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SELECTED RECORDS RELATING TO THE INDIAN (HINDU)  
INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT IN THE  
UNITED STATES, 1908-1933

Introduction

On the two rolls of this microfilm publication, M1868, are reproduced selected records relating to activities of the Indian (Hindu) independence movement in the United States, 1908-33. These records are part of the General Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group (RG) 60; the Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, RG 85; and the Records of U.S. Attorneys and Marshals, RG 118

Background

During World War I, Hindu nationalists took advantage of Great Britain's preoccupation with the European war by attempting to foment revolution in India to overthrow British rule. Their activities were aided politically and financially by the German Government. Hindu nationalists in the United States were active in the independence movement effort through fundraising, arms buying, and propagandizing through the *Hindustan Ghadar* newspaper published in San Francisco.

Records Description

The Department of Justice and U.S. Attorney records reproduced herein primarily concern the U.S. Government's prosecution of these nationalists in the "Hindu Conspiracy Case" for violations of the Espionage Act (40 Stat. 217-231) arising from two major incidents.

In the first incident, the German Government provided funds with which the nationalists purchased arms for shipment to Indian rebels. The arms were shipped from San Francisco, California, on the *Annie Larsen*, which then sailed to Mexico where the arms were transferred to the *Maverick*, which then sailed to the East Indies. The British Government arrested some of the *Maverick's* personnel in Singapore.

In the second incident, several Indians (some of whom were U.S. citizens) and others were arrested for attempted fraud involved in soliciting funds for, and calling themselves representatives of, the "Nationalists Government" of India.

In the spring of 1918, the "Hindu Conspiracy Case" trial (as it was called in the press and Department of Justice correspondence) was held in San Francisco, at which 29 people were convicted in indictments arising from the arms shipment. Indictments arising from the fraud case were dismissed.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service records reproduced herein relate to efforts to revoke the citizenship of certain Indians naturalized as U.S. citizens, as well as to general efforts to exclude Indians from admission to the United States and Canada.

These records were microfilmed in 1960 for reference purposes. In 2000, the microfilm was assigned the number M1868 in order to issue it as an official National Archives microfilm publication, at which time new introductory materials were microfilmed and spliced on. Over time, the original negative reference microfilm became scratched; these may be evident in copies made from it. Some of the original documents were negative photostats (white printing on black background), which may not reproduce well on positive microfilm.

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| <u>Roll</u> | <u>Description</u>   |
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| 1           | RG 60, General Records of the Department of Justice <sup>1</sup><br><br><u>Classified Subject Files, 1914-41</u> <sup>2</sup><br>File No. 9-10-3, Sections 1-11, relating to violations of U.S. neutrality by Indian nationalists, 1915-23. 2,196 pages.   |
| 2           | <u>Straight numerical Files, 1904-37</u> <sup>3</sup><br>1. File No. 193424, Sections 1 and 2, relating to regulation of the Indian Nationalist Party, 1918029. 218 pages.<br>2. File No. 203000. 9 pages.<br>3. File No. 218835. 11 pages.<br>4. File No. 225815. 5 pages.<br>5. File No. 232390. 12 pages.<br>6. File No. 232899. 2 pages.<br><br><u>Classified Subject Files, 1914-41</u><br>1. File No. 95-1483. 10 pages. |

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<sup>1</sup> These records are described in Marion Johnson, comp., *Preliminary Inventory of the General Records of the Department of Justice*, Preliminary Inventory (PI) No. 194 (Washington, DC: National Archives, 1981).

<sup>2</sup> PI 194, Entry 114. These files are arranged by a subject-numeric system that uses a numerical file designation made up of various parts separated by dashes. The primary class number, which is the first part of the file designation, usually represents a Federal law or an administrative or other subject. Primary class 9 indicates "European War Matters"; 38 indicates "Naturalization"; and 95 indicates "Miscellaneous Criminal Cases."

<sup>3</sup> PI 194, Entry 112.

2. File No. 9-12-264. 3 pages.
3. File No. 9-19-0, Section 1. 11 pages.
4. File No. 38-524. 55 pages.
5. File No. 38-525. 6 pages.
6. File No. 38-927. 60 pages.

RG 85, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service:

Central Office Subject Correspondence, 1906-32

1. File Nos. 52903/110, 52901/110A, 52901/110B, 52901/110C, and 52903/110D, relating to Hindu immigration, 1910-14. 226 pages.
2. File Nos. 53854/133, 53854/133A, and 53854/133B, relating to the Hindu situation, 1913-26. 271 pages.

RG 118, Records of U.S. Attorneys and Marshals:

U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of California, Neutrality Case Files, 1913-20.<sup>4</sup> 762 pages.

1. General Correspondence (selected records)
2. U.S. v. *Bopp, Ram Chandra, et al.*

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<sup>4</sup> Marion Johnson, comp., "Preliminary Inventory of the Records of United States Attorney and Marshals," unpublished preliminary inventory NC-51 (Washington, DC: National Archives, March 1964), Entry 26.