

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



Prime Minister

CDP  
10/1

HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE  
LONDON SW1H 9AT

10 January 1985

Dear Peter,

The Foreign Secretary will be aware of the proposal by members of the Sikh Community to march in London on 13 January. As my colleagues here passed on to SAD yesterday, the police have now informed us that the organisers have decided to postpone this event. Following a discussion between the police and the organisers yesterday afternoon we understand that the Sikhs are now proposing to hold the demonstration on 20 January.

A march of this nature is liable to give rise to concern both here and in Delhi. I understand that FCO officials will be meeting the new High Commissioner today when this matter may be raised in discussion. In view of the likelihood that the police will find no reason within the Public Order Act to apply to ban, it may be helpful to record what we know of it, in the hope that the High Commissioner will understand that there is, at present anyway, no evidence that Dr Chauhan is behind the march or that it need be regarded as offensive to the Indian Government.

The purpose of the march is to protest about the actions of the British and Philippine Governments in deporting Jasvir Singh, now in prison in India. The demonstrators intend to assemble in Hyde Park and then march to Trafalgar Square for a short rally. A small number of demonstrators will travel to the Philippine Embassy by coach to hand in a petition. Police believe that the numbers taking part in the demonstration are likely to be less than 5,000.

The police tell us that the demonstration is being organised by members of the Supreme Council of Sikhs and the Sikh Youth Movement. There appears to have been no involvement so far by Khalistan House who are engaged in a power struggle with the Supreme Council for the support of the Sikh Youth Movement and who are therefore believed to have little incentive to lend support to this event. We understand from the police that unlike other Sikh marches this one has attracted very little interest within the Hindu community and there has been no indication of any plans for counter demonstrations. The police expect the demonstrators to focus their attention mainly on the actions of the British and Philippine Governments and have no reason to believe that the event would give rise to public disorder. If this remains their view they would therefore have no grounds for seeking the Home Secretary's consent for a banning order under Section 3(3) of the Public Order Act 1936, and there are of course no other relevant powers available to the police or the Home Secretary.

We shall be obtaining further police assessments about the prospects for the march on 20 January and I will be in touch with you again next week with a report on the latest position.

A copy of this letter goes to Charles Powell at No 10.

Yours  
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N A PANTLING

Peter Ricketts, Esq