EAST AFR. PROT 63070 69140 Mason Bind TCo's Application for Steamer for EA 1919 Dec Does not recommend be supported us this would the on about on Conference lines Suggets Butter of the asked of astronate longer required for mate upon the first upon the will whole one had to make on offer to deal with whole El056 hr Bettundy I doubt whether in face of this my could sepport the projuncts - but wait for D. J. T. reply ? " remerted Dot I no reply for wee. I Gelica, The i walik is a my who were the name to fund to you folder of things now port at which ocean beach called to at not any mice hast by letting many or 6-ey : Milmous ? 6

TELEPHONE 7780 VIOTORIA

6 3070

4. MILLBANK ()

WESTMINSTER,

LONDON, S.W.1.

3rd December, 1919.

sir.

421

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th November, No.55656/1919, with enclosures, respecting Mesers. Bird & Co's application for steamers for service in East Africa.

- 2. We cannot recommend that this Company's proposition in its present form should be supported. So far as we can ascertain they are not shipowners, nor do they control any tonnage. They ask to be supplied with Government tonnage to move carge in which the Protectorate Governments are to a certain extent interested. If any tonnage is available, the Ministry of Shipping might be asked directly to supply steamers for the conveyance of the Sisal and other produce.
- 3. Assuming that the Ministry of Shipping gave Messrs, Bird & Co. the management of strangers they would have to be leaded outwards as well as homewards. This would be an attack on the Conference Lines, who would not submit to it without an effort,
- The Conference Line: Ised steamers at Glasgow, hirkenhead London and Middlescorough, and when sufficient carge is offered at, other ports, such as Cardiff, they are prepared to send steamers for it. Up to the present they have carried all the carge for the Protectorate Sovernments from the most convenient peris without undue delay. Our present arrangement with them is that we reserve the senent of 5% from the tariff rates of greight.
- The demand for tonnage is very large in every direction, and with the control of the ministry of Shipping Steam Chicomers are not able to develope their services as they might wish. Also the cost of running steamers under existing circumstances is so great Under Secretary of State, COLONIAL OFFICE.

TERMINETE ...

that it may be doubted, even at the high rates now charged, whether they are earning more than a fair profit.

- 6. A centimous service of steamers soing essential, we consider it would not be to the saventage of the East Africa Protectorates to take any hostile action against the Conference.
- 7: It will be recollected that until the Union-Caetle Hail. Steamship Co. were induced to make the freight contract in 1910, the service was very bad and intermittent.
- 5. We would suggest that the Protectorate Governments should be asked to estimate the tennage of all commedities they will require during next year, including these imported from America and the Coal for the Uganda Railway. At the present time the tennage on order is not large.
- 9. When this information is received, and if it is considered dvisable, the Conference might be invited to make an offer to deal with the whole, and also to state what facilities they can give for seasongers and homeward cargo.
- 10. The freight market is in a very uncertain state and pinions differ whether rates will increase or decrease in the near state, so that the question of entering into a contract will have be carefully considered.

I have the memour to be,

Sir,

Your chedient Servant,

For Opown Agents

te have since been informed that the Conference are making arrangements to deal with all the proques to offering in termina man Africa. Fairly promptly. They have also agreed that Allied and Heutral lines should be free to carry such cargo, to Continental ports.