

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION  
WASHINGTON

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BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION

JAN 22 1914

IN ANSWERING REFER TO  
No.

MEMORANDUM regarding Hindu migration to the United States.

The following <sup>tabulated</sup> statement is inserted at the outset to indicate the number of Hindus who have been admitted to, and excluded from, the United States, as well as the number who have been arrested after admission and deported, during the past fifteen years:

YEAR	ADMITTED	DEBARRED	RETURNED
1899	15	0	0
1900	9	0	0
1901	20	1	0
1902	84	0	0
1903	83	0 0	1
1904	258	7	2
1905	145	13	0
1906	271	24	2
1907	1072	417	0
1908	1710	438	9
1909	337	331	1
1910	1782	411	4
1911	517	862	36
1912	165	104	11
1913	188	236	32
	<u>6654</u>	<u>2844</u>	<u>98</u>

It should be stated in connection with the above, ~~statement~~, <sup>that the figures therein do not show the number of aliens of</sup>

~~however~~ that the figures therein do not show the number of aliens of the Hindu race who have been admitted from the Insular possessions of the United States, a very important item as will hereafter be shown. It will be noted that <sup>up to</sup> until the year 1904 the number of Hindus entering the United States was so small as to be hardly noticeable in comparison with the large number of aliens of other races who were being admitted.

See Serial 4  
entire subject



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In the year 1904, however, there was a decided increase in their migration. In that year the migratory movement of Hindus to the American Continent may be said to have definitely begun. ~~These~~

These aliens first came in large numbers to Canada, whence they later crossed into the United States, at first in small numbers but later in ~~quantities~~ large parties. Between the years 1904 and 1908 about five thousand Hindus were admitted to Canada, and during the fiscal year 1907-8, 1078 Hindus entered this country through the port of Vancouver, B. C., alone. Little ~~complaint~~ notice had been taken of the movement up to this time, but by the year 1908 the undesirable qualities of these people had become well known to Americans on the Pacific Coast, where the large majority of them settled, and considerable complaint was made about them. During the year 1908 a larger number of Hindus were excluded than in any previous year, the result largely of the agitation which had been made against them. In nearly, if not quite, all of the cases which came before the Bureau and Department on appeal reference was made to the feeling against this class of immigrant and their unfavorable reception. This attitude on the part of the people of the Pacific Coast States furnished practically the sole ~~reason~~ ground upon which the Department could exclude Hindus ~~under~~ <sup>Emergency</sup> the existing immigration laws which were felt to be inadequate to meet the ~~situation~~ <sup>Emergency</sup>, but the situation called for ~~prompt~~ <sup>and, in the Department's opinion, justified what might</sup> action ~~therefore~~ <sup>be regarded by some as a strained construction of the law.</sup>

Up to this time the Hindus had applied for admission principally at Canadian border ports, but during the years 1909 and 1910 the steamship companies began to bring them in large numbers directly from ~~Asia~~ <sup>Hong Kong</sup> to Pacific ports of entry. In April, 1910, the Commissioner of Immigration

perhaps be regarded by some as a strained application of the law



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at San Francisco reported that "the Hindus are coming here at the rate of 80 to 100 a week." During this and the succeeding year <sup>many</sup> large numbers of them were excluded as persons likely to become public charges because of the unfavorable attitude of the people of the Pacific Coast States, although, under the circumstances, the Department <sup>sometimes</sup> frequently felt, and expressed the opinion, that it was straining a fair construction of the existing immigration statute to do so.

During the year 1911, probably as the result of the stringency with which the law had been enforced toward aliens of this race arriving from foreign territory, the Hindus began to come in numbers from the Philippine Islands, to the mainland <sup>where</sup> to which they found access easy. ~~after a residence there of but a few months or possibly a year.~~ Their admission to the Islands, of course, was only a subterfuge to which they resorted in order to later gain admission to the mainland. At that time aliens arriving from the Philippine Islands were admitted without restriction to the mainland, their admissibility to the United States, mainland as well as insular, being regarded as having been determined once for all at the time of their admission to the Philippines. Realizing, however, that drastic action of some kind <sup>should be taken</sup> ~~would be necessary~~ to stem the tide of this undesirable immigration through this newly-found "back-door" entrance, the Department, in January, 1911, upon the arrival of a party of 19 Hindus from the Philippines, considered the advisability of arresting the men after admission and deporting them to India upon the ground that they were persons likely to become public charges. <sup>however,</sup> It was decided, that the admission of the aliens to the Philippines <sup>ought to be regarded as</sup> ~~was~~ conclusive, and that they <sup>should</sup> ~~were~~ not, therefore, subject to arrest and deportation upon arrival at the mainland <sup>ports</sup>.

