

## PRELIMINARY INQUIRIES AS TO MERCHANT SEAMEN

5. Before leaving New Zealand I ascertained that there was a possibility that the "Pamir" might be in American waters during the election period, but that no other New Zealand merchant ships were likely to be there, though there might be cases of New Zealand seamen on other ships. I accordingly decided to make arrangements in Vancouver, San Francisco, and New York to cover New Zealand seamen whose ships might be in port during election period.

## PREPARATIONS PRIOR TO CLOSING OF NOMINATIONS

6. I prepared detailed instructions for the taking of votes, and, prior to the closing of nominations, circulated these, together with the necessary number of ballot and voting papers, to all stations, both naval and air, to which New Zealand personnel were attached. In addition, I arranged with the following to look after voting in the places mentioned:—

Mr. E. E. Ackland (New Zealand Agent), Vancouver, B.C.

Mr. S. B. Pilcher (New Zealand Agent), San Francisco.

Mr. L. M. Death (New Zealand Supply Mission), Washington, D.C.

Mr. T. O. W. Brebner (N.Z. Customs Representative), New York.

Flight Lieutenant F. O. Spackman (R.N.Z.A.F.), Halifax, N.S.

Flying Officer R. Somerville (R.N.Z.A.F.), New Zealand Air Mission, Ottawa.

Messrs. Ackland, Pilcher, and Brebner kept in touch with the shipping position in an endeavour to contact any New Zealand seamen touching port in the voting period.

In the case of the various stations and ships, the Commanding Officers were requested to arrange for an officer to take charge of the voting, and were advised that, in cases where the number of New Zealand personnel exceeded one hundred, the station would be visited by a New Zealand representative who would assist in the taking of the votes.

I arranged for an announcement to be made concerning the election in the Radio News Summary which is broadcast to New Zealand and Australian Air Force trainees in Canada each Sunday, and voters were advised to communicate with Ottawa headquarters if no arrangements were made for them to vote.

## NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION NEWS SHEET

7. The nominations were received on Friday, 10th September, and I had copies printed immediately. I received the cable containing the whole of the material for the election news sheet at 5 p.m. on Sunday, 12th September. As this had to be printed for circulation at the earliest possible moment, Mr. Firth, the Acting High Commissioner, arranged for a number of typists to work that night transcribing the cable ready for the printer.

By working all Monday and through Monday night the printer was able to deliver the news sheet to me ready for circulation by 2 p.m. on Tuesday, 14th September, and by 6.30 p.m. that evening final instructions for the voting, together with sufficient copies of the list of candidates and election news sheet to give one to each voter, were in the mail.

All packages were sent by the most expeditious means available.

## CONDUCT OF THE VOTING

8. The greatest number of R.N.Z.A.F. personnel were centred around Calgary and Winnipeg, and, in view of the fact that approximately 300 men had just arrived in the Calgary area and their names were not on any roll, I considered it advisable to proceed to Calgary myself. I arranged for Mr. Middlemass, of the New Zealand High Commissioner's Office, to accompany me, as some assistance would be necessary.

We visited four stations in the area, assisting the polling officers with the voting at three of the stations, and communicated with other stations to ascertain that voting was proceeding.

I arranged for Flight Lieutenant A. Drake, from the New Zealand Air Mission, Ottawa, to visit Winnipeg, and he visited a number of stations, assisting the polling officers with the voting, and communicated with other stations to ascertain that the voting was proceeding. Flight Lieutenant R. Potter, of the New Zealand Air Mission, Ottawa, went to Toronto for several days and communicated with the stations in that area to see whether any assistance was required. At the request of the officer commanding one station he visited the station and assisted in the taking of the votes of the New Zealand personnel, who included a number of Fleet Air Arm trainees.

Flight Lieutenant Spackman communicated with the stations in the Halifax area to ascertain that the voting was proceeding and that no further assistance was required.

## AREA COVERED

9. There were New Zealand personnel in approximately ninety different stations and ships in or near the North American Continent, from Honolulu in the west to Bermuda, the Bahamas, and Trinidad in the east and south. All had an opportunity of voting except a few ferry pilots who were away on duty, and the men in Bermuda, the Bahamas, and Trinidad and in some ships which put to sea before the 10th September and did not return to port before 25th September. The voting-papers and list of candidates, although sent by air, did not reach Bermuda until 25th September and did not reach Trinidad until some days after that date. They reached the Bahamas on 22nd September, but owing to a misreading of the instructions the voting was not proceeded with. The number of men affected was as follows:—

Bermuda	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Bahamas	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	18
Trinidad	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	27
Ships at sea	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	66

I had records of the names and addresses of all these men, except nine of those in the Bahamas, and none of those whose addresses I had come from the closely-contested electorates.