

Vancouver, B.C., July 25, 1914

Sir:

I beg to acknowledge your wire of the 24th instant reading:

"Commissioner Clark pressing for immediate decision three Hindus detained Sumas".

and to confirm my reply by night lettergram:

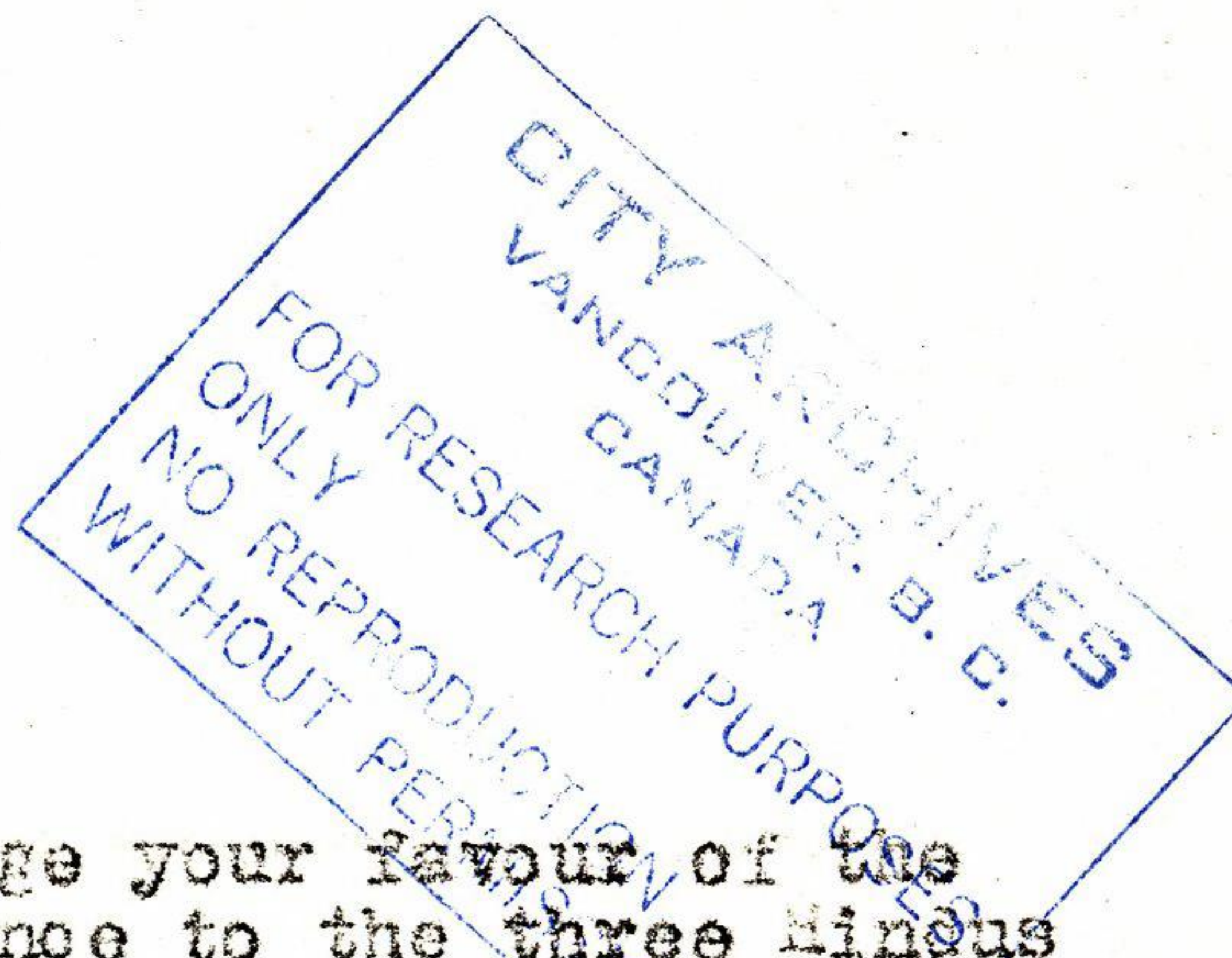
"Have just returned from Sumas. Will mail you full account re three Hindus detained there tomorrow. At least in one case, Harnam Singh, he was once deported from Canada and is not eligible to return. He has also been refused admittance into the United States owing to trachoma. Maiwa Singh charged carrying concealed weapons and smuggling at Abbotsford. Extremely anxious that he be prosecuted vigorously as cross examination may disclose whole plot in which these Hindus concerned. Please arrange with Customs that this charge be proceeded with and that our counsel prosecute. Clear evidence obtained today Sumas of purchase arms and ammunition there and arrangements attempted be perfected to deliver further supply."