By December, 1911, the arrival of these aliens in larger numbers



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from the Philippines gave rise to greater apprehension than had theretofore been felt. At this time the Bureau suggested that a rule regarding aliens coming to the mainland or Hawaii from the Philippines similar to that in force with regards to aliens coming to the mainland from Porto Rico or Hawaii be adopted, i.e., that such aliens should be required to present a certificate showing them to have been regularly examined and admitted at an insular port, with the expectation of securing through the War Department such an enforcement of the immigration laws as would cut off a large part of the Hindu immigration to ~~the Philippines~~ <sup>in the Philippines</sup> those Islands. Inasmuch, however, as the Department anticipated the early enactment of <sup>anti-Hindu</sup> legislation, it was deemed inadvisable at that time to alter the existing regulations.

In July, 1912, no ~~restrictive~~ restrictive legislation having been enacted, the Department reconsidered the matter and decided to extend the operation of its regulations so as to require from all aliens arriving at the mainland from the Philippines certificates showing their regular entry to the Philippines. This, although acknowledged to be merely an expedient, it was thought would materially reduce the migration of the Hindus from the Philippines. In March, 1913, however, the Commissioner of Immigration at Seattle, Wash., reported that "An officer of the Philippine Customs and Immigration Service who arrived on the Minnesota and is fully conversant with the facts, stated that when he left Manila there were six or seven thousand Hindus, the majority of whom had come from Singapore, in Manila and vicinity unemployed and apparently only awaiting an opportunity to take passage for the mainland. He stated that they gambled, peddled to some extent and visited fairs, giving conjuring exhibitions, while awaiting an opportunity to embark for Pacific Coast Ports." It was apparent from this information that the Hindus had become fully



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aware of the existence of this "back-door" entrance to the United States and were ready to take advantage of it. It was thereupon decided that an attempt should be made to arrest and deport such of them as, upon arrival at a mainland port, might be legally regarded as persons likely to become public charges. Warrants of arrest were accordingly issued for several ~~skins~~ Hindus, but upon more mature consideration they were canceled and steps taken to revise the Departmental regulations with respect to the effect which the admission of an alien to ~~an American possession~~ <sup>the Philippines</sup> would have upon his admissibility to the mainland, the Department being of the opinion that its existing regulations ~~practically~~ <sup>practically</sup> guaranteed the admission of any alien in possession of the required certificate showing regular admission to ~~an American possession~~ <sup>the Philippines</sup> and stood in the way of arrest proceedings contemplated. As a result this revision <sup>it is</sup> now provided that any alien who has been regularly admitted to the ~~insular possessions~~ <sup>Philippines</sup> <sup>of the</sup> will, upon presentation of the required certificate <sup>showing such admission</sup> ~~thereof~~, be admitted into continental United States upon proper identification and surrender of the certificate to any immigration officer at a designated continental port of entry, provided it is then shown that at the time of admission to the Philippines such alien was not a member of the excluded classes ~~or~~ <sup>or</sup> likely to become a public charge if he proceeded ~~thence~~ <sup>to</sup> the mainland. <sup>Under these revised regulations,</sup> ~~above referred to~~ 72 Hindus were arrested upon their arrival at Seattle in August last and were ordered deported. A writ of ~~habeas~~ <sup>Corpus</sup> was sued out, but upon hearing before the district judge the decision of the Department and its authority to deport the aliens under the procedure ~~to be~~ followed was upheld by the court. This case is now on appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. Shortly



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- afterward a number of Hindoos were arrested upon similar procedure at San Francisco, where a writ was likewise sued out, the cases taken to court and the action of the Department again upheld. It is understood <sup>that all</sup> these cases will also be appealed to the Supreme Court. <sup>in all</sup> of these cases, It should be mentioned, however, <sup>that in all these cases</sup> deportation must be effected, at the expense of the Government, including all of the expenses of the aliens while awaiting transshipment at Hong Kong where they must occasionally be held for a considerable time <sup>pending the</sup> sailing of a vessel to India. Needless to say, the expenses incident to this procedure are <sup>heavy</sup> and the a serious drain upon the appropriation available to the service.

