

1915.
NEW ZEALAND.

REDUCTION OF NEWSPAPER POSTAGE

(FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO).

[In continuation of F.—7, presented on the 29th July, 1913.]

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

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No. 1.

The HIGH COMMISSIONER to the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

SIR,— Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London S.W., 7th November, 1913.

* * * * *

In connection with the question of newspaper postage, it seems to me that if it were arranged for British newspapers to be forwarded to the Dominion at the same rate as New Zealand papers can be despatched to this country it would be a very great advantage.

I have, &c.,
THOS. MACKENZIE.

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington.
[P. & T. 40/54.]

No. 2.

The Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to the HIGH COMMISSIONER.

SIR,— Prime Minister's Office, Wellington, 15th January, 1914.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th November last . . . suggesting a reduction of the rate of postage on newspapers sent from the United Kingdom to New Zealand.

In the Agent-General's letter of the 21st August, 1903 [No. 13, F.—3, 1904], he conveyed the decision of the Imperial Postmaster-General not to reduce the postage on newspapers from the United Kingdom to New Zealand to 1d. per paper, as proposed by New Zealand.

In 1907 [see No. 2, F. 7, 1908] the Postmaster-General of this Dominion proposed to the Imperial Postmaster-General that the rate of postage on newspapers and periodicals from the United Kingdom to New Zealand by direct steamers be reduced to 1d. per pound, as had already been done in the case of newspapers and periodicals from the United Kingdom to Canada. The proposal was not entertained.

In 1911 the Right Hon. Sir Joseph Ward wrote [No. 23, F. 7, 1912] to the Right Hon. Herbert Samuel renewing the proposal. The reply was again unfavourable [see Sub-enclosure 2 to Enclosure 1 in No. 7].

I shall be glad if you will now inquire of the British Post Office whether there is any expectation of the rate for newspapers from the United Kingdom to New Zealand by direct steamers being reduced.

I have, &c.,

R. HEATON RHODES,

For the Prime Minister.

The Hon. Thos. Mackenzie, F.R.G.S., High Commissioner for New Zealand, London.

No. 3.

The SECRETARY, British Empire League, London, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,— Norfolk House, Laurence Pountney Hill, London E.C., 28th May, 1914.

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of resolution [not printed] adopted by the Council of the British Empire League, at its meeting held at the House of Commons on the 21st instant, on the subject of newspaper postal rates.

I beg to refer you to the last paragraph of the resolution, in which the Council of the league expresses its desire "that efforts be made to secure for New Zealand the advantages of cheaper postal rates on British newspapers and magazines."

I have, &c.,

C. FREEMAN MURRAY, Secretary.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General of the Dominion of New Zealand.

No. 4.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, British Empire League, London.

SIR,— Postmaster-General's Office, Wellington, 10th July, 1914.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th May last, forwarding copy of a resolution adopted by the Council of your league on the subject of newspaper-postage rates.

I am pleased to hear that your Council desires to see a reduction in the postage rates for British newspapers and magazines posted in the United Kingdom for New Zealand. Years ago the Postmaster-General of this Dominion endeavoured to induce the Imperial Postmaster-General to reduce the rate for newspapers and periodicals sent here by direct steamers to 1d. per pound, and I have renewed the question. As a matter of fact, I am awaiting a reply to representations I made through our High Commissioner in January last. The assistance of your league will be much appreciated.

I have, &c.,

R. HEATON RHODES, Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, British Empire League, Norfolk House, Laurence Pountney Hill, London E.C.

No. 5.

The Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to the HIGH COMMISSIONER.

SIR,— Prime Minister's Office, Wellington, 5th August, 1914.

I have the honour to refer to my letter of the 15th January last asking you to inquire of the British Post Office whether there is any expectation of the rate of postage for newspapers from the United Kingdom to New Zealand by direct steamers being reduced; and shall be glad to hear whether you have yet received a reply to the inquiry.

I have, &c.,

R. HEATON RHODES,

For the Prime Minister.

The Hon. Thos. Mackenzie, F.R.G.S., High Commissioner for New Zealand, London.

No. 6.

The HIGH COMMISSIONER to the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

SIR,— Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London S.W., 6th October, 1914.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th August last, and in reply to enclose you herein copy of the letter I caused to be written to the Colonial Office, together

with the acknowledgment of that Department, with regard to the desired reduction of the rate of postage on newspapers and periodicals from the United Kingdom to New Zealand by direct steamers.

Of course, during the present war crisis it is not possible to pursue the matter further, but immediately the conditions are again favourable I will reopen the question with the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington.

THOS. MACKENZIE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 6.

