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London Borough of Camden



The Town Hall
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London NW1 2RU
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B. H. Wilson, CBE, MA, LLB
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Director General & Clerk to the
Council,
The Greater London Council,
County Hall,
London SE1 7PB.

Date 20th December, 1974.

Your reference

Our reference LS/SAV/LAK

Telephone inquiries to:

Mr. S.A. Vile.

Ext. 2005

Dear Sir,

Mr. Krishna Menon

[?]
[1897-1974]

d. New Delhi
6 Oct 1974

My Council was recently informed of the death ^{of} Krishna Menon, who was a well known personality both locally in the former metropolitan Borough of St. Pancras and internationally. This Council wishes to commemorate his life in some way, and at present is investigating the possibility of erecting a statue in his memory, in conjunction with the India League. I have also been asked to approach you to enquire whether a blue GLC plaque could be placed on his former residence at 57 Camden Square, NW1. I have set out below some background information on Mr. Krishna Menon's connections with Camden which may help your Council in considering this matter.

He served as a Labour Member on the St. Pancras Council from 1934 to 1947 and is particularly well remembered as the Chairman of the Education and Public Libraries Committee from 1945 to 1947 during which time he was primarily responsible for the development of a public libraries service in the Borough. In 1946 he set up the St. Pancras Arts and Civic Council, a charitable organisation, and was its first Chairman concurrently with his chairmanship of the Education and Public Libraries Committee. Under his chairmanship the Arts and Civic Council developed the arts in the Borough and laid the foundation for the St. Pancras Arts Festivals which officially began in 1953 and continue to this day.

For a large part of his life he campaigned for Indian independence and in 1947 became the first High Commissioner for India in London, and later became the Indian Minister of Defence. In January 1955 he was made a Freeman of the Borough of St. Pancras, an honour he shared only with George Bernard Shaw.

I should be grateful to receive an indication, within the next month or so, as to whether your Council is agreeable to placing a blue plaque on his former residence, as, I am sure you will appreciate, my Council would wish to give consideration to an alternative method of commemorating Mr. Krishna Menon if a blue plaque cannot be provided in the foreseeable future.

GREATER LONDON COUNCIL

Architect. Sir Roger Walters, KBE, FRIBA, FI Struct E



DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND CIVIC DESIGN

Bondway House, 3-9 Bondway, London, SW8 1SJ

01-633 5874

your ref

my ref AR/HB/SG.6

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The Town Clerk
The Town Hall London Borough of
Euston Road Camden
London NW1 2RU

14 January 1975

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Dear Sir,

Commemorative Plaques: Krishna Menon

57 Camden Square, Camden

Thank you for your letter of 20 December 1974. I am most interested to learn of your Council's intention of commemorating Krishna Menon.

This Council does not normally commemorate persons who have been dead for less than twenty years except where the centenary of birth falls earlier. If this rule is strictly applied a plaque could not be erected to Mr. Menon before 1994. Whilst exceptions have on very rare occasions been made there is, I am afraid, very little prospect of a plaque in the near future.

I am sure, however, that the Council's Historic Buildings Board will take a keen interest in this suggestion and I will show your letter to the Chairman of the Board at the first opportunity.

Yours faithfully,

John Earl
for Surveyor of Historic Buildings.