The experiences of our neighboring state, Canada, in connection with these aliens are interesting and enlightening. As above stated, the movement of Hindoos to Canada began about the year 1904 and has continued rather steadily up to the present time. But <sup>the</sup> sentiment is strongly against the aliens, and it is reported that large numbers of unemployed them/are constantly to be found in Canada, particularly in the Province of British Columbia where the largest colony is established. <sup>There is the</sup> head tax

<sup>they were required to pay upon admission</sup> ~~upon these aliens~~ was raised to the sum of \$200. On December 8, 1913,

<sup>at one time</sup> the Privy Council passed a resolution prohibiting the admission of artisans and laborers, skilled or unskilled, from that date until the 31st day of March, 1914, it being conceded that, although the order on its face includes all nationalities, <sup>it</sup> is especially directed against Hindoos. The <sup>Sentiment</sup> in British Columbia against these aliens has been growing constantly since the establishment of the colony there, and they are their undesirability is conceded by all.

<sup>in an economic sense seems to be</sup>

Other similar cases are now pending before the Dist Ct at San Francisco, and it is reported may be decided in the same way.

Various English drinks have been resorted to by the Canadian authorities to discourage the coming of the Hindoos.

Again, an order was made that no alien who had not come over by direct passage from his native land should be admitted, thereby obliging to transship at Hong Kong. This order proved effective for a time but was afterwards nullified by the establishment of a steamship line from India to Canada.



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It should be stated here that the applications of these aliens for admission are not confined to the Pacific Coast ports of entry. During the past two years about 60% of the Hindus <sup>admitted in</sup> ~~who~~ arrived from foreign territory ~~and were admitted~~ came in through the port of New York, and on at least two occasions the Bureau's attention has been called to the fact that there are now ~~large~~ numbers of Hindus in Cuba and Panama - particularly in Panama - ready to invade the Southern States through the Gulf ports of entry should it appear at all likely that they could gain admission should they apply.

In 1909 a movement was started to encourage the migration of Hindus to Hawaii, but it proved unsuccessful for the reason that it was found the aliens would not remain in Hawaii after admission longer than to seize the first opportunity that offered to proceed to the mainland of the United States.

Although the Bureau has no authentic statistics upon the subject, it is understood and believed that the Hindus gravitate toward the State of California where the climate is more nearly that of their native land than in any other state of the Union <sup>which they have so far tried.</sup> They may be found there in larger numbers at the present time than in any other state. It should be remarked, however, that a similar warm climate may be found in all of the Gulf States and in ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> most Southern of the Western States and that these states are also subject to an influx of Hindus should the aliens at any time be successful in their attempts to enter the United States in large numbers.

Sentiment in this country, as well as in Canada, is very strong against these people. The feeling toward them is well described by the Commissioner of Immigration at Seattle in a letter dated July 12, 1910.



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He states: "It is a matter of common knowledge that Hindu labor in this part of the country is not in demand and when, by underbidding other laborers, they do succeed in securing employment, it often results in labor disturbances and the Hindus at once become, as a rule, helpless and public charges. These aliens are generally weak physically, decidedly clannish, and refuse to eat food prepared by others, underbid the ordinary laborer, and for these and other reasons the Hindu laborer is liable at any time to become a public charge." # Comments similar to these, but frequently expressed in more forcible terms, have been repeatedly received from the Pacific Coast Ports as well as from the press and through private sources, and labor organizations in many sections of the West, particularly in California, ~~where there are the most Hindus~~, have adopted resolutions denouncing the Hindus and demanding their exclusion. They are, by reason of their peculiar characteristics and customs, their clannishness and refusal to adopt Western dress and customs, not to mention their filthy and unsanitary habits of living, quite unassimilable in America and a constant source of disturbance.

*Impelled*

The above briefly recites the experience of the Bureau and the Department with the immigration of the Hindus, but it does not indicate the vast amount of trouble and concern the problem has occasioned or the difficulty experienced in dealing with it under the present inadequate provisions of law. Although, notwithstanding the inadequacy of the statute, the migration of these people directly from Asia and indirectly through the Philippines seems to have been checked, temporarily at least, the efficacy of the procedure adopted has yet to stand the test of the Supreme Court's scrutiny which, if unfavorable, may result in throwing wide the door for the entrance of the Hindus from the Philippines. Meantime the



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aliens may seek admission through ports of entry in jurisdictions where the courts are not in favor of a strict construction of the immigration laws and thereby gain admission by the use of the writ of habeas corpus. The present procedure is, moreover, cumbersome, <sup>uncertain,</sup> and tedious, and very expensive to the Government.