

Braden Papers

p 17827

Ottawa, Ont. Aug 29<sup>th</sup>, 1914

61 My dear Rogers,

The enclosed letter from Mr. Burnell explains itself. Upon his return from Vancouver he informed me of the condition which confronted him in arriving at a settlement of this very troublesome affair. He was told by Commander Hore of the "Rainbow" that if it should prove necessary to use force at least one hundred men would have been killed. Under the circumstances Mr. Burnell seems to have made some arrangement for reimbursement of claim of local Hindus. I think the course was prudent. Will you kindly take up the matter with me.

Yours faithfully

Hon. Robert Rogers,

Minister of Public Works

Ottawa, Ont

p 17797

Confidential

~~the~~ Nanamata BC

July 28, 1914

Sir Robert Braden

Ottawa

62 My Dear Sir Robert,

- I have been trying to get a little rest, but have so many letters and telegrams to attend to, that it has been a difficult matter.

I gathered from the message, which the Duke sent that he had been following up the Vancouver affair closely and anxiously. I have written Farquhar to say that, if the Duke wants to get a clearer understanding of the whole situation, before he reaches Vancouver,



I will either run up to Banff, or meet his train somewhere along the line. I would like very much to give you a full account of the network of complications, that I found on ~~an~~ arrival. I fear there is no time now, and indeed would rather do it otherwise than by letter. It may seem that I went a little far in concessions, and indeed I fear that Stevens and the Immigration people may have felt, that I was advising giving way unnecessarily, and that to some extent, ~~as~~ that it was a game of bluff on the part of the Hindus. I was, however, so profoundly convinced of the tremendous gravity of using force, that I felt that you would wish me to go very far before running that risk.

In a confidential talk with Commander Hore, he frankly stated to me, that if he had to board the vessel and forcibly take control, he would not be surprised if one hundred lives were lost. And in addition to the Hindus, there would have been Japanese sailors killed, the complications would have been endless.

Facing this possibility, I felt that you would justify me in not quibbling at a few thousand dollars worth of provisions more or less, or in writing the enclosed letter, which indeed was the turning point in securing peaceable control of the ship. You will notice that I have not given any definite pledge of meeting these claims, but I fancy McNeil had to go rather farther than this verbally. I gathered that the crews of those in charge when I got there were not specially sympathetic towards payment of any such claims; but again I say that a point might well be ~~well~~ sketched and deserving honor as claim be well considered, rather than have run the appalling risk of converting the Komagata Maru into a shambles.



Bunell to Borden July 25, 1914 (Cont. 1)

Confidentially, I think that Inspector Reid was inclined to be dissatisfied with the idea of an outside man coming in to judicate on matters, which he would perhaps consider himself competent to deal with. But under the ~~car~~ circumstances it seemed to me imperative to have a man from the outside. It strikes me that some man having experience with Oriental matters might be advisable, but you may perhaps be able to think of someone, who would be acceptable in every sense of the word.

The Mr. St. George, who wrote you from Victoria, and whom you referred to me called on me sometime ago in Ottawa. He had been a Commissioner, a judge in India and was recently pensioned. I am trying to find out something more about him, and I presume, if he was a possibility, it would not be difficult to get from the India Office, an opinion of his ability.

I am going through the lower part of my constituency during the next few days. I shall be at Kamloops August the first, Vancouver, August 8 [cont. read] I presume the Emigration Department will keep you advised as to what has transpired since I left, and ~~whatever~~ whenever necessary I will write you further. I fear that this has been a source of great anxiety and worry to you, and I sincerely trust, that you are keeping well, and enabled to get a least a little rest. This whole matter brings right to the foreground the great question, Naval defense on the Coast and Oriental Immigration generally with very best wishes, believe me

Yours sincerely

M. B. Bunell