

Memorandum presented by the Indian Workers Association Great Britain to Mr. T.T. Krishnamachari, India's Finance Minister, and Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, on their Visit to London during the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference.

London,
11th July, 1964.

Dear Mr. Krishnamachari and Mrs. Indira Gandhi,

We welcome you on your visit to London. Whenever our beloved late Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, visited London, he always received our delegation. Shri Nehru's death is an immense loss to the Indian Community in Great Britain. Whereas he took a very keen and personal interest in solving our crucial and pressing problems, he always had frank and heart to heart talks with us. Shri Nehru was an inspiration to us and we will always remember our meetings with him.

1. INDIAN WELFARE CENTRE. This is not the first time that we are requesting for the establishment of Welfare Centre. We had discussed this question with Shri Jawaharlal Nehru 1960 but it was our last meeting with Shri Nehru on 18th September 1962 when the details of the Centre were finalised. Shri Nehru said at this meeting that he was already briefed about this plan by Mr. T.N. Kaul, the then Acting High Commissioner in London, and that he was very much impressed about the desirability of the Welfare Centre. Shri Nehru then declared that he would like to see this centre accomplished as soon as possible. However, this could not materialise because of the national emergency in India. At the Nehru Memorial Public Meeting in St. Pancras Town Hall, the mayor of the said borough declared that they will help to find a suitable site for the Nehru Memorial. We are now of the opinion that both these plans, the Indian Welfare Centre and the Nehru Memorial, should be linked together and the Welfare Centre should be made a befitting memorial to Nehru and the name should be given Nehru Memorial Centre.

2. INDIAN FILMS. The other plan that we had discussed with Shri Jawaharlal Nehru at our last meeting was that of the exhibition of Indian Films in Great Britain. Shri Nehru had asked Mr. M.C. Chagla, the Indian High Commissioner, who was also present at the meeting, to give full co-operation to bring all the films under one banner and to see that Funds derived from the showing of the films are used for the uplift of the Indian community.

There are more than 100 Films shown every week throughout Great Britain. With the exception of a very few, all others are shown by a number of racketeers under the guise of film or cultural societies. Nearly £250,000 which is derived through these Indian film shows, goes in the pockets of a number of individuals. Indian film producers are also not blameless; because they encourage such rackets by making deals with such people. Indian Government does not benefit adequately from the export of Indian films because major part of the sterling is received in England through devious means. In England they do not pay entertainment duty or any tax by declaring that films are shown on non-commercial basis, when in practice it is quite the opposite. We want a body, fully representative of the Indian Community in Great Britain, set up under the guidance of the Indian High Commissioner, to undertake the exhibition of these films, and to use the funds on education and well-being of the Indian community in Great Britain.

3. Now, we wish to express our concern and anxiety about some of the emergent problems in India. Despite that we live many thousand miles away from the mother-land, we cannot remain indifferent about its problems.

(a) SOCIALISM: We are proud that India is dedicated to establish a Socialist system. But we are sorry to say that the progress has been very slow in this respect. Main hurdle seems to be not only some reactionary and communal forces outside but there are also some elements within the Congress who are furiously opposed to Socialism. It is our fervent belief that Socialism is not only the best but the only solution for India to rid itself of poverty, disease, hunger and illiteracy.

(b) COMMUNALISM v. SECULARISM: Communalism is the worst enemy of Secularism. Indian Constitution provides for religious freedom, free speech and equal opportunities. This is meant for religious harmony. But the past era of 17 years shows that the reactionaries and communalists have always twisted and exploited it for their narrow and selfish motives, upset the religious harmony, developed communal riots and incited hatred against one another. This in variance with

the Socialist system and a flagrant violation of the Constitution of India. We request the Indian Government to bar such activities and to make unlawful to form or to function any party on communal bases. Immediate steps should be taken and all such parties should be deprived from taking part in elections. If necessary the Constitution should be suitably amended.

(c) POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT AND INDEPENDENCE. We express our full support for the policy of non-alignment based on the five noble principles of peace. We are also glad that India is espousing the cause of freedom and independence for the suppressed colonial territories such as South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and British Guiana, etc.

(d) BORDER DISPUTE WITH CHINA. Although the conflict between the two major countries is now averted and tension has somewhat receded, but the problem of solving the border dispute still exists. Shri Nehru had said that it is futile to think either for China to defeat India or for India to defeat China, and he had rightly prophesied that the ultimate solution of this problem can only be found through peaceful means acceptable to both sides. While we fully appreciate and support the desire to find a peaceful solution, we request both the Governments to leave no stone unturned in finding an amicable and peaceful solution of this problem.

(e) CORRUPTION: The problem of corruption is old but it is becoming, day by day, more acute, protubing throughout India. Recently the Dass Commission set up by the Central Government to enquire into charges of misuse of Government power and corruption against S. Partap Singh Kairon, Chief Minister of Punjab, has published its report. The Dass Commission report has given its verdict against S. Partap Singh Kairon in most unequivocal terms. While we fully appreciate the prompt action taken by the Central Government and the Congress High Command to relieve S. Partap Singh Kairon from Chief Ministry, we further request that on the basis of the Dass Commission's findings legal proceedings shall be instituted against S. Partap Singh Kairon and his associates condemned in the report. We also request that ill gotten wealth and properties should be taken into Government custody and S. Partap Singh Kairon should be expelled from the primary membership of the Congress for life.

Finally, Sir, we like to express our heartfelt gratitude to you for affording us an opportunity to meet you and to redress our grievances. Through you, we also want to send our best wishes and warm greetings to the people of India.

Yours most sincerely,

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INDIAN WORKERS ASSOCIATION GREAT BRITAIN.