

Subject

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T78/85

cc Master
DPS

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DD 060330Z NEW DELHI
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DESKBY 060330Z
FM F C O 051830Z MAY 85
TO IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI
TELEGRAM NUMBER 488 OF 5 MAY
YOUR TELNO 555: CONGRESS CENTENARY CELEBRATION
1. PLEASE PASS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO
RAJIV GANDHI:
BEGINS

'THE CENTENARY OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS IS AN
IMPORTANT LANDMARK IN THE HISTORY, NOT ONLY OF INDIA BUT OF
DEMOCRACY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. IT WAS A BRITON, A O HUME, WHO
ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO BEGAN THE PROCESS WHICH LED TO THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, AND, IN TURN, TO
THE INDEPENDENCE OF INDIA. THIS PROCESS WILL ALWAYS BE
ASSOCIATED IN OUR MINDS WITH MAHATMA GANDHI, WHOSE TEACHINGS
CONTINUE TO HAVE A RELEVANCE FOR ALL MANKIND, AND JAWAHARLAL
NEHRU, INDIA'S FIRST PRIME MINISTER, WHOSE MEMORY IS PARTICULARLY
DEAR TO US FOR HIS PART IN ESTABLISHING THE PATTERN OF CLOSE
RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND INDIA WHICH CONTINUES TO THIS DAY.
I JOIN WITH YOU IN YOUR CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENARY OF THE
CONGRESS, AND SEND YOU AND THE PEOPLE OF INDIA MY WARMEST
CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD WISHES.'
ENDS

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

2 May 1985

Dear Charles,

yes

Prime Minister
Agree to this
message (despite
weekends)?

CDP

Indian National Congress Centenary

Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) Party are celebrating the centenary of the Indian National Congress: their celebrations begin on 6 May. Although the celebrations in India are being treated as a party affair, the Indian National Congress was first and foremost a nationalist, rather than a party political, movement; and we believe that a message of congratulations from the Prime Minister would be appropriate - particularly in view of the continued strain in our relations with India. The American Embassy in New Delhi have recommended a message from their Vice-President or Secretary of State.

/ I enclose a draft message.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

From: Prime Minister

To: Shri Rajiv Gandhi
Prime Minister of the Republic of India

The centenary of the Indian National Congress is an important landmark in the history not only of India but of democracy throughout the world. ~~[I am proud that]~~ it was a Briton, A O Hume, who one hundred years ago began the process which led to the establishment of the Indian National Congress, and, in turn, to the independence of India. This process will always be associated in our minds with Mahatma Gandhi, whose teachings continue to have a relevance for all mankind, and Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister. His memory is particularly dear to us for his part in establishing the pattern of close relations between Britain and India which ~~have~~ continued to this day. On behalf of the British Government and people I send you and the people of India my warmest congratulations and good wishes.

Ambedkar

2 MAY 1985

