

GR 475  
CONFIDENTIAL  
FM PEKING 270300Z OCT 83  
TO PRIORITY FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1090 OF 27 OCTOBER  
INFO PRIORITY HONG KONG

CONFIDENTIAL

TOP SECRET  
FEC 397/2  
31 OCT 1983  
287\*

13/11  
MAED.

POSSIBLE VISIT BY DUKE OF EDINBURGH

1. WE HAVE HAD A TELEX FROM MARK HALLE IN THE WORLD WILDLIFE FUND HEADQUARTERS IN SWITZERLAND TO SAY THAT HE WILL BE VISITING PEKING FROM 21-26 NOVEMBER AND WILL BE DISCUSSING WITH THE CHINESE A PROPOSED VISIT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE WWF (HRH THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH) TO THE PANDA RESERVE AT WOLONG IN SICHUAN IN SPRING 1984. THE PANDA RESERVE IS A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT BETWEEN THE WWF AND THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT. HALLE HAS ASKED TO CALL ON ME FOR AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF THIS PROPOSAL. WE HAVE REPLIED THAT I WOULD BE GLAD TO SEE HIM.
2. I AM STILL UNEASY ABOUT ROYAL VISITS TO CHINA IN GENERAL. THE RISK I SEE IS THAT THE CHINESE MIGHT IN SOME WAY SEEK TO USE SUCH A VISIT TO ASSOCIATE THE ROYAL FAMILY WITH THEIR POLICY ON HONG KONG, FOR INSTANCE BY RAISING IT IN A GENERAL WAY WHEN THE VISITOR CALLED ON A LEADER AND THEN SUGGESTING IN PUBLICITY THAT ALL PRESENT HAD BEEN IN AGREEMENT. IT IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS THIS RISK IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE - SINCE I CANNOT PREDICT NOW HOW NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE GOING BY SPRING 1984. IF THEY ARE GOING WELL THERE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM AND EVEN SOME ADVANTAGE IN A VISIT, SINCE IT WOULD EMPHASISE THE COOPERATION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND CHINA. ON THE OTHER HAND IF A VISIT IS SET UP AND THE TALKS DO NOT GO WELL, IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO CANCEL IT AT A LATER STAGE.
3. A VISIT BY THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH TO WOLONG UNDER HIS WWF HAT CLEARLY CARRIES LESS RISK THAN WOULD HAVE BEEN THE CASE IF PRINCESS MARGARET HAD COME TO PEKING EARLIER THIS YEAR. I ALSO RECOGNISE THAT AN ATTEMPT TO STOP THE DUKE GOING TO WOLONG WOULD BE LESS THAN POPULAR. THE RISKS WOULD BE LESSENERED IF THE DUKE WERE TO GO DIRECTLY FROM HONG KONG TO SICHUAN, AND DID NOT COME TO PEKING. THIS MIGHT BE DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE, BUT WE COULD AT LEAST TRY.
4. ON THE WHOLE I AM INCLINED TO ADVISE THAT WE SHOULD TELL THE WWF THAT THERE ARE SOME SENSITIVITIES ABOUT SUCH A VISIT IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, AND THAT WE SHOULD PREFER TO ENSURE THAT IT REMAINS ENTIRELY NON-POLITICAL BY CONFINING IT TO SOUTH CHINA. THE CHINESE WOULD PROBABLY INVITE THE DUKE TO PEKING. WE COULD PERHAPS COUNTER THIS BY SAYING THAT WE WOULD PREFER THE FIRST ROYAL VISIT TO PEKING TO BE A BILATERAL ONE RATHER THAN ONE UNDER WWF AUSPICES.

CRADOCK  
LIMITED  
FED  
H&K  
PROTOCOL.D.  
NEWS.D.

PS/MR. LUCE  
MR. GIFFARD  
MR. DONALD

THIS TELEGRAM  
WAS NOT  
ADVANCED

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Royal Family  
: possible visit to China by Queen Margaret,  
Aug 82

E7 NOV 1983

