

Copy.

THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SEAMEN

C. P. O'Donovan,
National President.

305 LUMBERMEN'S BUILDING,

VANCOUVER, B.C., May 13, 1936.

Mr. TOM REID, M.P.,
House of Commons,
Ottawa.

DEAR SIR,—We are enclosing herewith a completed list of the Deck department, also a list of the Stewards department. I wish to assure you that great pains have been taken to check on every name. In the first instance, we sent you the census of nearly all of the Association's unemployed seamen taken during 1933 and 1934. These figures do not represent by any means, the whole number of seamen in British Columbia. I may add, however, that the Association's office has been stormed during the last week with indignant seamen, and I may further add that we were not even acquainted with the vast majority of those who called to protest against the assertions made by representatives of the Canadian Pacific Steamships.

You can readily enough realize, without any additional evidence, from the list we have already submitted, that there are sufficient men in British Columbia to man not only the Empress liners, but a good many besides. We have made preparations, however, to compile other lists of various seamen who have responded to our appeal to report at this office. I may add that many of these seamen listed have told us of their experience in not only keeping up to the Oriental, but surpassing them in efficiency in the tropics. Needless to say, the majority of these men are on relief and have been for some considerable time past.

It was a great misfortune that during the last week the Association did not possess a move camera to take pictures of the Chinese seamen lowering a life-boat and trying to row it in our harbour. One boat, to-day, nearly fell into the water and because several of our members loudly criticized the management of this particular boat, the C.P.R. police were sent for and they were told they were on C.P.R. property, and therefore would have to "move off."

Among the names on the list of the catering department, you will find one by the name of H. Robinson, residing at 2763 Cambridge Street. This man testifies that in 1925, when he was employed as a cook in one of the logging camps, the C.P.R. sent him two telegrams offering him a position as second cook aboard one of the Empress boats. As Mr. Robinson realized there was at this time a strike conducted by the Chinese crews, he wired back and asked if the job would be permanent, and received no reply.

Another man by the name of Gilbert Blair, an oiler, but at the present time employed as a Fireman, by the Pacific Coyle Navigation Company was also sent for, and yet this man who was formerly a member of our National Executive Board, and is still a member of the Association, declares that at no time has he worked aboard any ship operated by the Canadian Pacific Steamships, nor has he at any time applied for work there. He, like a good many more who have made similar statements, are at a loss to understand how the C.P.R. got hold of their names and addresses. It certainly was not through this Association, because we were not in existence at that time.

You will be pleased to learn that Mr. O'Donovan withdrew his resignation on the request of an emergency meeting. He is given leave of absence, and he will, as he told you in a recent letter, I believe, call to see you at Ottawa. We will appreciate it very much, Mr. Reid, if you could make arrangements for him to see the Minister of Marine, also the Minister of Labour, and not forgetting our old friend, the Hon. Ian Mackenzie.