

MO 5/21



Home Office

I would

to go should like the Duke of Kent
War Graves Commission. It would
be a great comfort to the
family. I agree that it is
Prime Minister should also go. For
reasons the Duke's attendance
must be kept secret until
he is within a few hours of
his visit.

- (a) whether the Royal Family should be involved in an event which may become the subject of international criticism
- (b) whether the Uruguayans will not feel utterly deceived by the promise suggested below.

2. I think we ought to examine carefully so that the visit is all the next of kin would wish.

3. The Foreign Secretary will be writing - await his reaction.

A.J.C. 11/3

VISIT OF NEXT OF KIN TO FALKLAND ISLANDS

You may wish to know that arrangements for the visit by next of kin to the Falklands in April are going well. Air transport to Montevideo and sea travel from there to the Falklands has all been laid on and we are now working on the details of the three day stay in the Islands and of the service of dedication.

2. The question now arises as to whether a member of the Royal Family should be present while the next of kin are on the Islands. The Duke of Kent *

* would be particularly appropriate as he is the President of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and has close military associations. During his recent visit to the Falklands Mr Wiggin was given the clear impression by the Civil Commissioner and by the Commander, British Forces that the Duke's visit would be most welcome.

3. The Duke of Kent's presence will of course be subject to review nearer the time in the light of intelligence reports. We would propose to organize the visit on the same basis as your own visit, with awareness of it kept on a strict need-to-know basis, and with no formal announcement being made until the Duke had actually arrived in the Islands. It will be important to inform the Uruguayan authorities of the Duke's participation before it becomes public but not before the transfer of the next of kin from air to sea transport has taken place in Montevideo. The Uruguayan Foreign Minister's agreement to the transfer is an oral

* * Passage deleted and closed, 40 years, under FOI Exemption. 1

Wayland
5 March 2013



one and depends on the visit being kept as low key as possible. This consideration would be met if the Ambassador were instructed to inform the Uruguayans of the Duke's involvement after the sailing of the Cunard Countess and before the Duke's arrival in the Islands.

4. I have also been considering whether a Minister should also be present and I believe it would be appropriate for a Junior Minister from here to go. The Chief of the Defence Staff will also be in the Islands on a long-planned visit and will be able to represent the Services.

5. I know that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary has been concerned that this visit should not have too high an international profile but I understand that he is content with these arrangements.

6. I should be grateful to have your agreement.

7. I am copying this to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

WJA

Ministry of Defence
11th March 1983