I further now beg to transcribe communication received from John L. Zurbrick, United States Immigration Inspector in Charge:

"Referring to the case of the three Hindus detained at Sumas, Wash., by reason of their being refused admission to Canada by your office, I have to advise that the writer went to Sumas and made an investigation relative to the circumstances leading up to their detention by our officers subsequent to their being refused admission to Canada, and find that these three applicants, as you are aware, were residents of British Columbia, and went to Sumas for a temporary purpose and were not admitted but during their entire stay in Sumas were under the custody of our officers, although they were allowed to stay at a hotel.

The status of these three Hindus is the same as that of a large number of other aliens who apply for admission and are not admitted but held in the custody of our officers pending their return to Canada, and a request is made for your authority granting their return to Canada, as at the time they were detained some of your officers at Sumas had knowledge of the fact of their detention by our officers, and consequently it is the opinion of this office that they should be returned to Canada."

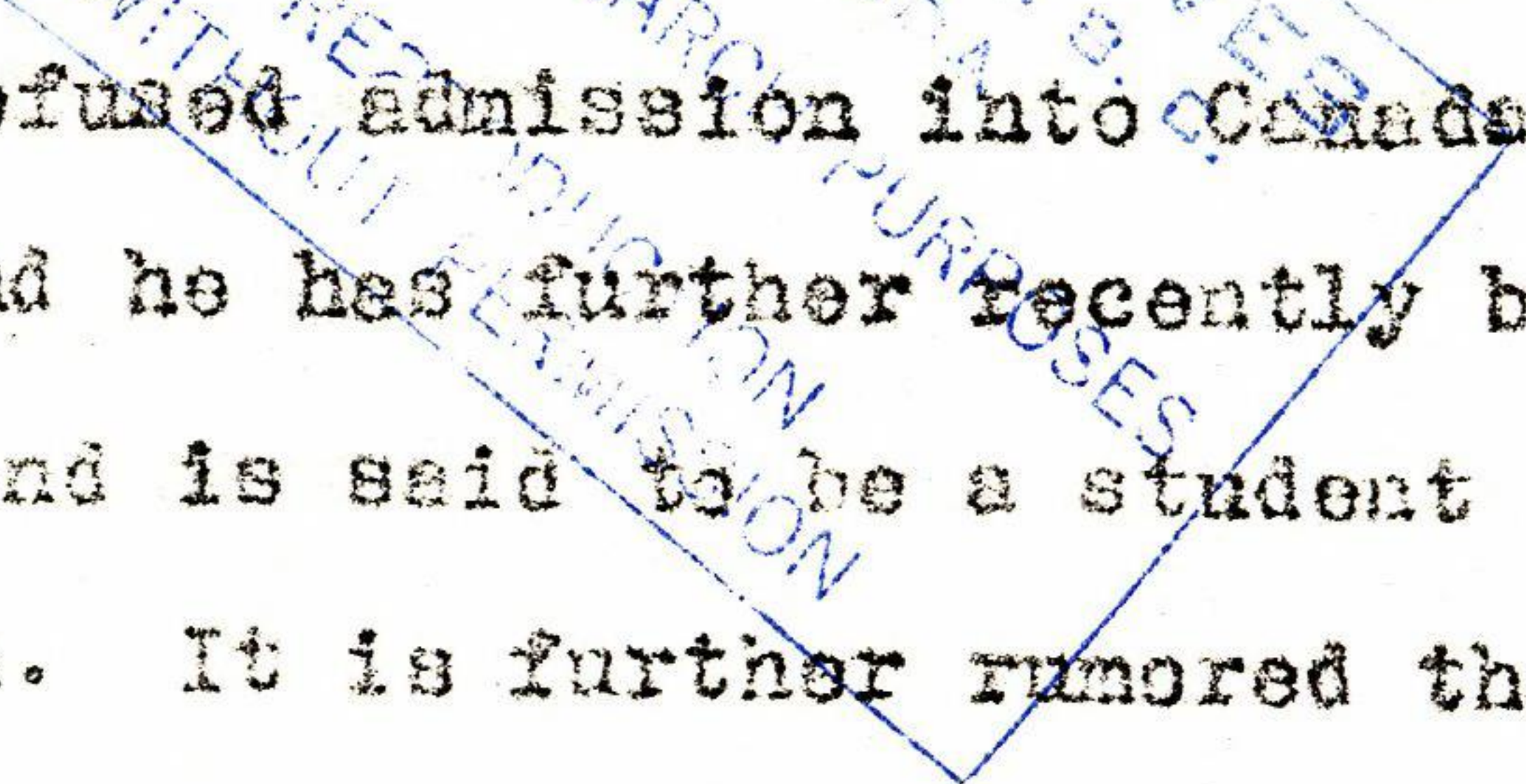
and my reply thereto:



