargo boat." I, to use a vulgar expression, "smelt a rat," and, after inquiring if a cargo boat carried a doctor and stewardess, and receiving a negative reply, said I thought it scarcely suitable for a woman and a young child travelling alone, and betook myself to Messrs. Thos. Cook and Son. They thought they could get me an assisted passage, but said, "These Government offices are rather slow." I received a week or two later a letter from my husband telling me to start as soon as possible. I went again to 13 Victoria Street, taking with me my brother-in-law, who explained that I wished for an assisted passage, and that I was going to take my ticket through Messrs. Cook and Son. The polite elderly gentleman read my husband's letter, asked for references and a doctor's certificate, and that the necessary amount of capital be sent to the High Commissioner. All this was done through Messrs. Thos. Cook and Son, and the whole "fixed up" in a fortnight. Meanwhile I had received an immense amount of papers from E. A. Smith and Co., but I grieve to say they all went into the waste-paper basket, or I would have now sent you a sample.

I am, &c.,  
JANE MARGARET CARTER.