THE SECRETARY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER to the UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE, Colonial Office.
SIR,—

13 Victoria Street, London S.W., 25th July, 1914.

Referring to Colonial Office letter of the 18th August, 1903 [Enclosure 4 in No. 13, F.-3, 1904], and to proposals made in 1907 by the New Zealand Postmaster-General to H.M. Postmaster-General that the rate of postage on newspapers and periodicals from the United Kingdom to New Zealand by direct steamers might be reduced to 1d. per pound as in the case of Canada, I am directed by the High Commissioner to state that he has been requested by his Government to again bring the matter to the notice of the British Post Office, and to inquire whether the Government of New Zealand may still have any expectation that it will be found possible to reduce the rate to New Zealand as desired, and so enable the people of that Dominion to receive the same advantage by the extended interchange of literature with this country as is enjoyed by the people of the sister Dominion of Canada.

The High Commissioner is aware that the reduction would entail financial considerations, but he feels that such considerations would be quite outweighed by the appreciation that would be felt by the large numbers of people in this country who have New Zealand interests. He ventures to hope, therefore, that you will again approach the Imperial Post Office on the subject, and that your representations may result in the granting of this long-standing request.

I have, &c.,

C. WRAY PALLISER,
Secretary to the Department.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office, Downing Street, S.W.

Enclosure 2 in No. 6.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE, Colonial Office, to the SECRETARY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER.
SIR,—

Colonial Office, Downing Street, S.W., 4th August, 1914.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th July on the subject of the postage on newspapers and periodicals from the United Kingdom to New Zealand, and to inform you that a copy has been forwarded to the General Post Office for consideration.

I have, &c.,

JOHN ANDERSON.

The Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for New Zealand.

No. 7.

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER to the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

SIR,— Westminister Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London S.W., 27th November, 1914.

Referring to my letter of the 6th ultimo and to previous correspondence on the above subject, I have the honour to enclose herein copy of a letter I have received from the Colonial Office declining to grant the desired reduction in the rate of postage on newspapers and periodicals from this country to New Zealand.

I am, however, not disposed to leave the matter at that point, and I have accordingly pressed New Zealand's claims again upon His Majesty's Government in a reply to the Colonial Office, of which I also annex a copy. I will let you know what happens in due course.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington.

THOS. MACKENZIE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 7.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE, Colonial Office, to the SECRETARY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER.
SIR,—

Colonial Office, Downing Street, 24th November, 1914.

With reference to your letter of the 25th July last, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Harcourt to request you to inform the High Commissioner that he has now received the views of the Postmaster-General upon the request of the New Zealand Government for the reconsideration of the question of extending the Canadian magazine rate of postage to newspapers and periodicals sent from the United Kingdom to New Zealand.

2. The Postmaster-General states that the position is still substantially the same as when the letters on the subject addressed to the Postmaster-General of New Zealand on the 28th October, 1907 [No. 7, F.-7, 1908], and the 12th December, 1911, copies of which are enclosed for the High Commissioner's information, were written.

3. He adds that at the time of the institution of the Canadian magazine post the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury were reluctant to agree to the scheme, on account of its financial unsoundness and of the probability that it would be used with effect as a precedent by advocates of cheaper newspaper rates throughout the Empire, and indeed of cheaper rates on printed matter in the inland service of the United Kingdom, and that it was only in view of the exceptional political and geographical position of Canada that the objections of the Treasury were waived. There appears to be no such exceptional considerations in the case of New Zealand; and as the existing rates for newspapers are unremunerative, there does not appear to him to be sufficient ground for reducing them still further to a point which would result not only in a heavy immediate sacrifice of revenue, but in a cumulative and increasing loss.

4. An extension of the magazine post to New Zealand could not, the Postmaster-General thinks, be considered as a postal concession to that Dominion only, as it would probably provoke demands, which could not consistently be resisted, not only for similar concessions in other parts of the Empire, but also for a reduction in the inland service of the United Kingdom, and ultimately for a reduction in the international rate for printed papers as well, any of which concessions would necessitate a large sacrifice of revenue.

5. The difficulties in the way of meeting the wishes of your Government are thus purely of a financial character, but they are so serious that the Postmaster-General regrets he is unable to recommend His Majesty's Government to extend the magazine post to New Zealand.

6. Copies of your letter under reply and of this letter are being sent to the Governor of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

HENRY LAMBERT,

For the Under-Secretary of State.

The Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for New Zealand.

Sub-enclosure 1 to Enclosure 1 in No. 7.

[See No. 7, F.-7, 1908.]

Sub-enclosure 2 to Enclosure 1 in No. 7.

The Right Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, London, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 12th December, 1911.