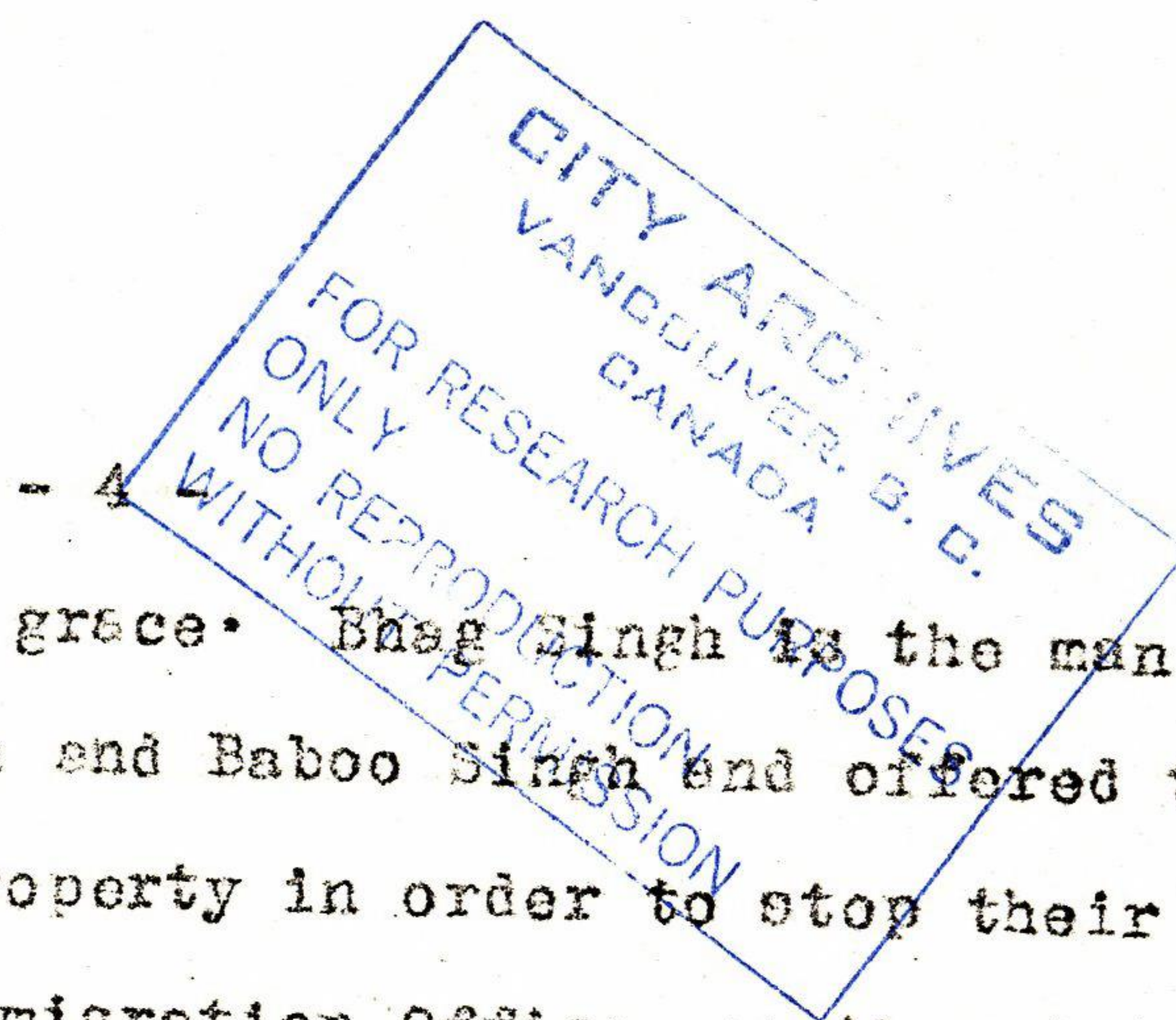
"I beg to acknowledge your favour of the 21st instant with reference to the three Hindus Bhag Singh, Balwant Singh and Harnam Singh. The matter is now in the hands of the Department at Ottawa, and I will forward a report on this case by this morning's mail."

