

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

No. 57.

Shanghai, China.

April 21, 1914.

Subject: Movement Headed by a Wealthy Indian of Calcutta, Having for its Object the Establishment of a Steamship Line Between the Far East and British Columbia, for the Purpose of Carrying British Subjects, Who are Natives of India, into Canada.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

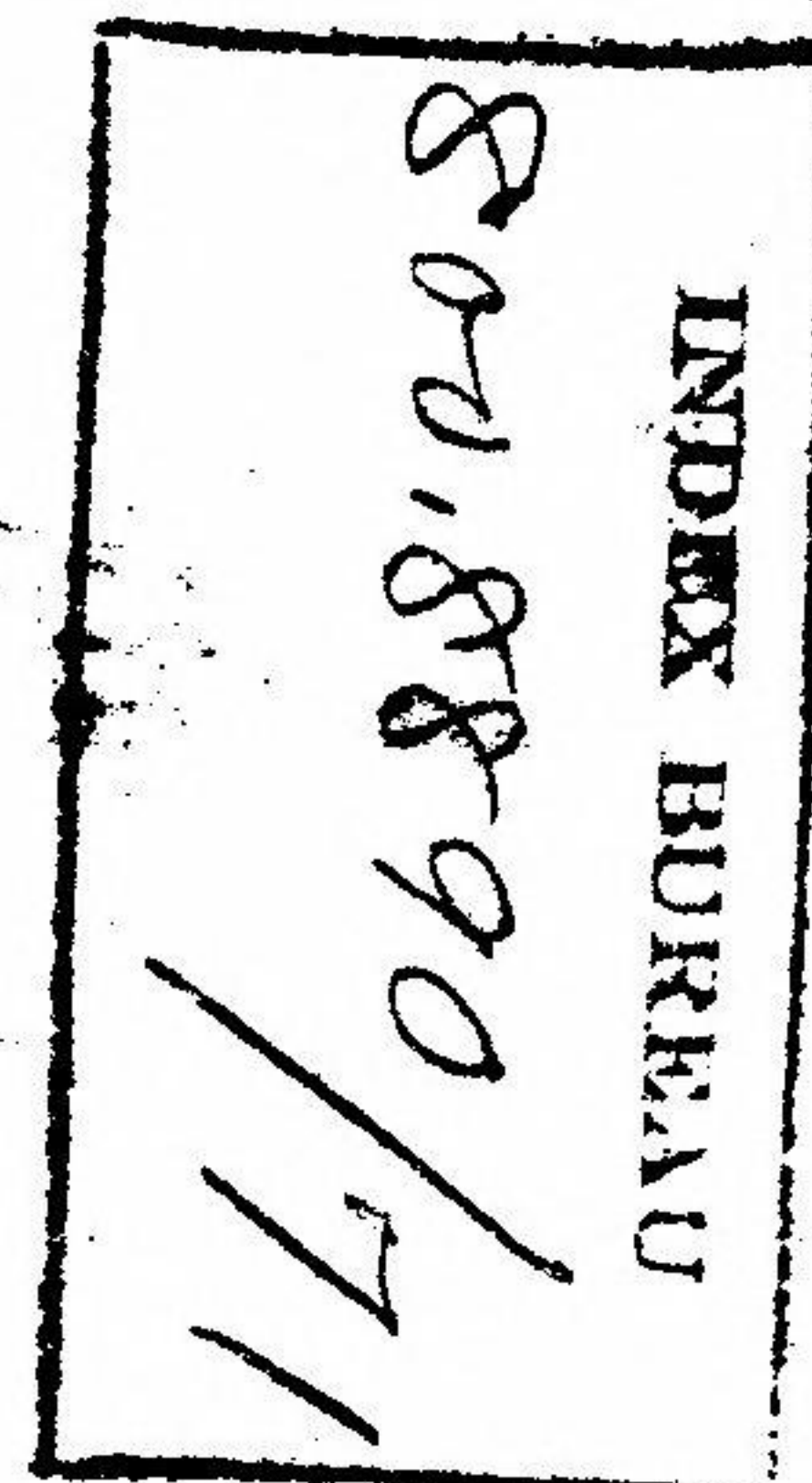
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that the Japanese steamer, KOMAGATA MARU, left Shanghai on the 15th instant, carrying approximately 350 British subjects, who were natives of India, with the intention of proceeding to Vancouver, British Columbia.

