

MRJR/EC.

Vancouver, B. C., June 16th

14

W. D. SCOTT, ESQ.,

Superintendent of Immigration,

Ottawa, Ont.

Sir:-

For your information I beg to transcribe a communication received from Gurdit Singh this morning, as follows:-

"June 16th 1914, No. 37:- I have the honour to inform you that your rush favour of the 11th instant reached me today at noon. I do not know where the letter has been kept so long a time.

"I am very sorry that when your rush letters are delayed for so long time, when what would be the cause with the others.

"Yesterday a letter to my address was unlawfully taken from Captain Yamamoto by one of your officers; which is quite unjust. If you do not wish any my private letters to come to me you can't keep them with you without any reason, but can return to the sender.

"The object of Gardner Johnson and you by detaining me as prisoners, by stopping my communications and friends and by not letting my legal advisor to see me, can never bring a successful result in returning my ship.

"We will not let hoist the anchor to remove the steamer until the decision of the Court. Your Board of Enquiry does nothing but play and delays the ship unlawfully.

"Your hearty object to injure us is quite wrong. We don't think your these hardships and troubles for us. Hardships but you will come to know by and by that these will turn to you and cause a heavy loss for your Department.

"Your such a cruel treatment towards us will flash in the world, when a book of those will be in the hands of the public.

"If you think my above statement untrue, it would be better that you would give me an opportunity to go in the Court to prove that your such behavior is quite harmful for Government and the subjects.

"Kindly forward my this request to Ottawa Government about this; if it is beyond of your power.

Sgd. DALGIT SINGH,
for Charterer s.s. Komogata Maru."

W.D.S. - 2.

to which I replied, as follows:-

"I have your favor of the 16th instant, No. 37, I presume that this date was in error and that the proper one should be 15th, as your letter was received by me in the morning of the 16th. You refer to my rush letter of the 11th instant having been delayed in transit. I cannot understand this as my officers assure me that immediately a letter is given to be handed out, same reaches you on the first visit of the launch to the vessel. I therefore cannot accept your statement.

"In regard to the letter Capt. Yamamoto had, perhaps you did not know that this letter was in a package with a great deal of literature in the Hindi language, of a seditious nature. You will recall your request of some days ago to watch out for literature of this nature, and the whole package was in virtue of your request, taken from Yamamoto. The letter, however, we have nothing to do with, and it has been sent through the post office and will reach you in due course, addressed to Gurdit Singh. It is not my intention to allow any literature of a provocative nature to be placed on the ship.

"Kindly do not refer again to my keeping you a prisoner. I am carrying out my duties and am responsible to the Department of the Interior.

"Major Gardner Johnson's actions are on behalf of the owners of the ship to whom he is responsible. If you have anything to say regarding his actions, kindly take it up direct. In so far as I am concerned, my duties under the Act are to carry it out to the letter, without any interference by you or anyone else.

"The Board of Inquiry has been hampered in its action by yourself and also by the dilatory methods employed by your counsel. Since you have now been placed in possession of a copy of the Act you are aware it is necessary for the Board to sit and decide on the merits of each individual case. I have no powers to vary the procedure, as your counsel can inform you.

"Kindly refrain from using any language such as you do in paragraph 7 of your letter on any future occasion; and, whatever the Department has to answer for is for the Department to deal with. In the meantime I am NOT looking to the public, to you, nor to anyone else either for plaudits or criticism. I have been forwarding copies of all letters sent me and replies, to Ottawa, and a copy of your No. 37 will also go forward. If you have any complaint to make as regards my conduct-in-office you have the privilege of appealing to the Superintendent of Immigration or to the Minister at Ottawa, and in so far as court procedure is concerned, your own counsel, Mr. J. E. Bird, can advise you fully. In the meantime I would have you understand however, that all the names of those who appear as passengers on the Komogata Maru will be brought before the Board of Inquiry as quick as possible; and, if instead of the actions of this Board being hampered by your own actions, those of your passengers, and counsel, assistance would be given the Board, the question of the right of those passengers as applicants for admission to Canada can be very quickly settled."

W.D.S. - 5.

I also transcribe below, a letter written by me today to Gurdit Singh with reference to the money qualifications, of immigrants, as required by the Act:-

"During the sitting of the Boards of Enquiry, in connection with Hindu applicants for admission to Canada arriving here on your steamer, I have found that when asked to produce for the inspection of the boards the sums of money they claim to be in possession of, they have hitherto failed to do so. In many instances they claim that their monies are on deposit with you and produce receipts to that effect. These receipts are not evidence before our board and it is incumbent upon the applicant to produce for our inspection the amount of money he claims to have.

"I therefore would request that you kindly hand over to each Hindu whatever sum he might have on deposit with you so that at the hour of 3 p.m. today when officers call to inspect the amounts of monies in the possession of each individual applicant, the same may be produced by him when asked to do so by our officer."

To this letter, Gurdit Singh replied:-

"Reference your rush favour, file No. 2592, of today, I have the honour to state that the passengers have deposited the monies with me, which I can't give unless go ashore.

"When I go ashore I will satisfy the authorities that they will do the works of farmers and there shall be no burden of them on the Government.

Sgd. Gurdit Singh,
Charterer s.s. Komogata Maru."

My reply to Gurdit Singh, I also beg to transcribe:-

"Your letter No. 40 of the 16th instant to hand. You have already been notified in regard to the matter mentioned therein. Mr. Hopkinson has explained to you the desire of the Board of Inquiry, and if you refuse to assist the Board in carrying out its duty, we would point out that such action is not only shortsighted but is hampering those persons whom you say you are desirous to help, i.e. the applicants for admission to Canada.

"Whether these men are farmers or not has no bearing on the case of this letter. With regard to your request for a copy of the Immigration Regulations, that is already supplied to you, and in connection with the purchase of provisions, this subject is becoming so tedious that a repetition of what the Department will do or what my staff will do, I refrain to make or comment upon. You know your duties under your Charter, and I have written and told you many times that I will assist you in carrying out your obligations to your passengers thereunder."

Your obedient servant,

Malcolm R. J. Reid

DOMINION IMMIGRATION AGENT & INSPECTOR.