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COPY:

VICEROY INDIA TO GOVERNOR GENERAL, OTTAWA.

CABLE:

Calcutta,

PRIVATE:

January 25th, 1908.

In answer to your telegram of 13th January I have sent following for communication to you through the Colonial Office begins:

"Your telegram of 19th November. Proposed adoption of passport system to control emigration to Canada.

We recognize peculiar difficulties of Canadian Government and appreciate the conciliatory attitude with which it has approached this difficult question, but after very careful consideration regret we are unable to agree to any proposal for placing in India restrictions such as are suggested on emigration of free Indians or to suggest any further action on ~~one~~ part to check it.

Any such measure would be opposed to our accepted policy and is not permissible under Indian Emigration Act 21 of 1883 and any action in the direction of taking general powers of restriction by legislation will be the subject of severe criticism.

In present state of public feeling in India we consider that legislation of this kind particularly inadvisable.

We must leave it to Canadian Government to take such measures as may be necessary to restrain immigration into its territories.

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Should that Government think fit to legislate so as to require certain qualifications such as physical fitness to be determined by Medical examination on landing and possession of certain amount of money, we will make every endeavour to make such Legislation widely known but we trust that no express discrimination will be made against British Indians.

A letter also has been received from Governor General of Canada containing proposal for establishment of examining office in India for the purpose of prohibiting emigration of those who are physically unfit and are not properly equipped and financed.

Suggestion is open to same objection as passport system and accordingly we are unable to accept it.

We have taken steps to warn intending emigrants that their landing in Canada is likely to arouse strong popular feeling.

We have also given wide publicity to intimidation recently received from Canadian Government to the effect that Colonial Governments have ordered that during continuance of present conditions of the Canadian labour market immigrants will be prohibited from landing unless they come from country of birth or citizenship by continuous journey and on through tickets purchased before sailing.

Please communicate our answer to Canadian Government through the Colonial Office.

ends.

VICEROY.