

U DX334

**National Union of Seamen
ballot rigging enquiry and other papers**

1944-1964

Historical Background:

The Seamen's Union was founded in 1887 and became the main trade union (as the National Union of Seamen) of merchant sailors in the UK until its merger with the National Union of Railwayman in 1990 to form the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT).

In its early years, the Union successfully fought several strikes and by 1889 had an approximate membership of 80,000. However, determined resistance from shipowners led to a decline in successful protests, membership and funds and, ultimately, to liquidation in 1893. Even when the Union was reborn as the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union (NSFU) in 1894, financial difficulties and low membership was still a concern. Although, after a successful strike in 1911, the Union's fortunes were significantly restored.

More problems began, however, when in 1921, and later in 1923 and 1925, the NSFU supported wage reductions imposed by the National Maritime Board. This was followed by further criticism owing to its apparent support of the Special Restriction (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order (1925) as well as its failure to observe the General Strike in 1926. This led, in September 1928, to the NSFU's expulsion from the Trades Union Congress.

The Union (renamed the National Union of Seamen in 1926) became reconciled to the trade union movement again after pursuing a more mainstream policy by 1929, although some criticism still remained. Its last two strikes were launched in 1966 and 1988, with the first aiming to secure higher wages and a reduced working week and the second concerning P&O ferries.

Custodial history:

Donated by Stan Suddaby's ex-wife, Susan King, after his death.

Description:

This small collection contains records relating to an investigation by the National Union of Seamen into alleged ballot rigging and bribery by Thomas George Bishop. Includes a report of and the conclusions of the Special Committee set up to investigate the case.

Extent: 1 file & 2 items

Related material:

Records of the Transport and General Workers Union, Docks and Waterways [U DTG]

Other repositories:

National Union of Seamen, University of Warwick Library [MSS.175]

National Union of Seamen v The British Shipping Federation Ltd., National Archives [J 148/55]

Access conditions:

Some of the records in this collection contain sensitive personal information. In accordance with data protection legislation, records containing sensitive personal information are not available for public inspection for 75 years if the information relates to adults, or 100 years if the information relates to children. In some circumstances access may be granted for research purposes. To request access or for further information please contact archives@hull.ac.uk.

Access to all other material will be granted to any accredited reader.

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| U DX334/1 | <p>National Union of Seamen Ballot Rigging Enquiry
Includes minutes of interviews with individuals connected to the ballot rigging and bribery investigation; a copy of the report of the Special Committee set up to investigate the confession of ballot rigging by Thomas George Bishop, and also of alleged bribery charges; a copy of the conclusions of the Special Committee and a copy of an affidavit of Thomas George Bishop.
1 file</p> <p>This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2040. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact archives@hull.ac.uk.</p> | 1964 |
| U DX334/2 | <p>Two record books of Certificates of Discharge belonging to Stanley Suddaby
Includes the names of the ships on which he served, his date of appointment and discharge and a brief report of his character. In some cases there are also brief details of the ship. These items are very fragile.
2 items</p> | 1944-1955 |