

Copy for the information of:

H. H. Stevens, Esq.; M. P.
House of Commons,
Ottawa, Ont.

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MRJR/EC.,

Vancouver, B. C., June 5th

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Ottawa File No. 879545 Imm.

W. D. SCOTT, ESQ.,

Superintendent of Immigration,

Ottawa, Ont.

Sir:-

I beg to confirm my night lettergram of today's date, as follows:-

"At request of Counsel Gurdit Singh was permitted interview Bird, Gurdit Singh in one launch, Bird in another. Interview accordingly took place in Harbour yesterday. In consequence Bird asks submission following proposition. Gurdit Singh will provide proper detention shed in which place Hindus on shore and supply provisions while right of Hindus to land is being determined. Will furnish immigration department ship for return of all ordered deported. Himself returning to India immediately on Empress Russia eleventh instant. This will allow him sell cargo Komogata Maru and take out cargo on her from here.

"I strongly oppose proposition, firstly will be construed as weakness on part of Government; secondly if these men permitted on shore danger of riots by white population; thirdly because acting on Ritchie's advice we offered take three cases on writs habeas corpus on understanding that judgment would go dismissing writ in order that appeal might go before Court of Appeal, but proposition was refused. This proposition made immediately on arrival of ship. Fourthly Sir Hibbert Tupper's representative states he has been secured as counsel for owners of ship. Apparently no funds behind this scheme and Sir Hibbert Tupper will assist in every possible way endeavor rid harbour of vessel by June twelfth; fifthly should these men get into Courts old question of bail would be brought to front and they might eventually by some loop hole or by forfeiting bail, enter Canada. Sixthly, dangerous, difficult and expensive to guard large body of men as lengthy period of time necessary carry out involved legal proceedings. Seventhly, no building known to me large enough and so situated as to afford necessary accommodation; eighthly every facility already allowed for coal buyers to examine cargo, two authorities having already inspected same. Every facility afforded at request lawyer Grant New Westminster to place on board proposed cargo of lumber. Ninthly by permitting Gurdit Singh return immediately would only mean cause this agitator cause trouble in India and possibly influence Indian Government place obstacles in way this Department successfully ridding this country of this shipload. Boards of Enquiry convened yesterday and today for completion of cases returning men. Gurdit Singh refuses allow these men permission attend Board unless their cases are taken up

W. D. S. - 2.

".....up in conjunction with new arrivals. Board has decided to finish returned men and then follow order in manifest. In consequence of decision of Board, Hindus propose hunger strike; have stated they have passed unanimous resolution to die. Private information ship's officers states Hindus are eating at night after day shift of guards withdraw. Am pursuing a watchful waiting policy. Gurdit Singh I now find received offer for coal from Hassan Raheim, agitator well known to Department and Editor of Hindustanee is who is treasurer local committee interested in Komogata Maru. Demand is being made on the charterer to permit vessel to dock. Sir Hibbert Tupper interviewed me on this matter and I have seen Harbour Master in whose hands berthing of vessel lies. He assures me on no account will he take such action but vessel must lie in stream in present position. This is only scheme for Committee to secure some security for money raised at meeting last Sunday. The following cables were handed me this afternoon together with forty dollars in gold to pay for transmission of same. I am forwarding paid these messages with the notation that answers are also prepaid. Cable begins: His Majesty King, London. No provisions since four days. Reid refuses supply charterer and passengers starving; kept prisoners, ends. Signed Gurdit Singh, Komogata Maru. The same message also addressed Governor General Ottawa. Absurdity of the alleged starvation is plain in view of Bird's proposed and gold to pay for cablegrams and wires."

also my further wire of the same date, as follows:-

"Continuation my night lettergram even date, Hassan Raheim on behalf committee requested me four o'clock today permit provisions go aboard vessel. I offered him use our launches to convey same to ship. Few minutes later phoned me thanking me for offer but stated provisions already loaded Japanese launches. Our men went to steamer offering convey provisions aboard but Gurdit Singh refused to permit same. Some two tons flour, three hundred pounds rice, fruit and other articles. Their request for food to myself is absurd as they request in addition to 100 bags flour, ginger, cabbage, purified butter, quarter ton, ten boxes milk, fifty live sheep or goats; one hundred live fowls, two hundred boxes cigarettes, red peppers, spices etc. and crates of eggs. Do not think Department would feed any class of immigrants on such expensive rations and luxuries."

Your obedient servant,

Malcolm R. J. Reid

DOMINION IMMIGRATION AGENT & INSPECTOR.