



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

21 June 1982

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Dear Mr. Robertson

Thank you for your letter of 16 June. I can understand why you felt compelled to write about the sorrow of David Hardman's relatives, and their wish that he should be buried in this country.

As you say, the normal practice when soldiers are killed in action abroad is for them to be buried immediately and with all possible reverence and decency, close to where they fall. When peace is restored, they are transferred to a final military cemetery nearby, where they are given a full military funeral. This is a moving ceremony, and arrangements can be made for families to travel at no cost to attend.

However, I realise that some families, like David Hardman's, may prefer to have the bodies of their loved ones brought back here, and I can understand how anxious they may be for us to take a decision soon. Naturally I hope that we may be able to meet the wishes of those families who want their loved ones buried here, and I have promised to consider their views very carefully; but there are many practical and other problems involved, and I really do think that we should not take too hasty a decision one way or the other. I hope that David Hardman's relatives will be able to bear with us for a little longer.

Finally, I must say that I honour all those who have fallen in the service of their country. We owe David Hardman, and

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those who fell beside him, a great debt. I know that nothing I say will make up for his family's loss, but I hope they will take some comfort from the knowledge that he died so that others might live in freedom.

Yours sincerely  
Raymond Storer

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George Robertson, Esq., M.P.