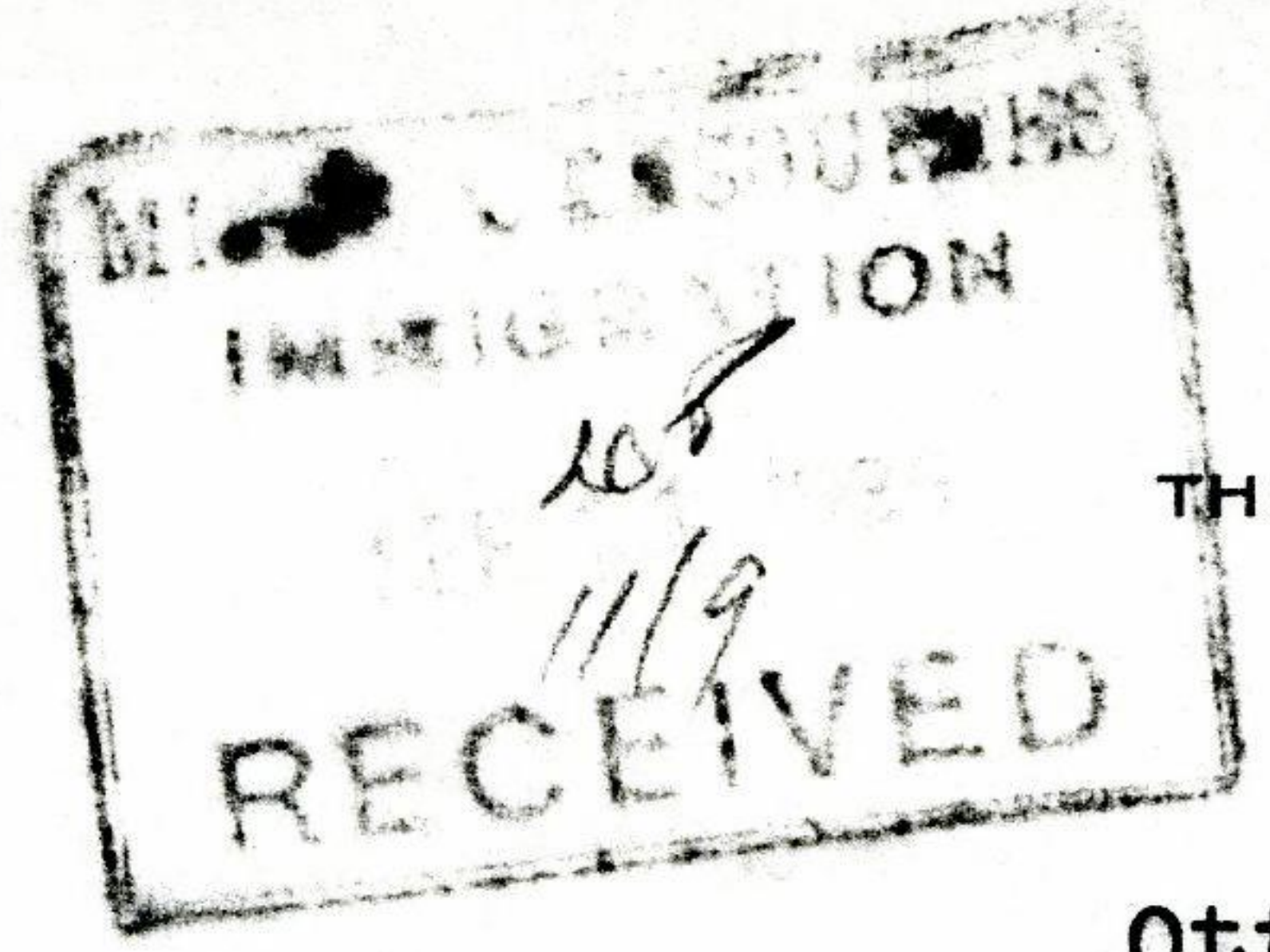


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OFFICE OF
THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
CANADA

Ottawa, September 9th, 1939.

Dear Mr. Blair,

I have had it on my mind for some weeks to inquire how matters stand in the discussions you have been having with Dr. Pandia and his colleagues regarding the deportation proceedings in process or contemplated against a number of East Indians resident in British Columbia. I have not, of course, your Department's familiarity with the case histories of the particular persons who would be affected by these deportation proceedings. I understand, however, that there are some twenty-five or thirty individuals involved who have, for the most part, lived in Canada for many years, and that, whatever the method of their original entry into this country may have been, they have conducted themselves here as respectable citizens who have broken no laws and are in no case public charges.

I need not remind you that the Komagata Maru incident coincided pretty closely with the outbreak of the last Great War, and that its repercussions in India proved to

F.C. Blair, Esq.,
Director of Immigration,
Ottawa.

be profound and disturbing. I think that, on grounds of general policy, we should do everything we can to prevent the recurrence of anything that might be remotely comparable to that unfortunate affair. I have been wondering, therefore, whether, having in mind the domestic situation in British Columbia, our general relations with the Government of India with whom we have been discussing the negotiation of a new trade agreement promising substantial advantages to Canadian exporters, and the paramount importance in the present situation of avoiding any initiative that strengthen the forces of disaffection in another part of the British Empire, it would not be possible to effect some settlement speedily of this deportation question. Tentatively I would suggest that an arrangement validating the entry into Canada of British subjects who have been resident here for at least five years, have no criminal records, and have not become public charges, might appeal to public opinion here and in India as a satisfactory liquidation of what may otherwise become a very difficult situation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. D. ...', written in a cursive style.