

Copy.

(A 5008/165/51).  
P. & J. (S) 2151/40.

5  
India Office,  
Whitehall,  
S.W.1.  
5th December, 1940.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the letter from this Department of the 6th January, 1933 P & J. (S) 1395/32 and connected correspondence relating to the "Hindustan Ghadr", the organ of the Ghadr party, published in San Francisco and to state, for the information of Viscount Halifax, that Mr. Amery's attention has been drawn to the objectionable character of recent issues of this paper. Copies of summarised translations of the issues for May, June and September, 1940, are enclosed.

2. I am to refer to the following items in the May issue:-

Comment on the Indian Mutiny. p.1.

Eulogy of Udham Singh Azad. p.2.

Eulogy of Madan Lal Dhingra

and reproduction of the  
latter's statement. p.2.

Reference to the murderer of  
Bhag Singh in Canada. p.3.

and in the June issue:-

Reference to Udham Singh Azad. p.2.

Approval of the murder of  
Karn Singh in India. p.4.

As regards the September issue, apart from a number of anti-British and defeatist

articles, /

The Under Secretary of State,  
Foreign Office,  
S.W.1.

6

articles, it will be seen that it contains eulogistic references to Udham Singh, the murderer of Sir Michael O'Dwyer at Caxton Hall (items 1, 20 and 21), approval of the murder of a police officer in the Punjab (item 11) and alleged indiscipline in the Indian Army which Ghadr propaganda is claimed to have fostered (item 4). It will also be seen that it contains criticism of recent and prospective legislation affecting foreigners in the United States (item 9.).

3. The claim of the Hindustan Ghadr to have fostered Sikh discipline in the Indian Army can be substantiated by both direct and indirect evidence. In the former category may be placed the 'Open Letter to the Troops' which appeared in the issue of the paper for February 1940 and of which a translation is attached. It was a direct appeal to Indian soldiers to commit acts of insubordination and mutiny. Such acts have indeed been committed, the most serious being the refusal of a Sikh mechanised squadron to embark on active service. This and other acts of insubordination have all been traced back to one focal point, namely the military station of Meerut in the United Provinces, where the Kirti Lehr, assisted by funds remitted from Ghadr supporters in North and South America (mainly California), carried on the most intense anti-British propaganda and directed special attention to the seduction of Indian troops. The Communist group which was responsible for this subversive activity consisted almost entirely of Sikhs financed by the Ghadr Party. Its leading spirit, Harmandar Singh Sodhi, was in fact at one time actually Manager of the Hindustan Ghadr in San Francisco and a frequent contributor to that paper. The Immigration Authorities in California instituted deportation proceedings against him but allowed him to leave the country voluntarily in 1934, whereupon he proceeded to Russia to undergo a course of training in Communism before finally making his way back to India for practical work. It is clear from the above brief narration of facts, as well as from advices which are being received from India, that the Ghadr Party and its

indirect  
newspaper/

7

newspaper has made considerable efforts to undermine the loyalty of Sikh troops and thus hamper India's war effort. These efforts have met with sufficient success to call for stringent measures on the part of Government for the protection of innocent soldiers against such perverse influences.

4. Mr. Amery considers it desirable that such restrictive steps as may be feasible should be taken against this paper, and he would suggest for the consideration of Viscount Halifax that copies of these summaries might be communicated to His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington with a view to the matter being brought to the notice of the United States Government, should a suitable opportunity arise. It might be possible for His Majesty's Ambassador to induce the State Department to suppress this paper altogether, or if an approach on these lines is not considered practicable at least to deny the Hindustan Ghadr and other Ghadr Party propaganda the cheaper postal rates usually accorded to newspapers in the United States, a step which, it is understood was taken by the United States authorities during the Great War of 1914-18 with considerable effect.

5. A copy of a letter which has been addressed to the Dominions Office is also enclosed.

I am, etc.,  
(Sgd.) Silver.