Start here

My visit to Sumas yesterday disclosed the following facts. Accompanied by W.H.D. Ladner and Mr. Hopkinson, I went down to Sumas for the purpose if possible of conducting the prosecution of Mawya Singh; as the Provincial Police had informed us that we were to carry out this prosecution and that the date had been set approximately for Friday. On arrival there we interviewed the Magistrate and found arrangements had been made to prosecute this morning at noon, and the man had been taken to New Westminster jail. I then crossed the boundary line to Sumas and visited the Rees-Thomas store in company with A. F. Skinner, Inspector in Charge. Mr. D. C. Swartwood stated as follows: - Three or four Hindus had visited the store about 8:30 in the morning of the 17th of July. They inspected revolvers and bought 4 in all - 2 Savage automatics, 1 Hopkins & Allen automatic, and 1 ordinary 32, with shells for each. The Savage guns were of 32 caliber, the Hopkins & Allen .25, and the cheap revolver .32. It appears they next visited another hardware store nearer the international boundary, and endeavoured to buy from P. I. Whitman 12 automatic revolvers. Mr. Whitman states that they were in his store on two occasions, but no definite bargain was made. Apparently before they could act Mawya Singh had been sent across the border and apprehended. Mr. Whitman further stated that three were turbaned Hindus and one was in European clothes, the latter we are satisfied being Taraknath Das.


This man was recently refused admission into Canada at White Rock. I understand he has further recently become a naturalized American and is said to be a student at the University of Washington. It is further rumored that he was for some time in the employ of the United States Government.

After securing this information we again interviewed Magistrate Yarwood and the Provincial constable. Mawya Singh had a revolver concealed on his person and it was with great difficulty that it was found. Three boxes of ammunition to fit the other guns were found down each sock. The charge of carrying a concealed weapon would apparently be proved - in fact Barrister Carter who visited Sumas, intimated to Magistrate Yarwood that such would be the case, but the charge we wish to lay - hence my night lettergram - is that of being in possession of fire-arms when carrying goods on which duty has not been paid, that is, evading the Customs and carrying a gun to do so. Our proof is the fact that he had ammunition for the other guns. Should we be successful in obtaining a conviction the penalty is ten years imprisonment, whereas for carrying a concealed weapon the maximum fine is \$50.00, or in default, three months' imprisonment. I enclose herewith a copy of communication addressed to Balwant Singh (who is now held at Sumas) in which you will notice reference is made to the fact that if the Hindus on the Komagata Maru had "had that thing it would have been great." I need not dwell upon the disastrous results should these men have been successful in equipping the Hindus on the Komagata Maru with such offensive weapons. If you remember, Bhag Singh and Balwant Singh had their wives and children



admitted as an act of grace. Bhag Singh is the man who approached Belah Singh and Baboo Singh and offered them a bribe of money or property in order to stop their connection with the Immigration Office, as they intended to kill Mr. Reid and Mr. Hopkinson. I refer you to a verbatim report which has already been sent you, of this.

In the case of Harnam Singh, I would refer you to your File No. 818294. I would further call your attention to the fact that the following wire was received addressed to myself and to His Imperial Majesty's Consul, from Bhag Singh:

"I Bhag Singh one of the charterers of Komagata Maru now detained at U. S. Immigration station at Sumas Washington beg your good services to inform Captain Yamamoto and Dominion Immigration authorities that I have not consented that Komagata Maru shall sail unless our demand of thirty-five thousand dollars for fares of passengers and other demands are met by the Dominion Government. I have not given my power of attorney to anybody and Dominion Government authorities and Captain Yamamoto should communicate with me directly to take my approval or disapproval. Wire assurance collect."

Having all these facts before me I have informed Mr. Zurbriek that I will not take the responsibility of admitting these men into Canada without your consent. In the case of Harnam Singh, the United States authorities should deport him, as he is not lawfully in Canada in any case. I further think stronger supervision should be exercised over the Board appoints with reference to Hindus, and no Hindu be permitted to go into the United States without first registering out, at this office. I should be pleased to receive your instructions so that I may notify the Board appoints accordingly. Would you kindly also hurry the necessary registration forms, which

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have not yet come to hand. I understand you are having these printed in London.

I am

Your obedient servant,

Malcolm. R. J. Reid

DOMINION IMMIGRATION AGENT AND INSPECTOR.

M. D. Scott, Esq.,

Superintendent of Immigration,

Ottawa.

Enclosure.

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