I duly received your letter of the 24th October last [No. 23, F.-7, 1912] renewing the suggestion that the rate of postage on newspapers and periodicals sent from the United Kingdom to New Zealand should be reduced to 1d. per pound, as was done in the case of newspapers and periodicals sent from the United Kingdom to Canada and Newfoundland.

As you are aware, the circumstances which led to the establishment of the magazine post to Canada and Newfoundland were quite exceptional, and were such as to outweigh purely financial considerations. No similar conditions obtain in any other part of the Empire, and in this respect New Zealand is in the same position as the other self-governing Dominions. It would not be feasible further to extend the low magazine rate of postage without making it universal throughout the Empire, and I should not feel justified in recommending to His Majesty's Government the considerable sacrifice of revenue which would be involved. I regret therefore that I am still unable to meet the wishes of New Zealand in this matter.

You will have observed, I hope, with satisfaction, the large reductions of cable rates for Press and other plain-language telegrams of a non-urgent character between New Zealand and the United Kingdom, which, as I foreshadowed at the Imperial Conference, I have now been able to arrange.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward, P.C., K.C.M.G.

H. SAMUEL.

Enclosure 2 in No. 7.

The SECRETARY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER to the UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE, Colonial Office.
SIR,—

13 Victoria Street, S.W., 27th November, 1914.

I am directed by the High Commissioner to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant, and to state that it is with extreme regret he learns that the British Government will not depart from its original decision in reference to giving the Dominions and the Mother-country the benefit of cheaper postal rates on magazines and newspapers, especially on the latter, as the question of magazines could, in the meantime, be left in abeyance.

The High Commissioner considers it should be possible for the British Government to charge as moderate rates on newspapers going from this country as the New Zealand Government charge on newspapers sent from the Dominion to the United Kingdom, if passenger and cargo steamers are used for carrying the mails. The postal authorities do not appear to realize how great is the interest of the overseas people in the doings of this country, and it is especially necessary at the present time that those people should be kept well informed of all that is going on. The best way to secure this end is by allowing the mail-matter alluded to cheaper transit.

The High Commissioner feels sure that if his suggestion for cheapening the postal rates were adopted there would be such an increase in the matter despatched that the British Government would be put to no expense. On several occasions lately he has thought it advisable to send certain newspapers to New Zealand, and in order to bring the matter within the 1d. rate he has, in some instances, been obliged to throw away three-quarters of the newspaper, merely sending the portion especially dealing with the point under consideration. On one occasion six hundred copies of a newspaper were sent, and a large portion had to be thrown away, which the High Commissioner is sure the people in the Dominion would have appreciated.

To the High Commissioner it seems singular that this important concession, which means so much to the Empire and would cost so little to the British Government, if anything at all, is not granted. He is of opinion that later on the concession will be made, and then people will wonder why so important a reform should have been delayed so long and what blindness caused the delay.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office, S.W.

C. WRAY PALLISER.

No. 8.

The Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to the HIGH COMMISSIONER.

SIR,—

Prime Minister's Office, Wellington, 18th January, 1915.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th November last in reference to the representations made by you with a view to securing a reduction in the rate of postage on newspapers and periodicals from the United Kingdom to New Zealand.

I await with interest the result of your last representations.

I have, &c.,

R. HEATON RHODES,

For the Prime Minister.

The Hon. Thos. Mackenzie, F.R.G.S., High Commissioner for New Zealand, London.

No. 9.

The HIGH COMMISSIONER to the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

SIR,—

Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London S.W., 11th February, 1915.

Referring to my letter of the 27th November last, and to previous correspondence with regard to my efforts to obtain the desired reduction in the rate of postage on newspapers and periodicals from this country to New Zealand, I have the honour to enclose, for your information, copies of two further letters from the Colonial Office in answer to mine of the 27th November, of which I sent you a copy with my above-quoted communication.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington.

THOS. MACKENZIE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 9.

The UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to the SECRETARY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER.

SIR,—

Colonial Office, Downing Street, 15th December, 1914.

I am directed by Mr. Secretary Harcourt to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th November, and to request you to inform the High Commissioner that he is communicating further with the Postmaster-General with reference to the question of lowering the rates on magazines and newspapers to New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

HENRY LAMBERT,

For the Under-Secretary of State.

The Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for New Zealand, London.

Enclosure 2 in No. 9.

The UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to the SECRETARY TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER.
SIR,—

Downing Street, 10th February, 1915.

With reference to the letter from this Department of the 15th December last, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Harcourt to request you to inform the High Commissioner that the question of lowering the rates on magazines and newspapers to New Zealand is still engaging the attention of the Postmaster-General, but that it is expected that some little time will elapse before the statistical material required for the further consideration of the matter can be collected.

I have, &c.,

HENRY LAMBERT,

For the Under-Secretary of State.

The Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner for New Zealand, London.

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