



From the Secretary of State

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Tim Jankester Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
London, SW1

Dear Tim

INDIA: FOLKLORIC TEXTILES

We spoke on the telephone this morning about the continued retention of a number of consignments of textiles from India which are claimed to be "folkloric".

The present incident has to be set against total imports last year of £3½ million worth of goods which are claimed as "folkloric". The value of the items now detained is about £75,000. At meetings with representatives of the Indian High Commission it has been accepted that about £10,000 worth are clearly not covered by the "folkloric" exemption from quotas. There is no written confirmation of this, but I do not expect that the Indians could go back on what they have said in meetings with representatives of this Department and Customs and Excise.

I must stress that it would be quite unprecedented for Ministers to seek to intervene with Customs and Excise in their application of the law to individual cases.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Hampson

S HAMPSON
Private Secretary

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Prime Minister

The value of garments on which there is disagreement amounts to a mere £65,000.

It seems extraordinary that we cannot make some gesture in India's direction. But I am told that Mr Britten regards

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this as an important matter of principle - because of the textile lobby. I suggest you have a v. brief word with him in the margin of Cabinet/E tomorrow.

Folkloric 1978 17,000
1979 207,000
1980 883,000

(Customs think that £1 m worth out of £3½ m in 1980 was not folkloric (only £75,000 held) (20,000 pieces currently held → value £75,000))