The charterer of this steamer is a wealthy Indian of Calcutta, by the name of Gurdit Singh, and he states that it is his intention to endeavor to establish a steamship line between the Far East and British Columbia for the purpose of engaging in freight carrying trade in general, but with the specific object of transporting large numbers of British subjects, who are natives of India, into the Canadian provinces.

The KOMAGATA MARU arrived here from Hongkong with 175 Indians aboard. Approximately another 175 were taken on



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on board at this port, and 50 additional Indians are to be picked up in Japan, the majority of them having proceeded there from Manila. The steamer may also take on a cargo of coal from Moji.

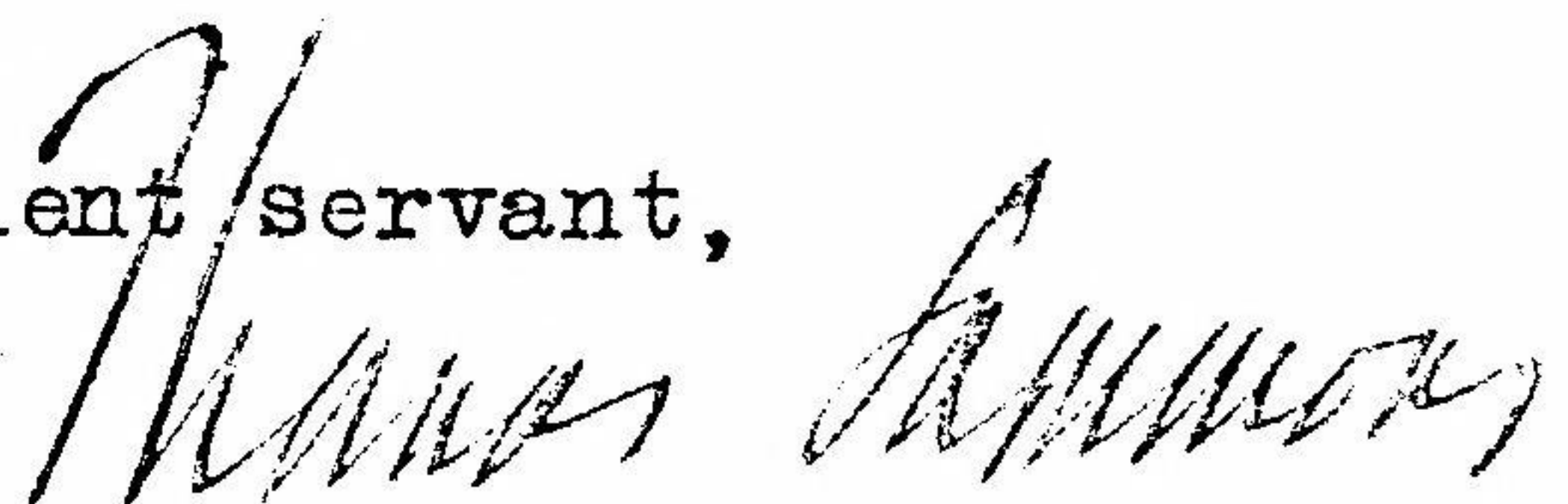
The wealthy Indian referred to has stated to newspaper reporters here that the present voyage of the KOMAGATA MARU will test the attitude of the Canadian authorities with reference to the landing of such a large number of Indians. Before the Steamer left Hongkong, the British Governor cabled the Governor-General of Canada regarding this matter and, in due course, I am informed, was instructed by the British Imperial Authorities in London to allow the KOMAGATA MARU to proceed.

The Charterer seems confident of his ability to land his passengers on the present trip, but is not so confident regarding the future. In any event, he seems determined to force the issue and cause the British authorities to agree upon some definite plan of procedure as regards the admission or exclusion of British subjects who are natives of India.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, there is, at present, no definite understanding regarding the possible forwarding of Indians shipped into British Columbia and Canada over the line into the United States.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,



American Consul-General.

Enclosure:

Copy of this despatch for reference to the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization.

Copy to Legation at Peking.

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June 3, 1914.

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to The Honorable the Secretary of Labor, and has the honor to transmit, for the information of the Bureau of Immigration, a copy of a despatch from the Consul General at Shanghai, China, reporting relative to the establishment of a steamship line between the Far East and British Columbia for the purpose of carrying natives of India into Canada.

Enclosure:

From Shanghai, No. 51, April 21, 1914.

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