

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

6 February 1984

BF | Thank you for your letter of 3 February about the Indian request for advice on plans for the removal of dissident Sikhs from the Golden Temple. The Prime Minister is content that the Foreign Secretary should proceed as he proposes. She will look forward to receiving a report on the adviser's visit and notes that the Home Secretary would be informed if the Indians seemed likely to proceed with their plan.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

F. E. R. BUTLER

Brian Fall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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NBPM

Pl. file



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

23 February 1984

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Dear Mr Taylor

Sikh Community

The Home Secretary will have seen press reports of communal violence in the Punjab. The Foreign Secretary wishes him to be made aware of some background which could increase the possibility of repercussions among the Sikh communities in this country.

The Indian authorities recently sought British advice over a plan to remove Sikh extremists from the Golden Temple in Amritsar. The Foreign Secretary decided to respond favourably to the Indian request and, with the Prime Minister's agreement, an SAD officer has visited India and drawn up a plan which has been approved by Mrs Gandhi. The Foreign Secretary believes that the Indian Government may put the plan into operation shortly.

An operation by the Indian authorities at the Golden Temple could, in the first instance, exacerbate the communal violence in the Punjab. It might also, therefore, increase tension in the Indian community here, particularly if knowledge of the SAS involvement were to become public. We have impressed upon the Indians the need for security; and knowledge of the SAS officer's visit and of his plan has been tightly held both in India and in London. The Foreign Secretary would be grateful if the contents of this letter could be very strictly limited to those who need to consider the possible domestic implications.

I am copying this letter to Robin Butler (No 10), Richard Mottram (MOD) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Handwritten signature

(B J P Fall)
Private Secretary

Hugh Taylor Esq
Private Secretary to the Home Secretary
HOME OFFICE

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