

Item No. 15

CANADIAN NATIONAL STEAMSHIPS

Code Address
"Cangomar"
Code Used
Scott's 10th Edition

Our File No.
M. V. "Canadian Challenger"
Bridgetown, Barbados,

JULY 15th, 1953.

Nelson Castonguay, Esquire,
Chief Electoral Officer,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Sir:—

Prior to leaving Montreal on July 3rd, as Master of this Canadian National Steamships vessel, on a voyage which will keep me out of Canada until after the coming general election, I asked my wife to arrange to get a proxy form which, attested, I hoped would enable me to cast my ballot in absentia.

My home, now 5666 Beurling Avenue, Verdun, Quebec, was originally in the Constituency of Parry Sound, Ontario.

After diligent inquiry of various election Officials who could not, unequivocally, inform her, she wisely telephoned you in Ottawa.

Please accept my thanks for your courtesy to her, as well as for the, to me, distressing information that there is no provision made for a Seaman to vote in a Federal election, and that, per se, his occupation, sometimes considered in the National interest, in fact disfranchises him while exercising it out of his home constituency.

I feel it quite impossible to accept with equanimity, at least without some protest, such a situation which might so easily be remedied, especially when it is remembered that such provision was made for balloting by Merchant seamen during the late hostilities.

Quite aside from my own case, in this Ship alone, some forty men under my command are similarly disfranchised, to say nothing of many other absent ships with their Canadian crews.

I feel assured that if it were brought to the attention of the proper Committee some provision would be made for registering the Seaman's vote in any subsequent election, permitting us to exercise our valued, and in the past hard fought for rights, as Canadians.

Yours truly,

(sgd) T. C. Anderson.

c.c.

Honourable Lionel Chevrier,
Minister of Transport,
Ottawa, Ontario.

MRL