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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

10 June 1981

FESTIVAL OF INDIA

Mrs. Jayakar called on the Prime Minister this morning to discuss the arrangements for the Festival of India. She was accompanied by the Indian Deputy High Commissioner, Dr. Singh.

Mrs. Jayakar expressed her gratitude for the cooperation which she had received during her visit to this country. The interest in the Festival was extraordinary. The possibilities of improving Anglo/Indian relations through the Festival were tremendous.

As foreseen in your letter, Mrs. Jayakar said that she was not particularly concerned about the financial problem. If the organisation of the Festival could be got right, the money problem should solve itself.

As regards the organisation, Mrs. Jayakar said that in her view the Festival badly needed a Director. There needed to be a pivotal figure to whom others could refer and around whom the administration of the Festival could be structured. The right person to play this role, according to Mrs. Jayakar, would be Miss Joanna Drew. Miss Drew was already doing a great deal of work on the Festival and was familiar with all the issues. It would be enormously helpful if she could be made available full time, or virtually full time, from now until the opening of the Festival.

The Prime Minister said that she agreed with Mrs. Jayakar that an event like the Festival of India needed a central figure. She would ensure that Mrs. Jayakar's suggestion was followed up immediately.

I should be grateful if you could let me know soon whether there is in fact any possibility of formalising in the way suggested by Mrs. Jayakar the responsibilities for the Festival

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which Miss Drew already appears to have taken on. If Miss Drew is not available, is there anyone else who could take on the task? Mrs. Jayakar, in response to a question from the Prime Minister, made it clear that she thought there was unlikely to be any other candidate as suitable as Miss Drew.

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