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WCH/R.

Vancouver, B. C., Sept: 20th 1913

Sir:-

Referring to your letter No.S25095 of the 5th August last, regarding the issue of tickets at Hong Kong to alleged returning Hindus.

In this connection I might say that I am in receipt of a letter from the Superintendent of Immigration, Ottawa, dated 15th August, a copy of which I enclose herewith. The form submitted is an amended one and contains more detail which did not exist on the old forms. I am enclosing a copy of this also for your information. The question of domicile is still in abeyance and I hope to hear further on the subject from the Department in a little while.

The system of registering out Hindus has already been introduced and on the last three outgoing boats quite a number have taken advantage and the Hindu colony are acquainted with the new departure. I fully appreciate the fact that the introduction of this system will virtually shut out the returning Hindu traffic until some time has elapsed.

In connection with Hindus returning to this country from a visit to India, it has been found by us that your Agent at Hong Kong has issued transportation to any Hindu who can produce a slip of paper written in English any bearing the ma

the man's name, and apparently dated at Vancouver, B.C., or some printed receipt purporting to have been issued in some part of British Columbia to a Hindu whose name does not appear on it, but "Hindu number so and so" and this is accepted by your Agent as prima facie evidence of his having been a resident of Canada and with no interrogation whatsoever as to the documents' authenticity or any further proof that the man is entitled to come to Canada resulting in, thereby, the issue of tickets to anybody who can produce the slightest evidence tangible or otherwise.

This state of affairs was brought to your attention on two occasions and the slips of paper and a few other exhibits made over to you bearing the "O.K." of your Agent, and you acknowledged that the material was very flimsy and no particular attention was being paid to these men. This you will admit is not fair to our service, inasmuch as hundreds of men can obtain such papers, present them to the Hong Kong Agent and secure passage to Canada. These are easily obtained from their friends here who would not hesitate in adopting this method of securing entry for Hindu immigrants finding that a passage can be so easily had.

In the examination of Hindu arrivals every facility is afforded your Company for the quick landing of these men, and if a stricter examination is instituted and proof demanded in

each individual case of previous residence and corroborative evidence of such residents, you can readily understand the length of time each case will take. In cases heretofore we have had great difficulty in handling these returned man as a number of them are very illiterate and ignorant, and coupled with the fact that they did not provide themselves with any papers or documents to prove their residence here, it was necessary to hold a board of inquiry in ten cases. Had it been a question of the re-admission of Chinese I would not on the evidence submitted have admitted the man as I have done under the actual circumstances.

If we went into the case of each individual thoroughly with the view of investigating his status as a returned Hindu it would mean that the matter would be held pending for a month or more, owing to the number of cases to be dealt with, and as there is no accomodation for these people either on board or ashore after their arrival in port we have considered the difficulty and not gone more fully into the cases, thus saving your compant further trouble with regard to their keep and litigation when detained on your boats. You are fully aware of the procedure of these

people that no sooner a Hindu is detained on board his friends and the colony have recourse to the courts and secure a writ of Habeas Corpus.

The agitation in this Province on the Asiatic question by the residents here and the Hindus themselves who are clamouring for the admission of their wives and children have compelled us to act very carefully in ~~admitting~~ this matter, and we have more or less used discretion in admitting these people on

their return; but if the Agent at Hong Kong were to continue to issue tickets on the production of such meagre evidence as I have made over to you it will be necessary for me to go more fully into each case of a returning Hindu and demand evidence satisfactory to myself and which I am sure will result in litigation owing to detention.

I am quite sure that your Company is anxious to keep things running smoothly and with that view we introduced the system of registering out Hindus so that no cases could arise where the company will have issued transportation to Hindus not entitled to same. At the same time in the matter of Hindus who returned to India prior to the introduction of this system we would ask you to request your agent at Hong Kong to advise all Hindus applying for transportation as returned men to forward a declaration stating that they have been residents of Canada, giving the years of their landing in this country, the father's name and village, the date of their departure from Canada, and what boat and port they sailed from. This declaration to be sent to me, and attached to the declaration two copies of their photographs. On receipt of this declaration with photograph each individual case will be investigated and you will be notified whether the party is entitled to re-enter Canada with an endorsement on the declaration which will be returned to the Hindu in Hong Kong and he can apply for transportation.

This is the only way that I can see where a check can be kept on these people returning to Canada and thus save both

your company and my department from unnecessary litigation and trouble if we introduce a much stricter examination than we have heretofore.

Yours truly,

Sgd Malcolm R. J. Reid
Dominion Immigration Agent.

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Cipy for the information of W.D.Scott, Esq., #536999.